

INSPECTION REPORT

BRAMPTON ABBOTTS C of E SCHOOL

Ross-on-Wye

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116867

Headteacher: Ms L S Chilton

Reporting inspector: Mr T Richardson
16500

Dates of inspection: 20 – 24 November 2000

Inspection number: 225006

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brampton Road Ross-on-Wye Herefordshire
Postcode:	HR9 7DE
Telephone number:	01989 562256
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Stevenson
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr T Richardson 16500	Registered inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; art and design; music; special educational needs	How high are standards; how well are pupils taught; how well is the school led and managed
Mrs S Drake 9843	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; how well does the school care for its pupils; how well does the school work in partnership with parents
Mr P Buckley 28014	Team inspector	English; design and technology; geography; history; physical education; children in the foundation stage of education; equality of opportunity;	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils.

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The Registrar
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The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brampton Abbots is a Voluntary Aided, Church of England primary school for boys and girls aged five to eleven years. It is below the average size for primary schools, with 111 pupils (61 boys and 50 girls) on roll. Almost all pupils are of white European origin and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs and there are a further 24 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. The majority of pupils are from family backgrounds with below average socio-economic circumstances. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average and consistently in the lowest ten per cent of Herefordshire schools. Children's attainments in speaking and listening on entry are particularly low. The number of families claiming free school meals is not an appropriate indicator for comparing the school's performance. The local education authority no longer provides hot meals, parents do not like the packed lunch that is offered instead, and many do not claim their entitlement to a free meal. Evidence suggests that the school should be compared (as it was four years ago) with similar schools that have between 20 and 35 per cent of pupils claiming free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school no longer has serious weaknesses. It has made good improvement over a short space of time as a result of very good leadership and management. The very good improvement in teaching enables pupils to achieve very highly in Key Stage 1 and is already raising standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Brampton Abbots is now a good school that gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are improving the school and managing change very well. Staff function as a team and the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.
- Enables teachers very effectively to improve the quality of their work so that good teaching is now provided in all classes.
- Makes very good provision for children in the foundation stage of their education.
- Enables pupils in Key Stage 1 to make rapid progress so that, by the time they are age seven, they attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are above the national average.
- Successfully raises standards in English, mathematics and science, in both key stages so that, pupils achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry.
- Makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. As a result, there are very good relationships throughout the school.
- Provides a very supportive and secure environment that encourages pupils to grow in maturity and self-confidence. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to their work.
- Promotes increasingly effective links with parents that encourage them to support the work of the school.

What could be improved

- Give further emphasis to raising pupils' standards in speaking and listening.
- Enable pupils to have sufficient access to computers to improve their skills.
- Further develop the provision for science and the foundation subjects to match the improvements in English and mathematics.
- Provide a wider range of outdoor play equipment for early years and older children.
- Provide better information in reports to parents that show the progress and achievements pupils have made, and what they should learn next.
- Implement formal policies for sex education and child protection, and improve the procedures for lunchtime supervision.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998. Since then, it has made good improvement and no longer has serious weaknesses. There has been very good improvement in the quality of leadership and management; the quality of teaching; and in the provision for pupils in the foundation stage of their education. Good improvement has taken place in the standards attained by pupils in English,

mathematics and science and in the way teachers assess attainment in English and mathematics. The school has made satisfactory improvement in developing the curriculum, providing schemes of work for all subjects and improving the role of subject coordinators. The school has set very good priorities for improvement and continues to implement effective change at an appropriate rate.

STANDARDS

This table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds, and eleven year olds, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments.

Performance in:	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2				Key	
	compared with		compared with					
	all schools	similar schools	all schools			similar schools		
	2000	2000	1998	1999	2000	2000		
English	A	A*	D	D	E	E	well above average	A
mathematics	A*	A*	E	D	E*	E*	average	B
science	A*	A*	E	D	B	A	below average	C
							well below average	D
								E

Standards are steadily improving year on year and the school routinely meets its targets for improvement. Pupils' attainments in science are now above the national average. However, the year 2000 results in English and mathematics are very low, with the mathematics results being in the bottom five per cent of the country. These results are not typical for the school as each pupil in that cohort made satisfactory progress over time in English and mathematics. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved dramatically as a direct result of the very good teaching of children in the foundation years of their education, and the good teaching throughout the school. In English, pupils attained results well above the national average. In mathematics and science, pupils attained results that are placed within the top five per cent of the country. When compared with similar schools, Brampton Abbots' seven year olds are in the top five per cent in English, mathematics and science. This 'tide' of improvement is moving through Key Stage 2 and being sustained by those pupils currently in Key Stage 1. Base-line assessment tests show that the attainment of Brampton Abbots' children on entry to the school is in the lowest 10 per cent of the county. By the end of Key Stage 1, almost all pupils have reached at least the national average in English, mathematics and science. This is good achievement that represents good progress throughout Key Stage 1. In most subjects, the majority of the current Year 6 pupils are in-line with the expectations for their age and this too represents good achievement for these pupils with good 'added value' over their time in school. A substantial majority of children enter school with delayed language development and find difficulty in acquiring new vocabulary and expressing themselves with reasoned argument. This prevents them from attaining higher levels in their National Curriculum assessments. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are rising, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Standards in reading for the current Year 2 are in-line with the national expectation. In Year 6, pupils are achieving well, although their reading standards are marginally below what would usually be expected. Standards in writing in Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations. In Year 6, standards in writing are slightly below national expectations. In mathematics, two thirds of the current Year 2 are already working at the national standard for seven year olds, and others should come close to this by 2001. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are expected to attain mathematics Level 4 in 2001. In science, the majority of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are working at the level expected for their age, and are achieving well when compared with their attainment on entry to the school. In both key stages, standards in art,

design and technology, geography and history, music and physical education are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. Standards in information and communication technology are lower than expected. There are not enough computers for pupils to practise their skills to the level required. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well for their level of difficulty.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to their work and are enthusiastic about school
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour, with respect shown for people and property
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships. Older and younger pupils mix well together
Attendance	Not as good as other schools, due to parents taking holidays in term time.

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.

Teaching was judged to be good or very good in 73 per cent of all observations. Very good teaching was observed in 22 per cent of lessons. Overall, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of all lessons seen. The unsatisfactory teaching in one lesson was due to the ineffective control of pupils in physical education by a part time teacher. The teaching of children in the foundation years is consistently very good and gives the children a high quality start to their education that is very effective in raising standards. A large proportion of the teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is also very good and helps to prepare pupils effectively for secondary education. There is good teaching of English and mathematics. Basic skills, such as phonics, spelling and strategies for reading new words are taught well. Teachers have a good knowledge of both subjects and provide pupils with challenge and fun in learning. Literacy and numeracy are also addressed effectively in other subjects. Science is taught satisfactorily and pupils are prepared well for their National Curriculum assessments. There is good teaching in history. The standards achieved by pupils in geography, art, design and technology, music and physical education suggest that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Computer skills are taught satisfactorily, but not all teachers are demonstrating sufficiently to pupils the value of information and communication technology in their own work. Teachers have high expectations and use a good range of teaching methods that help pupils with their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are included well in class and teachers pay particular regard to the targets for these pupils as detailed in their individual education plans. The work of learning support assistants is of good quality; they are deployed well, and contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Teachers also make good use of parents, volunteers and governors who offer their time to help in class. Pupils are acquiring good levels of new knowledge and skills, especially in the priority areas of literacy and numeracy. They apply good physical, intellectual and creative effort to their learning, are interested in their work and concentrate in class, often for long periods of time. Discussion with pupils shows they have full knowledge of their own targets and know how well they are doing towards meeting them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Meets requirements. Broad, balanced and improved since last inspection. Literacy and numeracy strategies implemented well
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils identified well and effective support provided. Good involvement of pupils and parents in individual education plans
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision made for spiritual development. Good moral development, pupils know right from wrong. Social development is good and helps pupils learn to get on with each other. Good cultural development, including multi-cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good provision in a very supportive and secure environment that encourages pupils to grow in maturity and self-confidence

The school has increasingly effective links with parents and they, in turn, support the work of the school. Reports to parents do not give enough information about what pupils have learnt, and what they should do to improve. Good curriculum planning and assessment procedures are effective in English and mathematics and should be extended to other subjects. There are no formal policies for sex education and child protection, and more staff supervision is needed on occasions during lunchtime.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Successfully providing a clear vision for improvement and is steadily raising the quality of teaching and improving pupils' standards of attainment.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Becoming increasingly professional in the support they give to the school, with very good strategic financial planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good use of assessment data and monitoring of standards, with effective action taken to meet targets for improvement
The strategic use of resources	Good. Principles of best value applied well with good investment in people and financial backing to well chosen priorities for development

Good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum. Sufficient learning resources provided for most subjects. Adequate accommodation, with suitable plans for a new classroom. More outdoor play equipment would be helpful, particularly for the younger children.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is a happy atmosphere, all individuals are valued, and children like school the school is improving, expectations are higher and children are helped to make good progress through the quality of the teaching they receive all teachers are approachable, enthusiastic and give their time to pupils and parents the school is well led and has effective links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a wider range of activities outside lessons a new classroom for class 5 more computers and more time for children to learn how to use them standards in music

with parents	
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Inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by parents. The inspectors judge that the school provides a good range of clubs and activities outside lessons and that pupils' standards in music may not be as high as some years ago, but nevertheless meet the expectations for their age. The school already has appropriate plans to provide a new classroom and inspectors agree that more computers are needed, so that, pupils can practise and improve their skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's standards, as measured by the results of National Curriculum Assessments at the end of Key Stage 2, are steadily improving year on year. Pupils' attainments in 1999 in English, mathematics and science were just below the national average. The year 2000 Key Stage 2 results show that this trend has continued in science and in this subject, the pupils' attainments are now above the national average. However, the year 2000 results in English and mathematics are very low and well below average, with the mathematics results being in the bottom five per cent of the country. Detailed analysis shows that these results are not typical for the school. There were 14 pupils in Year 6, and three of these had significant special educational needs. When the attainment of each of these pupils over time is analysed, the majority achieved results of two National Curriculum levels above their attainment when they were at the end of Key Stage 1. This demonstrates that, despite the level of the results, the pupils in Year 6 in 1999 – 2000 made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. The science assessments were administered with the use of a 'reader' so that pupils with special educational needs could be tested on their scientific understanding rather than their reading skills. The success of this strategy is seen in the scores of the pupils. When the year 2000 end of Key Stage 2 results are compared with those from similar schools (with between 20 and 35 per cent of pupils claiming free school meals), the English and mathematics percentages are still poor. However, the results in science are well above the average for this band of schools.
2. Standards in Key Stage 1, as measured by the year 2000 National Curriculum assessments, and teacher assessments, have improved dramatically. This is a direct result of the very good provision and teaching made for children in the foundation years of their education, and the improvements in teaching throughout the school. In English, pupils attained results well above the national average. In mathematics and science, pupils attained results that are placed within the top five per cent of the country. When these results are compared with those from similar schools, Brampton Abbotts' seven year olds are in the top five per cent in English, mathematics and science. This 'tide' of improvement is moving through Key Stage 2 and being sustained by those pupils currently in Key Stage 1.
3. This trend of rising standards is even more impressive when the achievements of pupils are considered. Most children enter the school from homes with low socio-economic backgrounds. A significant minority has had little or no pre-school educational experience. Herefordshire's base-line assessment tests show that, each year, the attainment of Brampton Abbotts' children on entry to the school is in the lowest 10 per cent of the county. However, by the end of Key Stage 1, almost all pupils have reached at least the national average in English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement and demonstrates the good progress made in Key Stage 1. In most subjects, the majority of the current Year 6 pupils are in-line with the expectations for their age and this too represents good achievement for these pupils with good 'added value' over their time in school. The children and pupils' backgrounds do make a difference, however, to the number of pupils who attain the higher Level 3, at age seven, and the higher Level 5, at age eleven. The school has lower numbers of children who attain these higher levels. A significant factor in this is the language development of the pupils. Children's speaking and listening skills are routinely the lowest scoring section on their base-line assessment. A substantial majority of children enter school with delayed language development and, although they learn to use vocabulary and grammar sufficient to function in the classroom, they find increasing difficulty in acquiring new vocabulary and expressing themselves with reasoned argument. These skills are necessary for pupils to attain higher levels in their National Curriculum assessments.
4. Inspection confirms that the quality of teaching in school has improved and that standards are rising, particularly in literacy and numeracy, as a result. In the foundation stage, most children are making very good progress and are in-line to meet the early learning goals as expected when they

enter Year 1. In English, the speaking and listening skills of the current Year 2 and Year 6 are below national expectations (which is an improvement on their attainment on entry). Standards in reading for the current Year 2 are in-line with the national expectation. In Year 6, while pupils are achieving well, their reading standards are currently marginally below what would usually be expected at this stage in the school year. Pupils show very good attitudes to their reading and most pupils read accurately for their age. In Year 3, pupils have a good range of strategies for reading new words; phonic building, partitioning and reading ahead for context clues. All are aware of punctuation and try to read with expression. As pupils progress through Key Stage 2 they learn to read for information and research, using the index and contents pages with increasing skill. Standards in writing for pupils in Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations. Many younger pupils show good letter formation and reasonably accurate spelling. They can identify capital letters and punctuation marks and are beginning to understand when to use them. In the current Year 6, standards in writing are slightly below national expectations. Pupils' writing is interesting and carefully presented when it is redrafted, but first hand work shows weaknesses in spelling and sentence construction.

5. In mathematics, almost all the pupils in Year 2 count to 20 in twos, to 50 in fives, and to 100 in tens. The work in their books shows that two thirds of the class are already working at the national standard for seven year olds, and that others should come close to this by 2001. Pupils in Year 6 recognise and understand place value to two decimal places and are beginning to calculate to this level using the four operations and metric measures for length and weight. They practise their mental calculation skills and set one another word problems to solve. The majority of these pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in 2001. In science, the majority of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are working at the level expected for their age, and are achieving well when compared with their attainment on entry to the school. Pupils in Year 2 draw graphs of their favourite foods, know which are healthy, and are aware that balance is needed in their diet. They know the correct names for external body parts and label their diagrams accurately. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, they prepare experiments to find, for example, the conditions needed for plant growth. They take a flower apart carefully to identify correctly parts such as anther and stigma, know the function of the stem and have a basic understanding of pollination. This represents a significant improvement in standards in science since the last inspection. This is due to the improved quality of teaching, as there is still work to be done on improving the science curriculum.
6. In both key stages, standards in art, design and technology, geography and history, music and physical education are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. The school has done well to maintain this level of achievement while giving priority to raising standards in literacy and numeracy. However, standards in information and communication technology are lower than expected. There are not enough computers for pupils to use for more than ten minutes per week each. As a result, although pupils learn a sufficient range of skills, they do not have enough time and opportunity to practise these skills to the level required.
7. The school is aware of national trends and analyses assessment data effectively to determine the impact of, for example, gender and month of birth on attainment results. Any differences that arise are examined closely and effective targets set to rectify any anomalies. The learning needs of pupils with special educational needs are diagnosed carefully and work is set that is well matched to their needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress and achieve well for their level of difficulty.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' positive outlook on life, good behaviour and very good relationships help to make the school a happy place in which to learn and work. These good attitudes extend throughout the school and enhance the quality of pupils' education. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the youngest children were not so positive, due to weaknesses in the school's provision for them.
9. Pupils arrive at school in the morning with smiles on their faces, settle well at the beginning of lessons and generally approach their learning in a positive manner. They listen well to their

teachers, are keen to volunteer suggestions when, for example, pooling ideas for a class poem, and move from one activity to another with a minimum of fuss, thereby wasting very little time. Many pupils participate in the extra-curricular clubs, and willingly contribute to, for instance, preparations for the Christmas bazaar. They show real interest in learning and sometimes become quite fired up with enthusiasm. This was shown when a Year 4 pupil created, at home, a splendid model of a Victorian house, complete with working chimney sweep, inspired by a history lesson earlier in the week.

10. Pupils of all ages behave well both in and out of lessons. The school has had no need to exclude any pupil in recent years. Pupils can be trusted to act sensibly when, for example, allowed to stay in the classroom during break-times, and they treat the accommodation and property with respect. Occasionally, where teaching is weak or when pupils are out on the playground, some take advantage of the situation and are uncooperative with the teacher or take their boisterous playing too far, but this is unusual. The norm is that pupils are polite, pleasant and act in a sensible manner. They move around the building quietly, wait for their turn patiently and behave very well in assemblies, paying good attention throughout, joining enthusiastically in any singing and acting with due reverence during the prayer.
11. Very good quality relationships are at the heart of this warm and welcoming community, and continue to be one of its strengths. Pupils of different ages work together very well during activities such as the paired reading programme, and then carry this collaboration through to the rest of the school day. In the playground, older pupils readily explain to younger ones the intricacies of a complicated skipping game and patiently allow for their mistakes. In lessons, pupils work well together when, for example, pairing up in physical education to demonstrate the power of counter balance, or discussing their joint composition when using the computer. In assemblies and the classroom, pupils show genuine appreciation of others' skills and success, volunteering others, for instance, when asked by a visiting speaker for people who are good at drawing, and spontaneously applauding those chosen to receive awards. They are friendly and helpful towards each other and adults, thinking of others as well as themselves. They see what needs to be done in order to contribute to the community and this leads them to, for example, tidy away chairs unasked, offer to wash up empty cups, and organise events to raise funds for charity, or to augment the supplies of playground equipment. Pupils from this school emerge as well-rounded, pleasant young people.
12. Levels of attendance during the most recent academic year, during which two pupils had particularly poor attendance, were below the national average and unsatisfactory. The amount of unauthorised absence from school was much higher than that in most primary schools. During the current year the majority of pupils attend regularly and punctually, but the overall levels are still unsatisfactory due to the large number of pupils who are taken on holiday during term time. This has an adverse effect on both their own and other pupils' learning since teachers have to spend time repeating work already covered.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. This is due to the careful selection of new teachers and the support and development provided by the headteacher through monitoring the teaching in each class. In addition, the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has focused on how English and mathematics should be taught. The result is that the quality of teaching is now good throughout the school. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was judged to be good or very good in 73 per cent of all observations. Very good teaching was observed in 22 per cent of lessons. Overall, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of all lessons seen. There was only one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, due to the ineffective control of pupils during physical education by a part time teacher.
14. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation years of their education is consistently very good. The teacher has very good knowledge of the needs of the children, has high expectations,

and leads her lessons in a lively and exciting manner that motivates children to work hard and keep concentrating for long periods of time. She keeps challenging the children to extend their knowledge and vocabulary and seizes every opportunity possible to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills. This very good start to the children's education is very effective in raising standards and is the major contributory factor to the dramatic improvement in pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 1. A large proportion of the teaching of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is also very good and helps to prepare pupils for secondary education through promoting independent learning skills, such as using dictionaries, thesauruses, and pupils setting work out for themselves.

15. Throughout the school, there is good teaching of English and mathematics. Lessons are well planned and learning objectives are clearly shared with pupils. In English, teachers have good subject knowledge and question pupils effectively to make them think and give reasons for their answers. Basic skills, such as phonics, spelling and strategies for reading new words are taught well. Teachers also pay good attention to reinforcing pupils' literacy skills in other lessons; for example, teaching how to spell new words in history and pairing readers in science so that every pupil is able to understand what is written in the textbook. In mathematics, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and provide pupils with challenge and fun in learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, one pupil remarked, 'she always makes it difficult for us' and then clearly enjoyed answering questions with increasing accuracy to improve on last week's results. Good use is made of day-to-day assessment and in several lessons, teachers deviated appropriately from their plans to take pupils into new knowledge and to sharpen the pace of their learning. Numeracy is also addressed effectively in other subjects; for example, in music in Key Stage 1 where pupils sing number songs and remember musical sequences.
16. Science is taught satisfactorily. Teachers' good questioning technique was particularly evident in a Year 3 lesson where a high level of class debate helped the pupils to decide whether the tests they had devised were fair or not and this led them to be more accurate in their observations. Questions were also used well in a lesson for Year 6, in order to find what pupils already knew about the structure of flowers and this helped the teacher to know which new words to focus on for the pupils to learn. There is also good teaching in history. Although insufficient lessons were seen in geography, art, design and technology, music and physical education to be able to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching, the standards achieved by pupils in each of these subjects suggest that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Computer skills are taught satisfactorily, but not all teachers are demonstrating sufficiently to pupils the value of information and communication technology in their own work, through using computers for routine tasks, enhancing presentation and providing information.
17. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks for their pupils. For example; in a Year 4 mathematics lesson where pupils learnt to double two digit numbers, the teacher expected pupils to apply the same strategies to halving similar numbers. This led to rapid learning as the pupils rose successfully to the challenge. Good lesson planning is evident in English and mathematics and this is supported well by teachers using the guidance provided in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Not all other subjects have such complete guidance as yet and this results in satisfactory standards of lesson planning overall. The school is pursuing a rolling programme of improvement in all subjects that is aiming to provide this guidance, in the form of schemes of work, to help teachers plan more effectively.
18. There is a good range of teaching methods used that helps pupils with their learning. Most lessons contain a good mixture of visual and auditory presentation. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where practical demonstration led the pupils to 'see' the two times table (by counting feet on the number of children) and the chanting of the table helped them to memorise the number facts they had just discovered. Good use is also made of resources, such as wipe clean number 'slates' for pupils to work out and display their answers to oral questions. There is good management of pupils and this leads to lessons being orderly and enables all pupils to take part and benefit from the learning. Pupils with special educational needs are included well in class and teachers pay particular regard to the targets for these pupils as detailed in their individual education plans. Learning support assistants are of good quality and contribute effectively to pupils' learning; for example, through leading a group of pupils with additional literacy support work, helping pupils to

read questions and set out their work on the computer and playing piano accompaniment in music. Teachers deploy assistants well, so that pupils receive the maximum benefit. They also make good use of parents, volunteers and governors who offer their time to help in class.

19. Time is used well and lessons are paced effectively, with frequent reminders, so that pupils know what has to be done in the time remaining. This is effective and results in most pupils bringing more effort into their work to finish their tasks within the time set. Teachers also make sure that their introductions and plenary sessions are not too long and this helps pupils to maintain their concentration and give of their best. Pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are assessed and recorded well and this provides teachers with really useful information to use in planning future lessons. This knowledge of how well the pupils are doing also helps teachers to make sure that future work is challenging and builds on what pupils already know. The school has appropriate plans to help teachers extend these good assessment practices into their work in other subjects. In all classes, teachers use homework effectively. This ranges from sending reading books home to share with parents, to Year 6 pupils being set extension tasks from the work they have done in class, to be completed by a set date. Pupils take their homework seriously, and often volunteer to do more than expected at home, and these good learning habits prepare them well for secondary education.
20. The consistent quality of teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. They are developing good learning habits and routinely working hard and trying their best. As a result, pupils acquire good levels of new knowledge and skills, especially in the priority areas of literacy and numeracy, and this is now becoming evident in the improving results of National Curriculum assessments over time. The very good teaching for children in the foundation stage leads to very good learning and the outcome is seen in pupils' rapid progress from below average attainment on entry to meeting the early learning goals by the age of five. Elsewhere in the school, pupils apply good physical, intellectual and creative effort to their learning and maintain good levels of productivity through working at a good pace. Pupils are interested in their work and concentrate in class, often for long periods of time. Discussion with pupils shows they have full knowledge of their own targets and know how well they are doing towards meeting them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning due to the quality of support they receive and the different work provided for different ability groups in class.

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

21. The overall quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory. The curriculum is broadly based and well balanced in the range of subjects taught at both key stages and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school has appropriately developed its curricular planning for most subjects by incorporating and adapting national guidance into schemes of work. Although this task is not yet complete, the school deserves credit for continuing to develop the curriculum, while at the same time raising standards in numeracy and literacy. The curriculum for each subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has also sustained its extra curricular provision and pupils benefit from the opportunity to attend a good range of after-school clubs.
22. The curriculum successfully promotes the physical, personal and intellectual development of the pupils. Provision for personal and social education is satisfactory. It is taught mainly through science and religious education. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught through science but there is no agreed policy for this in place. Religious education and collective acts of worship also make a significant contribution to the quality of the curriculum. Pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. The school for example, pays for all pupils to go swimming and also for guitar tuition for the older pupils who request it. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Their needs are identified well and teachers make sure these pupils are included fully in all activities and given work that is suitably adapted to their ability.

23. The curriculum promotes intellectual development by providing increasing opportunities, as pupils get older, for personal study. Good provision through the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, which are well established, impacts positively on standards in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of the questionnaires returned by parents before the inspection shows that a significant proportion (22 per cent) feels the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors judge, however, that the school provides a good range of extra curricular activities, both sporting and non-sporting, and a wide range of clubs. These are available to pupils throughout the school, and enhance the curriculum. Also, Year 6 pupils attend an annual residential centre that focuses on the development of outdoor adventurous activities.
24. The contribution of the community to pupils` learning is sound. Members of the PTFA contribute to the curriculum by running clubs and events for pupils. The school has strong links with the churches in the parish and this is an important feature in the life of the school. Pupils also benefit from a variety of visits into the locality and through visitors coming to the school. There are good relationships between the school and partner institutions with a number of benefits provided through the local `cluster` of schools, for example, through sharing expertise for staff training. Links with the pre-school playgroups are good and contribute to the smooth transfer of children who attend them into school. The school liaises well with the local secondary school and Year 6 pupils are prepared well for transfer to their new school. There is effective hand-over of records and information and this is particularly thorough for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers in the two schools also work together on curricular liaison.

Pupils` spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

25. The school makes good provision for pupils` spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a church school there is a firm commitment to this provision and it is a strength that the school has sustained and developed since the last inspection.
26. Opportunities for pupils` spiritual development are good. Collective acts of worship allow for reflection and strong links with the churches in the parish contribute to pupils` spiritual awareness through celebrating the main Christian festivals. The digital arts project `One Voice Many Places` where Year 6 pupils consider an heirloom, not as an object but as a thought linked to the five senses, is one of a number of activities designed effectively to develop pupils` awe and wonder.
27. The provision for pupils` moral education is good. All teachers have high expectations of pupils and their behaviour. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. The new behaviour management policy is understood well by both pupils and parents and is having a positive effect. Pupils` work is valued through assemblies and plenary work at the end of lessons. They are encouraged to respect property and the school environment, which is tidy and litter free as a result. Through developing very good relationships, adults encourage pupils to be consistently courteous and considerate.
28. The school makes good provision for pupils` social development. The staff are very good role models. They set a very good example to the pupils in their relationships with each other and with the pupils. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to work together and discuss their activities. The reading activity each day during the inspection was a good example of this as friendships are forming through the daily contact of pupils in pairs. This was also seen to extend outside the classroom where older pupils, for example, show a genuine interest in how the younger pupils are doing. Further opportunities are provided in the good range of extra curricular activities. Pupils have responsibilities within their own classrooms, and as they grow older, around the school. Pupils` close involvement in raising money for charities contributes to their understanding of citizenship.
29. Provision for cultural development is good. The school has strong links with the community and uses it well as a learning resource. The use of the Ross Heritage centre and a range of well-planned visits, often linked to studies in history, geography and religious education, encourage pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions. The school actively encourages its pupils to understand and value other faiths and cultures through, for example its links with a school in Uganda and visits to the mosque in Gloucester to help gain awareness of life in multi-cultural Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. One of the features of the school that parents particularly appreciate is the good ethos of care in which everyone looks after each other. Inspectors agree that this is the case and that the school provides good support for pupils as individuals, thus helping them to grow in maturity and self-confidence. One of the key issues noted at the time of the previous inspection was the need to improve the procedures through which teachers assess pupils' academic progress. The school now has good procedures in place, particularly for English and mathematics, but these do not yet extend to all areas of the curriculum.
31. The school has good strategies to ensure the health and safety of all those who use the premises, and conducts regular risk assessments in order to highlight any hazards. However, the fact that attendance registers remain in the classrooms all day means that, in the event of fire or other emergency, staff might not be fully certain about who is in school that day. First aid arrangements are good, with trained staff, ready access to access first aid equipment such as ice packs, and good recording of any accidents. At break-times, the supervision of pupils' play is satisfactory, but at lunch times there are not always enough members of staff to oversee all the pupils in the playground sufficiently well. Staff are swift to notice if pupils' behaviour alters, and are alert to possible child abuse implications, keeping records of concerns in an appropriately confidential manner. However, the school does not have its own policy or guidelines for staff to follow, and this means that the arrangements relating to child protection are not satisfactory.
32. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour and act in a consistent and positive manner in order to ensure good discipline, with the result that pupils behave well for the great majority of the time that they are in school. Incidents of poor behaviour are documented, staff talk with pupils to help them improve things, and work in partnership with parents, if necessary, in order to bring about change, all of which encourages pupils to appreciate the benefits of behaving well. Pupils and parents agree that the school acts swiftly and effectively should there be any hint of bullying. Teachers register pupils' attendance each day and staff contact pupils' homes if there has been no indication as to why a pupil is absent, but inspectors noted an anomaly in recording attendance which meant it was unclear exactly when one pupil had been removed from the school roll.
33. In recent years, the school has developed good procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress, but currently these are only used in English and mathematics, with other subjects lagging behind. Staff analyse the information they now glean from recording pupils' attainment on entry to the school and compare this with the results of a variety of formal tests as they move through the school. They draw up individual targets for pupils to aim at in these subjects, and all pupils know what the targets are and how successfully they achieved the previous ones. This is particularly evident for pupils with special educational needs. Each of these pupils has an individual education plan with clearly defined targets to show what the pupil needs to do to improve. Pupils' reading records are good. Class teachers build up examples of pupils' work in evidence files, which accompany the individual through the school and show their progress. However, as yet these are not sufficiently graded according to National Curriculum levels, and teachers do not use the information they contain on a regular basis when planning future work. The procedures for assessing the pupils with special educational needs are good and local education authority staff confirm the accuracy of the school's diagnosis of individual difficulty. Written targets in these pupils' individual education plans, include a commitment from the pupil, the school and parents about what they will do in order to help improve the pupils' work, and these are in daily use in the classroom.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. Parents view the school in a very positive light and welcome the visible improvements made over recent years. The school actively and effectively involves them in their children's learning, and has developed a genuine partnership with them, built on mutual respect and good relationships. Parents particularly like the fact that their children make good progress and realise that this is because they are well taught and expected to work hard. They consider that staff are very approachable, with special praise for the helpful manner in which the secretary deals with any queries, and are confident that any concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively.
35. The school provides good quality information for parents about its routines and expectations, and provides good opportunities for formal and informal discussion of pupils' progress. The new prospectus and the governors' annual report are both well-produced, lively documents that encourage parents to find out more about the school. Parents also receive good notice of important dates and events throughout the year, with ready access to back information should it get lost on the way home. The school has responded to criticism in the previous inspection report regarding communications with parents and now produces, for instance, helpful guidance about mathematics targets for different year groups and how parents can help their children with this subject. It has also taken action to improve pupils' written progress reports. However, these still do not include sufficient information about what pupils know in each subject, how much progress they have made during the year, and what areas they particularly need to concentrate on in the future, in order to improve their work.
36. The great majority of parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. Parents attend in large numbers the meetings to discuss pupils' progress, and those parents whose children have special educational needs are well involved in supporting their learning from the first stage of diagnosis. Some parents help regularly in the classroom and most support activities such as the reading target month, when particular emphasis is laid on the importance of hearing their children read at home. The Parent Teacher and Friends Association is a very active group whose members organise many social and fund-raising events throughout the year. These events are well supported and raise considerable amounts that are used to augment the school's resources recently, for instance, enhancing the playground with picnic benches and markings for games, and providing a new television. Overall, the strong partnership developed between school and parents has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. Since the last inspection, pupils' standards of achievement have risen and the quality of teaching has improved. This is a direct result of the very good leadership and management provided by the headteacher. To move the school out of serious weaknesses, she set a plan of improving teaching, keeping class sizes small, strategically deploying new staff and focusing on improving the provision for English and mathematics. This plan has been steadily and securely implemented. The quality of work of each teacher is monitored very well and evaluated regularly. These evaluations recognise what is done well in addition to setting realistic targets for improvement. Class sizes are kept to between 20 and 25 pupils and this enables teachers to give more attention to each pupil. Full use has been made of the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy to take advantage of the in-service training, advice and support provided by the local education authority. Much work has gone into building a sense of community within the school and also in supporting the governing body to become more knowledgeable and aware of their responsibilities. The success of these initiatives is seen in the clear direction the school is following to continued improvement with a vision that is shared by staff and governors.
38. The successful drive for school improvement is helped by the very good qualities of the deputy headteacher. She brings considerable enthusiasm and energy into her work and supports the headteacher and staff very well. Her teaching skills are deployed to very good effect in Class 1 so that, as they enter the school, children have a very good foundation to their school life. This is a

major factor in the significant increase in pupils' achievements in Key Stage 1. There is good delegation of roles and responsibilities. The coordinators for English and mathematics give a good contribution to school development through their effective management of change in their subjects. Thorough curriculum planning, with consistent assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, has helped other teachers improve their work, and this is further developed by the support provided by coordinators in monitoring the quality of teaching of literacy and numeracy in all classes. Rightly, the school currently plans to extend this model of improvement to other subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs benefits from good coordination. The register for pupils with special educational needs is maintained well and all statutory requirements for reviewing statements and individual education plans are met in full. Responsibility for meeting special needs is appropriately passed to each class teacher, but the coordinator lacks additional time to support pupils directly and keep up to date with necessary administration.

39. The aims and values of the school stress the value of all individuals in the school community and these are reflected well in all its work. This is most clearly seen in the Friday assembly where pupils receive awards for good work, behaviour and effort and this generates an atmosphere of pride in belonging to a community that recognises the worth of everyone. In addition, there is evident teamwork between staff. Learning support assistants, caretaking staff, meal-time assistants and parents are proud of their school and know they are valued members of the school community. Everyone can see the recent improvements in the school and shares a commitment to working together for further development. As a result, the school has a good capacity for continued and sustained improvement.
40. The headteacher, staff and governors make good use of the data from the assessment of pupils' attainments in mathematics and English. Thorough analysis is carried out and this leads to accurate and realistic targets for improvement being set that are based on what each pupil should be expected to achieve. Most of these targets are routinely met and this enables the school to be able to demonstrate effectively its success. Governors provide sound support for school development, are increasingly involved in the work of the school and receive clear information from the headteacher that helps them to know what the school does well and how it is working to improve. The governing body is appropriately constituted with effective delegation of tasks to sub-committees. The minutes of full governing body meetings show improvement since the last inspection and now have a more professional content with a relevant focus on standards, teaching, the curriculum and current developments such as performance management. Most of their statutory requirements are fulfilled effectively. However, formal policies and clear procedures for sex education and child protection have not yet been adopted, and are long overdue. Also, there are some minor omissions in the school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents that have been notified to the school.
41. The school development plan is a good quality, working document. Priorities for inclusion are well chosen and this process is shared effectively with teachers and governors. Final decisions on which priorities to follow are made by senior managers with regard to the long-term strategy for school improvement. These priorities are linked to the school's budget with very good financial planning. For example, the priority to keep class sizes small has required substantial investment in salaries for additional staff. This has been very carefully planned and implemented at the same time as ensuring that teachers have sufficient resources for their lessons and that training and support can be provided for improving quality. Governors show a good awareness of the principles of best value through this work as they are aware that the outcomes, of rising standards and improved quality of teaching, more than compensate for the investment required. Best value is also evident in the school's procedures for tendering and purchasing for premises and curriculum costs. There is sound financial control and specific grants, such as the government provided 'standards fund', are used effectively for their designated purposes. The school secretary is of high quality and works very well in all the many aspects of her job. New technology is satisfactorily used to aid office and administration procedures, although teachers could still use computers more for routine tasks. However, with the school's increased financial responsibilities, the secretary now needs support to be able to set aside 'uninterrupted' time each week to concentrate on administering the school's accounts.

42. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The current very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching are effective in highlighting the personal and professional development needs of staff and these are being appropriately met with suitable training and support. As a result, the school is well placed to introduce performance management to make formal the effective systems already in place. The school's accommodation is adequate, and there are appropriate plans in hand to rectify the cramped conditions for pupils currently in Class 5 by building a new classroom. The buildings are well maintained and kept commendably clean by the caretaker. However, pupils indicated that they would like more outdoor play equipment. Inspectors agree with this, particularly for children in the early years of their school life. Since the last inspection, resources for the curriculum have been purchased so that there are now sufficient for all subject areas. The exception is in information and communication technology where there are not enough computers for pupils to be able to practise their skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. To enable the continued improvement of the school, the governors, senior managers and staff should now:

- Raise standards in speaking and listening (paragraphs 3, 47, 53) through:
 - increasing the emphasis on this aspect of the English and literacy curricula in all classes;
 - providing pupils with a variety of opportunities to practise and extend their speaking skills;
 - assessing and recording pupils' progress to a similar standard as for reading; and
 - using this assessment to set realistic targets for improvement.
- Improve pupils' skills with computers (paragraphs 6, 16, 81-83) by:
 - raising teachers' skills so they use computers more effectively for routine tasks, planning their work, and enhancing the presentation of work sheets and displays; and
 - enabling pupils to have greatly increased opportunities to practise their skills.
- Continue to improve the standards and provision in science and the foundation subjects (paragraphs 30, 58, 64, 66, 71, 74, 85) by:
 - following the model for improvement already shown to be effective in English and mathematics;
 - continuing to enable subject coordinators to take a more active lead in developing their subject;
 - ensuring all subjects have schemes of work and guidance for teachers that help them effectively to plan their lessons;
 - ensuring the assessment of attainment and progress is consistent throughout the school and analysed effectively to show what is done well and what can be improved;
 - evaluating routinely the quality of provision in all subjects and acting to rectify any shortfalls.
- Fully implement formal policies for sex education and child protection (paragraphs 22, 31).

In addition to the above, governors, senior managers and staff should:

- seek to provide the school secretary with regular 'uninterrupted' time to manage the school's accounting procedures (paragraph 41);
- provide more outdoor play equipment for early years and older children (paragraphs 42, 51);
- improve the quality of pupils' progress reports to parents (paragraph 35); and
- make sure there are sufficient staff for lunchtime supervision (paragraph 31).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	22	51	24	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	111
Number of full-time pupils claiming free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
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
	2000	11	8	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	18	18	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (82)	95 (82)	100 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (82)	100 (91)	100 (77)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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
	2000	8	6	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	8	5	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (70)	36 (80)	93 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	8	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (65)	64 (65)	71 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	110
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	22.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	244584
Total expenditure	239322
Expenditure per pupil	2137
Balance brought forward from previous year	5705
Balance carried forward to next year	10967

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	111
Number of questionnaires returned	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	33	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	53	13	4	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	51	9	0	4
The teaching is good.	35	62	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	49	9	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	31	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	53	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	35	55	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	29	62	2	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	55	9	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	51	20	2	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

44. The school has a mixed age class of reception and Year 1 children in a spacious classroom leading to an outdoor area that adjoins the school playground. The area lends itself, along with the grassed area, to development. It has the potential to enhance the physical and creative areas of the curriculum. Pupils enter the school in two intakes during the year, in either the September or January before they are five. Last year there were two intakes, pupils starting in the term in which they became five. At the time of the inspection there were six reception age children in the class and ten Year 1 pupils. A well-planned programme introduces the new children and their parents to school and ensures that positive relationships are quickly forged with families. Links with the local playgroup from which some children come are well developed. However, some pupils have no pre school experience. The local authority baseline assessment indicates that children's attainment on entry to the school is below average and well below average in speaking and listening. Their attainment levels are also consistently in the bottom ten per cent for all Herefordshire schools.
45. Since the last inspection, very good improvement has been made in the provision and teaching for children under five and it is now very good overall and a strength of the school. This is due to the consistently very good quality of teaching in all areas of the curriculum that thoroughly addresses the needs of the children. The teacher has high expectations and leads her lessons in a lively manner that motivates children to work hard and keep concentrating for long periods of time. She keeps challenging the children to extend their knowledge and vocabulary and seizes every opportunity possible to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is securely based on national guidance for the foundation years and children are on course to reach the expected outcomes by the appropriate age in all areas of their learning. This represents a good level of achievement, with some pupils making rapid progress from their below average levels of attainment on entry to school.

Personal, social and emotional development

46. Children in the class are happy and settled. They have quickly learnt the rules and conventions associated with the classroom and school life. This area of development is very well taught and the teacher sets high expectations for what pupils should do for themselves. A great deal of time has been spent on organising the environment and good activities are provided that enable children to make choices and decisions and develop independence. For example, they self-register themselves and record their choice of activity when they have completed a given task. They play and work happily together and know the rules associated with taking turns, tidying up and listening to others. They undress and dress for physical education and fold their clothes without adult help.

Communication, language and literacy

47. The attainment of the children in communication, language and literacy is variable but significantly, in the previous two years, 70 to 85 percent of the children were below the local authority average in speaking and listening skills. This pattern of language delay is clearly seen in the current intake, where some children are only just beginning to talk in meaningful sentences. The teacher provides many purposeful activities that make a valuable contribution to this area. For example, children recount their news and learn to sing a large repertoire of rhymes that helps them to practise putting words in sequence as well as their pronunciation. They are starting to copy sentences and find letters in the sand. They put them on a magnetic board and identify the name of the letter to which they then match objects. They use a story sack to retell the week's `Big Book` story and follow stories in books through pictures predicting what will come next. Most four year olds can recognise their name and can make attempts at writing it. They enjoy books and delight in taking them home to read. Boys and girls handle the books carefully and understand that print is read from left to right. Most talk about the pictures, but their language is underdeveloped. They develop their imagination and language through role-play as for example the `Owl and the Pussy Cat` in their boat. They are beginning to recognise many clearly displayed captions and display notices in the

classroom. The teacher takes every opportunity to reinforce communication skills and reading and writing play a big part in all lessons. Her consistent approach and emphasis on learning new vocabulary is successful in leading most of the children to meet the early learning goals expected by the age of five.

Mathematical development

48. Very good and imaginative strategies are used to teach and consolidate numbers to ten, number bonds to five and the position of objects. For example, children go on a number hunt in the hall where they search for the correct numbered card on the floor in response to the number of beats they have heard. They add together two differently pitched beats and find the answer to consolidate their number bonds to five. They sit in a circle with `whiteboards` and draw, for example, the shape of the object a given position. Number songs and daily routines are used to reinforce counting activities and, as a result, the children learn quickly and make good progress so that they attain the early learning goals by the age of five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

49. Children are gaining good understanding of the world in which they live through their topic of living and not living things. They look at, for example, a large artificial sunflower and give reasons why it is not and has never been alive. They discuss what living things need to survive and walk round the school ground to establish things that are alive. Following a visit to the Plump Hill environmental centre they look at photographs and talk about their experiences. On many occasions, adults were patiently supporting four year olds and teaching them specific computer skills, such as how to control the mouse and print out their work. Boys and girls have good opportunities to use a variety of construction kits to make their own models. They design and use a variety of materials to make animal homes. Very good teaching enables the children to have a good balance of formal investigation and guided play. This helps them to `discover` new knowledge and make good progress on their prior attainments to meet the early learning goals by the age of five.

Creative development

50. The teacher organises the curriculum very well and provides the children with regular planned opportunities to use play dough, paint and create drawings. As a result, the current pupils are in-line to meet the early learning goals by the time they are five. The children respond well to activities, such as, making two dimensional winter robins using newspaper, tissue paper and card. They make a bird cake with real ingredients and enjoy the feeling of mixing different textures. Children are given good opportunities to play imaginatively in the role-play area not only in the classroom, but for example, in hall when they responded to a tape-recording about the nativity. In music, children respond to songs with actions and use instruments. They know a variety of rhymes and jingles and are beginning to develop a sense of time and rhythm through clapping and moving to music.

Physical development

51. This area of learning is very well taught, and children achieve well to meet the early learning goals by the time they are five. Four year olds have many opportunities to develop fine motor skills as they handle small tools such as pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, glue sticks and scissors. They frequently put together and take apart construction materials and work with jigsaws and other tabletop equipment. These activities are making a significant contribution to their physical development. Regular planned times in the hall provide a structured time for responding to music by dancing, skipping and hopping. They use small apparatus for throwing and catching. Children use the outdoor area for skipping and hopscotch, but there is insufficient outdoor equipment for balancing, climbing and for the development of large motor skills.

ENGLISH

52. The year 2000 national test results for seven year olds show a marked improvement on previous years with standards well above the national average. This is a direct result of the very good provision made for children in the foundation stage of their education, of improvements in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1, and of the good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The year 2000 results in national tests for eleven year olds are well below the national average. However, it was a small cohort and the percentage figures were significantly affected by the number of pupils with special educational needs in the group. Previous years have shown an improving trend in English results and last year's are not representative of the school. Despite the low level of attainment, detailed analysis of these results shows that the pupils involved made satisfactory progress on their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards in English seen during the inspection are in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and slightly below that at the end of Key Stage 2. In both key stages there are fewer higher attaining pupils than the national average. The trend of improvement in Key Stage 1 is continuing and the current Year 3 pupils, and those who follow, are expected to do well by the time they are eleven.
53. The standards in speaking and listening are well below the national expectation when pupils enter the school. Some teachers are aware of this and provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. For example, in Year 1, the teacher insisted that pupils used a different word for 'hungry' every time it appeared in a song and this led the pupils to use 'famished and starving' instead. In Year 6, the teacher recognised that the wording of mathematical problems was more difficult than the calculation and taught pupils effectively how to recognise the key words. Although opportunities such as these are taken to improve pupils' skills there is no formal scheme of work in place, or expectation for what each year group should be able to do, or means of assessing their attainment and progress, similar to that, for example, in reading. As a result, standards in speaking and listening are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is a contributory factor that limits the numbers of pupils who attain higher levels in their National Curriculum assessments. The National Literacy Strategy provides a platform for speaking skills in the introductory whole class shared work. Pupils join in well and make sensible contributions, but the level of language they use is functional and pupils tend not to develop their ideas, use more interesting vocabulary and speak in complex sentences. For example, in a Year 6 lesson few knew the word 'narrative' in telling a story. In another lesson, pupils were slow to give examples of an abstract noun even though they had discussed it earlier in the week. The way teachers use the National Literacy Strategy is widening pupils' vocabulary, particularly those of the youngest children; however, it has not had time fully to impact on the standards of the older ones.
54. By the age of seven, pupils attain the standards expected for their age in reading although few attain higher reading levels. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is slightly below national averages and similarly there are fewer higher attaining readers. Throughout the school, teachers use the literacy strategy effectively to teach phonics and encourage pupils to use dictionaries and thesauruses to extend their vocabulary. For example in a Year 2 lesson, pupils read a poem together with the teacher picking out the sound 'oa' in words. Year 4 pupils read a list of prohibitive rules after re-capping on previous work using imperative verbs to create a list of rules. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher modelled a poem, written by her, to reinforce the use of alliteration, similes and personification. Pupils worked well to understand these metaphors and make alternative suggestions, but in speaking and reading, their standards were slightly below those expected of pupils of a similar age. The inspection coincided with a reading month where the school set aside 10 minutes before lunch for paired reading across the school. This is a very good initiative that is enjoyed by the pupils and generates pleasure in reading, and in helping others to improve. Parents continued this initiative at home and also maintained a log of hearing their children read. Pupils show very good attitudes to reading and most pupils read accurately for their age. In Year 3, pupils have a good range of strategies for reading new words; phonic building, partitioning and reading ahead for context clues. All are aware of punctuation and trying to read with expression. In a year 4 group, pupils were asking questions of each other and making predictions. As pupils progress through Key Stage 2 they learn to read for information and research, using the index and contents pages with increasing skill.

55. Standards in writing for pupils in Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations, but there are no examples of pupils attaining higher levels. Many younger pupils show good letter formation and reasonably accurate spelling. They can identify capital letters and punctuation marks and are beginning to understand when to use them. Pupils write for a range of purposes. For example, Year 2 pupils write an imaginary get well card to a dragon. They write in simple sentences and are beginning to join their handwriting. Opportunities are also taken for pupils in Key Stage 1 to practise and develop their writing skills, for example in history by writing about the Great Fire of London.
56. Standards in writing for pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 are slightly below national expectations. Pupils' writing is interesting and carefully presented when it is redrafted, but their first work shows weaknesses in spelling and sentence construction. There is evidence of a good range of writing throughout the key stages. For example Year 4 and 5 pupils show a good range of story openings, with headline and text and interesting autumn poems. Year 6 pupils use their writing skills in very well presented work on aspects of life in Britain since the 1930`s.
57. The quality of teaching of English is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and question pupils effectively to make them think and give reasons for their answers. Basic skills, such as phonics, spelling and strategies for reading new words are taught well. Teachers also pay good attention to reinforcing pupils' literacy skills in other lessons; for example, teaching how to spell new words in history and pairing readers in science so that every pupil is able to understand what is written in the textbook. Lessons are well planned and begin with good introductions. The format of the lesson is clearly shared with pupils. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attainments and they manage their pupils well. Pupils respond with very positive attitudes to their work, good behaviour and equally good relationships with adults and each other. This creates a positive environment for pupils. Achievement in English is good and the majority of pupils make good progress to raise their attainment from below average on entry to the school to almost in line with national expectations by the age of eleven. Teachers monitor progress well and use their assessments to plan effectively for pupils of different prior attainment
58. There are good assessment procedures overall and teachers are consistent in knowing how much progress has been made and what it is reasonable to expect of each pupil, based on their prior attainment. There is good assessment of reading skills, which includes the use of national testing materials, and this information is used well to select the pupils who need additional help. Teachers collect samples of work for each pupil and mark it with attainment levels to track the individual progress made. The data from assessment is used well to set individual and class targets for improvement and these have a positive impact on pupils' performance. Marking often has positive comments written and sets further targets for improvement. The range and quality of books is sound. The strong emphasis on developing literacy skills has had a very positive impact on attainment in English. The coordinator has worked well to raise standards and improve the provision for the subject. She has made effective use of local education authority support to provide in-service training for teachers. In addition, the quality of teaching has been monitored well so that all staff now work to a consistently good standard. The result of this good coordination is seen clearly in the improvements now evident throughout the school.

MATHEMATICS

59. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection and are continuing to improve. The base line assessment undertaken by children as they enter the school shows that their mathematical skills and understanding are below average for their age. By the time pupils leave the school at age eleven, their attainment in the subject is broadly in-line with national averages. This represents a good level of achievement over time.
60. Caution is needed in the analysis of national test results as the number of pupils taking the tests each year is small and percentages can be significantly affected by, for example, the number of

pupils in a cohort who have special educational needs. However, for Key Stage 1, the year 2000 results are supported by the findings of the inspection. All the pupils attained Level 2, and 21 per cent of pupils went on to attain the higher Level 3, a result that is better than in most schools in the country. This dramatic improvement in standards is directly linked to the very good teaching in the early years class and the improvement in the teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 1 as a result of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The pupils currently in Year 2 are doing well and are on target to attain similar results in 2001. Also the pupils currently in the reception year are making rapid gains in their mathematical ability and are expected to meet the early learning goals in mathematics by the age of five. The school is doing very well and enabling these pupils to achieve more than is expected for their age. This 'tide' of improvement is being sustained through the school and, as a result, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are also set to rise over time.

61. The results of Year 2000 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 look, at first sight, to be very low, and in the bottom five per cent of the country. However, detailed analysis shows that a large proportion of the pupils had special educational needs. In addition, almost all the pupils made satisfactory progress over time and achieved as much as could be expected when their results are compared with their performance at the age of seven. Inspection shows that the current Year 6 are expected to attain results in 2001 that are broadly in-line with national expectations, and that the pupils currently in Years 5 and 4 are working at a standard appropriate for their age.
62. When the year 2000 National Curriculum Assessment results are compared against the results from similar schools, pupils in Key Stage 1 do much better than in other schools. Their results are in the top five per cent of schools with between 20 and 35 per cent of pupils having free school meals. The end of Key Stage 2 results put the school in the lowest five per cent of similar schools but, as detailed above, these results are not representative of the school. Over the last three years, the school's results have been steadily improving at much the same rate as the rest of the country, and inspection confirms this improving trend.
63. Pupils in Year 1 count to 10 and some go beyond this with help. They learn to understand and use mathematical terms quickly and, for example, sequence names correctly from first to tenth, using the correct word each time. Almost all the pupils in Year 2 count to 20 in twos. Half the class count back from 20 in the same way and almost all count to 50 in fives and to 100 in tens. They all record number bonds in the correct format and know these to 10. The work in their books shows that two thirds of the class are already working at the national standard for seven year olds, and that others should come close to this by 2001. In Year 3, pupils know that a half is two equal parts of one whole and a significant proportion of pupils extends their knowledge to work confidently with eighths and sixteenths. The pupils in Year 4 are working confidently with centimetres as standard measures and produce reasonable estimates for the length of classroom objects. They quickly calculate mentally correct answers to, for example, 693 minus 30 and describe how to partition tens and units to double them. Pupils in Year 6 recognise and understand place value to two decimal places and are beginning to calculate to this level using the four operations and metric measures for length and weight. They practise their mental calculation skills and set one another word problems to solve, for example, *"If a man has four dogs and buys two bones for each dog at 75 pence each, how much does he pay altogether?"*
64. The quality of teaching is good. Since the last inspection, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and teachers have benefited from:
 - the training they have received;
 - the support from the Local Education Authority's numeracy consultant;
 - the monitoring and evaluation of teaching provided by the headteacher and subject coordinator; and
 - the targets set for teachers to improve the quality of their work.
65. As a result, teachers have good knowledge of the subject and provide pupils with challenge and fun in learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, one pupil remarked, 'she always makes it difficult for us' and then clearly enjoyed answering questions with increasing accuracy to improve on last week's results. Teachers use a good range of methods that help pupils to understand the language

of mathematics. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, the teacher led the singing of number songs with pupils acting out buying and selling 'currant buns' between verses. Each time, different calculations were involved and the teacher made sure that ideas such as relative value, change, and total cost were included in the discussion. As a result, these pupils are over-coming some of their speaking and listening difficulties and are increasingly able to talk about numbers in appropriate ways. In a lesson for Year 6 pupils, word problems were introduced carefully with the teacher helping pupils to understand which words were important, before deciding how to solve the problem. As a result, pupils read their problems more carefully and selected the right operations to use with satisfaction at finding a previously daunting task made easier. Practical demonstration is used effectively. A good example of this was in a Year 2 lesson where pupils stood at the front to show that one pupil has two feet and that this can be written as $1 \times 2 = 2$. This quickly led the class to work out the remainder of the two times table and led one pupil to remark 'I've got it now'. Teachers use day-to-day assessment well and continually extend the knowledge of the pupils at a brisk pace. For example, in a lesson for Year 3, the teacher realised, through the answers pupils made to her good questions, that they were ready to extend their knowledge of fractions and she deviated from her plans to discuss thirds and fifths, with the result that pupils understood these as well as halves and quarters. In another lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher effectively taught pupils how to mentally double two digit numbers and assessed that they could extend this skill to halve similar numbers. This moved the pupils forward in their thinking and they quickly grasped how to do this and achieved successfully in one lesson what had originally been planned for two. Numeracy is also addressed effectively in other subjects; for example, in music in Key Stage 1 and in science in Key Stage 2 where pupils are encouraged to think how to calculate the relative strength of magnets.

66. The attainment of pupils is assessed well and good quality analysis of the data takes place so that teachers know how well pupils are doing, the progress they make, and can set realistic and challenging targets for what they should be expected to achieve. The very good improvements made in the subject since the last inspection have been very well led by the coordinator and supported very effectively by senior managers' determination to raise standards. The curriculum is clearly defined so that teachers know what to plan to include next in their lessons. The quality of teaching has been effectively improved through good monitoring and evaluation and the subject now has a secure base for further improvements in standards. This is an effective model for the development of other subjects.

SCIENCE

67. Standards in science have improved significantly since the last inspection as direct result of improvements in the quality of teaching. The results of teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show, that in 2000, every pupil attained Level 2 which is well above the national average. Pupils were very successful in the year 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, with 93 per cent attaining Level 4. This is above the national average. When these results are compared against similar schools, with between 20 and 35 per cent of pupils having free school meals, Brampton Abbots is well above their average. This demonstrates that pupils achieve very well over time in the subject. The majority of pupils enter the school with knowledge and understanding below the levels expected for their age. By the age of five, they have caught up and continue to develop their knowledge to have attainment above the national average by the age of eleven. This year's end of Key Stage 2 test results were boosted by pupils being prepared effectively for them and were also aided by pupils with special educational needs having a 'reader' for their questions. Inspection confirms that pupils' attainment on entry is below average and indicates that it is in-line with the expectations for their age at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, while most pupils are expected to attain Level 2, at the age of seven, and Level 4 at the age of eleven, fewer pupils are on target to attain the higher Levels 3 and 5 at these ages than in other schools. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 points to them having the required knowledge, but difficulty in expressing it to a sufficiently high level.
68. Pupils in Year 1 understand the difference between non-living and living and explore the similarities between, for example real and artificial flowers. They are aware that seeds grow into flowers and

trees and observe items closely to group them together by their similarities. Pupils in Year 2 draw graphs of their favourite foods, know which are healthy, and are aware that balance is needed in their diet. They know the correct names for external body parts and label their diagrams accurately. In Year 3, pupils demonstrate their knowledge of magnetism and devise a fair test for measuring the relative strengths of magnets by seeing how many paper clips each magnet can pull in a line. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, they have an appropriate level of knowledge and prepare experiments to find, for example the conditions needed for plant growth. They take a flower apart carefully to identify correctly parts such as anther and stigma and know the function of the stem and have a basic understanding of pollination.

69. Since the last inspection, the curriculum provided has been improved so that all attainment targets are now covered. Resources have been provided and there are now sufficient, for example, for a whole class to experiment in making simple electrical circuits. The major change is in the greatly improved quality of teaching. There is still improvement needed in the curriculum and assessment, but teachers are now more knowledgeable about the subject, and more skilled in helping their pupils to achieve.
70. The quality of teaching, in the lessons seen, is satisfactory, with very good teaching of pupils in Year 1 and reception. Teachers use good questions to stimulate discussion. This was particularly evident in a Year 3 lesson where a good level of class debate helped the pupils to decide whether the tests they had devised were fair or not and led pupils to be more accurate in their observations. In a lesson for Year 6, questions were used well to find what pupils already knew about the structure of flowers and this helped the teacher to know which new words to focus on for the pupils to learn. The pupils' work is marked well, with good comments written in their books that help them to clarify their understanding and know what they do well. Teachers also show appropriate awareness of pupils' learning needs, for example in Year 2, by setting different work for groups of differing ability, and in Year 6 by pairing together slower and fluent readers. In this way, pupils in Year 2 were all able to record their observations and those in Year 6 were all enabled to read the textbook with understanding. There are some occasions when the organisation of practical work leads to too much fidgeting and this slows the pace of learning.
71. The coordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has identified appropriately the next steps for improvement in the subject. Inspectors agree with her judgement and recommend that a more secure curriculum is provided for the school, that helps teachers plan their lessons with clearer objectives for the scientific knowledge to be gained. Also, that pupils' achievements are assessed consistently in all classes and recorded and analysed to the same high standard as in English and mathematics.

ART AND DESIGN

72. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are as expected at the end of each key stage. A majority of classes have their art lesson at the end of the week, and these took place after the end of the inspection. As a result it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching, and judgements on standards are based on scrutiny of the pupils' work on display in each class and around the school.
73. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have made effective collages on star shapes with pasta, seeds and gold spray. They produce pottery, leaf prints and autumn collages to an appropriate standard. In Year 2 the pupils mix paints as expected for their age. Most of them keep their brushes and palettes reasonably clean and achieve clear differences in tones of primary colours. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce portraits in the style of Picasso, using collage, sketch and colour to extend their ideas appropriately. They use their painting skills and produce interesting paintings of twilight with effective silhouettes against the sunset. In addition, there are attractive displays of good quality needlecraft, manufactured in the weekly craft club session run by one of the governors. Pupils enjoy their art sessions and discussion shows that they have developed an enthusiasm for the subject that they look forward to extending at their secondary school.

74. The coordinator has had relevant training and has drafted appropriate guidance for teachers to use in planning their lessons. She also monitors provision effectively to ensure that the activities provided in each class build on pupils' previous experience. Appropriate plans are made for developing the subject when it becomes the focus of the school development plan. However, the work of other artists is insufficiently displayed around the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

75. Although no lessons in design technology were seen during the inspection, evidence from discussion with the co-ordinator, displays and photographs of previous work, suggest standards are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection where statutory requirements for the subject were not being met.
76. From the outcomes of work seen, teaching is at least satisfactory. A photograph of reception and Year 1 pupils designing and making fireworks appeared in the local press during the week of the inspection. Year 1 and 2 pupils produce initial designs for moving toys using elastic bands. Year 3 pupils design and make a sandwich. They use a data base to find the most popular sandwich, try some from a shop, test different breads and spreads and discuss the appearances, smell, texture and taste. Year 6 pupils are involved in a project that approaches design in the abstract; a concept with ideas and thoughts rather than physical objects. They make a visual interpretation with simple shape and colour. Using large strips of paper they make strips of single frame animation, changing the position and shape in each frame. Using a combination of paint and conte crayon they invent their own colours and hand paint each frame. On their annual residential visit they design and make a shelter. Evidence from pupils' work clearly shows an emphasis on design for purpose and plans being modified. However no judgement can be made on pupils' use of tools.
77. Using national guidance and the work within the group of local schools, the co-ordinator has appropriate plans to develop a scheme of work which fully reflects the requirements of Curriculum 2000.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

78. The school has adopted a rolling programme of study, based on national guidance, for both history and geography, which promotes curriculum progression and continuity in the mixed age classes. Although no teaching of geography was seen during the inspection, evidence from teachers' planning suggests that the weaknesses in the curriculum identified in the previous inspection have been improved and statutory requirements are now met. At both key stages there is breadth and balance, reflecting national guidance, and the subjects are well supported by a range of appropriate visits.
79. Standards achieved in history are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age at the end of both key stages and have been maintained since the last inspection. Year 2 pupils, for example, can recount the main sequence of events during the Great Fire of London. They use specific language, such as, timber framed buildings, plaster and thatch. Pupils understand the causes for the fire spreading so rapidly, that modern buildings would not burn as quickly and the importance of a fire brigade. Year 3 pupils understand the differences between the lives of rich and poor children in Victorian times. In Year 6, pupils look at Britain since the 1930's, redrafting their work to produce good quality accounts of a range of events, such as, inventions, digging for victory, women at work and an interview titled 'An Evacuee's Thoughts'
80. The teaching of history is good in the lessons seen, and effective throughout the school. In Year 2, pupils are highly motivated by the Great Fire of London and answer readily although insufficient opportunity was given for them to develop their answers and thereby improve their speaking skills. Good teaching and interesting resources motivate pupils, as was seen in a Year 3 lesson where they played with a wide range of Victorian toys. Similarly, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils enjoyed identifying the difference between wedding photographs in the 1950's, 70's and 80's. Both subjects

are monitored effectively through analysis of teachers' planning. Evidence of the wide range of visits and visitors to the school contributes significantly to standards in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

81. Pupils' computer skills and knowledge of how to use computers for communication are below the levels expected in both key stages. There has been improvement since the last inspection in that each class now has access to a modern computer and the curriculum is planned so that it now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Also, some teachers have improved their own computer skills. However, pupils do not have enough time each week to use computers to sufficiently practise new skills to raise their standards to the expected levels.
82. Pupils in Year 1 have appropriate skills for their age. They enjoy using colourful software to help, for example, with their counting skills and quickly learn to use a mouse to click, drag and drop graphics in place. By watching their teacher, they also know which icons to use to start and finish games. Year 2 pupils slowly word process information about themselves and select the font style and size they prefer. They also use standard paint and draw software with appropriate mouse control to draw human figures. Pupils in Year 4 have used data to create a block graph and can explain their method correctly. They also quickly learn to highlight text, add bullet or number lists and use the 'undo' icon. Year 6 pupils have much the same level of skill as those in Year 4. They can open programs from the correct icon, they know how to edit text and change font and colour but are still slow to use a keyboard and spend unnecessary time, for example, deleting text to correct spellings instead of placing the cursor in the word they wish to edit. Work on display shows that pupils are able to experience data handling, control, using CD ROM's and accessing the Internet. However, discussion with pupils in Key Stage 2 shows that they are clear about what they want to learn, but are frustrated by only being able to use a computer, at best, for ten minutes a week.
83. Insufficient direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection to judge the quality overall in the school. Most classes follow a model of the teacher demonstrating a new technique (such as how to make a number list) then pupils in groups of two or three practise this on a rota at subsequent times during the week. Teachers plan for pupils to use computers during group activities in the literacy hour and also for word processing work they have done in class. Some teachers use computers themselves effectively to prepare materials for lessons, plan their work and produce labels and headings for class display. This needs to be extended so that pupils in all classes see the relevance of using computers for daily tasks as well as for good presentation of work. In addition, teachers have no guidance that will help them to assess accurately the computer skills that pupils already have and so enable them to plan lessons that meet the needs of those pupils who have computers at home as well as those who do not. The coordinator is appropriately skilled and has relevant ideas for improving the subject, but governors and senior managers have not, as yet, found ways of providing each pupil with much more time to practise their skills than at present.

MUSIC

84. The majority of music lessons took place after the end of the inspection. Judgements on standards and teaching are based on the lessons seen, discussions with pupils and incidental opportunities, such as singing in assembly. Before the inspection, parents expressed a concern that standards in music are not as high as they could be. Discussion with staff indicates that a number of years ago some teachers were gifted musicians and, at that time, pupils achieved high standards in their own performance. At the last inspection, standards were judged to be in line with expectations and this is still the case, in both key stages. Pupils sing confidently in tune and those in Key Stage 2 are able to hold a melody while others sing a harmony. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils play un-tuned percussion instruments to follow a basic score written with graphic notation. They handle instruments carefully and use them appropriately, keeping quiet when it is not their turn. All pupils have appropriate opportunities to listen to a sufficient variety of music and they attend carefully to the music of the composer of the week that is played as they enter the hall for assembly. Those

pupils who have tuition on the guitar read standard notation to play simple melodies effectively. Discussions with pupils show that they enjoy their music lessons and are pleased to have the opportunity to learn an instrument. The school is to be commended for providing equal access for all pupils to instrumental tuition, even though the cost sometimes means that other funds have to be used for the provision of resources.

85. Good teaching was provided in a lesson for pupils in Key Stage 1. They have their weekly session in the hall and good use is made of the space for pupils to enjoy active singing games and rhymes. These activities are well chosen and are aimed at encouraging language development and social interaction, as well as advancing singing and memory skills. Effective piano accompaniment is provided for these songs that reinforces melody and helps the pupils to learn to sing in tune. There is satisfactory teaching overall and pupils follow a curriculum that includes lessons broadcast on the radio as well as whole key stage singing sessions. This provides a reasonable musical experience for the pupils but is insufficiently thorough, or based on improving individual skills, to raise standards. The coordinator is aware that, to improve the curriculum and raise standards, class teachers need support to develop more confidence to teach the subject. Also that the curriculum and assessment procedures have yet to be clearly defined, and that more use can be made of tuned instruments and computers in composing and performing. Since the last inspection, the school has bought some good quality percussion instruments and there are now sufficient for whole class use.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

86. Gymnastics, dance and games are taught in blocks of time throughout the year at Key Stage 1 and athletics and swimming added to this at Key Stage 2. During the inspection, lessons in gymnastic and games were seen at Key Stage 2 and in these, standards were judged to be in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age. In swimming, the school is successful in that almost every pupil is able to swim 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in the subject have been sustained since the previous inspection.
87. Apart from one unsatisfactory lesson taught by a part-time teacher, teaching was satisfactory with very good teaching in Year 6. In the best lessons, the teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to make teaching points quickly and effectively so that the pace of the lesson and maximum pupil activity was maintained. Teachers use pupils well to demonstrate teaching points, and they responded sensibly when asked to assess their own performance as they worked in pairs in a gymnastic lesson. High teacher expectation of pupils' achievement and behaviour was evident in a hockey lesson where pupils demonstrated good levels of ball control and played a game co-operatively, applying the rules without argument. Lessons begin with a good warm up session and pupils clearly understand the value of this and know that their heart rate increases and their body gets warmer. There is a clear emphasis on safety in physical education lessons.
88. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic, manages the subject well and supports and monitors teachers' planning. The quality of teaching in other classes would benefit from more direct involvement of the co-ordinator in monitoring, as she has the expertise to raise standards. The school offers a good range of extra curricular activities and is well supported by outside coaching initiatives. There is a good-sized hall with a range of large apparatus, a hard playing surface and a playing field. The small equipment is of good quality and sufficient quantity. The annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils includes a good range of outdoor adventurous activities.