

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **TALBOT FIRST SCHOOL**

Kingstone, Uttoxeter

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124093

Acting headteacher: Mrs L. Gibson

Reporting inspector: Mr P. Edwards  
21069

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 225104

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Kingstone Uttoxeter Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST14 8QJ
Telephone number:	01889 500273
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J. Lines
Date of previous inspection:	5 <sup>th</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Paul Edwards	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Under fives Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it?  How high are the standards?  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?  The extent to which the school makes the best strategic use of its resources.
Mrs Sue Dixon	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  The quality of links with the community  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr Chris Scola	Team inspector	English Religious education Art History Geography Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?  The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources.  How well the school cultivates pupils' personal development.

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Talbot First School admits pupils between the ages of 4 and 9 years. It is situated in the village of Kingstone on the outskirts of Uttoxeter. It is a popular school that serves an area of mainly rural housing. A number of children attend playgroups or private nurseries prior to starting full time education. Assessments undertaken when the children enter the school show that there is a wide range of attainment although it is average overall. The school has 60 pupils on roll, which is much smaller than average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (17%) is average. Four pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need and a total of eight pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. There is one pupil from a minority ethnic background. The school is organised into three classes, a mixed Reception/Year 1 class, a Year 1/2 class and a Year 3/4 class. There are five pupils in the Reception class. A senior teacher has been acting headteacher since the beginning of term due to the short-term absence of the headteacher.

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

The school is effective in providing a good quality of education in all classes. The pupils make good progress, particularly in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. The school is well led, has a very supportive governing body and provides good value for money.

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

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average for the age of the pupils.
- Teaching is good overall.
- The leadership has had a significant impact on raising the quality of teaching, maintaining standards attained by the pupils and improving the ethos of the school.
- Parents are supportive of the school and there are good links with the community that enhance the pupils' education.
- Relationships between the pupils and staff are very good.

#### **What could be improved**

- The pupils' attainment and progress in information technology.
- Opportunities for the pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills and to undertake more investigative work in science.
- The use of worksheets that limit the pupils' opportunity for independent writing activities.
- The marking of pupils' work throughout the school.
- Information provided to parents regarding homework.

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

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

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in November 1996. Whilst National Curriculum test results for 1999 indicate performance is below average in reading and writing, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the small year group gives a false impression of the true picture. Analysis of the school's performance data indicates that the pupils, including those with special educational needs are making good progress. The provisional test results for Year 2000, results from previous years, and work seen during the inspection show standards are above average. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching with no unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection. Standards in all subjects, except information technology which is below national expectations, have been maintained or improved upon. The curriculum has improved considerably, with schemes of work in place for all subjects and assessment and monitoring of the pupils' progress used effectively to help raise standards. The governors are more involved and take an active role in monitoring the school's performance. The school development plan helps give the school a much clearer direction and focuses on improving standards. The ethos of the school has improved with pupils having much greater pride in their school. Whilst the behaviour of a small minority of older pupils still gives cause for concern, considerable improvements have been made in this aspect.





## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
reading	C	A	B	B
writing	A	A	C	D
mathematics	A	A*	A*	A*

**Key**

well above average      A

above average          B

average                    C

below average          D

well below average      E

The children in the Foundation stage make good progress and are on course to exceed the early learning goals in personal, social development and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They make satisfactory progress in creative and physical development and are on course to achieve the early learning goals in these two areas.

At Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in the 1999 National Curriculum mathematics tests puts the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Over a quarter of the pupils who took the reading and writing tests have Statements of Special Educational Need and this is reflected in the below average comparison with similar schools in writing. The provisional 2000 National Curriculum test results and the work seen during the inspection shows the performance of pupils is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in science are also above average. At the age of nine, standards remain above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are keen to come to school and most enjoy their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is mostly good. The pupils are friendly and polite. A small minority of older pupils are disruptive. There have been no exclusions in living memory.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good, as is personal development. The pupils are confident and there are suitable opportunities for them to take responsibility.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average and lessons start punctually.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
26 lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

All teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better. Thirty-one per cent is satisfactory, 54 per cent is good and 15 per cent is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when 22 per cent of the teaching was judged unsatisfactory. The teaching of English and mathematics is frequently good and occasionally very good and has a significant impact on the progress the pupils make, particularly in mathematics. Planning for literacy and numeracy is well matched to the needs of the pupils. Planning for other subjects is generally satisfactory. Marking tends to be confined to brief words of praise with few diagnostic comments. Pupils are given no individual targets in their written work and do not know how they can improve their work. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and enables these pupils to make good progress. All pupils take reading books home although other homework tasks are not clearly explained to parents.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is good emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Greater attention needs to be devoted to using information technology across the curriculum and the pupils need more opportunities to use their mathematical skills and plan investigative science.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Early identification and analysis of need ensures pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school involves the parents well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The good rôle models provided by adults give the pupils clear guidance. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Procedures for health and safety are good. Assessment procedures are good and systems for tracking the pupils' progress are in place.

The school has a good partnership with parents although they need to be better informed regarding homework arrangements.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and governors have given the school a clear sense of direction that is clearly focused on maintaining and improving standards. The acting headteacher is managing the school well during the short-term absence of the headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and other responsibilities satisfactorily. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and staff and work hard to shape the direction of the school. They are well placed to develop a greater awareness of curriculum areas beyond literacy and numeracy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance in literacy and numeracy have been implemented. The quality of teaching and learning has been assessed by the headteacher and the local education authority's advisory service.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are supported through careful financial planning and good use is made of the available staffing. The accommodation has been improved significantly although better use could be made of the school hall for physical education. The school applies best value principles to all spending decisions.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General improvement in standards since the last inspection.</li> <li>• The improved behaviour.</li> <li>• The quality of music tuition.</li> <li>• The raising of standards through the literacy and numeracy sessions.</li> <li>• Information on the progress made by their children and the way they are kept up to date.</li> <li>• The ease with which they can approach the staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach to the teaching of spelling and the way the pupils learn their tables.</li> <li>• Lack of consistent approach to homework.</li> <li>• The lack of out of school activities.</li> <li>• More emphasis on the use of apparatus in physical education.</li> <li>• The admission arrangements when children first start school.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive comments. Given the size and type of school, the range of extra curricular activities is appropriate. The majority of pupils acquire secure spelling and mental arithmetic skills as they move through the school. The school needs to ensure parents are aware of the homework arrangements and the arrangement for admission when children start school. The use of apparatus in the hall could be improved through removing equipment that is not needed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children start school, although the range of attainment is very broad, overall levels of attainment are average. During their time in the Reception class, the children make good progress in personal, social development and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and most are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. They make satisfactory progress in creative and physical development and are on course to achieve the early learning goals in these two areas.
2. In 1999, in the National Curriculum tests taken at the age of seven, the percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected Level 2 in reading and writing is well below the national average but very high in mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is above average in reading, well above average in writing and very high in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the results are average for reading, well below average in writing and very high in mathematics. However, it is not appropriate to compare the results of this very small cohort of 15 pupils with similar schools because the comparison is unreliable. Unusually, 25 per cent of the pupils who took the tests have statements of special educational needs.
3. Whilst the 1999 figures show a decline in reading and writing over previous years, this is not a true reflection of the school's performance and the provisional 2000 test scores confirm this. The very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs has created figures that are not in line with the school's past performance. Whilst the figures for 1996 to 1999 show the performance of the girls to be well above average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics, the performance of boys has been close to the average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics.
4. In work seen, the pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is above the national expectations in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. The inspection findings are broadly in line with the 2000 provisional test results. The school has maintained its standards in reading and writing from previous years due to the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the encouragement pupils receive from home for reading activities. The National Numeracy Strategy has helped the school maintain its standards in mathematics – the results of which show the school to be in the top five per cent of schools nationally.
5. The pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. The pupils are given good opportunities to improve their listening and speaking skills from the moment they start school and this is reflected in the good standards they achieve. Standards in reading are also above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. The pupils are good, confident readers with secure referencing skills. However, they need more opportunities to research information which are currently restricted due to the lack of a library. Standards in writing for most pupils are good by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they are nine, with a few attaining very high standards. They write for a range of purposes such as good accounts for historical diaries, letters to organisations such as Greenpeace and play scripts. There is lack of consistency in the approach to handwriting across the school that results in a lack of fluency. There is also a reliance on very structured worksheets that limit the pupils'

writing development, for example in science. The pupils with special educational needs are given good support that enables them to achieve well in relation to their ability.

6. In mathematics, the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 reach standards that are well above national expectations. Through regular teaching they develop good mental arithmetic skills with pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 doubling and halving numbers up to 20 with confidence and quick recall. Most pupils in Year 4 know their five, six, seven and ten times tables. They are beginning to develop a good knowledge of number and can partition numbers, when multiplying, for example breaking up sixteen into ten and six to multiply each by three to work out the answer. Higher attaining pupils achieve good standards as a result of the challenging activities. A significant factor in the very good standards achieved overall is the very good start pupils receive to their mathematical education in the Reception class. More opportunities are needed for the pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills throughout the school.
7. Standards in science are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and for pupils at the age of nine. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, materials and their uses and physical processes. Whilst they make satisfactory progress in their experimental and investigative skills, more progress could be made if they were provided with increased opportunities to plan and develop their own investigations.
8. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave school, the pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations. Year 2 pupils are beginning to use a mouse confidently and make appropriate use of their developing literacy skills in writing simple texts. The pupils in Year 4 also write and edit text and are starting to use computers to store and retrieve information. However, much supervision is still needed. The school has just received up to date equipment and the pupils are only just beginning to use it regularly and systematically.
9. Standards in religious education by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils make satisfactory progress. The pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of the special clothes, symbols and places of worship. Older pupils acquire a good factual knowledge of the main Christian festivals and similar festivals from other main world religions such as Judaism. They learn about different religions, practices and well-known Bible stories and how these affect the way people live. They are encouraged to consider how these affect their own lives and the way they treat other people. Standards in religious education have improved since the last inspection although more 'first hand' opportunities to learn about other cultures are needed.
10. Attainment in art, design and technology, history, geography, music, and physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at age nine and the pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects as they move through the school. Better progress in gymnastics could be made if the school made more effective use of the small, but adequate hall.
11. The overall picture is one of improvement since the last inspection. Work is generally more challenging, meeting the needs of the higher attaining pupils, and the school is making more effective use of assessments to determine whether the level of pupils' achievements are good enough.

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

12. The pupils have good attitudes to their work. They enjoy coming to school and approach their lessons and activities with enthusiasm. In lessons, the pupils respond well to challenging and stimulating questions and their answers are given with confidence. For the most part they listen well to their teachers and each other and instructions are usually followed quickly and quietly. The majority of pupils work hard and maintain concentration throughout lessons. There is a small number of pupils, mostly in Years 3 and 4, who have less good attitudes and this has a detrimental effect upon the pace of lessons and the learning of others. The pupils work alongside each other amicably and willingly offer help and encouragement to their classmates. Most of the pupils have good independent learning skills and are provided with good opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. This was seen in a Year 1/2 physical education lesson where the pupils used their gymnastic skills to produce short sequences. The high value placed upon the pupils and their achievements is evident through attractive displays of work in the classrooms and corridors.
13. The behaviour of most pupils is good; this has a beneficial effect upon their learning and upon the school community as a whole. The majority of the pupils behave consistently well in lessons, assemblies and at lunchtimes. There are some occasions in lessons when a minority of older boys lack self-discipline and this has a disruptive effect. In the main, the pupils understand and follow the school rules well. Praise and reward for good work and behaviour are received with pride. The pupils treat the resources and equipment they use with care and respect. There have been no exclusions in the past year but appropriate procedures are in place should they be needed.
14. The relationships amongst all members of the school community are good. The adults in school present good role models and the pupils are treated with care and respect. This is reflected in the pupils who are polite and helpful towards each other and to adults. Lunchtimes are sociable and pleasant and incidents of conflict or bullying are very rare. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They are encouraged to act responsibly and are provided with opportunities to carry out class duties or to serve the whole school community, for example by acting as milk monitors. Opportunities are provided for the pupils to express their opinions and feelings and they grow in confidence as they progress through the school. The pupils learn to respect the values and beliefs of others and show consideration for other lifestyles.
15. Attendance rates are above the national average and are good. The pupils are eager to come to school and most arrive on time. The parents provide the school with good information about absences that are largely due to childhood illness. A small number of families take holidays in term time. Some of these are extensive and for these pupils this has a detrimental effect upon their learning. Registration time is brief and efficient and leads promptly into the first lesson.

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

16. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. All lessons were judged to be satisfactory or better. Thirty one per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 54 per cent good and 15 per cent very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when, although the overall quality was judged to be sound, 22 per cent was unsatisfactory.
17. Teaching is good for the children in the Foundation stage in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and

understanding of the world and creative and physical development. As a result the children make good progress in all areas except creative and physical development where they make satisfactory progress due to the limited resources. In both Key Stage 1 and 2 the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good, resulting in above average standards by the time the pupils leave the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy to the Year1/2 class is often very good. The teaching in information technology is unsatisfactory in both key stages, partly due to the lack of equipment but also to the lack of confidence amongst the teachers. This has resulted in the pupils' progress being below what might be expected. The music carried out by the peripatetic teacher is very good and has a very positive impact on the progress made by the pupils within lessons. The teaching in art, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education is usually at least satisfactory.

18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and this enables them to make good progress in relation to their prior achievements. The school has the benefit of an experienced and knowledgeable teacher who adds significantly to the quality of education for these pupils.
19. The teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good, as is their knowledge of the subjects. In these subjects, the planning takes account of the pupils' differing ability and work is planned in line with the recommended strategies. Good use is made of introductory sessions to gain the pupils' interest and maintain enthusiasm. For example, in a very good Year 1/2 literacy lesson, the teacher's humour as she shared the story of Solomon Grundy, enthused the pupils who were quick to join in with examples of tongue twisters and alliteration. Planning for all subjects needs to be improved by indicating how information technology can be utilised more effectively across the curriculum. It would also be useful to indicate the National Curriculum levels at which the pupils are working and to share this with the pupils.
20. The methods and strategies used by the teachers are usually effective and help the pupils to acquire new skills, although the lack of a library and limited hall space does place restrictions on teaching referencing skills and some aspects of physical education. More opportunities for pupils to plan aspects of their own learning are needed, particularly in mathematics and science. Most of the behaviour observed in classrooms is good although a small number of older pupils can be silly. Whilst this aspect of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, the school needs to pursue different strategies for behaviour management.
21. The teachers use time and resources effectively. There is a good balance between teacher talk and pupil activity and pupils are encouraged to get on with their tasks efficiently. The teachers make good use of the very limited support staff and they have a good impact on the pupils' work. Liaison between teaching and support staff is good and they are clear about the tasks they are to carry out. Resources are generally used effectively, although the school recognises the need to make more use of information technology across the curriculum.
22. The teachers assess their pupils' work, particularly in English, mathematics and science and there are regular meetings with parents when targets for their children are discussed. However, it would be beneficial to the pupils if, when marking written work, targets for improvement were included. Homework is given in reading and in other subjects. However, it is not consistent and the parents are not aware of what is expected and when. Not all homework is marked and, as a result, it does not have the impact it might otherwise.
23. The improvement in the proportion of satisfactory and good teaching, together with the improved learning environment, has had a significant influence on raising the pupils' attainment.

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

24. The school provides a good, well-balanced curriculum for pupils of all ages, which fully meets statutory requirements and which is effectively supported by a good range of extra-curricular events and involvement with the local community. All subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal and social education are taught regularly in both key stages. This has a beneficial effect on the pupils' progress and attainment. Health and the use and misuse of medicines are taught as part of science and personal and social education. The governors have decided that sex education is not to be taught explicitly except where relevant.
25. The school has successfully introduced and implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. There are good opportunities across the curriculum for the pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, although opportunities for them to use information technology skills across the curriculum are limited. The school has worked very hard since the previous inspection and fully addressed the key issue of developing a coherent curriculum framework and developing schemes of work.
26. These policies and schemes of work guide teachers in their planning and make good use of the documents produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The development of long term planning through clearly identified topic cycles is very effective. The teachers' medium term planning is now good and the school is to be commended on the way in which temporary teachers are able to ensure continuity of the pupils' learning by using the school's planning. Particular emphasis is given to the planning of literacy and numeracy and this ensures these areas of the curriculum are taught effectively.
27. The provision for the assessment and support of pupils with special needs is good and the school fully complies with recommendations of the Code of Practice. Effective procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are in place and the needs of the pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need are fully met. Individual education plans are in place for those pupils who are at Stage 2 and above on the school's special educational needs register, and they are regularly reviewed. They are of very good quality and contain clearly stated and measurable targets.
28. The curriculum for the under-fives in the Reception class is good. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing the children's early language and mathematics skills and they are encouraged to learn through well-planned and prepared practical experiences and structured play activities. Planning is based around the six key areas of learning and successfully promotes the early learning goals. The teacher has a good overview of how young children learn and there is a good mix of activities that promote new learning and those which consolidate previous learning.
29. The school makes good use of the resources in the community. It has strong links with the local church and the Vicar is a regular visitor to school. The expertise of parents and other local resources are well used, such as in art, music and sport. Visits take place throughout the school year to enrich the curriculum, such as to the Shooting Butts and Shugborough Hall or participating in village events such as the Millennium celebrations. The school welcomes a variety of visitors from the local and wider community. Teacher and visitor exchange such as those from France and Japan give the pupils a real insight into the cultures of other countries. The school has good links with its feeder middle and high schools and the pupils enjoy various activities there and mutual benefit is gained from students on work experience.



30. There are opportunities for regular extra-curricular activities such as French, chess and recorder sessions. A football club operates on one evening each week. During the school year, various seasonal activities take place.
31. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall. The school makes good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. All of the pupils join in with prayers and hymns in school assemblies. The programme of assembly themes is designed to provide a stimulus for the pupils' spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Well-planned lessons in all areas of the curriculum stimulate the pupils' interest and create moments of excitement. A good example of this was seen during a dance lesson, when the pupils in their imagination stepped through a mirror and listened to the hooting of owls and watched the stars. The teachers receive the pupils' ideas sensitively and through skilful questioning lead them to think seriously about other people's ideas and beliefs. The school makes good use of cross-curricular links to extend the pupils' sense of awe and wonder at the world and develop their spirituality. Thought has been given to the development of the school grounds so that there are quiet areas, set in attractive surroundings, where the pupils can sit and think and talk with their friends.
32. The pupils' moral development is good. The pupils are taught how to distinguish right from wrong and their behaviour generally reflects this. There is an agreed code of conduct and each class has designed a set of rules based on this. There are various incentives such as house points and credits that lead to the presentation of certificates in whole school assemblies to celebrate individual pupil success. The school is in the process of drawing up a whole school approach to behaviour with an emphasis on positive reinforcement.
33. The social development of the pupils is good. They contribute actively to the life of the school. The pupils are taught to take responsibility from an early age and their help and collaboration ensures classroom and school routines are very smooth. There are very good links with the community. For example, the pupils put on a party for the village's senior citizens, making cakes and gifts and putting on a Christmas Concert. They also spend a day at a Staffordshire newspaper learning how a newspaper is put together. Over the year the school supports several charities.
34. The cultural development of the pupils is satisfactory. The pupils' appreciation of their own and other cultures is furthered by lessons in art, music, history and geography. In history and geography, they learn about the cultures of different times and places. For example they study life in Kenya and Greek civilisation. In religious education, the pupils are introduced to the richness and diversity of other cultures through, for example, the study of Judaism and Hinduism but there is a lack of opportunity to experience other cultures at first hand.
35. The school is highly regarded by the local community and people welcome opportunities offered to them to visit the school and talk to the pupils about their interesting jobs and experiences. Many of these people work with the pupils and share their expertise, for example artists and musicians. Visitors from the church make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and personal development and to their learning in some subject areas. There are very good links with the community and this is an integral part of school life that adds richness and experience to the pupils' lives. The local community supports the school well and in turn the school provides a focal point for community activities, for example, through the Millennium celebrations and by providing a picnic for Senior Citizens. The pupils make studies of the surrounding area and makes visits further a field to compliment the curriculum.

36. The school has developed good links with its partner schools. This enhances the pupils' learning and provides good opportunities to widen experience through joint extra curricular activities. There are good links also with the middle and high schools. The parents and pupils are provided with good information and the opportunity to make taster visits. Good staff liaison ensures that the pupils' academic and personal information is efficiently passed on.

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

37. The effectiveness of the school's measures to monitor personal development is seen in the enthusiasm with which the pupils individually and collaboratively apply themselves to their work without direct supervision. This is particularly evident in Year 1 and 2. They are also very good at accepting responsibilities and readily share with others. The procedures for promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality are good. The overwhelming majority of parents responding to the parental questionnaire stated that their children liked coming to school.
38. There is an agreed code of conduct, which is particularly effective in Key Stage 1 but it is not adopted systematically throughout the school. The Key Stage 1 pupils know what is expected of them and respond readily to the teachers' high expectations. In Key Stage 2 behaviour is generally satisfactory, but there is a small core of pupils who are easily distracted and take too long to respond to the teacher. The school needs to review its procedures so that a structure is in place to deal quickly and effectively with those pupils who are displaying inappropriate behaviour.
39. The school's procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs are good, enabling prompt action to be taken. Teachers highlight initial concerns, which are then followed up by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school has good contact with external agencies receiving very effective support from the local authority's visiting specialist teacher. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs appreciate their full involvement in reviews and setting targets.
40. Procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are good. Since the previous inspection the school has made good progress in this aspect of its work. Rigorous assessment procedures have been introduced sensitively and systematically and are in the process of further development. Particular emphasis has been placed on developing methods of tracking the pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy as they move through the school. Effective procedures for assessing science are in place at Key Stage 2. These measures are having a positive impact on raising standards. The school is now able, through its testing procedures when they enter the Reception class, to predict future performance and set appropriate targets. Procedures for assessing the pupils' progress and attainment in religious education and information technology are not at the same standard yet and the school is aware that this is an area for development. In most subjects of the curriculum records are kept of the pupils' work. These are helpful in providing teachers with information about standards and curriculum coverage throughout the school.
41. The monitoring of the pupils' personal development is good. The staff know the pupils and their families well and good relationships are established from the start. The school places a high priority on the importance of celebrating the pupils' academic and non-academic achievements. Personal achievement targets are included in reports to parents. At each parent consultation meeting future targets for the pupil are agreed and reviewed at the following meeting. All

classes have regular personal, social and health education sessions. At lunchtimes, supervisory staff are involved in monitoring behaviour and contribute to celebrating the pupils' successes.

42. The school has good arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. The pupils are well known to all staff and benefit from the good relationships that exist throughout the school. Health and safety procedures are good. The governing body is well involved in site and risk assessments. The school is well maintained and care taken to ensure that the pupils are always well supervised. There is an appropriate policy that provides good guidance for staff and promotes a suitable level of awareness. The majority of the members of staff have received relevant training but this has not yet extended to all non-teaching members of staff.
43. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. There is an effective system of rewards and there are clear rules that are well understood. The present system of sanctions lacks sufficient support for the teachers and lacks the necessary clarity and structure to provide the pupils with clear messages when behaviour is unacceptable. This is especially evident in lessons where a lack of self-discipline by a small number of pupils affects the learning of all.

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

44. The parents' views of the school are positive. They appreciate the quality of education provided for their children and the way the school is helping them to become mature and responsible. They feel that the teaching is good, that their children are making good progress and are expected to work hard. Some parents have expressed concern about the amount and consistency of homework provided, the information about how their child is getting on and the provision for activities outside lessons. The inspection findings support the positive views of parents but find that the provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory and that parents are very well informed about their children's progress and school life in general.
45. The school has established good links with parents who find the staff to be approachable and responsive. They are invited to school performances and curriculum workshops.
46. The parents provide good support for the work of the school. A number are able to help in the classrooms, on school trips and with extra curricular activities, for example with gardening. The Friends Association holds a variety of fund-raising and social events for both the pupils and parents. These are well supported and funds raised provide the school with welcome additional resources.
47. The quality of the information provided for parents is good. The school brochure, governors' report and newsletters are well written and keep parents well-informed about the life of the school. Information about pupil's work and progress is conveyed in good quality written reports and during the regular consultation meetings. The written reports offer very good information about the work that the pupils have undertaken. The provision of regular targets encourages the pupils to work hard and allows parents to appreciate their children's successes and areas of difficulty. The pupils' comments are included and show that they have a good understanding of their work and are proud of their achievements.
48. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is good. Homework is generally well supported and good use is made of reading record books. The

provision of homework is inconsistent and parents are not provided with sufficiently clear information about expectations and how homework is used to support the curriculum. The home school agreement has been well supported indicating parents' commitment to supporting their children's education.

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

49. At the time of the last inspection several aspects of leadership were unsatisfactory. Most of these weaknesses have been resolved due to the leadership and vision of the headteacher who had been appointed shortly before that inspection. At the time of the current inspection the school is being managed by an acting headteacher, a senior member of staff, due to the short-term absence of the headteacher.
50. The major key issues that arose out of the previous inspection have largely been addressed successfully. The school now has a coherent curriculum framework and assessment is being used much more successfully to plan work for pupils of differing abilities. Schemes of work and QCA guidelines have been adopted to give a clear structure to the curriculum. Assessments of the children's attainment on entry to the school have been introduced and used effectively to predict the pupils' future achievements. The school has worked hard to ensure focuses on maintaining and raising standards and good improvements are being made. The school development plan focuses on the appropriate aspects and shows the school is clearly concentrating on the important curriculum areas of English and mathematics. The plan covers an appropriate time scale, is costed and there are guidelines as to how success will be measured.
51. Strategies for improving behaviour are in the main effective although a small minority of pupils in one class are still disruptive. Considerable effort has gone into improving the ethos of the school and improving behaviour through the use of rewards which has had some impact.
52. Greater emphasis has been placed on monitoring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and the school has made effective use of the local education authority's advisory service to help with this. Monitoring has rightly concentrated on the key areas of literacy and numeracy and the effectiveness with which these two strategies have been implemented shows the emphasis has been correct.
53. The governing body is much more effective than at the time of the last inspection. The committee structure works well; they meet regularly and individual governors take a keen interest in school life. They are keenly aware of what the school is doing well and, where it is less successful, why this is so. With the advent of the re-introduction of the statutory curriculum there is a need for them to become more aware of what is happening in areas of the curriculum beyond literacy and numeracy, for example how information technology is used in classes. The governors fulfil their statutory obligations.
54. The procedures for special educational needs are good and the recommendations of the Code of Practice are fully implemented. Parents comment that this is an area of significant improvement over the last few years. The pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the visiting specialist teacher.
55. The school employs an appropriate number of teachers for the number of pupils on roll. Visiting teachers for music and special educational needs make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. The provision of learning assistants is just adequate and provides good value for money. The

school's accommodation is now good, having undergone considerable improvement since the last inspection. There is now a separate headteacher's office and a small computer suite. There are plans to develop an area of the school to create further space, which would incorporate a library area. This is badly needed as currently the school has no library and there is limited space in classrooms to display books attractively. The hall is rather small, particularly when the older pupils are doing physical education but more efficient use could be made of space by removing some equipment. Lunches are taken at the village hall nearby and the school does not have the problems of the hall being set out for meals over midday. Internally the buildings are in good decorative order and several minor improvements have been recently carried out to increase storage and shelving. There are sufficient learning resources for most areas of the curriculum and the school makes good use of the local authority's library service. The school grounds are attractive and well maintained and include a quiet area with seating where the pupils can meet their friends for a chat. There is also a pond and small wildlife area which are used to enhance the science curriculum.

56. Overall, the school makes good use of the resources at its disposal. Apart from the hall, which could be used more effectively for physical education, the accommodation is used well. Although the short-term absence of the headteacher created some staffing difficulties in the run up to the inspection, the school is coping well and temporary staff are utilised effectively. The governors are acutely conscious of ensuring they get the best value for money for the services they receive and throughout the recent building programme have monitored the work closely to ensure that this is the case. Together with the headteacher they ensure that the school receives any grants it might be entitled to and this has resulted in considerable improvements and more are planned for. There is a relatively high underspend but this is satisfactorily accounted for in monies owed for completed building work and set aside for planned future contributions. Effective use is made of technology for financial management and for monitoring the pupils' progress.
57. The school has built up a momentum for continued improvement and the return of the headteacher will enable the school to build on the firm foundation. Although the cost of educating the pupils is high, it is not unduly high for a school of this size. In view of these factors, the school gives good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

58. Significant improvements have been made during the last four years and in their drive for further improvements the school should now:
  - (1) Raise standards in information technology by:
    - ensuring teachers plan to use information technology on a regular basis to support other areas of the curriculum;
    - ensuring the pupils use computers regularly and systematically;
    - improving staff confidence through participation in training opportunities.(Paragraphs 8, 17, 25, 9, 103 - 108)
  - (2) Improve the pupils' skills in using and applying mathematics and science investigation skills by:
    - providing more opportunities for the pupils to plan and carry out investigative activities;
    - allowing the pupils to determine methods of recording their findings in science;

- providing the pupils with more opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in real-life situations.  
(Paragraphs 6, 7, 20, 81 - 82, 85, 87 - 89)
- (3) Develop the pupils' writing skills by:
- reducing the use of worksheets and providing the pupils with opportunities to develop their report writing skills in subjects such as science;
  - Adopting a common approach to the teaching of handwriting skills.  
(Paragraphs 5, 76, 91-92)
- (4) Improve the quality of marking by:
- Encouraging teachers to set targets for improvement in the pupils' written work.  
(Paragraphs 8, 91)

In addition to the improvements above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- improve the arrangements for informing parents about the arrangements for homework;  
(Paragraphs 48)
- develop the role of governors to enable them to have a greater understanding of curriculum issues;  
(Paragraphs 53)
- improving the hall by removing items of equipment when it is to be used for physical education;  
(Paragraphs 10, 55, 115)
- consider different strategies for dealing with the small minority of pupils who are disruptive;  
(Paragraphs 12, 13, 38, 43)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	15	54	31			

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8

#### **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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	10	5	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73(100)	73(100)	100
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	15	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73(100)	100(100)	87(100)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

- **Numbers omitted due to the small number of pupils in the year group.**



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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	59
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	20

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

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	147,102
Total expenditure	139,321
Expenditure per pupil	2,049
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,630
Balance carried forward to next year	17,411

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

61

Number of questionnaires returned

40

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	42			
My child is making good progress in school.	38	57	2		2
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	65	5	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	49	16	3	5
The teaching is good.	32	58	3		8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	52	15		2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	32	5	5	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	2		2
The school works closely with parents.	45	42	11		3
The school is well led and managed.	20	60	12		8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	54			3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	22	38	20	10

### **Other issues raised by parents**

There were no other significant issues.

**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**

59. There are currently five children in the Reception class, all of whom had been in school for some five weeks prior to the inspection. In previous years the children have been taught as a Reception class but now, due to the numbers of children, they are admitted to a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. An experienced teacher, who is also acting headteacher, has responsibility for the class. The children also receive support from a classroom support assistant. Most of the children have attended private nurseries or pre-school playgroups prior to commencing full-time education.
60. In the past the teacher has administered her own assessments to the children on entry to the school but for the past three years has used nationally recognised assessments. These show, that whilst there is a wide range of attainments on entry to the school, overall it is broadly average. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children achieve well and exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The limited resources, inhibits the children's progress for creative and physical development although they still achieve the early learning goals in these areas. Whilst the teacher's planning concentrates on the National Curriculum, due attention is given to the early learning goals. The quality of teaching in each area of learning is good.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

61. On entry to the Reception class most children have personal and social skills that are broadly average. The children make good progress and by the time they leave the Reception class most are exceeding the early learning goals in this area as a result of the organisation and activities provided for them.
62. Although a small minority are still learning how to play together and take turns, most are relatively mature and understand that it is important to listen when others are talking. They enjoy their work and are very enthusiastic – indeed so enthusiastic that they find it difficult to hold back with their responses. The children are requested to get equipment out for the beginning of lessons and to tidy away. This encouragement successfully improves the children's personal development.
63. The staff provide very good role models for the children. They talk to them quietly and sensitively and treat them with respect, encouraging the children to adopt the same approach with their peers. As a result, the classroom atmosphere is one of trust, where children feel confident to ask and answer questions. For example when listening to the story 'The Tiger who came to tea', they are keen to say what happens next in the story.

**Communication, language and literacy**

64. The children enjoy listening to stories and they are introduced to the National Literacy Strategy sensitively and effectively. They follow the text in the 'big books' and understand the relationship between the text and pictures. This gradual introduction to 'reading' helps them to develop their confidence and love of books. They enjoy 'sharing' books, turning pages carefully

and handling them appropriately. They are keen to describe what happens next when asked about a familiar book. The teacher and classroom assistant show that they value reading and provide the children with regular opportunities to look at books. The high level of parental support further aids the children's learning. They are encouraged to take books home and they have their own school book bags which help them to look after them. Several children recognise key words and associate patterns in rhymes, with syllables and with words and letters.

65. The development of speaking and listening skills is given good emphasis and the children's responses are valued by the adults. The children are encouraged to speak at length and listen to the responses of others. Most are well on the way to achieving these goals although some do find it difficult to listen. Writing skills improve significantly during the children's time in the Reception class. They are provided with opportunities to copy write and to trace letters and by the time they move into Year 1 are writing full sentences. The teacher provides the children with regular planned opportunities – as part of the introduction to the literacy hour – to use language in a variety of contexts and to develop the basic skills of reading and writing. Opportunities to pick out rhyming words, practise independent writing and a good emphasis on phonics all aid the children's communication skills. The children make good progress and by the time they leave the Reception class they are all achieving or exceeding the early learning goals.

### **Mathematical development**

66. The children take part in a daily mathematics sessions with their Year 1 classmates and the effective teaching ensures that they all make good progress with most exceeding the early learning goals for mathematics by the time they move into Year 1. They are familiar with counting games, number rhymes, songs and stories. The teacher makes good use of other curriculum areas to enhance their numeracy skills. For example, during a poetry activity all of the children were keen to join in with the rhyme 'One potato, two potato.' Through practical activities, they begin to solve problems and show an awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction, and of language such as 'add one more', 'take one away', 'how many altogether?' and 'how many are left?' They use mathematical language to describe shape, position, size and quantity, for example, circle, cube, behind, bigger than and more than. The children enjoy mathematics, particularly practical activities and this has a positive impact on their learning. For example, during a lesson on measurement, their understanding of 'taller and shorter than' was enhanced through an activity that involved them making models of trees. Many opportunities are provided by the teacher for the children to improve their skills with number and to build upon their previous learning.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

67. The children enter the reception class with a basic general knowledge. The teacher uses this knowledge effectively to improve their understanding of where they live, their environment and their lives so far. As part of a topic on 'Ourselves' children learn how people change as they get older. They know the names of a wide range of creatures and can group them according to how they move, for example swimming, flying, crawling and walking. The school has a wildlife area and pond and good use is made of this resource to improve the children's awareness of plant growth and to see tadpoles develop. They explore features of living things further a field when they visit local woods. Opportunities are provided for the children to use computers for example to dress a teddy bear. However the children need more independent learning opportunities to develop their skills and confidence. They explore and select materials and equipment to use skills such as cutting, joining folding and building for a variety of purposes. They have a good

sense of how things join together. The children are familiar with the layout of the school and the people who are there to help them.

### **Physical development**

68. Through gymnastics, dance, movement and games the children learn to move confidently and imaginatively, with increasing control, co-ordination and an awareness of space and others. Whilst there is no safe play area for the children to use outside, satisfactory use is made of the hall for physical activities and there is regular outdoor play. More use needs to be made of apparatus to improve the children's climbing skills. The children enjoy movement activities. They clap and stamp enthusiastically to the beat of music during a dance session and show appropriate skills in changing shape and rhythm according to the tempo of the music. They show an understanding of what happens to their bodies when they have been active explaining that they get hot and become out of breath. The children handle tools such as scissors and construction and malleable materials, safely and with increasing control.

### **Creative development**

69. Children explore sound through music and speech. The use of music in assemblies contributes to their development. They take part in music lessons with the pupils in Key Stage 1 and they make good progress due to the quality of teaching. For their age, the children in the Reception class develop a good awareness of timing and melody. In the lesson observed, the children joined in enthusiastically and the teacher's range of games and activities ensured they improved their singing and playing skills. They explore texture and colour through art activities and they paint self-portraits and use printing techniques. They recognise basic colours such as red, blue and yellow and know how to mix colours. The teacher provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for the children's creative development, ensuring that they are provided with frequent opportunities to experience a variety of media, to express choices and to express their own ideas.

## **ENGLISH**

70. The results of the key stage tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 in reading show that the pupils' attainment is above national averages. The results of tests in writing show that below average standards are attained. However in this year group, a quarter of the pupils had been identified as having special educational needs. In the current Year 2, attainment in English is above average. By the time they leave school the pupils in Year 4 are achieving at above average standards.
71. Trends over time show that in the past four years attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1, has varied from being well above in some years, to in line with national averages in others. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, the performance of girls was well above the national average in reading and writing, while that of boys was above in writing and in line in reading. These results reflect the small cohorts and the number of pupils with special educational needs.
72. Standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school. The teachers take every opportunity to provide activities that stimulate the pupils' imagination and require them to listen

carefully to each other and to adults and then respond appropriately. For example in a Year 1 lesson the pupils had to listen very attentively to the story of the “Tiger Who Came To Tea” and explain why he ate so much food as well as suggesting to the rest of the class other foods he might have liked. Year 2 pupils enjoy listening to a wide variety of poems and reciting their favourites. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, the pupils have achieved good standards in speaking and listening. The school provides them with many opportunities to develop these skills such as at Christmas Concerts, Millennium celebrations and in whole school assemblies. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are sensitively encouraged to contribute to discussions in lessons other than literacy.

73. The pupils make good progress in their reading in both Key Stages. Reception pupils enjoy listening to stories and retelling familiar ones in detail. They predict what might happen next and recognise familiar words. They learn the names and sounds of letters. Most Year 1 pupils read simple text accurately and some are fluent readers. In the present Year 2 standards of reading are very good. Most pupils have a very positive attitude to books and make good gains in accuracy and understanding.
74. By the time they leave school in Year 4 the most able pupils have reached a high standard in their reading. They enjoy reading and talk confidently about their preferences for books and authors. Across the school, records of their reading are kept for each pupil and these include comments by teachers and parents. This has a positive effect on their progress. The more able pupils have good reference skills and understand how to access reference material using appropriate subject headings and are able to use the contents and index. However opportunities to use higher reference skills, such as locating a book by its Dewey number, cannot be provided by the school, as it does not have its own reference library.
75. The pupils in Year 1 form most letters correctly and spell some common words accurately. The early skills of writing are systematically taught and most pupils are able to sequence words in simple sentences using the basic punctuation of capital letters and full stops. In Year 2 the pupils write for a good range of purposes. They have a good understanding, for example of how to express their concerns, in a letter to Greenpeace, over the proposed development of a local nature area. They experience a range of poetry and understand rhyme and alliteration, when for instance composing their own tongue twisters. Good use is made of cross-curricular links to develop the pupils’ understanding of audience and purpose. Factual accounts are made more interesting by links with history, where the pupils write their own versions of Samuel Pepys’ diary. Good use is made of dictionaries and spelling skills are above average. All pupils in this key stage, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their writing skills.
76. This continues and is further developed in Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school the majority of pupils have achieved a good standard in their writing and a small minority are achieving well above this level. Progress for all pupils is good. They produce well-punctuated and paragraphed work, develop good structure and interesting plot and reveal a mature sense of audience. The pupils are encouraged to write in a wide range of styles and for a variety of purposes. In their writing books there are good examples of narrative and imaginative writing as well as news reports and play scripts such as “Theseus and the Minotaur.” Although some pupils have developed a fluent legible style of handwriting there is no consistency across the school and a significant minority of pupils are not able to write in a cursive joined script. Information technology is used occasionally to support the pupils’ writing, for example when drafting, evaluating and editing work, such as ‘My Best Christmas Ever.’

77. Across both key stages, however, some of the worksheet tasks are too structured and constrain the pupils' creativity and do not always challenge the pupils, particularly those of above average ability, to produce work at their own ability level. Across the school, standards of writing have improved considerably since the previous inspection. There is now a much broader writing curriculum and the pupils are encouraged to write for a range of audiences and purposes.
78. In the previous inspection a key issue for the school was to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work. This was also an issue regarding the teaching of English. Apart from a small group of boys in Year 4, the pupils' attitudes are very positive and there is an enthusiasm and willingness to learn. This is particularly evident in Year 2. The quality of lesson planning was also a key issue in the previous inspection. This has now improved. Overall the teachers have a thorough knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and the planning and contents of lessons is well focused and generally provides challenging learning experiences.
79. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers have high expectations. They use questions very well to keep pupils on task, elicit and develop their response. They set targets and lessons are well paced. However in Key Stage 2, there are occasions when time is wasted managing inappropriate behaviour. A whole school approach to behaviour management is needed. Short term planning is good and teachers are skilled at providing an accurate match of work to challenge the pupils at the most appropriate level, although sometimes the overuse of worksheets limits the learning opportunities for the most able. All teachers make regular and accurate assessments of the pupils' progress, although the quality of the teachers' marking varies from class to class. The learning assistant plays an important role in lessons enabling lower achievers to take a full and active part and helping them to make good progress.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. Analysis of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 for 1999 show that all pupils achieved at least the average Level 2 which is very high in comparison with the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 is also very high compared to the national average. This shows the school has maintained its high standards over the last four years. In work seen, inspection findings are that the pupils are on line to exceed national standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment at Key Stage 1 was in line with national expectations but below at Key Stage 2. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
81. By the age of seven, most pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 accurately using appropriate strategies. They know what the digits represent in a two-digit number and the higher attaining pupils are secure in adding three digit numbers and subtracting using decomposition. Most pupils know the doubles of five, seven and eight and ten, and the more able pupils have a good knowledge of halving numbers. The higher attaining pupils show a secure understanding of quarters. The regular mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of the numeracy lessons improve the pupils' skills in recalling these and other number facts. The pupils also have a good knowledge of their times tables as a result of the good teaching within the numeracy lesson. They change pounds into pence, find totals and give the correct change. The pupils count forwards and backwards in twos and can round up to the nearest ten and estimate. They have a good understanding of shape and know the correct names for shapes such as circle, rectangle and triangle. They understand that some shapes have square corners and the higher attaining know that squares have right angles. The pupils are beginning to use data handling, for example

using a tally chart prior to completing graphs. The pupils need more opportunities, however, to produce their own graphs.

82. By the age of nine, the majority of pupils understand place value to 1000. The higher attaining pupils multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100 and are beginning to use decimal notation. They use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20 in problems with larger numbers. They use their knowledge of 2, 5 and 10 times tables in whole number problems involving multiplication and division. The pupils start to develop mental strategies to find methods for the addition and subtraction of two and three digit numbers, classify two and three-dimensional shapes using their properties and use standard and non-standard units in a variety of contexts covering capacity, length and time. They use collected data to create bar charts and pictograms although, as in Key Stage 1, the pupils need more opportunities to devise their own graphs.
83. The school provides the pupils with good opportunities to develop their numeracy skills. Mathematics is used effectively to support learning in several subjects, including science where data is presented graphically and design and technology where pupils produce graphs of their favourite sandwich filling. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well as a result because of teaching which is frequently good.
84. In the majority of cases, the pupils' attitudes contribute positively to their learning. They respond well to the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and enjoy mathematics. They listen attentively, sustain concentration and work hard to finish their work. There is however, a significant minority of older pupils in Key Stage 2 who are disruptive and continually upset the lesson, spoiling the learning opportunities for all pupils. Most pupils work very well on their own or in groups and take pride in the presentation of their work.
85. The quality of teaching is good overall with particularly good teaching observed in the Year 1 and 2 class. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection when the majority of teaching in Key Stage 2 was judged to be unsatisfactory. The teachers have a very good understanding of mathematics and particularly of the National Numeracy Strategy. The planning is good and the teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and academic performance. In the best lessons, the teachers question the pupils skilfully and match the work closely to the pupils' capabilities. Teaching methods are effective and classroom management is good overall. Whilst the quality of marking is satisfactory overall, more attention needs to be paid to setting targets for improvement on a regular basis. The teachers need to provide the pupils with more opportunities to use and apply the mathematical skills they acquire and to provide them with more opportunities to use computers, particularly for data handling.
86. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively and is having a continuing impact on the pupils' achievements. The monitoring of teaching and learning is having a positive effect on raising attainment. In addition to the statutory end of key stage tests, the school also undertakes the voluntary tests that prove valuable for the school and its feeder middle school. There is very effective liaison with the local pyramid group of schools enabling support and guidance to be forthcoming.

## SCIENCE

87. Attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is above national expectations, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. A scrutiny of previous work indicates that the pupils in



both key stages undertake a range of appropriate science activities covering all attainment targets although all pupils need more opportunities to carry out investigative work.

88. In Key Stage 1, the pupils ask questions about their science work and attempt to explain their findings and draw simple conclusions. The pupils understand that the local environment contain varied kinds of plants and animals and the teachers take opportunities to use local woodland to enhance the pupils' knowledge. Good use is also made of the school's pond to increase their knowledge of the life cycle of the frog. They classify creatures according to whether they fly, walk, crawl or slither. They understand the differences between reversible and non-reversible changes, for example that when an egg is fried it is non-reversible but that ice melting is a reversible change. Year 2 pupils show satisfactory skills in entering data onto the computer to produce a pictogram of hair and eye colour. The majority of pupils in Year 2 attain above the expectations for the end of Key Stage 1.
89. In Key Stage 2, where attainment is similarly above average, the pupils understand that light will pass through some materials, that a shadow is cast when light is unable to pass through and that some surfaces reflect light. They understand that some materials are better electrical conductors than others and represent electrical circuits by simple diagrams. They have a good understanding of healthy food and know the effects certain foods have on the teeth and the sort of foods that provide energy. The pupils carry out some investigative work, for example to determine how much water is needed by plants to transport through the leaves, although this is limited.
90. In both key stages, the pupils would benefit from more investigative science work, particularly if they were given the opportunity to devise their own investigations. They also need to be given greater use of computers to research information and to record their findings.
91. The quality of learning in lessons is good overall. Clear progress is made by the pupils due to the good pace set by the teacher and the consequent high level of pupil motivation. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and create a good balance between teacher talk and pupil activity. They question the pupils well to elicit what they know and can do and then ensure the activities are well matched to the pupils' abilities. The quality of teaching is good overall. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons observed is good overall. In the best lessons, the pupils show great interest in the activities and are keen to answer the teacher's questions, replying with great enthusiasm and confidence. They work together well and persevere with their tasks, without the need for constant teacher intervention. Most work quietly and conscientiously, clearly enjoying their science lessons. Whilst the marking of the pupils' written work is satisfactory, more attention needs to be paid to informing them how they might improve their work. The use of worksheets is also too prevalent and this limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their writing skills, particularly report writing.
92. Science is planned over a two-year rolling programme of topics based on the QCA guidelines. This enables good progress to be made and ensures continuity between classes and covers attainment targets appropriately. In most cases, lessons are planned well, with clear links to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The opportunities for linking science to other areas of the curriculum are not always taken and this needs to be addressed. Good use is made of the local environment to develop science skills and also the local authority's specialist centre. The school nurse also visits, bringing hearing equipment when the school talks about the senses.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. Only one art lesson was observed during the inspection. However the evidence from the scrutiny of work and teachers' planning, from photographic records, from talking to pupils and from work on display shows that attainment is in line with national expectations and that satisfactory progress is made by pupils of all abilities in both key stages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where attainment was judged to be below national expectations. Two design and technology lessons were observed, one in each key stage and both concerned with food technology. However, discussions with co-ordinators, pupils and a scrutiny of work indicate that the pupils undertake an appropriate range of activities in which they design, make and evaluate products, and that they make generally satisfactory progress at both key stages. Standards of work are in line with those usually found in most schools for pupils of this age. This too is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards at Key Stage 2 were below the national expectations.
94. In Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to a range of techniques and study the work of some famous artists. Progress throughout the key stage is satisfactory. Shades of greens are painted using colour-mixing skills to create a jungle collage in the style of Henri Rousseau. Teachers use the work of other artists as a source of inspiration for pupils. Good examples of this are in displays of work influenced by Van Gogh and Matisse. The work of William Morris is used to develop the pupils' understanding of pattern and texture. The pupils achieve a satisfactory level of cutting, placing and sticking skills that apply successfully when following instructions.
95. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of a range of skills, building successfully on what they have learned in Key Stage 1. Artwork is often linked to other subjects in the curriculum such as a study of Aboriginal paintings to link with work in geography. This effectively supports the pupils' cultural development. The pupils study the work of Turner and Jackson Pollock and produce their own landscape and splatter paintings. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of art from different cultures and some understanding of the work of famous artists. They have worked in a wide variety of media and they can evaluate their own and others' work. Additional attention is properly given to the designing process so that by the end of the key stage the pupils are designing and indicating how they might improve their products.
96. The pupils enjoy their lessons and are able to discuss the development of their own skills and identify those they have targeted for improvement. They work well in groups, and are very supportive to one another. A good example of this occurred when a pupil explained to his group how to lay out and rotate the patterns they were arranging.
97. In the art lesson observed the quality of the teaching was judged to be good. The teacher was well organised and had good control. She had good subject knowledge and teaching points on key skills were made clearly. Clear targets were set out for individuals and groups. The art co-ordinator has a good overview of the curriculum and has devised a scheme of work, which identifies a progressive list of skills to be taught across the school. The design and technology lesson in Key Stage 1 was also good. The lesson was very well planned, a wide range of food and utensils was available and parental help was well utilised. There were good links with science – the pupils quite knowledgeable as to which foods are healthy and which are not. Whilst the lesson in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory overall, the lack of strategies for dealing effectively with the small group of disruptive pupils affected the flow of the lessons.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

98. Due to timetabling arrangements it was only possible to observe one history lesson and none in geography. The evidence from this lesson, together with discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their previous work indicate that they make satisfactory progress in both these subjects.
99. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have a good knowledge of the local area and are able to use appropriate vocabulary to make observations of the physical features of their surroundings. They compare their own locality with those further afield and know that different features are typical of certain locations. For example they compare their environment with that on the Island of Struay. They use maps to locate the main features of their local area and produce their own maps to show their routes to school. They use atlases to locate the main countries of the United Kingdom and are encouraged to locate and develop their knowledge of countries further a field. In Year 1 and 2, for example, they use the travels of Barnaby Bear to extend their knowledge of other countries such as Thailand, Minorca, China, and France.
100. By the time they leave school, the pupils have developed their mapping skills through their study of the countries in Africa. The main towns of Kenya are studied and rainfall charts are analysed to see the effect on population distribution. Comparisons between the lifestyle of British and Kenyan children are made, comparing schools, amenities and food production.
101. History is closely linked to the work in geography. In Key Stage 2 the reasons for the Anglo-Saxons' colonisation of Britain are studied. The pupils learn to understand the difference between primary and secondary historical evidence. For example, they use pictures of Anglo-Saxon shelters on their visit to a Museum to help them erect a replica shelter. They make everyday objects such as a potholder. They analyse language to identify Anglo-Saxon words and names. Maps of London during various stages of the Great Fire, together with extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary, are used in Key Stage 2 to develop the concept and sense of importance of secondary sources as a source of historical information. There are good links with literacy when, for example, the pupils write their own first hand accounts of the Great Fire of London.
102. This developing understanding of a chronological framework and ability to research information are further developed in Years 3 and 4. The pupils make good progress in learning how important archaeology is in the understanding of ancient civilisations. First hand accounts of the Greek battles, an insight into the training of their soldiers and class demonstrations of the effectiveness of a Phalanx enable the pupils to understand why the Spartan army was so effective.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons effectively. The links with other areas of the curriculum are particularly effective. The local environment, reference books, artefacts, maps and atlases are well used to stimulate the pupils' interest in finding out about their area and the wider world. More effective use could be made of information technology for research.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

104. Standards in information technology are below the national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. The pupils receive limited direct teaching of information technology and have relatively little 'hands-on' experience during lessons in other subjects. By the time they leave school at the age of nine, standards are below the expectations because of a lack of previous experience and teaching.

105. The pupils in Key Stage 1 are becoming familiar with the mouse and they have satisfactory control when drawing pictures but they need considerable supervision when saving and retrieving data. They have experience of word processing text, but again need some supervision to amend text and to print out copies of their work. Greater use could be made of programmable toys to enhance their ability to plan and make things happen. Links with mathematics and geography, when considering distance and turning for example, are not developed.
106. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection when the teacher of the oldest pupils continued a lesson to teach about collecting and storing data. The pupils show a secure understanding of the meaning of 'field', 'record' and 'file'. The teacher made good use of the assistance given by an older pupil from a nearby high school to help the pupils record information about the attributes of 2D shapes. Whilst the pupils have a good understanding of how computers can be used in this way, they lack the skills to enter and access the information without some supervision. Again, their word processing skills are at a superficial level and little use is made of models and simulations to find things out.
107. The quality of the teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory. The lesson was soundly planned, had clear learning objectives and made good use of the available computers and the student 'expertise'. The majority of pupils responded well, were well-behaved, listened carefully to the instructions and got on sensibly with their work. There was, however, a minority who were rude, lacked the self-discipline to get on with their work and who disrupted the learning of others. Overall, the pupils in both key stages make unsatisfactory progress due to the lack of regular access to computers.
108. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of information technology but the school is at a relatively early stage in the subject. The recent acquisition of modern equipment and connection to the National Grid For Learning has given the school the resources it needs to move forward. Some staff have undergone training but this needs to be extended to all staff to ensure they make the best possible use of the equipment.

## **MUSIC**

109. There was only limited opportunity during the inspection to observe the teaching of music. This included singing, taught by the visiting music specialist and a small amount of recorder tuition taken by a parent and a teacher. Observations of assemblies, however, and discussions with teachers and parents indicate that the pupils make satisfactory progress in music as they move through the school. The pupils' singing in the whole school assemblies was tuneful and rhythmic. Opportunities for listening to music are utilised effectively as the pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies.
110. In the music lesson that was undertaken with all of the Key Stage 1 pupils during the inspection, the very good teaching from the specialist teacher ensured that they all made good progress and achieved a good level of singing. The teacher's enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge kept the pupils involved from beginning to end. Although the lesson was long, the pupils stayed on task and were very enthusiastic. They enjoyed their singing and even the most reticent pupils joined in. The teacher's planning was good and the wide range of games and counting activities kept the pupils' interest.

111. A good number of pupils take part in after school recorder tuition organised by a parent and a teacher. The pupils follow a programme that develops their skills systematically and they are rewarded with certificates as they achieve certain goals.
112. There are strong links with the community in music. Many pupils joined with other schools to take part in a Millennium Concert at Uttoxeter Racecourse. The pupils take part in regular musical events at school, in church and within the community and these events are greatly valued by all.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

113. The pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress in physical education as they move through the school. The curriculum appropriately includes gymnastics, dance, athletics, games and swimming.
114. The pupils in Key Stage 1 move round safely, stopping and changing direction when instructed by the teacher. They make effective use of space on the floor and are able to make a range of body shapes by curling and stretching. They are able to transfer these skills to apparatus work. They understand the importance of warming up and set up and store apparatus working together safely. They are able to respond imaginatively to music by changing shape, rhythm and speed as was seen in a dance lesson during the inspection.
115. By the time they leave the school these skills are further developed and the pupils have experienced a variety of team and individual games such as football, cricket and athletics. Records show that by the time they leave school most of the pupils are able to swim 25 metres. However the indoor hall space is inadequate for older pupils and the school needs to maximise the teaching space in the hall by eliminating the storage of apparatus and furniture that is not being used for physical education lessons.
116. Overall the teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly. They have clear learning objectives and high expectations. Teachers manage lessons well and a high standard of behaviour is maintained. Good use is made of the pupils' performance to demonstrate and develop teaching and learning points. By combining with the cluster schools, the pupils are able to experience some inter-school competition. A range of extra-curricular activities effectively provides support for the subject and extends the pupils' learning. These include after school football tuition run by experienced coaches. The pupils have also taken part in Morris Dancing as part of the Millenium celebrations. The school is also participating in a national scheme to improve teaching skills and resources.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

117. By the end of the Key Stage and by the time they leave school, achievement is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and all of the pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress.
118. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave school, the pupils have gained satisfactory knowledge of the major Christian festivals and ceremonies through stories and visits to the local church. They know of the reasons for weddings and significance of Christian occasions such as 'Mothering Sunday' and can compare the similarities and differences in other world religions. In Year 2, for example, when studying the theme of signs and symbols, the pupils developed a good understanding of how all religions have special clothes, symbols and places of worship. They

know, for example, that Sikhs wear a patka, while Christian clergy wear a cassock and surplice. They understand, why to Sikhs the 'Five K's' have important symbolism, and the significance of the cross to Christians.

119. In Key Stage 2 the pupils develop a deeper understanding of the Old Testament and study other world religions. For example in their work on Judaism they learn about Jewish festivals such as Sukkot, Shabbat and the Passover. By the time they leave school, through the themes of 'Light and Darkness', 'Special Books' and 'Communication' their learning is further developed.
120. The teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly in line with the agreed syllabus. The teachers make good use of resources such as appropriate and well-chosen reference books, artefacts and materials. Because of this the pupils are interested and motivated and their learning improves at a good pace. Religious education makes a contribution to the pupils' literacy development. The pupils read and write about aspects of different faiths and listen to and retell Bible stories. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
121. In the lesson seen the pupils had good attitudes towards their learning and this had a positive effect on the good progress made. They listen carefully to their teachers in lessons. Artefacts are handled very carefully, for example in a Y1/2 lesson the pupils looked carefully at Christian vestments and Sikh artefacts, and consequently gained a greater insight into the two religions.