

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THROSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hartlepool

LEA area: Hartlepool

Unique reference number: 111612

Headteacher: Ms J Hart

Reporting inspector: Mr E Jackson  
3108

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225123

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior, with nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr H Clouth
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> June – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Eric Jackson 3108	Registered inspector	Science; physical education; English as an additional language; equality of opportunity	Pupils' results and achievements; teaching and learning.
Tony Anderson 11437	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; care and welfare; partnership with parents.
Margaret Roe 10526	Team inspector	Foundation Stage (Under-fives); art; history; religious education; special educational needs.	
Andrew Scott 27545	Team inspector	English; geography; information and communication technology.	Leadership and management.
David Matthews 18505	Team inspector	Mathematics; design and technology; music.	Curriculum.

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is larger than most primary schools, with a 39-place nursery and 271 pupils in the main school. It serves a large estate of mainly local authority houses, with a number of new private housing estates being built close by. Pupils are admitted to the reception class in September and January, as they approach five years of age. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The number of pupils identified with special educational needs (SEN), including those with statements of their needs, is below average. However, 25 per cent of children on the school's SEN register have been identified as having behavioural difficulties, the majority of whom are boys in the upper end of Key Stage 2. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and the number of pupils learning English as an additional language is much lower than average nationally, although average for the local area.

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

This is an improving school. At the last inspection in 1998 it was found to have serious weaknesses in standards of pupils' attainment and progress, teaching, and assessment and curriculum planning. The headteacher, aided by other key staff and the governors, has taken it forward successfully so that it now provides a sound education for its pupils. Pupils' standards of attainment by 11 are still too low. Standards and progress in pupils' learning are improving throughout the school, however, in response to better teaching. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, and teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is good. The improvements in teaching have also affected the pupils' attitudes to their work and the quality of the working relationships, which are now good. The school provides satisfactory value for money; this has improved since the last inspection.

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

- The headteacher, supported well by key staff and governors, leads the school well and has ensured that teaching, behaviour and pupils' achievements have improved.
- Teaching is good, a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- The staff care for the pupils well, and there are good working relationships throughout the school.
- Attendance is above the national average for primary schools.

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

- Standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2, in particular in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Planning for the introduction of the Foundation Stage for the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils' spoken language skills within all the subjects of the curriculum.
- Opportunities for pupils to improve their independent learning skills as part of their overall personal development.

*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 improvements since the last inspection. The headteacher has continued to lead the school effectively, building well on the good start she had made at the time of the last inspection. She has led the successful implementation of a complex improvement plan in order to resolve the school's serious weaknesses. She has received good support in this from governors, staff and the local authority. Parents recognise and welcome the level of progress made. Although pupils' levels of attainment by 11 have not yet improved sufficiently, the signs of improvement are good because better teaching is having positive effects on pupils' learning and progress. For example, the pupils in the current Year 5 achieve at levels expected for their age, reflecting good progress since entry to Key Stage 2. A great deal of work has been undertaken by the whole staff to develop effective lesson planning and assessment systems. These are now effective in providing teachers with information to plan work, in English and mathematics in particular, that meet different pupils' needs. Staff development has been the key here, alongside the successful adoption of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Behaviour management has improved, although there are still difficulties at the upper end of Key Stage 2. Good relationships have been fostered, allowing teachers to teach and pupils to learn. This has also led to improvements in pupils' moral and spiritual development. The school is now well placed to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

There has been steady improvement in the pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, and the school's agreed targets for the Year 6 pupils were exceeded in the 2000 tests. These standards are still lower than they should be, and reflect previous problems in the teaching at Key Stage 2. These have now been resolved and the improved teaching is reflected in the higher standards in current work in Years 3, 4 and 5. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has improved in line with the national average, and although still below average, compares well with attainment in schools in similar circumstances. The successful adoption of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies has helped to ensure that basic skills are taught effectively. Standards in information and communication technology are average at Key Stage 1, but well below average at Key Stage 2. Standards in religious education are as expected in the Agreed Syllabus by the end of both key stages. Boys and girls attain at similar levels in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, but girls outperform boys strongly at the end of Key Stage 2. Many children enter the nursery with poorly developed language skills, but make good progress in the nursery and reception classes to attain levels close to but still below those expected by five years of age. Attainment at entry to the school has been improving in the past few years, although it is still below average overall.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are interested and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Many pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. A small minority of older pupils do not always behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The good relationships between teachers and pupils are an important part of the school's improvement.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and attendance make a good contribution to their learning and personal development. There have been five temporary exclusions in the past year.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. It was never less than satisfactory during the inspection, and it was good or better in over half of the lessons seen. It was very good or outstanding in 13 per cent of lessons seen. Teachers have good, often very good, relationships with pupils, making them feel valued and eager to learn. This in turn produces a positive atmosphere in the classroom. In these situations, teachers trust pupils to work productively unsupervised. However, teachers do not always take full advantage of opportunities to encourage productive talk by pupils in pairs or groups during lessons. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, and sometimes very good, and helps the children to make good and often very good progress towards the standards identified for their age group. This is due to very well planned and well-structured teaching and the carefully established routines. There were a few occasions, however, where the children lacked opportunities to learn practically, particularly in the reception class. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1, and it was good or very good in over half of the lessons seen; this is a good improvement since the last inspection. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are successfully taught in English and mathematics. Teachers manage the pupils well and this ensures that they are motivated and well behaved. At Key Stage 2, teaching was also good or better in over half the lessons seen. Good appointments have been made recently in the lower key stage, where teachers' enthusiasm helps the pupils to be interested in their work. The recently appointed deputy headteacher was unfortunately absent during the inspection, which unsettled his Year 5/6 class. Despite this, the teaching for the upper juniors was satisfactory, and occasionally good. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection, and teachers now use assessment information well to plan appropriate work for individual pupils. There is still a difficulty in raising pupils' attainment to acceptable levels by the age of 11, partly because of poor teaching in the past. Teachers had to spend a great deal of time managing the unsatisfactory behaviour of a small number of older boys during the inspection week.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactorily broad and balanced - meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; this leads to good progress towards the targets in pupils' individual learning plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are successfully integrated into all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory. Good for moral development. Improved for spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well, and teachers use assessment information effectively to plan new work.

The school works well in partnership with parents.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Subject co-ordination has improved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Fully and effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good procedures, and good use made of the information.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The principles of best value are beginning to inform spending decisions.

The headteacher has had a good impact on the school and has ensured that the serious weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been resolved. The governing body is very supportive of the school, and has made some very effective appointments recently. Care is taken to spend money wisely, for example to increase the number of support staff. The school's accommodation is good, and is now used effectively to support pupils' learning. Resources for learning are adequate, but there are insufficient high quality reading and information texts available.

## 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>• The quality of teaching, leading to good progress in their children's learning.</li> <li>• High standards of behaviour, and of the children's maturity and responsibility.</li> <li>• The school is well led, and they feel comfortable in approaching the staff.</li> <li>• The school's efforts to involve them, and that their children enjoy going to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• How well informed they are about children's progress.</li> </ul>

The inspection confirms the parents' positive views of the school. There is an average range of activities outside lessons, and parents receive good information about how their children are progressing. There was some unsatisfactory behaviour during the inspection, however, involving older pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school's results in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 have been well below the national average overall for the last three years. These results have improved in line with the national trend, however, and have improved above the national rise this year. The results are below average compared to attainment in similar schools in English and science, but they are in line with the average in these schools in mathematics. These comparisons do not reflect the hard work and development in the school since the last inspection, however. They conceal a substantial rise in the quality of teaching through further training, improved curricular and lesson planning, and recent good staff appointments. Although the current Year 6 pupils currently attain at below average levels, the pupils' achievement throughout the school is improving in line with the raised quality of teaching. The school exceeded its agreed targets for attainment in English and mathematics in 2000, and the current targets are appropriate for the Year 6 group, although they assume a lower level of attainment than last year.
2. Standards of attainment in national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 are rising. They were below average in reading and writing this year, and in line with the average in mathematics. These results are in line with the average attained in similar schools in reading and writing, and have improved on last year. In mathematics, they are above those of similar schools, although last year they were well above. The overall improving trend reflects developments in teaching, and the rising attainment at entry. It represents satisfactory progress in learning overall.
3. Boys attain higher levels than girls at the end of Key Stage 1, but this gap is narrowing. Girls consistently outperform boys at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in English. The school has firm plans to monitor these levels, and to raise the attainment of all pupils, particularly the boys, by 11. Effective steps have also been taken to ensure that both boys and girls make similar progress at Key Stage 1.
4. A substantial minority of children enter the nursery with poorly developed language skills. This poor language development affects both their academic progress and their development of social skills. However, the school's assessment on entry over the last three years indicates that the level of attainment of children moving into reception is improving. This is in part due to the good teaching that they receive in the nursery. The attainment of girls on entry is higher than for boys in all aspects of learning. Many children are below the expected standards when they enter Key Stage 1, but make good progress and achieve well in the various areas of learning in the nursery and reception classes. This is due to well-planned and well-structured teaching and well-established routines.
5. Results in the National Curriculum tests in English have risen steadily over recent years, especially in Key Stage 1, although they are still too low in reading. The results achieved by 11 year olds in 2000, though improved on previous years, remained well below the national average, and below results in schools in similar circumstances. They exceeded the school's agreed targets, however. The current Year 2 pupils achieve as expected in reading and writing at this stage of the year. The current Year 6 group are reported by the school to have been of much lower than average attainment at entry, particularly in speaking and listening, and early writing skills. These pupils have not had the advantage of good literacy teaching in recent years and their literacy skills are still too low. However, the quality of teaching has improved over the past two years, particularly at Key Stage 2, because the school has appointed new staff and has invested heavily in staff training. Teachers have concentrated on areas of weakness in pupils' work, such as writing, and this is beginning to raise standards. Pupils make steady progress and the standard of work in lessons throughout the school is now

similar to that generally found in primary schools, except at Year 6. Occasionally, higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in group activities as they have insufficient opportunities to make their own learning decisions. Pupils with special educational needs currently make good progress in lessons because of careful planning by teachers and good support teaching. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are doing well, as teachers integrate them successfully in all class learning.

6. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is similar to the national average by the end of Key Stage 1, but below the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. At the time of the last inspection, weaknesses in teaching were having an adverse effect on pupils' progress as they moved through Key Stage 2. Successful measures to improve teaching since, such as the adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy, have begun to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Although the standards that pupils achieve are not yet high enough by the time they leave the school, they are steadily rising year on year. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' attainment was average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as a result of improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection.
7. Standards of attainment in national tests in science fell dramatically between 1997 and 1998 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, and have been well below average since then. These results are also below average when compared to results in schools in similar circumstances. The school explains these results as reflecting poor teaching in the recent past. This was recognised in the last inspection report as often unsatisfactory or poor. This situation has been resolved by new appointments and staff training, so that teaching during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, and was often good. The improved teaching is well planned to cover the required curriculum and to build on pupils' prior learning, and includes more practical opportunities for pupils to explore scientific ideas. In 2000, teachers assessed standards at the end of Key Stage 1 as being close to the average compared to those of other schools nationally, but with fewer pupils achieving the higher levels. This maintains the levels attained in 1999, and also since the last inspection. Currently, standards for the Year 2 pupils are average, but skills in experimental and investigative science have improved.
8. Most children on the special needs' register build well on their previous attainment in literacy and numeracy, and a few of them attain closer to expected levels for their age in other subjects. They achieve well in lessons and most pupils reach the agreed targets in their individual learning plans, including those with a statement of educational need. A small minority of children with behavioural problems found it difficult during the inspection to attain the targets that have been set consistently.
9. Attainment in the other subjects of the curriculum at the end of Key Stage 1 is generally as found in primary schools for this age, and represents good progress in pupils' learning from entry to the school. It is also beginning to reflect the increasing level of attainment at entry year on year, which has not yet had time to affect attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. Here, pupils' attainment in religious education (RE) is as expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus, but in information and communication technology (ICT) it is below average. However, current work in the rest of the school is raising standards in ICT. Attainment is average in art and physical education (PE). In the rest of the curriculum attainment by 11 is below average.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, and their behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is good, and above the national average.
11. The nursery and reception class staff help the younger pupils to settle quickly into the school's routines. They teach them how to behave in school, and how to work together successfully, sharing space and resources with concern for others. For example, the first morning of the inspection was very wet and windy, but the nursery staff, with help from parents, settled the

three and four year old children quickly, and swiftly led into an early numeracy session. This shows how effectively the school's high expectations for behaviour and attitudes to learning have been established at this early stage of the second half term.

12. Pupils often displayed very good attitudes to their work, to their fellow pupils and to their teachers during the inspection, and the attitude of pupils to the school is good. For example, during a science lesson with Year 2 pupils, the pupils handled the electrical equipment carefully, and responded with interest and excitement to their teacher's prompting to construct and describe a complete circuit. Pupils are usually enthusiastic about their work, particularly when they are active, such as in practical science and mathematics sessions. A group of older pupils withdrawn for extra help in mathematics enjoyed working with a protractor, for example, and had developed a very good relationship with the support assistant, which helped them to concentrate and make good progress.
13. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is often good and during the inspection there were many examples of a positive response from pupils to teachers and visitors. Good behaviour was particularly evident in assembly. For example, during a Key Stage 2 assembly about 'Christenings', the pupils were very quiet and attentive throughout. The majority of pupils have a healthy respect for each other and are usually sensitive to their fellow pupils' values and beliefs. There was, however, occasional challenging behaviour from a minority of older pupils in some lessons, and there have been five fixed term exclusions over the past year. During the inspection the deputy headteacher, who usually takes one of the Year 5/6 classes, was absent. Some of the pupils in that class behaved badly during the first day when a supply teacher took them, but improved the next and last day when taught mainly by the headteacher and the literacy co-ordinator. They responded very well to a different supply teacher, the school's previous deputy, on the third day. This disruption to the school's normal routines, with a large class that includes a number of pupils with special educational needs due to behavioural difficulties, had a disproportionate effect on the quality of the behaviour in the school during the inspection.
14. The day-to-day relationships between pupils and teachers and between pupils are good. Pupils work well in collaboration when given the opportunity. For example, in a Year 4 class they worked effectively to produce drawings of a chair suitable for King Henry VIII. Although the school provides opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills through speaking and listening and by looking after the school office at lunchtime, the opportunities provided for pupils to take on personal responsibility are limited.
15. The attendance at the school is good and is above the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is low and is in line with the national average. Although there is some evidence of pupil lateness, the majority of pupils come to school and lessons on time. This is a good testament to the hard work of the headteacher in leading this aspect of the school's concern for its pupils' education.
16. Pupils' attitudes, values and attendance make a good contribution to their learning and personal development.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good, and has improved throughout the school since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. This is due to intensive training, good staff appointments, and an improved curriculum. Between them, the staff have good knowledge of the subjects they teach, although more required training in ICT is planned. Teaching was never less than satisfactory during the inspection, and it was good or better in over half of the lessons. It was very good or outstanding in 13 per cent of lessons seen. Teachers have good, often very good, relationships with pupils, making them feel valued and eager to learn. This in turn produces a positive atmosphere in the classroom. In these situations, teachers trust pupils to work productively unsupervised. However, teachers do not always take full advantage

of opportunities to encourage productive talk by pupils in pairs or in groups during lessons. Teachers often make helpful links between subjects that impact well on learning. For example science, history and geography are used effectively to develop pupils' extended writing skills. Homework makes a useful contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in reading.

18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage covering the nursery and reception classes is good, sometimes very good, and helps the children to make good and often very good progress towards the targets set for them. This is due to well-planned and well-structured teaching and the carefully established routines. There were a few occasions, however, where the children lacked opportunities to learn practically, particularly in the reception class. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1, and it was good or very good in over half of the lessons seen. This has improved since the last inspection. Basic skills are successfully taught in English and mathematics, and teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. This helps them to keep the pupils motivated and well behaved. At Key Stage 2, teaching was also good or better in over half of the lessons seen. Good appointments have been made recently in the lower key stage, where teachers' enthusiasm helps the pupils to be interested in their work. The recently appointed deputy headteacher was absent during the inspection, which unsettled his class, unfortunately. Despite this, the teaching for the upper juniors was satisfactory, and occasionally good. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection, and staff now use assessment information well to plan for individual pupils in English and mathematics. In some foundation subjects however, planning is still insufficiently precise in developing pupils' skills as they move up through the year groups, and this sometimes results in older pupils working at a level below younger ones. In music, for example, pupils in one Year 3/4 class were working at a higher level of skill than a Year 5/6 class.
19. There are effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy. Appropriate use is made of the National Literacy Strategy to support and enhance the school's approach to the subject. The school makes effective use of current national guidelines for teaching numeracy, although there are, as yet, limited opportunities for pupils to use their developing numeracy skills across the curriculum. ICT is not yet securely incorporated in planning, and so it makes an insufficient impact on pupils' learning in other subjects, notably mathematics.
20. The quality of the teaching in English is good. Staff training as part of the National Literacy Strategy is beginning to drive up pupils' standards. Teachers mostly use time well to keep pupils working hard, but they are sometimes too concerned about the rigid timings within the Literacy Hour. The literacy co-ordinator is supporting the development of writing skills across the school this term, and her contribution is proving effective in helping specific groups of pupils. This is also enabling her to gain an overview of how effective the planning for English is throughout the school. The teaching and learning of mathematics have also become more consistent in quality since the last inspection when half of the teaching in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning in the subject are now good overall. Teachers enable pupils to use their growing mathematics skills in other subjects sometimes, such as in science, music, history and geography. However, there are generally too few opportunities for pupils to apply these skills, particularly in ICT. The quality of teaching in science has been maintained at good levels at Key Stage 1, and has improved well at Key Stage 2. There is much more confidence amongst the staff in allowing the pupils to engage in experimental and investigative work than was the case previously, although older pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to decide how to find out answers in their own way to questions raised.
21. The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory. Teachers plan and explain their lessons well in relation to the scheme of work but they do not make work open-ended enough. The quality of support teaching is also good in demonstrating techniques and processes to slower learners. Sometimes, though, the lessons are not stimulating enough for the pupils, and the pace of their work dwindles. The teaching of RE is satisfactory and teachers have benefited from the development of a well-structured scheme of work based on the new Agreed Syllabus. Teaching is more focused than it was in the last inspection with some very good teaching observed in a Year 6 class. Lessons are well planned to take account of pupils' knowledge

and experiences in relation to the common themes that are studied throughout both key stages. As a result pupils build well on their prior knowledge.

22. Teachers' planning identifies clearly what pupils with special educational needs will learn in each subject. Teachers and support staff focus well on phonics and basic mathematical skills within the literacy and numeracy frameworks. Class teachers plan work in consultation with support staff to ensure that pupils' needs are met and that they have full access to all aspects of the curriculum. As a result of this good support most children with SEN learn effectively and build well on their prior achievement, especially those with statements and those with learning difficulties in the basic skills. Different work and focused support enables them to record their understanding in different ways, for example in table form, and to use ICT and discussion to support their learning. The support for a minority of older pupils with behavioural difficulties was not consistently effective during the inspection, and poor behaviour by a few of them affected their progress and the learning of other children in some lessons. This was exacerbated by the absence of their usual class teacher.
23. In art, teachers build well on previous learning, and skills taught in Key Stage 1 are well developed and extended into Key Stage 2. They use questions well to get pupils to think carefully about their ideas when constructing their designs. They provide good demonstration of techniques such as batik and draw particular attention to health and safety issues. The pupils respond well to this in their behaviour and their good self-control. This good behaviour results in good learning; for example, pupils were able to use knowledge gained well to find out how the process of batik worked. There were equal opportunities for boys and girls to decide in a design and technology (DT) lesson whether to design an outfit for a male or a female. Safety was addressed when the pupils handled scissors. In both key stage lessons teachers placed effective emphasis on the importance of good quality in the finished product. However, teachers did not enable pupils to use their own initiative and ideas sufficiently, in order to try out new ideas.
24. The teaching of history at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. In the main pupils sustain the progress made in Key Stage 1. In the lower Key Stage 2 classes, pupils do not readily use books as sources of evidence despite books being available. Consequently, by Year 6 the pupils have not developed their study and research skills sufficiently. However, due to teachers' persistence in making it clear what they were being asked to do the majority of pupils settled down to their work and took pride in their finished work. Some pupils with SEN who have specific support during history lessons from the literacy co-ordinator benefit well from this and achieve well in relation to prior learning. Teaching in music is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers choose bright songs for pupils to sing and select music carefully to enable pupils to learn about the different elements of music through listening. The general quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory, with occasional good features, particularly in the opportunities given for pupils to practise games' skills. Sometimes, however, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss and evaluate their own and other pupils' work.

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

25. The school effectively provides a broad range of appropriate opportunities that meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all pupils including the children who are under five in the Foundation Stage. It fully meets statutory curricular requirements, including the provision of RE in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils with SEN throughout the school. The adults in the school appropriately support pupils' personal development. They encourage pupils to grow into good citizens, and opportunities are taken in assemblies to reinforce the importance of good citizenship. Records on children's personal development are passed from the nursery through the school and are updated regularly. They effectively support teachers' knowledge of pupils' progress in this area. Most parents feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

education is sound and it makes a beneficial contribution to all pupils' personal development. Teachers use appropriate strategies to ensure that the curriculum captures pupils' interests through, for example, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. One visitor, for example, gave an account of being evacuated in the last war, as part of the topic 'When Gran was little'.

26. The previous inspection found serious weaknesses in the school's long-term curriculum planning because it did not ensure that pupils built up their knowledge, understanding and skills in a structured way. Subject co-ordinators have effectively used national guidance to ensure that planning is coherent and that it includes carefully sequenced steps in pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are enabled to progress systematically in numeracy, literacy and most other subjects. The previous inspection also found a lack of balance in the time allocated to different subjects that adversely affected the depth of learning in some areas of the curriculum. The school's allocation of time to each subject reflects current national recommendations.
27. The school makes useful links between some subjects that impact well on learning. For example science, history and geography are used effectively to develop pupils' extended writing skills. Teachers have begun to develop their confidence in adapting more accurately the national guidance for numeracy and literacy to the needs of the pupils in their classes. This has a positive impact on the steadily rising level of attainment in mathematics and English by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. While making appropriate use of new initiatives in these core subjects the school has a written commitment in its development plan to enrich the curriculum through further work in drama, dance and music. The school effectively adapts its curriculum according to identified needs and national initiatives. For example the school identified a need to focus on writing, and this resulted in raising pupils' attainment in this aspect of English. It has taken appropriate steps to adapt its curriculum plans to meet the changes in the new national guidance for the curriculum.
28. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, and based on recent national guidance for children of this age. The school does not as yet ensure that it plans coherently for children to develop in these areas of learning as they move from the nursery to the end of the reception year. As a result, while there are strengths in the reception curriculum such as numeracy, children have too few opportunities to develop their independence, which the nursery very successfully fosters. The nursery curriculum is very well planned to match the requirements for children in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum for children in reception is well structured but links more closely to the National Curriculum rather than to the Foundation curriculum. Although some of the content is appropriate, the way that children learn is not sufficiently practical, and the children have limited opportunities for investigation and spoken language development especially in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world and in some aspects of literacy.
29. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to play a full part in the life of the school and they have equal access to the school's curriculum. They make good progress through the effective provision of suitable learning opportunities that match their needs well. The provision made meets all requirements of the current SEN Code of Practice and the statutory requirements for pupils with statements of specific need. Individual education plans include appropriate, clear and achievable targets, that are used well to inform the planning of both teachers and other staff who are involved in teaching and supporting pupils with SEN. As a result their needs are effectively met.
30. The school provides appropriately for pupils' personal, social and health education. Through science, and a topic about healthy lifestyles, pupils are informed about the use and misuse of drugs and they are equipped to make informed decisions in the future. There is a programme of sex education for Year 6 pupils, agreed by the governing body. Parents are suitably informed about the arrangements for this, and of their right to withdraw their child from these lessons if they wish. Although the school does not yet have a scheme of work for personal and

social education it is embedded in classroom activities such as the 'circle time' seen in the reception class when children were effectively reflecting on emotions and feelings such as sadness, happiness and anger. The school effectively enables pupils to take on responsibilities such as taking dinner money and registers to the office. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for older pupils to take responsibility for planning and carrying out some of their own learning.

31. Some parents are unhappy about the extent of extra-curricular provision. However, the inspection found satisfactory provision outside the school day that makes a useful contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The provision mainly involves sports, with equal access for boys and girls. Teachers make good use of homework to motivate pupils and to extend their learning in subjects across the curriculum.
32. There are good links with the community. The local residents' association provided a recent holiday club that included a range of opportunities and activities for children including games, visits and creative activities. The school makes good use of its links with local institutions such as the library that the nursery children visit regularly. The police make good contributions to pupils' learning and personal development when visiting the school for a range of purposes. Regular contact with the local special school through reciprocal visits enhances pupils' attitudes effectively. Good links with a local secondary school enable pupils to develop their musical skills as well as to benefit socially through opportunities to perform. The school uses local sports organisations well to provide coaching, for example in football and rugby.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The previous inspection found that this area of provision was underdeveloped and that there were too few occasions for pupils to reflect on important matters. Pupils now have opportunities to reflect on significant issues. For example in assemblies they think about the effect that giving love has on the giver as well as the receiver, and through stories they consider a range of human qualities. These opportunities foster their awareness of and sensitivity to others. In one assembly there was a gasp of awe when the teacher lit a candle. Daily assemblies at the time of the last inspection did not always constitute an act of collective worship. The school has now remedied this. Daily acts of worship are of a Christian character, and they are planned around specific themes. Some are enriched through contributions from ministers of local churches.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Staff make good use of the school's system of rewards for good behaviour and parents strongly support this approach. Teachers use praise and incentives such as stickers and certificates very effectively to reinforce the importance of good behaviour. Certificates for kindness and for being helpful are also awarded in assembly. Teachers use incidents of pupils' inappropriate behaviour to develop their awareness of right and wrong, for example by enabling them to consider how poor behaviour affects others. For example, one teacher made it clear that inappropriate behaviour had interrupted a lesson and that it had caused her and the class to feel upset. The ethos of the school effectively fosters principles of honesty, fairness and respect for the truth.
35. The provision for pupils' social development is sound. From the time that children join the nursery they are enabled to learn to be independent. For example, they learn to choose activities confidently without needing the encouragement of an adult. One of the school's achieved aims is to encourage pupils to be caring, thoughtful and considerate. It fosters the understanding of group rules and citizenship effectively by enabling pupils to contribute to the annual formulation of the school rules. It appropriately develops pupils' learning about how to relate to others. For example, words such as 'respect' are emphasised and explained, and assemblies effectively reinforce the importance of taking responsibility. Opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility for younger ones are limited, but the school enables pupils to support selected charities.



36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school appropriately promotes pupils' awareness of their own culture and those of the wider world. This is enhanced through the school's teaching of religious education that broadens pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths, and through welcoming occasional visitors who represent religions other than Christianity to its acts of worship. Pupils listen to music that has its origins in other countries and cultural traditions. The school's written commitment to enriching the curriculum through the arts is effectively carried out, for example through visits from artists who work with pupils to produce sculptures that enhance the school environment, and by enabling pupils to watch live theatre. Concerts held for parents give pupils themselves the opportunity to act and sing for an audience. Pupils also took part in an arts festival in Hartlepool. Pupils extend their perceptions of the wider world effectively, for example through visits to the local church and to other environments such as a farm. In their studies in history and geography they develop a satisfactory understanding of cultures and lifestyles beyond their own.

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

37. The procedures for child protection and welfare are good. They are also good for the monitoring of academic performance and pupils' support and guidance in raising achievement.
38. Child Protection procedures are in place and effective. Teachers know their pupils well and, in the classroom, they are quick to observe any personal difficulties and to take appropriate action. The school monitors the individual levels of pupil absence very effectively and has set targets for improvement, which are already showing a successful outcome. Good attendance is actively promoted by the school through newsletters and classroom graphs together with a direct approach to individual parents if this method is felt to be more appropriate. A small minority of pupils exhibit unsatisfactory levels of attendance and the school actively seeks the early assistance of the local support services when appropriate. The school has developed a range of strategies for the monitoring and control of behaviour and this involves a partnership of the teaching staff, classroom support assistants and lunchtime supervisory staff.
39. The school is developing an effective school-wide system of individual pupil assessment that includes regular target setting and the monitoring of outcomes using samples of pupils' work. The outcomes are also linked to the provision for SEN and English as an additional language. Although the assessment system in its present format is relatively new, staff are aware of their responsibilities and this provision is a significant improvement on the last inspection. Pupils' academic performance is also monitored informally by the school. Steps are taken to identify individual problems with a range of strategies that also take into account the more formal assessment systems described above in the preparation of individual education plans for some pupils. However, the assessment information gathered is not always used effectively in presenting a range of work based on pupils' prior attainment in the classroom.
40. The school acknowledges pupils' individual achievements through the praise given to pupils in the classroom and, more formally, in regular achievement assemblies during which pupils' successes are shared with the whole school. Classroom support assistants, nursery staff and specialist support staff work closely with the teaching staff to ensure a consistent and balanced input of pupil support across the whole school.
41. Pupils with SEN receive a good level of support and guidance in relation to their specific needs. Teachers use assessment data and information well to identify pupils' special needs, with additional assessment and testing used when needed. The procedures to identify pupils at an early stage are improving, enabling class teachers to plan to meet particular needs before they become too serious. Formal assessment procedures are now firmly established in direct response to the last report and children identified at this stage are assessed with the involvement of parents, medical and support agencies as required. The SEN register includes information that is useful to the school but this is not used systematically enough to track trends in the identification and support processes. The progress and performance of children

with SEN are monitored through a common review procedure, which is undertaken with all children. Teachers' skills in target setting are generally used to benefit pupils within the whole range of attainment as well as those with SEN. Reviews for children with a statement of educational need are conducted annually and appropriate support and programmes are in place. Documentation and children's files are well managed and there is satisfactory involvement of external agencies when necessary.

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

42. Parents' views of the school are good, as are the school's links with parents. The impact of parental involvement with the school on the pupils' learning is satisfactory.
43. A significant majority of parents are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Inspectors agree with these views in the main, and that the teaching and support staff are good and that the school is well managed.
44. Parents are consulted before children are admitted to the nursery and provide valuable information about what children can do. The nursery staff use this information well to help them meet children's needs. There are good relationships here with the parents who take responsibility for bringing children into the nursery and preparing them for their shared reading session. Their good support enables children to settle well and develop early independence. Parents are kept well informed of events within the nursery. This good relationship is sustained within the reception class and parents are kept informed of progress made, through informal contact, parents' meetings and written information.
45. Parents are appropriately involved in all the reviews of children on the SEN register, a big improvement since the last inspection. These effective links with parents have been strengthened over the last three years and teachers have been well trained to undertake the management of the review process including target setting. They now manage these very well. The headteacher and the SEN co-ordinator are now more closely involved with children on the higher stages of the procedures. Reviews for these children take place annually and are well documented. The school has good links with a range of support agencies and close links with a local special school.
46. School reports are informative and include details of both academic progress and personal development. There are insufficient targets for future development, however, and pupils' attendance is not expressed as a percentage, which would assist parents to more quickly compare their child's attendance with both the school and national averages. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, open evenings and via regular newsletters is of a good standard. The available range of extra-curricular activities at the school is satisfactory and the school has good contacts with the local community who use the school buildings for a variety of purposes.
47. A small number of parents are occasional visitors to the school to provide very welcome classroom support and to organise and run fund-raising events. Almost all parents have accepted a home/school agreement that is designed to promote improved relationships between the school, parents and children. Several parents were interviewed during the inspection and all had only positive comments about the school. The school welcomes the parents of new children and the headteacher is very keen to encourage parents to share any problems or concerns they may have at an early stage. The Parent/Teachers' Association committee is a small but effective body providing much needed support to the school on a regular basis.
48. The school's links with parents provide a useful contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is a strong and effective leader, who has had the determination to develop the school well. Together with key staff, she has worked very hard to redress the serious weaknesses identified in the previous report. In this, she has had some success, but recognises that more work is required to raise standards to acceptable levels at the end of the school. In particular, the headteacher has ensured that the quality of teaching, curriculum planning and assessment systems have distinctly improved. She has worked closely with governors to make good appointments to the teaching and support staff, and raised substantially the morale in the school. The leadership provides a positive and caring atmosphere in the school in which pupils feel secure and valued.
50. The aims of the school are good, and are largely realised in the day-to-day work of the school. The staff, guided by the headteacher, plan very carefully for continued improvement. They analyse the strengths and weaknesses of their work so as to specify the best way forward. For example, the school is well aware that, by the age of 11, boys are not succeeding as well as girls. They are currently devising ways to overcome this. Also, staff will shortly receive first aid training to rectify a shortage of medical skills. The overall plan to develop the school is manageable and realistic. Discussions are taking place to fully implement the national guidance in instituting a new key stage covering nursery and reception classes, called the Foundation Stage. These are not well enough advanced, however. The accommodation for the nursery and reception classes is ideally situated in one area of the school, but is not yet used to its full potential for all the children in the Foundation Stage.
51. The headteacher has made teamwork an important ingredient of school management. Senior staff meet regularly to discuss and organise school issues and initiatives. Subject co-ordinators have more opportunity now to monitor progress in their subjects and suggest improvements, such as requesting funds for new resources. They have not, though, much opportunity to observe colleagues in lessons. This limits their ability to assess the quality of development in their subject, for example in mathematics. This term, however, the English co-ordinator has worked throughout the school to support pupils in developing their literacy skills. This has been a very useful experience, particularly as she has monitored the effectiveness of the school's literacy strategy at first hand. The headteacher also observes teachers in lessons and advises them on how best to improve their skills. She also works closely with officers and advisors of the local authority, whose help has been warmly appreciated in coping with the difficulties raised in the previous inspection report.
52. The governing body meets statutory requirements in relation to provision for SEN and demonstrates its commitment by providing extra funding allocation for classroom support. Specific grants are used effectively to provide training in line with the SEN action plan and are effectively targeted to school priorities, for example on behaviour management and training to develop the specialist skills of all staff. This training is already having a significant impact on the quality of provision throughout the school. There is a productive team approach to meeting the needs of pupils with SEN, managed well by the teachers. The school's improvement plan for SEN developed by the co-ordinator is clear, and the school is well prepared through its systems of identification, review and support to move to a fully inclusive curriculum for all children. Governors publish information about SEN provision both in the school prospectus and in the annual report to parents, but there is limited analysis of patterns in the identification of pupils or any evaluation of the extent of the policy's success.
53. Governors fulfil the rest of their duties effectively, and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They keep themselves fully informed about the school's work through a series of committee meetings, and the experienced chair of governors is very knowledgeable about the school, working closely with the headteacher. There are nominated governors for key aspects of the school's work who visit the school, talk to co-ordinators, and keep the governing body

informed. Co-ordinators also attend governors' meetings to supplement information in the headteacher's thorough reports.

54. The school keeps a firm grip on its finances. It wisely makes sure that its running costs are well within budget and that all development is properly costed. Through this, it has succeeded in ensuring a healthy surplus of funds. Good use is made of additional funds, such as those for staff training, which are carefully targeted to the appropriate areas, including the development of ICT resources. The school has good developmental priorities in its improvement plan, such as the completion of a computer suite and some building maintenance. The plan includes useful criteria against which governors measure the success of each year's developments. The school is currently adapting its monitoring and evaluation procedures to ensure the principles of careful and competent use of resources are fully implemented. The school's administrative and organisational procedures are efficient and effective, and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. For example, the headteacher had to manage during the week of the inspection to arrange supply cover for her deputy's class, including teaching herself for the equivalent of one and a half days. Immediately following the inspection, she was also planning to house a local school whose building had burned down, which involved the delivery and fitting of four mobile classrooms on the Sunday prior to the commencement of the inspection!
55. Teaching staffing is about average for a primary school, and governors are keen to improve the quality of education through their appointment of good teachers. They have been largely successful in that aim. Decisions taken last year before the influx of a number of pupils into Years 5 and 6 have caused large classes in upper Key Stage 2. This has been ameliorated by the deployment of the English co-ordinator until Christmas to create three sets for teaching English and mathematics. Further consideration has also been given to the provision of extra staffing following her return to her own class from January. The governors have also invested heavily in trained support staff to improve the adult : child ratio, and these staff make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. They also contribute to the strong feeling of teamwork, and recognise themselves the skilled management that enables this situation.
56. The school has satisfactory learning resources for most areas of the curriculum. It is building its range and quantity of ICT resources steadily and sensibly. Whilst the quality of new texts in the library and to support some subjects is good, there are not yet enough quality reference texts. Many books for younger pupils in the reading scheme are also not of a high enough quality. However, those books and other materials acquired to support the literacy and numeracy strategies, and investigative work in science, are good. The first hand experience of religious tradition in RE is limited to Christianity, and a broader range of artefacts and other sources would further help pupils' understanding.
57. The school building is a real asset, soon to be shared by another school! The huge hall is very beneficial for all kinds of activities: it was possible during the inspection, by using sliding partitions, for the infants to hold a hymn practice whilst a junior class did PE with no interference one with the other. The accommodation for the nursery and reception classes is ideally situated in one area of the school, but is not yet used to its full potential for all the children in the Foundation Stage. There is a surplus of classrooms that the school is starting to develop for the benefit of the pupils. The library has good potential and the art room is also an improving asset. Good use is made of space outside classrooms to create computer work areas, and to teach small groups. The accommodation is kept very clean, and is generally well maintained, a rolling programme of window replacement being carried out currently by the local authority, for instance. There are also extensive grounds and play areas, although the nursery play area lacks sufficient variety of activities.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to further improve the pupils' standards of attainment, and the quality of education offered, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

1. Continue to improve teaching and learning in order to raise pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 to levels at least equivalent to those achieved in similar schools, and ultimately to be in line with the national average by:
  - a. continuing to adapt the implementation of the literacy strategy to improve pupils' reading and writing skills in English, and by identifying more clearly how these skills can be further developed in other subjects;
  - b. enabling the mathematics co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning in the subject, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, and put in place strategies to develop the best practice across the school;
  - c. including opportunities for pupils to use ICT and reference materials in science, to support their independent work;
  - d. continue to implement the ICT action plan, and include more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in other subjects such as mathematics, science and geography.  
(Paragraphs 1, 19, 20, 51, 63, 75, 76, 85 and 96).
2. Accelerate the planning schedule for the full recognition of the Foundation Stage in its own right as soon as possible, including a clear management structure and a curriculum shared by the nursery and reception pupils based on the national guidance.  
(Paragraphs 18, 28, 50 and 60).
3. Improve pupils' speaking skills by:
  - a. ensuring that teachers' planning identifies opportunities to develop speaking skills through discussion, role-play, and drama in all subjects;
  - b. assessing pupils' speaking and communication skills and checking their progress against targets identified in the National Curriculum and for the Foundation Stage of learning;
  - c. setting targets for improvement in pupils' speaking skills so that the current Year 3 pupils can be expected to achieve the nationally recommended levels by the time they reach the end of Year 6.  
(Paragraphs 4, 17, 28, 59, 62, 74, 79 and 127).
4. Develop teaching strategies which allow pupils to successively develop independent learning skills, so that towards the end of Key Stage 2 they are enabled to:
  - a. choose their own materials and equipment in lessons such as art, DT, science and mathematics;
  - b. work out how to solve problems in their own way or find answers to questions they have raised in their own research in all areas of the curriculum.  
(Paragraphs 5, 23, 24, 30, 35, 80, 88, 106, 111 and 119).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

63

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	13	41	43	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	37.5	271
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	NA	54

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	40

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0,4
National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	22	27	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	24	25	25
	Total	43	45	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (80)	92 (68)	92 (93)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	24	25	24
	Total	43	45	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (82)	92 (93)	90 (91)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	19	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	14
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	23	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (54)	67 (59)	81 (69)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	84 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	6	10
	Girls	11	14	11
	Total	15	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40 (31)	54 (38)	57 (46)
	National	NA (68)	NA (69)	NA (75)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	268
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	3
Other minority ethnic groups	2	3

*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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	135

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39

Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	510544
Total expenditure	495300
Expenditure per pupil	1680
Balance brought forward from previous year	15512
Balance carried forward to next year	30757

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	271
Number of questionnaires returned	52

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	32	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	36	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	60	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	46	6	0	0
The teaching is good.	62	36	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	49	11	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	23	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	50	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	30	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	46	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	52	11	6	16

## **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. A substantial minority of children enter the nursery with poorly developed language skills. Many have difficulty in pronouncing words they know and some have a limited vocabulary, particularly some of the boys. This poor language development affects both their academic progress and their development of social skills. However, the school's assessment at entry over the last three years indicates that the level of attainment overall of children moving into reception is improving. This is in part due to the good teaching that they receive in the nursery, and partly to changes in the nature of the intake. The attainment of girls on entry is higher than for boys in all aspects. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 the majority of children have made good progress in their learning but still attain below the levels expected in communication, language and literacy, most aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Many children exceed the levels expected in mathematical development and in personal, social and emotional development, however. This is due to well-planned and well-structured teaching and the carefully established routines. Overall, the pupils' attainment on entry to the reception classes is below average. The teaching throughout the key stage is good, and sometimes very good. There were occasions, however, where the children lacked opportunities to learn practically, particularly in the reception class.
60. Discussions are taking place to fully implement the national guidance in instituting a new key stage covering nursery and reception classes, called the Foundation Stage. These are not well enough advanced. The accommodation for the nursery and reception classes is ideally situated in one area of the school, but is not yet used to its full potential for all the children in the Foundation Stage.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

61. Most children are secure, happy and well settled in the nursery due to the way that the nursery staff work with them and their parents. Children are able to choose activities independently, making good progress in personal and social skills. They work confidently with new activities and many engage in conversations within group situations. The good teaching, management and interactive skills of staff keep children interested and involved in their learning. In both the nursery and reception classes children behave well and sustain their concentration, especially when tasks are well matched by the teachers to their stage of development. In reception, the teacher encourages the children to talk about their feelings and reflect on what others might feel by using and interpreting facial expression. For example, she developed a story about the class panda to illustrate anger and shock. This was effective in helping the children to be sensitive to the feelings of others. The nursery staff are also skilled in this. For example, a group of girls played in the nursery home corner for a sustained period of time, and the child directing the play was new to the school. Because the staff had helped her to settle quickly, the other children happily accepted her into their friendship group. The nursery environment is well organised by staff to allow children independent choice of activity. In reception, children spend a substantial amount of time engaged in highly structured learning tasks in literacy and numeracy, however, and have more limited opportunities to work independently. Some children find these sessions too long and become restless and lose concentration, especially when tasks are not practical enough.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

62. Children listen well and are attentive in large and small group sessions. Their speech is often less well developed than expected, however. For example, a four year old boy described his play with a 'choo-choo train', and children role-playing fire officers did so successfully, but

without the usual level of animated talk. Nursery staff share books with children in daily informal sessions on the carpet at the start of sessions. As a result, most children are eager to share books and talk about them. Most follow the book as it is read, know that pages are sequentially turned and that print carries meaning. A small number of children are beginning to recognise that letters relate to sounds in words. This is directly related to the regular direct teaching of phonic skills, reinforced through several activities. In reception, most children are able to follow and enjoy a story read by the teacher. The teacher then uses the text well to draw attention to characters and words drawn from the story and to the beginning letters and sounds.

63. Many children develop a satisfactory knowledge of letter shapes and sounds in words, and by the end of reception have embarked on the reading process. By the end of nursery many are becoming familiar with a range of letter shapes and some can copy their name. In reception, children write their name and simple sentences with more independence. Children regularly write during structured tasks both in literacy and across other areas of learning, but there are fewer opportunities to write independently within structured play. Therefore they miss experimenting with written words that link directly to their spoken language.

### **Mathematical development**

64. In the nursery children engage in frequent counting activities and some count to five and beyond. They use a broad range of materials to count, order and classify a broad range of materials. Some children are able to name basic shapes and sort them by colour. Number skills are reinforced across the broad range of activities within the nursery and staff ensure that specific number experiences are built into their planning and their interactions with the children, for example by counting and comparing paintbrushes of different sizes. There is a strong emphasis on the development of mathematical language.
65. Children achieve well in this area of learning in the reception class. They have already developed counting skills and most understand the process of 'one more' and 'one less'. They solve problems in structured whole-class and group activities, and develop the language of number through songs and rhymes with their teacher. In one lesson, the teacher skilfully employed a variety of strategies to encourage the children to sing counting songs, and to build towers of cubes that were one more than or one less than as high as the previous tower. This approach successfully interested them, and gave them good opportunities to use mathematical language accurately in their play. They use counting materials to help them understand the processes of simple addition and subtraction, learning to record their findings pictorially. The children have positive attitudes to mathematics. However, there are limited occasions when they are asked by the teacher to apply their mathematical skills in practical activities and play situations.

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

66. In the nursery children enjoy taking on the roles of different people within the community, for example as fire-fighters and drivers of different kinds within their outdoor play, and of people in the family within the role-play area. Many of these activities are well supported by nursery staff who develop and extend children's play both by playing with the children and by the provision of good quality resources which develop and extend the children's experience and understanding of the world around them. Children enjoy exploring the local area with the staff during regular visits to the library and to a local school. They use ICT to support their learning and receive effective support from staff who keep good records of their progress in this area.
67. In the reception class, children develop an understanding of their families and of time by looking at how they have changed since they were babies. They use their senses well in observing living things and are encouraged well by staff to identify features such as texture and taste when looking at different foods. They identify differences in houses and draw simple maps of the local environment. They make good progress in their knowledge and

understanding of the man-made and the natural world, but have limited opportunities to develop practical investigation skills in using construction equipment and in using ICT.

### **Physical Development**

68. In the nursery children gain great confidence in working and playing within a large space both indoors and outdoors and use a range of equipment outdoors with increasing skill and co-ordination. Staff support them well and intervene in their play when needed. The children are developing an understanding of their bodies and are encouraged to care for their own needs with growing independence. They have access to a range of tools and other equipment, such as scissors and rolling pins, which they use safely and with increasing dexterity. The outdoor play area has improved since the last inspection and there is a greater range of equipment, which the children use well. In their play in the hall during inclement weather the children responded well to the rhymes and ring games led by the teacher, matching the songs well to the expected actions and movements. However, the area has a limited variety of activity areas to support nationally recommended learning activities.
69. Children in reception do not have direct access to a suitable outdoor area and this limits the quality of their physical activities. They have access to the hall at specific times and the teacher takes advantage of this to ensure that they engage in a range of movement and activities. They move within this large space with confidence and control. They enjoy moving rhythmically within singing games and play 'follow my leader' successfully and copy a range of movements. The teacher gives clear instructions so that the children know what is expected of them. They work well in pairs, take turns and throw and retrieve a range of objects. The teacher uses praise and encourages their effort well.

### **Creative development**

70. In the nursery boys are not enthusiastic about singing, not appearing to relate the activity to themselves, while the girls sustain the singing well and are enthusiastic. Here, the nursery staff do not observe the children closely enough, in order to see who joins in, and who needs more encouragement. However, the singing is well led by staff, with good pitch and rhythm. Some older children have a good knowledge of percussion instruments. In discussion with the teacher they describe the different sounds being made using appropriate words for the different techniques, for example 'hitting, banging, scraping'. Children take part in a range of creative activities, including using dough, painting, drawing and making junk models. They mix colours successfully when painting and are beginning to paint from both imagination and experience. The staff manage all these activities effectively, and work closely with the children. The role-play area is well resourced and popular with the nursery children and children who visit from a local school.
71. In reception, children have access throughout the day to a range of creative and art activities. They enjoy painting and mixing their own colours. They appreciate the work of artists such as Monet and emulate the use of colour and brush techniques and produce some very attractive and individual paintings. They enjoy drawing themselves and illustrate stories using their imagination well. They enjoy singing at different times through the day with their teacher and have a developing sense of rhythm. There are limited opportunities for children to engage in imaginative role-play; this is not sufficiently used to develop their spoken language.

### **ENGLISH**

72. Results in National Curriculum tests have risen steadily over recent years, especially in Key Stage 1, although they are still too low at both key stages. The results achieved by 11 year olds in 2000, though improved on previous years, remained well below the national average, and below results in schools in similar circumstances. They exceeded the school's agreed targets, however, although these were pitched low. The school feels that new teaching

methods and extra coaching using nationally targeted funding had considerable effect last year. Girls consistently achieve better results than boys at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has recognised this pattern, and has firm plans to deal with it: these include the effective deployment of the literacy co-ordinator to work with groups of pupils throughout the school this term. At Key Stage 1, results are consistent with those in schools in similar circumstances in reading and writing. Boys have tended to do better than girls at seven, but recent tests show that this gap is narrowing. Pupils with SEN make good progress in lessons, because of careful planning by teachers and good support teaching. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are doing well, as teachers integrate them successfully in all class learning.

73. The attainment of pupils when they begin in the nursery and reception classes is improving year on year, although this year's intake is still below average for five year olds generally, although above average for schools locally. However, the current Year 6 group are reported by the school to have been of much lower attainment at entry, particularly in speaking and listening, and early writing skills. These pupils have not had the advantage of good literacy teaching in recent years and their literacy skills are still too low. However, the quality of teaching has improved over the past two years, particularly at Key Stage 2, because the school has appointed new staff and has invested heavily in staff training. Teachers have concentrated on areas of weakness in pupils' work identified through monitoring of their test responses, particularly in writing, and this is beginning to raise standards. Pupils make steady progress and the standard of work in lessons throughout the school is now similar to that generally found in primary schools, except at Year 6. The current Year 2 pupils achieve as expected for pupils at this stage of the year.
74. Pupils have sound listening skills but do not all have confident speaking skills by the time they are 11. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy their lessons and listen eagerly to their teachers as they explain new learning. They have a sound vocabulary and understand what the teacher is asking of them. For example, most pupils in Year 2 understand when the teacher refers to authors and illustrators. They appreciate rhyming words and can suggest suitable alternatives. Pupils participate well in discussions when given the opportunity and talk confidently about characters and events in a story. They speak clearly but sometimes struggle for fluency. Less confident speakers often remain silent unless prompted by teachers. By the age of 11, pupils have not developed their speaking skills enough, although their listening skills are satisfactory. They understand what is required of them by the teachers and usually settle quickly to group activities. They listen well to other pupils, but teachers do not provide enough opportunities for them to need to speak, such as in decision-making activities. Teachers sometimes talk too much and pupils work individually on many occasions, without the benefit of discussing ideas with one another. Pupils lack a broad vocabulary and this limits their ability to talk articulately. For example, older pupils describe their reading books as 'fun', without giving a convincing reason for liking them.
75. By the age of seven, pupils in Year 2 read satisfactorily. However, reading standards are below average for the current Year 6 pupils. In Key Stage 1, pupils do not have a broad experience of books and find it hard to talk about their favourite stories. They are familiar with everyday words but are not yet reading fluently. Most pupils sound the initial letter of words to help their pronunciation, but have not yet learned how to break words up to aid accuracy. Nevertheless, most pupils are competent readers for their age. Lower attaining pupils find reading difficult and their struggle with unfamiliar words denies them any fluency or expression. Higher attaining pupils read swiftly and accurately, however. By the age of 11, pupils have not developed their reading skills satisfactorily. They are quite accurate in sounding words, even unfamiliar ones. However, they often read slowly and lack expression. This is largely due to their limited range of vocabulary and a restricted experience of reading material. The inadequate number of quality texts, for example, does little to motivate pupils to broaden their experiences in the language. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and accurately, but do not always understand the words they can read. A very high attaining Year 5 pupil, for example, had read the word 'clandestine' successfully in her reading book, but did not

understand it. She had not then used her well-developed research skills to find out its meaning. Lower attaining pupils lack confidence and tend to stumble over new words.

76. Pupils write competently by the age of seven. Current Year 6 pupils, however, have not developed their writing skills to a high enough standard. In Key Stage 1, pupils write in simple sentences and string them together coherently. They write in different styles and formats, such as basic poetry and factual accounts. They punctuate sentences with capital letters and full stops and develop their handwriting correctly. However, their expression in writing is restricted by a thin vocabulary and their spelling is sometimes unsure, even with familiar words. Lower attaining pupils find it hard to write sentences independently and find spelling difficult. Higher attaining pupils write clearly and informatively with correct spelling and grammar. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are quite confident writers, especially in using the structure of language. For example, they use complex sentences well and punctuate efficiently; most pupils also use paragraphs well. However, their expression is often mundane. They use safe words in descriptions or persuasive writing, and are rarely very creative in their choice of vocabulary. Even higher attaining pupils tend to play safe with similes such as 'as fast as a cheetah'. Lower attaining pupils also suffer from a limited vocabulary and especially from incorrect spelling.
77. Notwithstanding the low standards, the quality of teaching is now good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was sometimes unsatisfactory. The introduction of the Literacy Hour and an increased amount of training have given teachers more structure and skill in their teaching. This is beginning to drive up pupils' standards. Teachers mostly use time crisply to keep pupils working hard to a deadline, but they are sometimes too concerned about sticking to the rigid timings within the Literacy Hour. This limits flexibility. For example, teachers do not always give pupils enough chance to work on new learning because they feel they have to move on to the next part of the lesson. Occasionally the pace of lessons flags when teachers talk too much. Pupils lose interest, and do not complete their work efficiently.
78. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, making them feel valued and eager to learn. This in turn produces a positive atmosphere in the classroom. In these situations, teachers trust pupils to work productively unsupervised or they share a joke, without fear of silly reactions. Teachers usually interest the pupils and, in very effective lessons, teachers wholly involve them. For example, teachers feign ignorance at times in order to encourage pupils to come to their rescue. As a result, most pupils' levels of concentration as well as behaviour remain good. This was not always the case with older pupils during the inspection. Teachers sometimes did not deal firmly with misbehaviour and inattention by a few pupils, and this disrupted the flow and ultimate success of some lessons.
79. Teachers plan their lessons well. They know how much pupils have already learned and strive to provide work to challenge pupils of all abilities. This is not always successful. They do not, for example, plan enough opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking in whole-class or group discussions. They do not always allow higher attaining pupils to write freely, although they do focus the use of support staff well on the needs of pupils with SEN. They ensure that pupils know what they have to learn, but do not always use suitable language so that all pupils understand precisely. For example, Year 2 pupils had to write down the word 'antonym' as a title in their exercise books, but many did not understand its meaning. Furthermore, teachers do not develop literacy sufficiently through other subjects. They overlook opportunities for discussion and comment, for example, in PE lessons, and do not always enrich pupils' vocabulary enough in such subjects as history and art.
80. The school has worked hard to develop and improve standards in the subject. The teachers have successfully used the National Literacy Strategy to strengthen their teaching to benefit pupils. The school has good systems to check pupils' progress and it analyses all test results to determine how it can improve. For example, boys do not achieve as well as girls by the age of 11, and teachers are now seeking ways to remedy this. The co-ordinator has worked hard

to improve the subject through addressing the needs of pupils who are underachieving. She is currently working across the school, both to support individuals and groups of pupils, and to gain an overview of the subject at Key Stage 2. This is helping to raise standards throughout the school, but particularly in the Year 5 and 6 classes. The library is a potential asset to the school, but is currently underused. Older pupils were seldom observed using it for their own research, for instance.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is similar to the national average by the end of Key Stage 1, but below the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. These levels are similar to those attained in the most recent National Curriculum tests. At the time of the last inspection, weaknesses in teaching had an adverse effect on pupils' progress as they moved through Key Stage 2. Recently, the school has effectively improved the quality of teaching in this key stage, and it has successfully developed its long-term planning through the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. These measures have begun to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Although the standards that pupils achieve are not yet high enough by the time they leave the school, they are steadily rising year on year. The annual targets that the school sets for the number of Year 6 pupils to reach the average level 4 and above are appropriately rising. Most pupils, including those with SEN are currently making satisfactory progress as a result of improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. Girls' attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 tests has risen dramatically, but boys' results have fallen. However, at the end of Key Stage 1, boys outperform girls. The school has plans to improve the performance of girls at Key Stage 1 and boys at Key Stage 2.
82. At this relatively early point in the school year, most Year 2 pupils are beginning to recall addition and subtraction facts to 10. They recognise simple relationships and patterns such as 'longer', 'shorter' and 'the same'. Most pupils use appropriate mathematical language such as 'tens' and 'units' when discussing their work. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use mathematical names for two- and three-dimensional shapes, and they use non-standard units such as cubes to measure length accurately. Most pupils discuss clearly the strategies they have used for a calculation, and they confidently sequence numbers correctly up to 100. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils competently communicate data in bar charts. They solve problems involving multiplication and division of whole numbers, though this is not extended sufficiently by staff to calculations that result in remainders. Average attaining pupils use standard metric units such as centimetres to measure the length of different objects. They use addition and subtraction facts up to and beyond 10 well and they begin to recall two, three and four times table facts. Lower attaining pupils find it difficult to solve mathematical problems, though they communicate information in bar charts and they have a growing awareness of odd and even numbers.
83. Most Year 6 pupils have limited, though developing, skills in the accurate use of mathematical equipment such as protractors. Lower attaining pupils still have poorly developed knowledge of different types of angle, including right angles, and they find it difficult to explain how they reached a solution. Most pupils use a limited range of strategies to solve number problems. Average attaining pupils are aware of the correct terms relating to data handling, such as 'probability', 'certain' and 'unlikely'. By the time the pupils leave the school most can solve a problem using collected data but they do not make sufficient use of line graphs for representing data patterns. Most pupils recognise equivalent values in the form of fractions. Higher attaining pupils use their understanding of the place value of digits to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and 100 and they use multiplication to calculate the area of a rectangle. Lower attaining pupils have an understanding of reflective symmetry, but they are less competent when identifying all the symmetries in two-dimensional shapes.
84. The teaching and learning of mathematics have become more consistent in quality since the last inspection when half of the teaching in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. Teaching and



learning are now good. At the time of the previous inspection the assessment of pupils' attainment was not used sufficiently to shape the planning of their future work. Current arrangements for the regular assessment and recording of pupils' attainments in mathematics ensure that most teachers have a good knowledge of what individual pupils know, understand and can do. This has a positive impact on teaching and learning. For example in a Year 4 class a pupil who was set a problem said "I can't do it". The teacher, knowing well the capabilities of the pupil, responded "Yes you can!" and enabled the pupil to complete the calculation successfully. The teacher's nurturing approach, combined with a good knowledge of what the pupils in the class could and could not do, enabled high expectations to be fulfilled and the pupils' self-esteem to be raised significantly. As a result, the rate of learning in the lesson was good. Teaching and learning are less effective where teachers are less informed about pupils' capabilities through their assessment procedures. In one Year 3/4 lesson, for example, the teacher's lack of knowledge about the pupils' differing levels of attainment resulted in some pupils being set tasks that were too difficult for them. Because of this, the teacher changed the course of the lesson and as a result the learning was constrained and some pupils lost interest. Teachers generally have good relationships with pupils and, when combined with a very good sense of purpose, this results in pupils making good gains in learning. Teachers have effective strategies for enhancing learning. For example they use correct mathematical terms such as 'inverse operations' that are then used by the pupils. They provide pupils with good opportunities to explain the strategies that they have used in their calculations. This helps them, and other pupils, to clarify their thinking and extend their understanding of a range of methods. Very effective strategies in one Year 2 lesson developed pupils' mental agility rapidly. The teacher threw a beanbag to a pupil with a question, and the pupil threw it back with the answer. This increased the speed of pupils' mental recall of number bonds. Teachers use well-prepared resources effectively to promote learning and they make good use of the last part of lessons to consolidate pupils' understanding and knowledge. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject, though some older Key Stage 2 pupils are occasionally reluctant to respond until the teacher intervenes.

85. Teachers enable pupils to use their growing mathematics skills in other subjects. In science, pupils represent data in various forms such as Venn diagrams, pictograms and graphs. In music, pupils learn about the relative values of different notes. In history they refer to time lines and they use co-ordinates in their geography work. However, there are generally too few opportunities for pupils to apply their developing numeracy skills in mathematics in other lessons, particularly in ICT. The school's mathematics co-ordinator has a reasonable understanding of the impact of the improvements in teaching on learning, and she realises how the differences in the behaviour of pupils in the various year groups impacts on their progress. As yet, however, she has a limited awareness of the discrepancies in the attainments of boys and girls at the end of each key stage and what might be done to address these. There is no regular system for checking on the teaching and learning of mathematics through the school. This means that weaknesses at individual and at whole-school level are not always identified and steps taken to address them. Similarly, the strengths in effective teaching are not always shared with colleagues to help the school in its efforts to raise the quality of teaching further.

## **SCIENCE**

86. Standards of attainment in national tests fell between 1997 and 1998 at the end of Key Stage 2, and have been well below average compared to all schools nationally since then. These results are also below average when compared to results in schools in similar circumstances. The school convincingly explains these results as reflecting poor teaching in the recent past, recognised in the last inspection report as often unsatisfactory or poor at Key Stage 2. This situation has been resolved by new appointments and staff training, so that teaching during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, and was often good. The improved teaching is well planned to cover the required curriculum and to build on pupils' prior learning, and includes more practical opportunities for pupils to explore scientific ideas. Teachers assessed

pupils' standards in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1 as being close to the average compared to those of other schools nationally, but with fewer pupils achieving the higher levels. This maintains the levels attained in 1999, and also since the last inspection.

87. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average. Although many pupils' work is within the expected levels, there is little higher attainment, and a significant minority of pupils' attainment is below average. Pupils have developed their understanding of the best conditions for plant growth, and the hierarchy of food chains. They use a good variety of classification and data-handling methods, linking satisfactorily with work in mathematics. Much of this work is neatly and precisely recorded. There is little evidence of the effective use of ICT to support their work, however, nor of the use of reference materials and measuring instruments to develop an appropriate scientific understanding and vocabulary to talk about their work. These standards however, represent improvement on the standards attained in recent years, and reflect improvements in teaching and curriculum coverage, particularly in investigative work. Currently, Year 2 pupils' standards are average, but skills in experimental and investigative science have improved.
88. An analysis of completed work, including work saved from last year, shows that pupils make steady progress in all the required areas of the subject. This work is more consistent throughout the school than at the time of the last inspection, and includes an increased level of investigative work. This is confirmed from lesson observations, where all pupils have opportunities to conduct tests and develop their use of a variety of materials and equipment. By Year 5, pupils are closer to the levels expected for their age. However, there is still insufficient opportunity for older pupils to decide for themselves which equipment they need to use, or to record their findings in their own way.
89. The quality of teaching has been maintained at good levels at Key Stage 1, and has improved well at Key Stage 2: it was good in two out of three lessons seen during the inspection. There is much more confidence amongst the staff in allowing the pupils to engage in experimental and investigative work than was the case previously. During lessons pupils' behaviour was generally good, as they were keen and interested, motivated by the practical activities to enquire and experiment. Teachers split mixed age classes into the separate year groups to ensure that the pupils tackle aspects of the subject at suitable levels for their age.
90. Year 2 pupils in one split class developed their understanding of electricity well, using high quality equipment to construct circuits. One boy explained the flow in a completed circuit as the electricity 'jumping' down the wire. This was skilfully used by the teacher to illustrate the point in a good summary session. In the other Year 2 class, pupils built well on their knowledge of electricity from the uses of mains electricity round the school by working with a range of batteries to power a variety of appliances, including a watch and a floor robot. The pupils' knowledge and understanding is about average for their age, extended well by the teacher's good questioning skills. Year 1 pupils have good opportunities to learn about the sounds made by different objects in the school environment, including those made by a range of musical instruments from a variety of cultures, and from a computer program, with close help from support staff. The pupils were able to handle the instruments correctly, but the recording sheets prepared by the teacher were too formal, and opportunities were missed to teach the pupils how to click on screen to activate the sounds in the computer program. Support staff are generally deployed effectively to support pupils in groups during lessons, particularly those pupils with SEN.
91. Splitting the classes into age groups causes imbalance in the group sizes at Key Stage 2, but helps the staff to ensure that the required curriculum is taught. The class sizes appeared not to interfere with the pupils' learning in the lessons seen, but the long-term effects of this imbalance should be monitored closely. Year 3 pupils excitedly experimented with light and shadows, and as the group was relatively small, the teacher could encourage movement and sharing of the activities. At the same time, the science co-ordinator worked with 46 pupils from Year 4, with a support assistant. Here the pupils successfully tested different materials as

insulators or conductors of electricity, building well on their prior knowledge, and expressing their own ideas in finding answers to the questions posed by the teacher. Both these lessons were good, and led to good progress in the pupils' scientific understanding. The Year 5 and 6 pupils also split into year groups, creating a very large group of Year 5 pupils. The teacher had very carefully prepared an ambitious set of guided experiments to test which materials are good sound conductors. One group, for instance, tested whether a string and tin 'phone' still worked if one end was behind a door. Interesting debate ensued about whether the door should be closed on the string, and the pupils' explanations of what happened to the sound when this happened represented genuine scientific enquiry. Here again, however, the tests were too prescribed by the teacher to allow good progress for the pupils in devising their own methods of testing and recording.

92. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start in gaining overview of the subject, developing her own skills, and supporting other staff. Good, new resources were used well during the inspection in a number of lessons. Overall, the resources are satisfactory.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

93. In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress and their attainment by the age of seven is broadly average. In Key Stage 2, however, pupils are less successful. Their progress is not satisfactory and by the age of 11, their attainment is well below average. This is due largely to the fact that the school has only recently begun to improve provision for, and its teaching of, ICT and older pupils have had too much to catch up with. The quality of teaching has improved, thanks to intensive training, and the teachers now are much more confident. This is similar to the situation in many primary schools. However, current developments augur well for the future.
94. By the age of seven, pupils are reasonably confident with computers. They use the mouse well to select options and programs. This is especially useful for the mathematics and language games, which reinforce their learning. They paint simple pictures quite effectively, by re-sizing shapes, filling them with colour and using the spray-can feature. They are less competent, however, when writing using word-processing programs. They type in text but only laboriously. Pupils have not yet become familiar with the keyboard and are not confident about editing text, but are starting to learn. Teachers' planning indicates that the current Year 2 pupils will soon be focusing on this area. Pupils also program satisfactorily a floor robot to move in a specific way. By the age of 11, pupils lack many relevant computer skills. This means that when they attempt to produce a multi-media presentation, they cannot, for example, add the graphics themselves. They struggle to add buttons correctly and are not confident about experimenting with the software to seek solutions. Their word-processing skills are still quite basic. Most pupils know how to type and edit text, but only higher attaining pupils do so confidently. Some pupils have difficulty in opening a word document. Pupils are good, however, in using paint programmes to produce lively and colourful pictures. They can save and print data. They can access the Internet but only via web-site addresses. They have not yet learned to use search engines to find information to guide their studies.
95. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons well in relation to the scheme of work but they do not allow sufficient opportunities for pupils to use the skills they learn for their own purposes. As a result, pupils' work is quite rigid and they are not able to strengthen their learning by trial and error. Teachers explain well what is required of the pupils but do not always allow them enough time to consolidate the concept. For example, some pupils learned how to use formulae to calculate totals in a spreadsheet, but had little chance to practise them. Where teaching is good, the teacher fosters good relationships with the class and trusts the pupils to work sensibly on their own. The quality of support teaching is also good in demonstrating techniques and processes to pupils requiring extra help. Teaching is less effective when resources are limited. In one lesson, only 12 pupils were able to work on four computers, while the rest of the class had to design some computer layouts on paper. This lesson was not stimulating enough for the pupils, and their pace of work dwindled.

96. The school has worked hard to improve ICT throughout the school, and is now in a strong position to develop the subject apace. The school is introducing a new nationally accepted scheme of work, which gives vital structure to the curriculum. Teachers are now much more capable in the subject, but they do not yet use ICT in other subjects enough. For example, there is little evidence of computer- produced graphs in mathematics, or research for geography and history. The school has bought enough computers to provide one machine in each classroom, and small clusters around the school. This is ideal for individuals or groups of pupils but not helpful for class teaching. One of the school's aims is to create a computer suite. The school has a sound range of software, but has not yet installed it on all the school's computers.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

97. The standards in RE have been maintained since the last inspection with children reaching the expected levels in relation to the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus by the end of both key stages. All groups of pupils attain levels which are compatible with their prior attainment. They achieve well in developing their understanding and knowledge of religion, especially the significance of Christianity.
98. By the age of 11 pupils have a good knowledge of sacred texts in major world faiths, especially the Bible. They recognise their significance to believers in different communities. They understand that different texts are sacred to the believers in different religions. In Year 6 the pupils listened sensitively to a description by a pupil of how he showed reverence for his holy book. This enriched the pupils' understanding and generated their respect for different religious traditions. Pupils are developing an understanding of religious symbolism with some work on light used well to develop pupils' understanding of metaphor in relation to light and dark.
99. In Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on their prior knowledge although in Year 4 they did not have the expected level of understanding of the terminology associated with the inside of a church in spite of having covered some of this in Key Stage 1. The support for pupils with SEN is very effective in not only helping them to complete written tasks appropriately but in the way religious concepts and language are explored with pupils. This enables them to achieve well and in relation to the attainment of the majority of the class, and with their use of their literacy skills.
100. By the age of seven pupils are familiar with a range of stories about the life of Jesus and express what they learned from those stories in simple language. They understand that churches are special places with special artefacts, for example the Bible. Some were able to name and write about a range of religious artefacts after a visit to a church. Most pupils in Year 2 have an understanding of the Bible as a special book and treated reverently a special family Bible that they were able to handle. Pupils in this key stage build well on their previous learning across all aspects of religious education
101. The teaching of RE is satisfactory and teachers have benefited from the development of a well-structured scheme of work based on the new Agreed Syllabus. Teaching is more focused than it was in the last inspection with some very good teaching observed in a Year 6 class. Teachers plan lessons well to take account of pupils' knowledge and experiences in relation to the common themes that are studied throughout both key stages. As a result pupils build well on their prior knowledge. In some lessons pupils are encouraged to respond personally to different situations presented. Many, including those with SEN, describe how a candle flame makes them feel and how different believers might express their response to their sacred books in a poem. Good questioning by teachers enables pupils to develop and extend their use of appropriate religious language and to reflect on their feelings. Pupils generally display positive attitudes in RE lessons and this is due to the sensitive presentation by teachers. However, when teacher presentations are too long or when work is not sufficiently challenging, some pupils become restless and distract the attention of both the teacher and other pupils.

102. The subject is now well led and a new curriculum has been developed in response to the new Agreed Syllabus. This is being implemented effectively and it is now clear how pupils should progress within religious themes and topics from one year until the next. This is already having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement throughout the school. The assessment of attainment and the monitoring of standards are in the early stages of development. The first hand experience of religious tradition is limited to Christianity and a broader range of artefacts and other sources would further help pupils' understanding.

## **ART**

103. The school's provision and standards achieved in art have improved considerably since the last inspection, and attainment is average by the end of both key stages.

104. By the time they are seven, pupils respond well to ideas given them by their teachers and record some of them in sketchbooks. They have been taught to use pencil well to produce with increasing skill detailed drawings of people, and some pupils are starting to use shading. Most of them also develop a good awareness of human facial characteristics through observation. They mix colours skilfully and produce paintings with a good range of shades and tones. Teachers have introduced them to the work of a variety of artists from the past. Pupils produce paintings in the style of Lowry, for example, and appraise his style in discussion with others. They use techniques based on the work of Monet to produce pictures using paint, crayons, pastels and wash, and use clay and dough effectively to work in three dimensions.

105. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have developed good skills in drawing from observation with a broad variation in the skills used. Some are still using simple line techniques whilst others use shading using a variety of techniques to create form and depth. Within Key Stage 2, the use of sketchbooks has improved over the last year and by the time they are 11 most pupils use them satisfactorily to record their responses to the work of famous artists, and to practise techniques. They develop a range of techniques in both three and two dimensions. For example, they use modelling material to produce large art works including reclining figures in the style of Henry Moore.

106. In the lessons observed at Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching was satisfactory with some strengths. Teachers build well on previous learning, and skills taught in Key Stage 1 are well developed and extended into Key Stage 2. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to think carefully about their ideas when constructing their designs. They demonstrate techniques such as batik well, and draw particular attention to health and safety issues. The pupils respond well to this in their behaviour and their good self-control. This attentive behaviour results in effective learning. For example, pupils were able to use knowledge gained successfully to find out how the process of batik worked. However, in one lesson there was very limited practical involvement of pupils within the period of the lesson.

107. Art is well planned throughout the key stages and portfolios of work demonstrate that pupils are systematically developing and refining skills. These portfolios are also used by the co-ordinator to assess progress. There have been some exciting arts projects that have involved the pupils in local projects, and initiatives that have brought them into contact with the community, bringing local artists into school. These projects have encouraged pupils to work with artists to produce art on a large scale. These have included sculpture using natural materials, steel, paper and cloth. The effect of working in these projects is reported to have developed better co-operation and attitudes, particularly for the boys. In fact, the results of a questionnaire given to pupils about their response to different subjects indicates that art is by far their most favourite subject.

108. Art is well managed and great progress has been made through a thorough audit to identify action needed to improve standards. The issues raised in the previous report concerning the scheme of work, skills development, knowledge of local artists, subject knowledge and

teaching have been mostly resolved. There is insufficient systematic assessment of individual skills and use of three-dimensional work, however.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)**

109. Standards in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly as expected for this age group. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards fall below those expected for pupils of this age. These findings mirror pupils' attainments at the last inspection, though pupils' attention to the quality of the finished product has improved.
110. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils show their own original ideas on their plans, and that with assistance these ideas can be put into practice. Their plans show in picture form what they intend to do and which materials they have chosen to use. Most pupils confidently explain what they are making and they use a range of basic tools safely.
111. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they make satisfactory use of research to collect information and to generate ideas, and the higher attaining pupils talk coherently about this process. Most pupils make step-by-step plans showing increased detail and incorporating suitable words, such as lists of materials, and labelled sketches. They have relevant knowledge of food technology by, for example, describing the ingredients of a biscuit. Pupils carry out techniques carefully and precisely, and this results in good quality finished products such as batik printed fish. Pupils have insufficiently developed skills in choosing a variety of tools and equipment, in considering their own designs as they progress and in considering the use of the end product, however. Discussion with pupils shows that they have poorly developed evaluative skills, particularly in distinguishing between what works well and what could be improved.
112. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, the teacher effectively stressed to pupils the importance of the designing stage prior to making. There were equal opportunities for boys and girls to decide whether to design an outfit for a male or a female. Appropriate safety issues were addressed when the pupils handled scissors. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, the teacher used praise effectively when pupils' behaved well and placed good emphasis on listening carefully to instructions. The lesson purpose was made appropriately clear and pupils had been given suitable opportunities to collect ideas through research. The teacher effectively gave all pupils the chance to reflect on the impact of the inappropriate behaviour of a small number of pupils. However, teachers did not encourage pupils to use their own initiative and ideas sufficiently, in order to try out new ideas. This was also a weakness at the time of the last inspection.
113. There are effective links between DT and other subjects. For example learning in history is enhanced through research, prior to designing a tile depicting a past event, or masks of Greek gods. The school's development plan correctly describes pupils' development in design and technology as 'needing further work'. This is part of the school's continuing curriculum development programme to adopt the recently released National Curriculum subject guidance.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

114. It was not possible to observe geography lessons, as it was not taught during the inspection. Judgements have been based on pupils' work in books and on display and discussions with teachers and pupils.
115. By the age of seven, pupils become more aware of their locality through map-work. They understand the concept of layouts and draw plans of their rooms and homes. They also draw a simple map of their route from home to school. They sometimes consider local issues such as the volume of traffic. They produce very little work on paper, however, and the quality of their work is below average. Their drawing and labelling are often careless; only higher

attaining pupils are competent in their work. By the age of 11, pupils have better mapping skills. They find places in their locality better by using an A-Z map, and the positions of certain locations by using four digit co-ordinates. They know the points of the compass, and also understand how land is used for development and how water is harnessed. They know a little about life in a developing country, yet their overall knowledge of geography is sketchy. There is little evidence of any detailed study. Pupils sometimes research topics for themselves, but they do not learn sufficiently how to draw conclusions from their findings. Teachers do try to plan a proper development of skills in mapping but not in other topics. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, do the same work, regardless of age or ability.

116. Standards in history are below those reported in the last inspection. By the age of seven pupils reach the expected levels for children of their age, but by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils reach levels that are below average. The main reason for this lower attainment is because there is a significant proportion of children with special educational needs within the Year 6 group.
117. By the age of seven, pupils develop satisfactory knowledge and understanding of people in the past. For instance, most pupils can retell the story of Guy Fawkes and give some explanation for why we celebrate 5th November. This is due to the good teaching, especially story telling in words that the pupils understand which helps them to remember the important parts. In Year 1, pupils show that they understand the passing of time by classifying and ordering events in their own lives within simple time lines. They communicate their understanding of past events in different ways through pictures and simple narrative. In the main pupils in Key Stage 2 sustain the progress made in Key Stage 1. In Year 3, in studying the Tudors, most pupils use pictures to identify accurately the differences in the lives of the poor and the rich in Tudor times. They use their observational skills well to find relevant evidence. In Year 4, children show good understanding of the past and how evidence can be found about it. They record their knowledge of King Henry VIII and his wives through writing drawing and diagrams successfully, but they do not readily use books as sources of evidence despite their availability. Consequently by Year 6 their study and research skills are insufficiently developed. There has been limited improvement in this aspect of history since the last inspection.
118. Teaching in history is satisfactory. Work is well planned to meet pupils' needs. For example, writing frames for constructing a simple narrative and the provision of appropriate words helped some pupils with SEN to develop the same historical understanding as the average and higher attaining pupils. Teachers make sound links with other subjects, for example, in relation to geography where a topic on transport included the study of the differences between means of transport in the past and today. In some lessons it took some time for children to settle down to their work and they needed instructions repeated more than once. Due to teachers' persistence in making it clear what they were being asked to do, the majority of pupils settled down to their work, displayed interest and took pride in their finished work. Some pupils with SEN who have specific support from the literacy co-ordinator benefit well from this and achieve well in relation to previous learning. However, some of the pupils are not being fully challenged by some tasks and they achieve less than might be expected considering their prior attainment.
119. There is a reasonable range of reference material to support the teaching of geography and history, but the subjects have not recently had a high profile in the school. Plans are in place for provision in the subjects to be reviewed. The current curriculum is not planned to ensure that there is systematic progress across the different aspects of them for each age group and for pupils across the ability range. Resources available, including books, other reference materials and the local area are not used sufficiently to develop pupils' geographical and historical experience.

## **MUSIC**

120. Pupils' attainments are as expected at the end of Key Stage 1, but are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. The previous inspection found that pupils made unsatisfactory progress in

Key Stage 2 and that the performing skills of Year 6 pupils were not well developed through enough opportunities for exploring, selecting and combining sounds to make their own compositions. Pupils' progress is still restricted in Key Stage 2 because planning does not always build effectively on pupils' prior learning, because teachers' expectations are not always high enough and during the inspection because of the poor behaviour of a minority of older pupils.

121. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils clap in time to the beat of music, though many tend to become faster. In their singing they are beginning to show a sense of the shape of a melody. Most pupils recognise alterations in sounds, such as when the beat becomes slower or faster. They have an understanding that music can be represented by symbols, including standard notation. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 most recognise ways in which sounds can be combined. They are beginning to appreciate the relationship between sounds such as those made by voices, and the way in which music reflects different intentions. However, many pupils find it difficult to perform accurately from simple notations and they have poor skills in describing the music that they listen to by using suitable musical vocabulary. Some Year 6 pupils have immature attitudes when listening to unfamiliar music, as in the lesson when they were asked to comment on music with African characteristics. Some of them made silly noises, reflecting their ignorance of the style of the music, but it was to the credit of other pupils that they did not join in with the few who misbehaved.
122. Singing makes a suitable contribution to assemblies, and it is reasonably tuneful. However, teachers do not always ensure that words are displayed for pupils to see and sometimes they miss opportunities to motivate specific groups, such as reluctant boys. The school makes good use of visiting instrumental music teachers, and its links with the local secondary school, to enrich pupils' musical experiences. Pupils take part in concerts and religious celebrations performed for parents. Here, singing and speaking to an audience are satisfactory, but there is little high attainment.
123. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers use effective strategies to foster good learning. For example they choose bright songs for pupils to sing and they carefully select music to listen to that enables pupils to learn about the different elements of music such as tempo. Teachers make good use of correct musical terms such as 'ostinato' and 'pulse' which fosters pupils' learning satisfactorily. Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace that retains pupils' interests, though at times the lessons slow when pupils are expected to wait and watch for too long. Teachers generally have firm control, particularly in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, and this fosters pupils' attention well. The good teaching in Year 2 was underpinned by effective relationships with the pupils, good questioning to encourage them to discriminate between varying tempos and good opportunities for them to talk about their perceptions of music that they had heard. Teachers do not always ensure that the limited time available for music in Years 5 and 6 is used effectively to challenge pupils and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in one lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils were working at a level of skills much lower than those seen in a lesson for Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. The younger pupils were confidently and accurately performing from standard notation and they could maintain separate rhythms in their groups, while simultaneously keeping in time with the rhythms of other groups. The older pupils clapped in unison from coloured circles, and this was only partly successful as the teacher had not appropriately grouped the symbols into groups of four to reflect the beat. As a result many pupils found it difficult to keep time.
124. The previous inspection also found that the pupils were sometimes set tasks that were at an inappropriate level. Although planning has improved, it does not always ensure that pupils build on their skills, knowledge and understanding in a structured and progressive way through carefully planned steps as they move from class to class.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**



125. Standards are similar to those found in most schools in games and gymnastics at seven and 11. Almost all pupils attain the nationally recommended levels in swimming and water safety before they leave the school. No dance lessons were seen during the inspection. Pupils experience the full range of the subject curriculum, however, and have the opportunity in Year 6 to attend a residential centre where outdoor pursuit activities are organised. The standards and general subject status in the school are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
126. Year 2 pupils have a good range of skills in using the large space in the hall. They responded very well to their teacher's quiet but determined manner during an indoor games session, and showed enthusiasm and controlled excitement in developing passing and receiving games in pairs during one lesson. Their behaviour was outstanding, and they listened very carefully, trying hard to successfully adapt and improve their skills to the teacher's skilled prompting. Pupils in Year 6 worked very successfully with a supply teacher in creating a sequence of mirror patterns: they clearly enjoyed the challenges she set them, and rose to her excellent handling of them to improve their body control and poise well during the lesson. Year 5 and 6 pupils also demonstrated reasonable swimming skills, higher attaining pupils working steadily to improve their leg kick to gain better propulsion. Their response and behaviour were satisfactory.
127. The general quality of teaching is satisfactory, with occasional good features, particularly in the opportunities given for pupils to practise games' skills. Sometimes, however, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss and evaluate their own and other pupils' work. Teachers' planning covers the whole subject curriculum, and ensures, for instance, that games' skills are developed sequentially. Teachers generally have good control of pupils' behaviour, and an appropriate regard for safety. However, when the regular teacher was absent, arrangements for the management of the different groups at the swimming baths were initially unclear. As the subject overall has not been a recent focus for staff training, some of the less experienced staff are cautious in what they allow the pupils to attempt, often limiting their progress unnecessarily. For example, in order to maintain discipline, teachers are rightly concerned to create a quiet working atmosphere. Unfortunately, they often extend this to not allowing the pupils to discuss their work together in order to create new games or movement sequences, or to evaluate it to improve. When they did allow the pupils to discuss their work, the improvement was clear and effective, as during a Year 6 gymnastics lesson, a Year 2 games session, and the second of a Year 4 passing and receiving series of lessons. The teachers' subject knowledge is sound, supplemented by the use of commercial schemes, but some teachers are insufficiently confident currently to allow the pupils to develop higher level skills in gymnastics and games.
128. The recently appointed co-ordinator was absent during the inspection, so no clear picture could be gained of the management of the subject. Teachers commented warmly on the benefits they gained from training in how to teach games from the Top Sport scheme. It would be useful to include further staff training in how to encourage higher level skill development in the school's improvement planning. Parents expressed concern that there are insufficient extra-curricular games activities. The school currently offers similar opportunities as in most primary schools, including well-attended sports clubs after school, and competitive team games against other local schools. The accommodation indoors and out is extensive, and of good quality. The teachers and pupils would benefit from grid markings on the hall floor to help them establish activity boundaries. As the week of the inspection was very inclement, the outdoor facilities were not used. There are, however, no separate changing facilities for boys and girls, or pupils' showers.