

INSPECTION REPORT

WARMINGTON SCHOOL

Warmington, Peterborough

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121865

Headteacher: Mrs V Machin

Reporting inspector: Julia Elsley
16892

Dates of inspection: 20th – 22nd November 2000

Inspection number: 224992

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Warmington Peterborough
Postcode:	PE8 6TA
Telephone number:	01832 280420
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R E Davey
Date of previous inspection:	13 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Julia Elsley 16892	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught What should the school do to improve further? How well does the school care for its pupils?
Andrew Anderson 14083	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mari Powell 19387	Team inspector	English History Geography Information and communication technology Religious education Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Warmington is a small village school with 42 pupils on roll aged 4 to 9. The school serves a population that is predominantly of white United Kingdom heritage. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The children come from a wide range of social backgrounds and experiences, but most families have at least one parent in work. The numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs are both below average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. The pupils' attainment on entry covers the full ability range. The results of the assessments for the new intake are average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school because there is very clear and purposeful leadership from the headteacher and governors who are committed to raising standards and improving the quality of education. The headteacher values highly the work of all her staff, monitors the teaching and makes judgements about their training needs in order to support their commitment to raising standards. As a result, the overall quality of the teaching is good, often very good and sometimes excellent. This is reflected in the above average standards that pupils are achieving in English, mathematics and science year-on-year. Although the cost of educating the pupils at this small school is higher than usual, it nevertheless offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- Over the past four years, standards in English, mathematics and science have been sustained at levels above that expected nationally. Standards in religious education and physical education are good. The children aged five and under make good progress during their reception year.
- The high levels of well-focused and challenging teaching, including that of the work of the support staff, are effectively raising the pupils' achievement, particularly in writing and numeracy.
- The social and moral development of the pupils is generally good and often very good.
- The provision for extracurricular activities is good.
- The good levels of care shown by the adults enables all children, including those with special educational need to make good progress. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development and academic progress are good. Attendance is very good.
- The pupils' attitudes, interest and enthusiasm towards school and learning are good, and this has a positive influence upon their achievements. Relationships within the school are very good.
- The contribution that parents and the community make to the pupils' learning is very good.
- The headteacher and governors of the school provides a clear direction to the educational development of the pupils. All staff have a strong commitment to improvement and a capacity to succeed. The financial management is very good and ensures that the available funding is used very well to support the educational priorities in children's learning.

What could be improved

There are no major issues for improvement

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The previous report identified weaknesses in many aspects of the school's work. **This is no longer the case.** The strong commitment by the governors, headteacher and all staff has resulted in significant improvements to the quality of education provided at the school. Everyone connected with the school has the willingness and motivation to continue to progress. The teaching is much better than before and, as a result, all children are challenged to higher levels. They are able to achieve their best because the lessons are interesting, they motivate the pupils and help them to learn important skills and knowledge. This is particularly evident in literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology, religious education and physical education. The curriculum planning and the use of assessment have improved and the monitoring of the teaching and evaluation of the curriculum is now in place. The measures taken to establish progression in children's learning from the reception through to Year 4 are still in progress. Nevertheless, positive strides forward have been made to address this issue by reviewing the overall framework for learning in the Foundation Stage and the new Curriculum 2000. However, the next step is to further enhance the work on the curriculum planning and use of assessment in some of the non-core subjects, such as history, geography, music and art and design so that the pupils' learning builds steadily and gains greater depth as they move through the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests but is left blank because fewer than ten pupils currently take the national tests each year.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	[Year-2]	[Year-1]	[Year]	[Year]
English	[]	[]	[]	[]
Mathematics	[]	[]	[]	[]
Science	[]	[]	[]	[]

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The statistical analysis of the school's results in the national tests is unreliable because the number of pupils in each year group is very few and seldom more than nine. Nevertheless, when looking at the period 1996-1999 it is clear that the pupils' standards are above both the national picture and that found in similar schools by the age of seven in reading, mathematics and science. Although the results in writing are just above the national average, there are very few children over time who achieve a higher level 3. The inspection findings, however, confirm that there has been considerable improvement to the school's provision for the teaching of writing. Analysis of the pupils' work reveals particular strengths in the way that boys and girls of all abilities make good progress over the course of a school year. This is because the teachers have tracked progress meticulously and set challenging targets for each individual.

There has been considerable improvement to the school's provision for the teaching of information and communication technology. As a result, standards have risen and continue to improve. The quality of the pupils' work in religious education is above that indicated in the locally agreed syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are enthusiastic, well motivated and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. They treat each other with respect and consideration and are generally polite and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils enjoy very good relationships with all staff, who treat them with sensitivity and respect. From a very early age, the pupils are eager to assume responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance levels are well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is much stronger than at the time of the last inspection and is of good quality throughout the school. Of the lessons seen 21 per cent were satisfactory, 38 per cent were good and 41 per cent were either very good or excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection.

The teaching of English, and mathematics is a real strength and the skills of literacy and numeracy are appropriately transferred across into other subjects, such as science, and religious education. The planning and the use of assessments in these lessons are detailed and make clear the progression in knowledge and the skills that the children are going to learn. The teachers' pace is brisk in lessons, and they use good questioning skills which challenge and motivate the children to think more deeply about their work.

The school's investment in the learning support assistants and the appointment of an additional teacher is very good because it has enabled it to organise the groups with narrower range of age and ability. This ensures that all pupils including those aged five and under and the few children with special educational needs, receive full access to the school's curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The statutory National Curriculum is more firmly established than at the time of the previous inspection. The provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. However, there is scope to improve further the progression in skills across the non-core subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils make all-round progress because they are well taught.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable at present.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The social and moral development of the pupils is good. This helps to raise their self-esteem and encourage good behaviour. The provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Appropriate systems for monitoring the pupils' personal and academic progress and reporting to their parents are in place. The school has made a positive start to further improve the use of assessment in the non-core subjects.

The school provides a good range of extracurricular activities before and after school. Communication between home and school is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a strong and committed team of staff that is working together successfully to maintain and improve the achievements of all pupils in their care.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors keep themselves fully informed about the school and meet all their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has effective systems in place to monitor the strengths and identify areas for further improvement because it evaluates most aspects of its work with a quiet rigour.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Expenditure is planned carefully to match the priorities and evaluated in terms of its effect upon pupils' learning.

The headteacher provides very clear direction so that the management of the school continues to improve. The governors work very closely with the staff and are applying the principles of best value in all their financial decisions. The members of staff, including the support assistants, are well qualified and their expertise is very effectively deployed to meet the demands of all pupils in their care.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. They are well taught and make good progress. Standards are good and most children quickly become literate and numerate. • The staff encourages the parents to become actively involved in the life of the school, and they are well informed about their child's progress. • The staff is very friendly and approachable. • Concerns or complaints are dealt with sensitively by the staff. • The school is helping their children to become mature and to take responsibilities for themselves and their actions from a very early age. • The school is well led and managed. 	<p>There were no significant issues raised by the parents at the pre-inspection meeting, and the responses to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school.</p>

The inspection team agrees with the very positive views of the parents. There is a very happy, caring ethos and everyone connected with the school, staff, children, parents and the wider community has a commitment to providing a good quality education for all pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The statistical analysis of the school's results in the national tests for seven-year-olds is unreliable because the number of pupils in each year group is very few and seldom above nine. Nevertheless, when looking at the period 1996–1999 it is clear that standards are well above the national average in reading and mathematics and even higher in writing. This is a significant achievement for many of these pupils and a solid basis as they enter Years 3 and 4. It is clear that in these years they are building effectively on their prior attainment because a few of the brighter children are now working at a higher level. Further analysis of the test results of the past four years indicates that both boys and girls are achieving similar results.
2. The inspection findings confirm that the improvement in standards continues. In both the present and previous Year 2 groups, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels is above average in reading, and mathematics. Their writing is also improved considerably. It is above the national average and a significant proportion of pupils is reaching a higher level. This is because the teaching is of a high calibre in both the literacy and numeracy sessions. The standards in science are above average. This represents good progress because the achievements of the pupils entering the school in reception are average when judged against the school's approved baseline assessment. For instance, most of the current reception children will meet the national targets for the Foundation Stage, and a significant proportion of children will exceed them by the time they enter the Year 1 class. This is due to the good, very good, and often excellent teaching that they receive.
3. The school has a strong commitment to raising standards. The evidence shows that it has set challenging literacy and numeracy targets for every child. The pupils' work is very closely monitored and analysed, and they all receive extra adult support in order to boost their understanding in areas of weakness. The targets are challenging, and a significant majority of the pupils will reach them by the age of seven or nine, again because of the good quality teaching.
4. The strength of the work in English lies in the effective way that the teachers are developing the pupils' skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. The teachers' planning is structured and rigorous, and the children receive a thorough grounding in phonics from a very early age. As a result, their progress in reading is good. All children in the reception class for example, enjoy books and writing. They find stories are a source of pleasure and have a growing understanding of the written word. The good opportunities provided for independent writing gives them a very confident start in the formation of letters and simple words. At Key Stage 1, much time is spent on discussing writing tasks with good use of text to develop the pupils' ideas and use of vocabulary. The use of punctuation has been taught well, but the pupils' progress in spelling, whilst satisfactory overall, is not as rapid as it could be. The pupils are now more aware of the need to find and learn spellings independently and to check them when writing. This is beginning to eliminate some key errors. By Year 4, the pupils standard in spoken English and their listening skills are generally good. They find reading a source of pleasure and through the use of a wide range of texts continue to maintain good progress. However, there is still room to find more time for independent reading and to stimulate the interest of the higher attaining pupils to read more demanding text. Additional time has been made available for imaginative and factual writing, and this has been successful in further enhancing the standards in the use of grammar and punctuation. This work is also beginning to have a beneficial effect on the pupils' handwriting skills and the presentation of their work is good.

5. In mathematics, the overall standards are good. The pupils' achievements are a direct result of the school's recent work in numeracy and the improvement of the overall planning for individual pupils' progress, which was considered to be a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The teachers have worked extremely hard to improve their own knowledge of the subject and to increase the pace and the demands of their lessons. This can be seen in the way the pupils show their enjoyment and confidence to participate eagerly in the mental mathematics sessions. In these sessions, pupils are competent and have very secure skills and knowledge when calculating in a variety of ways. They can also for example, in Year 1 competently identify patterns in number well. In science at both key stages, the pupils are achieving standards above that of pupils of similar ages nationally and their progress overall is good. Their investigations are carried out with planned experiments, well-prepared resources, sustained concentration and determination. Their conclusions are thoughtfully drawn and accurately discussed or appropriately recorded together in simple tables.
6. Overall, the standards in information computer technology have improved since the last inspection and are fast becoming a real strength of the school. There is a well-planned programme of the skills that need to be taught, and as a result the pupils are making rapid progress. Information computer technology is being used across all subjects, but there is scope for further application of its use in mathematics and science. The pupils' achievements are in line with the expected levels. This is because the school has information computer technology as a high priority development within the teaching programme and all the staff are either being or going to be trained during this year in information and communication technology skills in order to build their own confidence in the use of the computer. The pupils confidently use art and design programs. They are learning to use and access information to support other subjects, such as history well.
7. Attainment in religious education is above that outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved and all pupils, including those with special education needs, are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding in both lessons and assemblies. The pupils have a good understanding of the main beliefs, writing and customs of the major world religions. They have, for example, a good knowledge of Bible stories and an awareness of other religions such as Judaism and Islam.
8. The overall standard and quality of work seen in physical education has been maintained at the high standards since the last inspection. Standards in art and design, design technology, geography, and history remain satisfactory. Although the standards are satisfactory in these subjects, the quality of the children's work would be further improved if more emphasis was placed on the teaching of basic skills. Although the school has recognised this and work is in progress to address the issue, it nevertheless remains **an area for further improvement**. It is not possible to make any judgements about the overall standards in music because there was no opportunity to observe any specific music lessons during the course of the inspection. The teachers' planning however, does indicate that further improvement is also needed in the progression of musical skills across the age groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Consequently, relationships within the school are very good. The headteacher, staff and the pupils themselves have high expectations of the standards of behaviour that are acceptable in the school. Parents feel that discipline is well managed and are very happy with the high standards of behaviour maintained by the school.

10. The pupils' attitudes towards learning in the school are good. The vast majority of pupils consistently demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. They are confident, motivated and eager to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers, ask and answer questions, and willingly offer their own ideas and suggestions. Nearly all children settle down quickly and in class, maintain sustained periods of concentration, and stay diligently on task.
11. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is good. The vast majority of pupils behave well and act in a mature and responsible manner at all times. Their behaviour in the classrooms is consistently good and this contributes to a positive learning environment. In nearly half of the lessons observed during the inspection, their behaviour was judged to be very good. The pupils enter and leave school, and move around during the day, in a quiet and orderly manner. Behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is also very good. During the inspection there were no signs of any bullying or isolation of individual children. No pupils was excluded either in the year prior to the inspection or the current academic year to date.
12. Relationships in the school are very good. The pupils relate very well to their teachers, to other adults whom they come into contact with, and also to one another. Children of all ages are polite, courteous and welcoming to visitors. For example, they politely approached inspectors and proudly showed off their work. Most are capable of collaborating well, sharing resources, taking turns and listening to each other. During assemblies, they show appropriate respect for the occasion, for example, bowing their heads during prayers and willingly joining in hymn singing.
13. The pupils' personal development is good. They are learning a sound range of social skills that is helping them to develop into well-rounded individuals. They willingly take responsibility for their own work, for instance, in lessons, when not subject to direct teaching, they were frequently observed working independently and staying on task. They are given an appropriate range of responsibilities around the school, for example, collecting registers, handing out hymnbooks in assembly, and acting as milk monitors. They consistently carry out these responsibilities in a mature and sensible manner. The pupils go out of school on an appropriate range of visits and the school raises money for charities.
14. The levels of attendance are very good and well above the national average. There is no recorded unauthorised absence. The pupils enjoy coming to school and their parents are very supportive in maintaining good attendance levels. The majority of pupils come to school on time and there is little lateness in the mornings.
15. The pupils' attitudes, their high standards of behaviour, and their very good attendance have a positive influence on their standards of academic learning and personal development, which are consistently achieved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. At the time of the last inspection, the overall quality of the teaching was mostly sound with some good and very good teaching in physical education. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The current inspection findings show that there has been a marked improvement in the quality of the teaching across the whole school. Of the lessons seen 21 per cent were satisfactory, 38 per cent were good and 41 per cent were either very good or excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. The overwhelming majority of lessons are well organised to meet the needs of pupils of all ability levels, including those who are five years old or under, higher achieving pupils and pupils with special educational needs.
17. The quality of the teaching for children aged five and under is good, very good and often

excellent. The school's new arrangements for teaching the reception children separately from the Year1/2 class on five mornings a week is paying dividends. This has come about because of the larger numbers entering the current reception year. It has enabled the school to improve on past work by having a greater focus on developing the individual and the group personal and social skills, and laid very good foundations for their future learning. The children are enthusiastic about their learning because they find the lessons exciting and stimulating. This is evident, for instance, when they are going for a walk, listening to sounds in the environment, planting bulbs or making sets of five people. The lessons are planned imaginatively by the staff to promote the children's interest through practical tasks. There is now a greater use of the indoor and outdoor learning environment and more use of play activities as stimuli, in line with the new Foundation Stage guidelines.

18. A strong feature within both key stages is the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The staff has spent a great deal of time to ensure their success. As a result, this is helping not only to raise standards in reading but also to improve writing skills. The teachers are skilled practitioners. They have secure subject knowledge because of the rigorous training that they have received. Their planning is good, they have high expectations of their pupils and challenge them to even greater levels of enquiry. The training of the staff and the monitoring of lessons by the headteacher have been rigorous, in order to raise the quality of the children's learning. This is a further improvement since the previous inspection. The lessons start with a clear introduction and the children know what is expected of them. The teacher's mental mathematics sessions and the introduction to the literacy sessions, for example, are well focused and have a quiet rigour and pace. In these cases, the teaching of the basic literacy and numeracy skills is good. The teachers work very hard and through the use of astute questioning promote the pupils' ability to think and reflect. The whole-class sessions are sharply focussed and the pace is lively. The work achieved is used well to inform the teachers of what children have understood, know and can do. As a result, the teachers and learning support staff have a good awareness of how to help the pupils, for example those with special educational needs. They pay good attention to explaining concepts very patiently and clearly. This is very good practice. The teachers use well the attainment levels in the National Curriculum and an analysis of test results to plan future work. This has helped them to identify where there are gaps in provision and has been successful in improving the pupils' individual performance, attainment and progress in these areas. For example, pupils of all abilities are being challenged to greater levels within extended periods which have been set aside so that pupils have more time to plan, draft and re-draft their writing. The teachers' plans are often annotated with comments about what works well and how their lessons might be improved.
19. The teaching of the numeracy strategy is good. All staff, including the learning support assistants, have a good approach to the teaching of numeracy. The lessons are sharply focussed and go at a brisk pace, particularly the mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of each session. It is clear that the planning for numeracy is being modified in the light of the progress made in the lessons. Throughout the school, the classrooms are well organised so that a range of resources is at hand to support the children's learning.
20. A great deal of useful information is also noted and stored within teachers' assessment folders. For example, the staff recognise that the next steps in the teaching of writing skills is to have less use of worksheets, or copying of text in subjects such as science and history, in order to help foster independent research skills and recording of factual information. At the time of the previous inspection, the teachers use of assessment to support their planning was highlighted as a weakness, but this is now a significant strength and provides very good information for support of the individual pupil's learning in English, mathematics and science. However there is room **for further improvement** in the use of assessment to improve the teaching of basic skills in areas such as history, geography, art and design and music.

21. The overall quality of the teaching for pupils with special educational needs, including the higher achievers, is good. All staff are fully involved in the drawing up of the pupils' independent educational plans, which are sharply focussed on literacy, numeracy and some science targets. The school has begun to address appropriately the provision for other areas of learning in the same way. Consequently, by the end of Key Stage 1, all of the lower attaining pupils are on course to reach the required national levels (level 2) in English and mathematics. Moreover, a significant proportion of the pupils is expected either to attain the upper end of level 2 or to reach the higher level 3.
22. The teaching of the other subjects of the curriculum has many more strengths than weaknesses. The overall quality of teaching in these subjects ranges from satisfactory to very good, particularly in physical education lessons. In science, an analysis of the previous test results showed that there was a need to increase the investigative work. This has been successfully done and the inspection findings indicate that it has helped to bring the pupils' learning 'alive'. The teachers have good subject knowledge, prepare their lessons well and use resources, particularly the outdoor learning environment, effectively. Their use of subject-specific vocabulary is good and they manage these sessions very well. The children, including those with special educational needs, know how to behave when working practically because they have helped to establish the class rules and they enjoy positive relationships with their teachers. As a result, for example, the children in Year 3 and 4 are beginning to think like young scientists and are developing a far better understanding of how to plan and conduct a fair test. A further improvement in the teaching is the way that information and communication technology is being taught competently by all staff. The pupils' skills are being developed well. However there is further scope for the use of research programmes so that the pupils developed their skimming and scanning skills on the web sites and by taking notes to support their work. The school recognises that the teaching of the basic skills in art and design, music, history and geography are an on-going development and **an area for further improvement**. Because teachers take their curriculum responsibilities very seriously initial steps have been taken to provide training during this academic year. There are also plans to support the teachers in improving their knowledge and understanding of how to plan and teach the basic skills in order to ensure progression in the pupils' learning.
23. The effect of all this good teaching is clearly evident in the responses of the pupils. There are clear rules and expectations about discipline and behaviour. As a result, relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and the pupils work hard and make good progress. Throughout the school, the teachers provide regular and helpful feedback to the pupils about their work. Their comments are sensitively and carefully written in order for the pupil to realise what they need to do next. Targets are set to help the pupils improve their work and these are shared with their parents. The pupils' have homework in a variety of subjects. There are strong links between home and school, which foster a good work ethos for homework. Amongst the staff, there is a real sense of teamwork, and a commitment to raising standards. During the school day, visitors and parent volunteers also make a very worthwhile contribution to the life and work of the school.

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

24. The curriculum has undergone a thorough review and has improved since the previous inspection. The school recognises that aspects of curriculum planning at Key Stage 1 and 2 are now ready for further evaluation in order to meet more fully the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Nevertheless, overall, the curriculum is now much broader and better balanced. An appropriate curriculum is being put in place to meet the new arrangements for teaching the Foundation Stage.

25. The curriculum for the pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 is appropriately based on a two year rolling programme which caters for the needs of mixed age classes. Recently produced national curricular guidance is beginning to contribute to the provision of a framework for the development of long and medium-term plans. However at present, there is a less rigorous curriculum framework to ensure that the development of skills in subjects such as history, geography, art and design and music is sufficiently sophisticated. The topics of study for the foundation subjects at both key stages are carefully chosen, but the school recognises the need now to document a more precise map of the intended learning of skills. For example, the pupils need to be taught how to ask more searching questions as they build on each successive unit of work. **This is an area for further improvement.**
26. The teachers' daily planning is much improved since the previous inspection. The learning objectives are very precise and generally shared with the pupils. This was the case in a lesson in information and communication technology where the pupils were told that they were going to learn how to cut and copy text. This helped them to focus on the core task and raised the eventual attainment because they were clear about what they were required to learn.
27. The school has developed a productive strategy to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy. This is particularly the case in relation to the development of the pupils' writing skills so that they undertake a greater range of writing. There is evidence to suggest that improved planning, which ensures more time for pupils to write, is having a beneficial effect on the standards the pupils achieve. The teachers' awareness of the use of basic literacy skills in many areas of the curriculum and also the application of numeracy in science, geography and design and technology ensures that their planning reflects secure and valid cross-curricular links. The programme for religious education is thoroughly planned and based on the local syllabus. The school is aware of the recently produced national guidance that will further enrich the already good quality planning seen.
28. The curriculum for pupils with special educational need is well planned. The Individual Education Plans provide a clear picture of their needs and are linked to good strategies for ensuring their progress. The school is very alert in enabling all pupils to access the wide range of opportunities available. Additional adult help is readily provided, for example, to support literacy and numeracy skills or to promote personal development. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored and plans to meet their needs are appropriately adjusted in the light of the regular reviews that take place.
29. The provision for the pupils' personal and social development is very good. The adults have a very consistent approach and seek every opportunity to raise the pupils' self-confidence and self esteem. The schools' agreed approach to sex education is that there is no formal programme, but the teachers respond willingly and sensitively to any questions raised by the pupils. The raising of the pupils' basic awareness of the use and misuse of drugs' is included in the programme of work for science.
30. Overall, the provision to foster the pupils' spiritual development is sound. In some areas of the curriculum, such as religious education or the learning of poetry, the opportunities to promote awe and wonder are good. This was the case when pupils in Key Stage 1 visited the local church and marvelled at the stone carvings and stained glass windows. However, some instances that might arise through work in science or music are not as well developed as they might be.
31. The school's value system underpins the pupils' moral development well. There are agreed rules that are consistently and sensitively applied. The pupils are encouraged to be honest and trustworthy as they carry out various responsibilities and when they are discussing occasional upsets with others. They are given valuable opportunities for socializing with a range of visitors,

with each other and with pupils from other schools when they attend residential visits in Key Stage 2. This prepares them well for the next stage of learning that they will share with these pupils. The pupils are given many opportunities for taking initiatives when supporting good causes or partnering their less confident peers, for example, in work on computers.

32. The curriculum provides satisfactory experiences for developing the cultural aspects of the pupils' learning. They are enabled to develop a high level of awareness of their own local identity. Books in the school library and lessons in religious education provide valuable information about lifestyles and religious practices in cultures where, for instance, either Islam or Judaism prevails. However, this is an area for further development through the aesthetic side of the curriculum and also through provision of images, artefacts and experiences to further enhance the pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of cultures in Britain. At present, the pupils are introduced to the work of artists such as Monet and Picasso.
33. The school is proud of its community identity. The pupils' learning experiences are considerably enriched by the contributions of local people, who have, for example, provided first hand evidence of life during World War II. There is a good link with the local church. Contact with other nearby schools and organisations enable the pupils to participate in a wider range of events than would be possible for a small school alone. For example, through these local links, the children are able not only to participate in competitive sports, but also to learn French as an extracurricular activity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The high quality of the care provided for children found within the school at the previous inspection continues to be a major strength. The school has good systems to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety. As a result, the children do feel valued, and secure. However, a couple of minor health and safety issues were brought to the attention of the headteacher during the course of the inspection. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place, and liaison with outside agencies occurs as required. All members of staff know the individual pupils very well and are committed to providing a welcoming and caring environment. The pupils are made aware of safe practices during lessons such as practical science and physical education, when using tools in art and design technology, and whilst moving around the school. The school carries out regular risk assessments and fire drills. Key members of staff hold appropriate first-aid qualifications.
35. There are appropriate systems in place for the monitoring, evaluation, review and the support of the children's academic performance and their personal development. As a direct result, good improvements in the use of assessment procedures have been made since the time of the last inspection, although there is still some headway to go in supporting the work in areas such as, history, geography, art and design and music. **This is an area for further improvement.** The model deployed in the use of assessment in the core subjects shows that the teachers track the pupils progress conscientiously and are increasingly using a good range of information to guide their planning. Consequently, the teachers have a clear picture of what each pupil knows and can do, and this leads to the setting of work that challenges the children appropriately. This is particularly the case in regard to reading, writing and numeracy. It has a beneficial effect on improving the pupils' literacy skills and their abilities to carry out mental calculations because the tasks are carefully matched to the pupils' needs. The use of assessment to support the individual planning of work for the very youngest children in the school is very good.
36. The school makes good use of the information gained from national test results and other test and assessment data in order to produce appropriate targets for every pupil at the school. For example, the staff recognised that greater work was needed to raise standards in writing, which has been successfully targeted as an area for on-going development. The children with special

educational needs make good progress. Careful attention is given to raising their self-esteem and increasing their belief in themselves as successful learners. Thorough and detailed notes are maintained about each pupil's strengths and weaknesses, and these are then used to set clear and appropriate targets for improvement. They are regularly reviewed with the child and the parent and it is clear that most pupils are making good progress.

37. The pupils know the school rules and code of behaviour well. This helps them to have a very positive approach towards learning. The evident commitment of all the staff to the well being, care and personal development of each child helps to provide a secure and happy community in which all pupils, of all abilities, make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Relationships between the school and parents are very strong. The school enjoys the active support of all the parents. The headteacher and her staff are very approachable and many parents were observed talking to the class teachers at the start and close of the school day. There are a small, but dedicated, number of committed parents who regularly help in classrooms, and accompany the pupils on trips out of school, for example, helping to supervise the children when they go swimming. The parent governors are fully involved in the work of the school. Parental involvement in the children's work is good, and there is strong support for reading and other homework. There is an active parent teacher association that organises events, and raises funds for the school. The parents consistently expressed very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the school.
39. Communication between the school and home is very good. The school sends out regular informative newsletters and there are frequent communications to parents about specific events and activities. The school publishes an attractive and informative prospectus. The governors hold an annual meeting with parents and publish a comprehensive annual report. The parents, both at the pre-inspection meeting and through their responses to the questionnaire, said that they felt that they were well informed about their children's progress. There are appropriate opportunities for parent/ teacher consultation, and the annual written progress reports are clear about the extent of progress made and what children should do to improve further. The home-school files are informative and provide the parents with another very good means of direct communication with the teachers. The parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed and fully involved in their children's education.
40. Overall, the children's education is enriched by the very good relationships between the school and their parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The previous report identified the leadership and management of the school as a strength. This continues to be the case. There are well-established systems and policies that are consistently followed and ensure that there is a shared sense of purpose and a strong commitment to continuing to improve the educational provision for the pupils. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the staff has established an effective set of values which has earned the strong support of the parents. Together with the governing body, the headteacher has identified an appropriate set of priorities in response to the many initiatives that schools have had to address.
42. The headteacher has effectively developed a system for sharing the management of the curriculum with her small staff team. Together, they have set a programme for the development of each curriculum area. In the case of information and communication technology, for example, they have set out a clear map of the skills the pupils need to learn. They also recognise that the next phase of their planning must address where best in the overall curriculum to teach and apply

these essential skills. The governors are closely involved in all areas of the school's development. They have made good use of opportunities to visit the classrooms to see at first hand how the various initiatives, such as the school's numeracy strategy, are progressing.

43. The school makes good use of available data such as the outcomes of baseline assessments and the results of national testing to compare its performance with other similar schools both locally and nationally. This information is used to address important issues such as why, until recently, the pupils' attainment in writing has not matched that of their reading. As a result, strategic action has been taken which is beginning to raise attainment in writing. Members of the local authority advisory staff also visit the school to observe lessons. Any issues arising from these observations are analysed and discussed by the staff. In the same way, the outcomes of the previous inspection have been carefully considered and a detailed Action Plan has resulted in key issues being addressed. This has formed the basis for a very detailed and coherent School Improvement Plan. The school now recognises the need to include in this plan the recent initiative for the teaching of the Foundation Stage of Learning. This is an **area for further action** as the time scale for both the appointment of a teacher, and the introduction of the curriculum has been brief.
44. The school makes good use of all the funds available to it. The finances are managed with rigour because the headteacher and governors are vigilant about tracking expenditure. Detailed discussions take place before final budgets are set. The school is highly aware of how to obtain best value for money. The last audit report confirms that, with the exception of some very minor issues, the school's budget systems are very secure. Astute financial management together with the acquisition of some additional funding has led to improved teaching arrangements for the youngest children. Future provision in the medium and longer term now needs to be planned and detailed costing made so that this initiative, which is so much valued by the parents, children and staff, may have a secure future.
45. The careful financial planning and evaluation of curriculum requirements have resulted in good resource provision. In addition to enhanced teaching opportunities for the youngest children, the pupils benefit from a specialist teacher for physical education. The school also has a visiting violin teacher from the local authority music service to give lessons to a small number of individual pupils. The headteacher, who has a very full teaching commitment, has been given release time to carry out her important monitoring role and to use her expertise in information and communication technology to develop the skills of other staff as well as the those of the pupils. The classroom assistants are well deployed and work closely with the teachers for the benefit of the pupils. The school has an adequate supply of computers, but because there is a high level of interest in information and communication technology the pupils are sometimes frustrated by their unreliability. Books are in good supply and prominently displayed in classrooms and in the library area which forms a welcoming part of the school's entrance foyer. The school's accommodation is good overall as classroom space allows the pupils to move around for different activities, such as using the computers, doing artwork or browsing in book corners. The hall is small, but very well equipped for physical education activities. The building is accessible for pupils and adults with disabilities although there is no purpose fitted toilet for disabled pupils. The building is well maintained, spotlessly clean and provides a good educational environment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. There are no major key issues for development. The headteacher, governors and staff should continue to build upon the procedures already established to raise the quality of education by considering the following areas for further development:
- curriculum planning, especially in history, geography, art and design and music, so that the teachers know exactly what skills to teach and assess as the pupils move through the school. (paragraphs: 8, 20, 22, 25, 35, 84,86,91)

- an action plan for the current work on the Foundation Stage of Learning. (paragraph: 43)

The school is aware of both these issues and has already included the first one within its development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	33	38	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	42
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	5

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	[]	[]	[]	[]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	[]	[]	[]
	Girls	[]	[]	[]
	Total	[]	[]	[]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	0	0	0
	National	82 (80)	83 (85)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	[]	[]	[]
	Girls	[]	[]	[]
	Total	[]	[]	[]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	0	0	0
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	[]	[]	[]	[]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	[]	[]	[]
	Girls	[]	[]	[]
	Total	[]	[]	[]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[] ([])	[] ([])	[] ([])
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	[]	[]	[]
	Girls	[]	[]	[]
	Total	[]	[]	[]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[] ([])	[] ([])	[] ([])
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	96.8
Any other minority ethnic group	3.2

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)	2.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.2
Average class size	20.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	26

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
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	£
Total income	122660
Total expenditure	136150
Expenditure per pupil	3366
Balance brought forward from previous year	25115
Balance carried forward to next year	11625

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	46
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	10	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	27	16	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	17	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	20	1	0	1
The teaching is good.	33	10	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	12	1	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	26	17	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	9	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	7	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	16	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	14	0	0	0

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

47. The school makes very good provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. The teaching is consistently good across all areas of learning with a significant proportion that is either very good or excellent. There are currently 10 children of this age who are taught as a class for five mornings a week. For the rest of the week they work either in small groups with the learning support assistants following the class teacher's plans or with the class teacher from Year 1\2. The children enter the reception class in the year that they are five and most have had some playgroup experience. The attainment of the current cohort of children, eight weeks into the academic year, is in line with that expected of pupils of this age. There are no children within this small cohort with either specific special educational needs or English is an additional language.
48. The children have quickly settled into school and are making good progress in all areas of learning. As a result, they are on course to exceed the early learning goals set out in the Foundation curriculum. A significant proportion is already exceeding these levels in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding, and in the physical areas of learning.

Personal and social development

49. The children's attainment in personal and social development exceeds that expected of children of this age. They have a very good start to their school life in the reception class. This is because the teacher's major focus has been to foster the children's skills in this area. Through the carefully planned curriculum and daily routines, the teacher demonstrates a strong commitment to developing children's ability to accept responsibility and become very independent learners. For example, when entering school in the mornings they self-register and plan an activity to do with either their parents or another adult before school-time officially starts. Consequently, the children have developed an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs and feelings of others and have learnt to establish relationships very well. Most children listen well to adults, and value each other's contributions. They share equipment very well. For instance, when engaged in role-play they wait patiently for a turn to sweep the leaves in the bears' lair or to throw and catch a ball. Their behaviour is very good, and they show respect for those about them. The sharing time at the end of sessions reinforces socially acceptable behaviour and they listen carefully to what each other has to say about the work they have achieved. The team of adults in the reception class and the Year 1/2 teacher work well together and they have established firm routines for both indoor and outdoor work. This provides a good structure within which the children begin to learn about the world, to co-operate and play well together. As a result, the children's level of independence is high. For example, when work is finished both boys and girls tidy away before going on to the next task. There are no significant differences in the responses of boys and girls due to the good support provided by the staff. The adults show a very caring and sensitive approach to the children and maintain very good relationships with their parents.

Language and literacy

50. A major part of the work with these children focuses on the development of their spoken English and listening skills, and the teaching is excellent. A significant majority of the pupils start in the reception class with good levels of spoken language. Discussions with the staff, individually and at group times, are stimulating, and further enrich the children's spoken language. Good use is

made of spontaneous song at the beginning or end of the sessions to extend the children's vocabulary, and their listening skills. Most children speak clearly and confidently to each other and to adults. The teacher's skilful and sensitive questioning of the children during various activities, or after listening to a story is fostering and encouraging them to respond in extended sentences rather than one or two brief answers. For example, they are very keen and interested to know about the adventures the class bear has when he visits one of their homes at the weekend. As a result, most children are speaking clearly and asking questions of each other and adults.

51. The literacy sessions and a good variety of play experiences are setting most children on course to achieve the early learning goals and in some instances exceed them. The introductions to new activities are clear and precise: learning points are highlighted very well, enabling all children to share in the teacher's explanation and extend their knowledge. During the short time the children have been in school, the adults have stimulated their interest and love of books and stories. Stories are a source of pleasure, and children have a growing understanding of the written word. A significant minority has already begun to read some words or sentences, and most can recall a story fairly competently. They know the author of a book, and understand that a story has a beginning, middle and end. They can identify the main characters, sequence the events and confidently recall them in the correct order. They are very keen to offer their opinions about the illustrations in the books.
52. On entry to school, the children have writing skills that are in line with pupils of similar ages, but over the past few weeks they have made very good progress. The teacher has paid good attention to handwriting and the formation of letters. The children's early attempts at writing are good and most understand that various marks, words and letters convey meaning. This is because they are given good access to writing materials during their play activities. For example, two children were seen in the writing area making marks on paper to represent an acceptance for a birthday invitation. A significant majority of the children can write their names and can copy or follow the contour of the teacher's writing fairly accurately. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to write simple words using correctly formed upper and lower case letters, and starting to make attempts at writing unfamiliar words. The teacher and the learning support staff encourage the children to share their work with each other at the end of the sessions. They provide very good role models for the development of language and literacy skills, and the work is very carefully prepared to meet the needs of all children.

Mathematics

53. Most children's achievements are in line with the levels expected of pupils of this age. They are making good progress in their mathematical learning because the good quality teaching that they receive ensures that the practical activities are well organised and resourced appropriately. The lessons are well paced and involve all the children in counting numbers up to five and beyond. They have become familiar with number rhymes and games and show good recognition of numerals 1 to 5. Good use is made of mathematical language, such as 'more' and 'less'. The children understand this concept because the staff reinforce the mathematical language through relevant practical experiences and encourage them to record their findings in their own way.
54. Many mathematical activities are linked to other areas of learning. For instance, in role-play the children are beginning to understand and make rotating patterns as a result of the effective questioning by the staff. Other activities, such as sand and water-play, building with wood blocks, and outdoor play, also enhance the children's mathematical learning because of the well-balanced breadth of materials provided. Most children know the names and meanings of shapes such as circle, triangle, square and rectangle and can apply these terms to different items around the classroom. They confidently point to a wide variety of things and name the shapes, for example, of some musical instruments. Most children tackle mathematical tasks confidently,

competently and with sustained concentration.

Knowledge and understanding

55. Most children's achievements in this area of learning are above the levels expected of pupils of similar ages. The activities to develop their scientific understanding are good. This is because the staff use skilful and challenging questioning skills to assess and extend the children's appreciation of scientific terminology and foster effective use of the vocabulary in an appropriate context. For example, the children are developing an awareness of growth both in human, animal and plant form. They can explain the different parts of a bulb and know that the roots grow down into the soil. The teacher had prepared and organised efficient ways of ensuring they understood why and how to plant the bulbs and this helped to keep their attention well focussed on the tasks and their enthusiasm for learning high. All children showed the ability to follow directions. They also talked very confidently about how they have grown in their own short life span. As a result, the children are developing their observation skills and a good awareness of the school environment.
56. The children's information and communication technology skills are very good. They have regular access to the computers. They work together and help each other to follow the computer instructions and carry out the tasks well. They understand, for example, the function of the keyboard and the 'mouse', and know how to use them to access a programme and print their own work.

Physical development

57. The children's physical skills are being appropriately developed and their achievements are above those expected of pupils of similar ages for this early point of the academic year. The children are making good progress in their control of both large and fine movements. They are using a good range of apparatus and other equipment with increasing skill. They have good spatial awareness when moving around the hall and have been taught well about safety issues and the importance of listening for instruction. For example, they stop immediately when told to do so. The finer physical movements, such as the handling of tools, the management of construction equipment and holding a pencil correctly, have been taught well and show the children's increasing co-ordination. They use malleable materials, such as clay and dough, safely and with increasing control.
58. The provision for the outdoor play activities is satisfactory. A well-planned programme gives the children frequent and regular opportunities to be creative and imaginative. They engage in a wide range of activities, such as an exploration of sound in the local environment, riding bicycles, driving trucks, sand and water-play, building with bricks, playing with balls, hoops and skipping ropes. They also experience a variety of art work and create musical sounds as on-going developments. The teacher uses the available space and resources well to increase the children's levels of enquiry, exploration, and discovery. Most children enjoy setting themselves challenges and show pleasure in their achievements, for example, when climbing on the outdoor apparatus, balancing on bars or throwing and catching a ball. They show a high level of concentration and decision-making during their physical activities. Where there was good interaction and sustained involvement of the adults in the play activities it helped to support and extend the learning.

Creative development

59. The children's creative development is satisfactory and often good. This is particularly evident where the role-play activities are well structured and the development of skills and techniques in art and design technology are effectively taught. The children make good progress because the staff uses all the available space imaginatively to allow them to experience a wide range of

activities that present good opportunities to explore, investigate and discover.

60. The provision of good quality learning experiences is suitably developing the early skills that are necessary to extend the children's ability to express their thoughts, ideas and emotions. Most children like to draw and their free painting, finger painting and colour mixing are beginning to develop their skills and a good eye for detail. They use tools and materials confidently and safely. For instance, a significant number of children are becoming increasingly competent with scissors when cutting different thickness of card, paper and cellophane. They are able also to use malleable materials, such as dough. They can use small and large construction equipment purposefully, and they talk confidently about what they have built. In music, more opportunities would enhance the children's exploration of sound and help them to master the technical aspects of playing an instrument. However, the children enjoy singing and were frequently seen using song as a very good means of communication. Informal opportunities are available for children to listen to music on a tape, but a greater emphasis on sustained listening would enhance their musical appreciation.
61. The school has an excellent commitment to providing an appropriate curriculum for young children with a strong and appropriate emphasis on using structured play to their support learning. It is currently reviewing its planning to record and truly reflect the good practical experiences already being provided more consistently. All the children's work is valued highly and is discussed and assessed very well to ensure that it leads to the next stages of learning. Now that the baseline assessments are complete, a clearer picture of individual needs is emerging. Targets are now set and parents are aware of the ways in which they can support their children's learning at home. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils with special educational needs within the cohort. Procedures are in place should the need arise, and such children would be quickly identified and given support to meet their targets. Parents, grandparents and visitors are welcomed and are given good opportunities to become involved with school.

ENGLISH

62. The analysis of the results of the national tests for each year is unreliable because each cohort contains so few pupils. Nevertheless, all the available evidence indicates that standards in English are higher than at the previous inspection. Although the results remained consistently above the national average between 1996 and 1999 the outcomes of the more recent tests are likely to record a further marked improvement, and considerably so in the case of writing. This picture reflects that seen during the inspection.
63. When the pupils enter the school, their literacy skills are average. Well planned writing and reading experiences enable them to make good progress, so that by the end of Year 2 their attainment in reading and writing is above average. This good progress continues until the pupils leave the school in Year 4. Their progress in spelling is satisfactory overall, but it is not as rapid as it could be. This is because they make insufficient independent use of word banks either while they write or when they proof-read their work. The pupils enjoy speaking and because they have a lively curiosity, for example in history, they ask questions in order to extend their learning. Many younger and older pupils make spontaneous observations about the work that they are doing. This was noticeable when a class of younger pupils was discussing a visit to the local church. The classroom displays incorporate captions that support the development of the pupils' vocabulary.
64. Progress in reading is good as a result of the thorough grounding in phonics that the children receive. This enables them to link sounds with the letters they read and gives them confidence to attempt to read new words. The classrooms are well organised for reading. There are attractive, comfortable corners where the children are encouraged to browse. The pupils make good progress as they share reading in small groups during the literacy hour. They also benefit

from whole class reading of the focused texts selected as a basis for work in literacy. This particularly benefits the pupils with special educational needs and others who lack confidence. The pupils confidently use books and CD-ROM to support work in a range of subjects. For example, a group of pupils in Year 2 efficiently found selected sections of a book on materials and were able to make notes of facts they had not previously known. However, the teachers still need to find more time for independent reading and to stimulate the interest of higher attainers to read more demanding texts.

65. The pupils writing skills are still improving. A few pupils are on course to achieve higher than average levels. At all stages the pupils are being guided to raise their writing above the level of mere acceptability to one that is more vivid and exciting. This was evident in the writing of the pupils in Key Stage 1 as they described an old attic and wrote their responses to Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" painting. However, in some subjects, such as history and science, less use of worksheets and the copying of text would provide greater opportunities for the pupils to develop their factual writing skills. This would have a beneficial effect on their ability to sequence their own ideas and thoughts more logically. Standards are improving because periods have been set aside so that pupils have more time to plan, draft and re-draft their writing in a sustained manner.
66. Standards of handwriting and general presentation are good. Joined writing is encouraged from an early stage where pupils are given constant guidance and ample opportunities to develop the shapes of their letters. Some pupils have manipulative difficulties, but nevertheless manage to acquire a neat joined hand as a result of skilful and patient teaching.
67. There is a consistent approach to the way that the teaching of literacy is planned. This is why in all the lessons seen, the teaching was of good quality. The teachers have an agreed approach to teaching reading and writing and a shared commitment to ensuring that the pupils' literacy skills are fostered across the curriculum. It could be enhanced even further through encouraging the pupils to make some written recording when they use the computers. The teachers themselves provide good role models to develop the pupils' expression when reading. This was vividly illustrated when a teacher read the story "Peace at Last" and the pupils echoed her exasperated tone when Mr Bear's sleep was repeatedly disrupted by minor domestic disturbances. The writing is improving partly because there is more time for the pupils to plan their work and clarify their ideas before they write. However, a better balance needs to be struck between allowing the pupils to write freely and developing their ability to check their spelling independently. Their language work reflects the fact that they have been taught phonic rules, though they do not always apply them to check the spelling of less familiar words. The teachers' marking is of good quality and helps the pupils to improve their work. The independent education plans provide clear guidance about the literacy needs of some pupils. They are followed conscientiously so that the work of these pupils improves. They are developing the confidence to express themselves in writing, often communicating their ideas clearly, but spelling is a difficult challenge for them.
68. The members of staff communicate well so that additional support for literacy is well focused. The pupils take pride in their work, show a willingness to read and write and an enjoyment of talking. Occasionally, their listening skills suffer from their eagerness to express their own opinions as opposed to listening to and responding to those of others. The classroom resources are good and are usefully supplemented by books in the library area. The subject is well-managed by the co-ordinator. Her commitment to raising standards is fully supported by all staff.

MATHEMATICS

69. Although the very small cohorts within each year group makes the statistical analysis of the results of individual years unreliable, the pupils' results in the national tests between 1996 to 1999

show that standards at the school are consistently above the national average. The results in the Year 2000 were also above the national average, but were not as high as in the previous year. This picture is consistent with the work seen during the inspection. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils have maintained their rate of improvement and a significant majority of pupils have left the school with attainment above that expected of them.

70. The inspection evidence indicates that these levels of attainment are being maintained. The current achievements of a significant majority of the pupils' are above the expected levels for seven-year-olds and eight and nine year olds. There is little difference in the attainment between boys and girls. Most of the increased performance is in numeracy, but other aspects of mathematics, such as mathematical investigations, are improving. The rise in attainment in numeracy is the direct result of the very successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The lessons have a quiet rigour to them because the teachers plan thoroughly, have very clear targets that meet the needs of pupils of all abilities and use resources well to support pupils' learning. All the teachers have very good subject knowledge, and the skilful way in which they use mathematical vocabulary challenges the pupils to a greater depth of thought, particularly in the mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of each lesson.
71. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their class teachers and learning support assistants, both in class and when withdrawn in small groups. Consequently, they are able to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts because again the work is very well planned to meet their individual targets.
72. The pupils build steadily on the good start they make in the reception class. In their mental calculations in Year 1, they understand the relationship between numbers up to nine, and can say which are more than, less than or equal to nine. They count in two's both forwards and backwards at a sharp pace and sequence numbers accurately to twenty on a board. Most pupils have understood the different ways in which you can make a story about a number, for example, the number nine. In this activity, they recorded confidently using practical apparatus and all could explain clearly how they had done it. Most pupils wrote the numbers accurately and with confidence. However, a small minority of pupils still have some difficulty in writing the correct formation of the number, particularly number 3. In Year 2, they make good progress and most pupils at this point in the academic year are already working at the expected level with a high proportion working at the higher levels. They have a good understanding of number work, and tackle new concepts with verve. This is because they are well challenged, and the focused teaching, ensures that individuals have begun to understand well new concepts, such as, 'bridging' ten. The pupils persevere and enjoy the challenges presented to them. A particular feature is the quiet rigour that the teacher has when working with both individuals and the whole class. She uses the correct vocabulary, which the pupils then adopt with great delight when talking about what they are doing. The pupils have very positive attitudes and are keen, enthusiastic and well motivated to learn.
73. This enjoyment of learning is carried on in Years 3 and 4 because the teacher has very good knowledge of each individual child's mathematical ability. The work is thoroughly planned and paced at an appropriate level so that the pupils are highly motivated and want to progress. The lesson begins with challenging mental arithmetic sessions. Care is taken to ensure that sufficient support is given to the pupils whose knowledge and skills are less secure. All pupils' responses are valued. The pupils are confident when counting on in tens, fifties and hundreds. Most have a secure understanding of the place value of numbers to one hundred, and a small minority has an understanding up to a thousand. Previous work shows that most pupils understand the rules of addition and subtraction, and can recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes. Through science activities, for example, they have begun to acquire an understanding of the importance of bar charts and simple tables. The pupils listen to their teacher and to each other and participate willingly in all activities.

74. The quality of the teaching in mathematics has improved since the last inspection. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. Her commitment to raising standards is fully supported by all staff, including the learning support assistants. The staff's good subject knowledge enables the pupils to achieve high standards in their understanding of mathematics. The planning is good and there is better progression in the pupils' learning. This is because the work is now monitored, and targets for development are appropriately set. Although some mathematical programmes are used on the computers, there is scope for further extension of these activities. The supply of other resources for mathematics is good. They are used well and have a positive affect on the pupils' levels of attainment.

SCIENCE

75. Between 1996 and 2000, the results achieved by pupils in the teacher assessments indicate that standards are consistently above the national average by the age of 7 and continue at this level into Years 3 and 4. The inspection findings and the analysis of the pupils' work indicate that standards this year continue in this vein. The inspection evidence also shows that there are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls.
76. From the two lessons seen during the inspection and from a scrutiny of the pupils' previous work, it is clear that they have an appropriate experience of science investigations. Their attainment in most areas of science is above the national average. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, for instance, the pupils had practical experiences when investigating and classifying materials as either waterproof or absorbent. The Year 2 pupils were confident in recording their findings on a simple chart. Their previous work centred on natural and man made materials and their texture and quality. All pupils can sort materials into various groups according to simple properties and the higher attaining pupils can distinguish between man-made and natural materials. The pupils in Year 2 can recognize and label correctly the main parts of the human body and a plant, and have investigated the best conditions for plant growth. The pupils are beginning appropriately to use information computer technology to research and retrieve information to support learning.
77. The pupils show positive attitudes to science from reception to Year 4. Most are interested in the subject and keen to learn. They enjoy practical activities and participate appropriately. Most co-operate well with each other and handle the equipment carefully and safely.
78. The teaching seen in science was good. The teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subject was used particularly well when questioning the older pupils. It encouraged them to explain and expand their replies and opinions on what constitutes a 'fair' test, and state the importance of planning of an experiment. This aspect of their science work is developing well. The teacher's on-going assessment of the learning during the lesson is good; it helps the pupils to stay focused on their tasks and motivates them to work hard. Consequently, as they move through the school they make good progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding, for example, of human and animal life cycles, the habitats of 'minibeasts', and physical forces and processes in areas such as electricity and light. Good mathematical elements are included when the pupils are working on forces, for instance in measuring how far a ping-pong ball will travel when propelled by a single puff of air through a tube, a straw or a squeeze bottle. The pupils record their findings in simple tables either individually, together in groups or as a whole-class activity. However, the use of worksheets restricts the opportunities they have for devising their own ways of recording their ideas and findings. Their literacy and numeracy skills are applied well across the subject.
79. The subject is well led. The teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection and there is better progression and challenge in the pupils' learning. This is because the work is more

closely monitored and targets for development are set out for individuals and groups of pupils. The children's work has been collated and entered into their own individual portfolios. When complete and the process is operating across all year groups, it will help to further support the teaching and learning in the subject. Computer programmes are used for some work in science, but there is scope for further application to support scientific knowledge and research. The other resources for science are good. They are used well and have a positive effect on the pupils' levels of attainment.

ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY AND MUSIC

80. The satisfactory standards in these subjects have been maintained since the previous inspection and are identified on the school's current development plan for further improvements in line with Curriculum 2000 and the national guidance documents.
81. In design and technology the youngest pupils have learnt about winding mechanisms. They have explored levers, sliders and split pins that make movement and used their knowledge to make, for example, their own clocks and doll's prams. This process ensures that the pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Older children's designs are labelled with the resources they will need for the making of the items such as, purses, which demonstrates an increasing ability to produce individual work. In Year 1, the pupils make good progress and achieve a satisfactory level of cutting, pasting and sticking skills that they apply successfully when following instructions. This is because the adults focus well on the improvement of these skills. Similar good teaching and support were given to a group of children who were using the computer to make decisions about the design of a stained glass window and the matching of its colours. In Year 2, the pupils confidently complete simple design sheets that include an outline of the materials needed, a sketch of the proposed artefact and some indication of the means of construction. In Years 3 and 4, additional attention is properly given to the designing process so that the pupils are given suitable opportunities to sketch their plans and label the parts. The pupils utilise a range of finishes and evaluate the end results. When painting, the younger pupils learn to select and mix a range of colours and to paint accurately, but do not yet apply these skills freely and with verve. However, they are beginning to acquire good observational skills and some of their drawings of the local church show individual characteristics well. Little three-dimensional evidence, such as artefacts from previous design and technology lessons or pictures reflecting the pupils' experience of the work of famous artists, was available during the inspection. However, photographic evidence shows satisfactory work from the previous year. Art and design is well used to support topic work, for example, to produce pictures of the Greeks and in work in geography and science. Older pupils have good opportunities to attend a drawing club after school each week which is organised by a local artist. Because an appropriate emphasis is being placed on skills, pupils in some cases are beginning to develop in their pencil drawings a sense of different tones.
82. The pupils' attitudes to work in the lesson seen were always good. They concentrate hard and achieve well. They behave well, co-operate effectively in sharing equipment and materials, willingly help to clear away and evaluate their work honestly. For example, this was particularly good where a group of pupils used building blocks to make the outline of a church, and the tower. They discussed, negotiated which blocks to use and placed other blocks within their structure to indicate the important features you find in churches.
83. The teachers are well organised and ensure that the appropriate resources are available for the pupils to use. Relationships are good and pupils are given positive feedback. The teachers' subject knowledge is mostly secure. Art and design has not been a recent priority area for further improvement due to the implementation of other national strategies. The school is reviewing provision for art and design in light of Curriculum 2000 in line with national requirements. The teachers assess the pupils' achievements informally, but as yet the

information gained is not used sufficiently in the planning of subsequent work. **This is an area for further development.**

84. It was not possible to observe any direct teaching of music during the inspection. When singing in assemblies, a significant number of the children can quickly pick up the words of a song and the general contour of the melody. They keep the rhythm of the music fairly accurately, but at times their sense of pitch falters. The children obviously enjoy singing. However, there were missed opportunities for pupils to learn something about a piece of music, who wrote it and the instruments being played. Moreover, they had no opportunity to reflect upon the mood or character of the pieces being played at the beginning of assemblies.
85. Music lessons are scheduled to take place regularly, but the school now needs to further improve the coherence of its planning to ensure that the pupils' musical skills and knowledge build steadily as they gain in age and experience. Music has a high priority on the school development plan for this year. The teachers' have begun to use the national guidance document for music supported by other published schemes in order to produce a scheme of work. However, they have yet to establish how they will modify and develop the various components in order to meet the needs of pupils within the mixed age classes containing a wide range of ability. **This is an area for further improvement.**
86. The school provides good opportunities for individual violin tuition, and there is an ocarina club.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

87. Since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be line with what is expected nationally, some review of the curricula has taken place. There are now discrete units of work planned as a two-year rolling programme to cater for the needs of mixed age classes in both key stages. Although the pupils still reach the expected levels, there is some evidence that a greater variety of teaching methods, supported by the effective use of resources, is beginning to raise standards further, particularly in history.
88. Within the two-year programme, the pupils in Key Stage 1 develop an understanding of how places and people change over time. They use their own locality well, not only to develop their mapping skills and a recognition of what gives their village its identity, but also to recognise how buildings and the use of land have changed over time. The pupils are satisfactorily recognising that there are differences between one locality and another, for instance, between their inland village and another by the seaside. They also know that the seaside has changed from the way it was for Victorian children.
89. Scrutiny of the pupils' work in history and a lesson seen in Key Stage 2 reveal that the oldest pupils have a keen interest both in their own local history and that of the ancient past in Europe. They have had first hand experience of the work of archaeologists and have a good understanding of how evidence of the past is uncovered. In their current study of aspects of ancient Greece, the pupils excitedly pointed out the significance of the designs on several Greek pots. Nevertheless, some of the concepts within this unit of work were difficult for the pupils to grasp as they had no previous knowledge or understanding upon which to draw. They are developing an awareness of man's impact on the environment and the features that contribute to a good environment. They have linked this aspect of their geographical work to the development and care of their own immediate school surroundings.
90. The teaching approaches are often lively and motivate the children to learn. This is because the teachers devise interesting activities for them and use a variety of effective resources such as video programmes, pictures and artefacts. They make good use of displays to provide the pupils with interesting books, pictures, maps and artefacts linked to the various topics. The teachers are also aware of the value of using lessons in history and geography to develop the pupils'

writing and their information retrieval skills. They recognise that less use of worksheets would enable the pupils to become more independent and creative in the recording the information gained. Local people have proved to be a good source of information about how life in the village used to be, about their experiences of World War II and the reasons behind the Remembrance Day commemoration. Each individual lesson is thoroughly planned with very clear learning objectives that are communicated to the pupils. History and geography have a high priority on the school development for this year and the co-ordinator is currently reviewing the areas to be covered over both key stages. However, the teaching and learning could be still more effective if a further review of the programmes of work produced a clear map of how the skills being taught in one unit of work could be developed in the next. Over time, this would enable the pupils to develop a sophisticated array of historical and geographical skills. Some of the topics would also benefit from further review in the light of recent national guidance. **This is an area for further improvement.**

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. At the previous inspection, standards were judged to be in line with those expected nationally. Since that time, the headteacher has taken responsibility for the co-ordination of information and communication technology and standards are rising. The pupils in Key Stage 2 are making rapid progress. There is a well-planned programme of the skills that are to be taught. However, the school recognises that the next stage of development is to ensure that there are regular opportunities for the pupils to exercise their skills more fully in order to support their work in other subjects of the curriculum and in line with the requirements of Curriculum 2000.
92. At present, the pupils in Key Stage 1 can control the mouse to change what appears on the screen. They are able to create short pieces of text which they edit on screen can present simple information in the form of graphs. They use phonic programs to improve their spelling and paint programs to support their work in art and design and religious education. They very much enjoy opportunities to use a programmable device that they control to move in different directions. There is currently some use of information and communication technology to support work in mathematics, but there is further scope for the use of computers in both science and mathematics.
93. In Key Stage 2, a CD-ROM program provided a useful source of information to support work in history. The pupils are making good progress in recognising that information and communication technology has a wide range of uses. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to control the screen to quickly access relevant sub-topics within a broader subject. For example, one pupil had set himself the task of finding information about Greek Gods. He rapidly accessed the menu within a general program on ancient Greece and retrieved the desired section. The pupils do not habitually take notes from what they see on the screen. This practice would have a beneficial effect on their learning.
94. The adults provide very good support for the pupils. The computers were regularly in use throughout most of the school day so that the pupils were able to return to practise newly acquired skills. This was the case when the older pupils learned to cut and copy text. By the end of the day, even those who had made a slow start confidently achieved the prescribed learning goal. The teachers' careful, well-timed interventions not only allow the pupils space to experiment, but also ensure that they experience success. This is an area of the curriculum that is becoming a strength of the school. It is very well led and managed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

95. As at the previous inspection, standards in this subject are above average. This is because of

the school's strong commitment to this aspect of its provision and also the result of specialist teaching, for example, of gymnastics. The pupils benefit from a broad programme that includes all areas of the statutory curriculum.

96. The pupils understand the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise. They also adhere strictly to the code of dress that is emphasised as a safety factor in physical education lessons. Although the hall is small and has to be used for a variety of purposes, it is well equipped which enables the pupils to enjoy a wide range of activities. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make good use of the available space, ensuring that they spread out to devise and develop a range of imaginative body shapes and movements. They develop a good awareness of contrasting shapes, such as curling and stretching, that contribute to effective exercise.
97. The pupils in Key Stage 2 respond well to the rigorous demands and challenges presented to them. They are developing good body control both in floor and apparatus work. They effectively recall the importance of neat finishes instilled into them during Key Stage 1. They listen carefully to the teachers' evaluation of their performance and, because they are eager to improve, they strive to please by heeding the constructive comments made about their performance. They also showed pleasure when other children were selected to demonstrate their performance.
98. The pace of the teaching is brisk. The pupils recognise that the programme is rigorous and in turn they concentrate well on improving their work and developing their skills. The groupings for physical education are sometimes different from those within which the pupils normally work. This, together with the opportunity to meet children from other schools, makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development. All pupils participate fully in the lessons. There is also a range of seasonal extracurricular opportunities in which both boys and girls participate. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity. No pupil leaves the school without reaching the required standards in swimming. The subject is very well led and managed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. The pupils attain standards that are above those indicated in the locally agreed syllabus. This shows some improvement has been made since the previous inspection. It is the result of the teachers' developing their knowledge and understanding of the topics and also to the interesting teaching approaches that they use.
100. Over the two year rolling programme, the pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a good knowledge of stories from the Old and New Testaments. They also learn to make links between celebrations in different faiths, for example between Christmas and Diwali. They are beginning to recognise that special meals such as the Eucharist have significance in many religions. A pupil in Year 1 was confidently able to explain the significance of the wafer and the wine in the Christian tradition. They have recently developed an understanding of the significance of the church building, and can name and describe many of its features such as the altar, font and pulpit.
101. By the end of Year 4, the pupils acquire a greater breadth of knowledge about Jesus' ministry, and know that the significant points of the church calendar are linked to his life and death. They also recognise and respect features of other world faiths, such as Judaism and Islam. They know that religion has an impact on the life of believers and that each major faith has its special places of worship, holy book and practices.
102. The teaching was observed only in Key Stage 1, but other evidence was drawn from a variety of

sources such as teachers' planning and pupils' past work. The lesson seen was of very good quality and provided a very effective follow up to the class visit to the local church. Discussions are well conducted and are responsive to the pupils' desire to demonstrate their knowledge and express their opinions. A range of recording activities was well matched to the needs of the mixed age class and showed how secure was the pupils' learning. A further session, where the pupils used 'Colour Magic' on the computer to design stained glass windows while others modelled the interior of the local church using construction blocks, provided a very good opportunity for the pupils to talk about what they had experienced.

103. Good resources such as books, artefacts, photographs and video programmes enliven the teaching and learning. The curriculum for religious education is well led and managed. The co-ordinator now recognises the need to introduce an effective assessment system in line with the requirements of the local syllabus.