

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE ABBEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY AIDED FIRST SCHOOL**

St James Street
Shaftesbury
Dorset

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113850

Headteacher: Miss E Scott

Reporting inspector: Mr L Lewin
22330

Dates of inspection: 20th - 24th November 2000

Inspection number: 225226

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St James Street Shaftesbury Dorset
Postcode:	SP7 8HQ
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Wilkinson
Date of previous inspection:	24/6/96

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr L Lewin 22330	Registered inspector	Mathematics, science, information technology, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs, equality of opportunity.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? Leadership and management
Mr M Whitaker 9644	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils. How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
Mrs M Turley 1921	Team inspector	English, history, geography, art, music, foundation stage.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Abbey Voluntary Aided Church of England First School is a small school situated in the town of Shaftesbury. Pupils attending the school are between four to nine years of age and are mainly drawn from the immediate catchment area, although 46 per cent of the pupils are drawn from further afield and arrive at school by private transport, bus and taxi. Children starting school, initially attend part-time and then full-time from the term in which they reach their fifth birthday onwards. Nearly all of the pupils in the school come from white ethnic backgrounds with a small number of pupils (7.2 per cent) coming from other ethnic backgrounds. There are currently 118 pupils on roll taught in five classes by five full time teachers including the headteacher and two part-time teachers. The number of pupils on roll has not varied significantly over recent years. Twenty five per cent of the pupils are registered as having special educational needs which is slightly above the national average. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need, at one percent, is below average. Two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this figure is well below the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to school is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The headteacher and staff work effectively together to provide a very caring Christian ethos to the school where mainly good teaching enables most pupils to develop enthusiastic attitudes towards their work, generally progress well and attain appropriate standards for their ages by the time they leave the school. The school currently provides value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall, teaching in the school is good and is very well supported by the work of the ancillary welfare assistants.
- Pupils' have very positive attitudes and their behaviour, relationships and personal development are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and ancillary welfare assistants working with these pupils provide very effective support.
- Parents provide strong support for the work of the school and are well involved with their children's education.
- The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for supporting pupils' personal development and these procedures are applied consistently by all staff.
- Pupils achieve good standards in music and physical education.

What could be improved

- Nine per cent of teaching in the lower Key Stage 1 class is unsatisfactory and, as a result, the progress of pupils is not always as good as it should be and, in particular, results in pupils attaining lower standards in mathematics than they should do.
- Teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to inform planning of future lessons and the assessment of pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is not always sufficiently accurate.
- The school development plan has insufficient detail and does not show clearly how the school is going to improve over the next few years.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not organised in a sufficiently systematic way and governors do not have clearly established systems to assist them in monitoring the overall effectiveness of the school.
- There is insufficient guidance to advise subject co-ordinators how their roles should operate.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. The key issues for action raised by the inspection report of that time have been satisfactorily addressed. The school has made sound progress with improving the quality of education provided including a slight improvement in the overall standard of teaching and an improvement in facilities for information technology. As a result, overall, standards have continued to rise in line with the trend of improvement in standards nationally. The school has a sound commitment towards and capacity for improvement in the future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				
	all schools				similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	D	A	A	B	D
Writing	E	B	D	A	C
Mathematics	E	B	D	D	E

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

The above results show that in 2000, Year 2 pupils attained above average results for reading, well above average results for writing and below average results for mathematics compared to other schools nationally. Results compared to other similar schools reflect a picture of lower standards. However, some characteristics of this school, including the very strong likelihood of inaccuracy in the number of pupils shown as eligible for free school meals¹, means that the similar schools comparison does not reflect an accurate picture of pupils' achievements. Inspection evidence broadly confirms the school's results (compared with all schools nationally). The great majority of pupils attain at least the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics. However, mathematics results are low due to the fact that too few higher attaining pupils reach an above average level by the end of Key Stage 1. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in science indicates above average attainment, but this is not confirmed by inspection observations, which finds the attainment in science to be average by the end of Key Stage 1 for this year's cohort of pupils. Nearly all of the pupils in Year 4 are currently on course to reach at least the expected levels in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. In most other subjects at both key stages, pupils achieve appropriate levels for their ages. However, in art, music and physical education by the end of Key Stage 1 and music and physical education by the end of Year 4 pupils attain standards that exceed those expected for their ages.

The trend in the school's results since 1997 shows overall improvement in line with the national trend of improvement. However, writing is improving at a slightly better rate than the national trend. Although results in mathematics have improved since 1996, the levels attained have been consistently too low. Teachers set targets for pupils to achieve by the end of the year, but these targets are not always sufficiently challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are generally positive, confident and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and friendly and respond well to the school's expectations for behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Strong relationships exist between pupils of all ages. Pupils carry out responsibilities they are given conscientiously and efficiently.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are happy to attend school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.

Overall, 91 per cent of lessons seen were satisfactory or better, 35 per cent were good, 21 per cent of lessons were very good and nine per cent (four lessons) were unsatisfactory. With 56 per cent of the teaching being good or better, the overall teaching across the school is therefore of good quality. Teachers plan lessons well and usually provide clear explanations for all tasks. Lessons are usually well organised and run at a good pace so that pupils remain interested and participate fully in all activities. In the good and very good lessons interesting activities are provided that closely match pupils' attainment levels and that challenge and motivate them. Such teaching was particularly apparent in music and physical education and resulted in above average performances from the pupils. Some unsatisfactory teaching is seen in the Year 1 class where expectations of pupils' attainment are often set too low, particularly for the higher attaining pupils in mathematics, who, as a result, progress too slowly with their learning. There is some inaccuracy in teachers' assessment of pupils' levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Also, teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment information to help them plan future lessons. As a result, opportunities to extend higher attaining pupils are not always fully utilised. In all other ways teachers cater well for the needs of different groups of pupils and, in particular, through strong encouragement, help individuals to develop a confident approach towards their work. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been satisfactorily implemented throughout the school and English and mathematics lessons are usually well taught.

In all classes, ancillary welfare assistants work very closely with teachers, are very well deployed and provide strong support for individuals and groups of children, especially for pupils with special educational needs. The extra guidance and support that these pupils receive help them to progress well through all activities. Parent helpers are also well deployed and provide good support for pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum and provides an appropriate range of interesting activities. Good links are often provided between different subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The needs of individual pupils are very effectively catered for and ancillary welfare assistants provide particularly good support
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall good. Pupils' moral and social awareness are well promoted and the development of pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for supporting pupils' personal development. Suitable assessment procedures are in place but the information gained about pupils' progress is not used sufficiently by teachers to inform their planning. Assessment of pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is not always sufficiently accurate.

¹ Similar schools are currently categorised by the number of pupils eligible for free school meals at the school.

Parents provide strong support for the work of the school and are well involved with their children's education. The school ensures that parents are kept fully informed about school events and their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and staff work effectively together to provide a caring Christian ethos in the school. Staff work hard to achieve the school's aims. There is insufficient guidance to advise subject co-ordinators how their roles should operate and, as a result their approach towards formulating actions to improve subject areas and raise standards is unclear. There is not enough detail in the school development plan to show clearly how improvements will be made over the next few years.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are kept fully informed and most are satisfactorily involved in the management of the school
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher monitors teaching, but this is not carried out in a formalised and systematic way. Similarly, governors do not have systematic procedures to enable them to gauge the school's effectiveness.
The strategic use of resources	Full use is made of all available funding. Prudent budgeting and comparison of costs and quotations enables the school to obtain the best value with all spending decisions.

The school has an appropriate level of staffing. Ancillary welfare assistants are particularly well deployed and provide very effective support for pupils. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory and well used, although there is not enough large play apparatus for children in the reception class and some lack of equipment for science. The accommodation is generally satisfactory with good outdoor facilities, but the Year 2 classroom is quite small and particularly cramped when practical activities take place.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parents feel that their children are happy to attend school. Behaviour is very good. The school has a very caring ethos and family atmosphere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. A very small minority of parents feel they are not sufficiently informed about their children's progress.

The inspection team agree with the positive views expressed by the parents. In the opinion of the team, an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities is provided for a school of this type and size. Inspectors also found that parents are kept appropriately informed about their children's progress with detailed written reports being provided by teachers and also careful preparation made for the parent consultation evenings held twice during the year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. With a few variations, the current inspection findings reflect a similar picture of attainment to that of the previous inspection report with pupils mainly meeting nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science and appropriate standards for their age in most other subjects by the time they leave the school. Pupils achieve good standards in music by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. Standards in physical education have improved since the last inspection so that by the end of Key Stage 1 and at Year 4 pupils are well on course to attain standards that exceed the levels expected for these age groups. However, whereas previously pupils achieved a well above average standard in art, they now mainly attain an above average standard at the end of Key Stage 1 and an average standard at Year 4. Also in design and technology, where pupils achieved above average standards last time, they now reach an appropriate standard for their ages by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. The reasons for these changes have some association with the variation in standards from year to year that are to be expected in a school of this size.

2. Baseline assessment results for this year's reception class show that, overall, the attainment of children on entry to school is broadly average, although in mathematics, many children show below average levels of attainment. Observations made during the inspection broadly confirm this picture with the great majority of children attaining levels expected for their age in relation to the Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage.

3. From entry to school to the end of Key Stage 1, overall pupils generally progress well and, compared with other schools nationally, they attained above average results in reading and well above average results in writing in the end of Key Stage 1 2000 national tests. However, progress in mathematics is unsatisfactory with pupils attaining below average results. The low performance in mathematics is clearly linked to weaknesses in the teaching of the lower Key Stage 1 class (see teaching paragraph). On the basis of teachers' assessment, pupils' performance in science at age seven was above average.

4. The comparison of the school's results with those of similar schools is much less favourable than the comparison with schools nationally - reading was below average, writing was average and mathematics was well below average. Taken on face value, this comparison would indicate significant underachievement of the pupils. However, there is some distortion for the school in comparing its results with other similar schools - using the 'free school meals' bench-marking system. This is because there are strong indications that the school's current number of pupils admitted as eligible for free school meals is well below what it should be. The relatively low number of pupils involved in the tests each year further exacerbates this distortion (20 pupils in 1999 and 23 in 2000). Another point to consider, is the school's slightly above average number of pupils with special educational needs (25 per cent). Consideration of all of these factors means that much caution is needed in interpreting the school's results data - and the comparison of the school's results with similar schools in particular is not a true reflection of pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, one irrefutable fact indicated by the results is the pupils' consistent underachievement in mathematics in recent years.

5. Looking at the trend of the school's national test results since 1997 shows overall improvement in line with the national trend of improvement. Taken alone, the trend of improvement in writing results is slightly better than the national trend. Although results in mathematics have improved since 1996, the levels attained have been consistently too low.

6. Close analysis of the national tests data for 2000 shows that the number of pupils reaching the nationally expected level (Level 2) is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, and significantly, although all pupils attained at least level 2 in mathematics the number of pupils achieving the higher levels of 2A, 2B and level 3 is well below average. It is this factor, in particular, that points to the underachievement in mathematics at Key Stage 1.

7. Evidence from lesson observations during the inspection broadly confirms the picture from this year's end of Key Stage 1 tests with the majority of pupils on course to attain at least the nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. It is also clear from observations that despite the early impact of the good teaching at Year 2, higher attaining pupils are not yet performing at a sufficiently high level. One area of disagreement is the scrutiny of work and lesson observations in science indicating standards as mainly average as opposed to above average indicated by the teachers' assessment of pupils' work for the 2000 cohort. This difference can be partly explained by the variations in standards to be expected from year to year, but it also indicates that the teachers' assessment of pupils' levels is not sufficiently accurate. This is also true for reading, writing and mathematics assessments where there are significant differences between teachers' assessments and actual outcomes in the end of key stage national tests; this is particularly the case for mathematics.

8. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 complete the optional national test papers for these year groups in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics and the 2000 results show that by the end of Year 4 nearly all pupils attain appropriate levels for their age. The results show good progress from the end of Key Stage 1 with 44 per cent attaining an above average level in mathematics and 41 per cent attaining an above average level in reading. In writing, 15 per cent attained an above average level, which is higher than the average level for the rest of the county (10 per cent). The school has rightly recognised a weakness in pupils' spelling where fewer pupils reached the upper level than the county average. Inspection lesson observations confirm the test results, with the great majority of Year 4 pupils on course to reach appropriate levels for their ages in English and mathematics by the end of the academic year. Fewer pupils are currently attaining the upper levels than was the case for last year's Year 4 cohort, but with relatively low size cohorts such variations are to be expected from year to year.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school. This progress is verified partly by the clear evidence of pupils being moved off the school's special educational needs register as classes move up through the school. In lessons observed, the strong support provided by ancillary welfare assistants meant that frequent one-to-one support for pupils enabled individuals to achieve well. The strong support of the ancillary welfare assistants and the teachers ensures that all pupils with any particular difficulties are always given the opportunity to participate fully in all activities and achieve good levels in relation to their prior attainment. As mentioned above, higher attaining pupils do not always achieve satisfactorily in mathematics - this was noted in particular in the lower Key Stage 1 class.

10. By the end of Key Stage 1, the great majority of the pupils attain average levels in English and a significant number attain beyond these. Overall, standards are in line with national expectations in Year 4. The majority of pupils listen very well to adults and to one another and this enables them to appreciate and learn from the work shared during the plenary sessions of the literacy hour. Most pupils are articulate and learn to speak confidently. By the end of both key stages, literacy standards are in line with the national expectations. Reading standards at Key Stage 1 are average. A small number of the higher attainers reach above average standards and achieve well. The sharing of stories and poems during the literacy hour promotes the pupils' enjoyment of literature. At Key Stage

2, standards in reading are at least average with a significant number achieving beyond this. Most pupils read accurately and some read aloud very expressively. By Year 4, the pupils have secure library skills but their research skills are not well developed overall. At Key Stage 1 the pupils attain average standards in their writing. They are able to write several sentences using the correct punctuation. Higher attainers begin to write at length making sensible attempts at unknown words. The spelling of frequently used words is often incorrect and the same mistakes are repeated over time. At Key Stage 2, the pupils use an imaginative range of descriptive vocabulary. In their poems they recreate effectively the sounds of machines and the force of volcanoes. Written work is usually appropriately punctuated and written in cursive style. The majority spell common words correctly.

11. In mathematics, the great majority of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils achieve well in their numeracy lessons and are on course to attain the nationally expected levels, although as indicated by the test results too few pupils higher attaining pupils are achieving a sufficiently high standard. Year 2 pupils are beginning to show confident ability to discuss work using the correct mathematical vocabulary. In mental/oral work pupils competently count in tens from different starting points while a small minority of higher attaining pupils competently work out the differences between two digit numbers. Year 4 pupils confidently discuss their work and articulate their mathematical thinking. They show a reasonable understanding of place value to 1000 and have an appropriate mastery of their multiplication tables for their age. A small number of Year 4 pupils work at an above average level, showing the ability to think of their own strategies when trying to solve problems. Year 4 pupils are beginning to grasp the concept of finding fractional quantities of numbers. However, a few higher attaining pupils occasionally find the work too easy and are not fully extended by the tasks provided.

12. In science, Year 2 and Year 4 pupils are on course to achieve the nationally expected level by the end of the year. Pupils gain appropriate investigative skills so that by Year 4 they have a sound understanding, for example, of the concept of 'fair testing'. At Key Stage 1, pupils gain a suitable knowledge of the parts of a flowering plant, appropriate knowledge of how our senses give us an awareness of the world in which we live and acquire sound knowledge of the differences between materials. They also gain a good basic understanding of how simple series electrical circuits work. Year 4 pupils also learn about electricity at a level appropriate to their age and, while learning about light, they gain a suitable understanding about the processes of reflection and how shadows form. Also at Key Stage 2, pupils acquire suitable factual knowledge about the planets in the Solar System.

13. Standards in art are above the level expected at the end of Key Stage 1, where pupils' drawing is particularly good. Pupils in Year 4 are on course to attain appropriate standards for their age by the time they leave the school. In design and technology, Year 2 and Year 4 pupils use a range of materials and tools and gain appropriate skills for their ages.

14. Insufficient evidence was available to make judgement in attainment in geography at either key stage.

15. In history at Year 2 and Year 4, pupils work at levels that are appropriate for their ages. At Key Stage 1, they develop a secure understanding of how things change over time. Year 4 pupils retain historical facts well, and they begin to gain an understanding of the key features of an era, for example, they are able to comment on the contrasts in social conditions.

16. In information and communication technology, there was not enough evidence during the inspection to enable judgement about attainment to be made by the end of Key Stage 1. However, the lack of evidence of pupils using the computers during the inspection indicates that pupils are not involved in enough opportunities to extend their skills in this subject or in using information technology to support work across the curriculum. At Key Stage 2 pupils use computers in a useful range of

situations and Year 4 pupils are on course to reach appropriate standard for their age by the time they leave the school. Pupils develop appropriate word processing skills and make appropriate use of the Internet to carry out research. Generally, pupils are covering all of the necessary areas within the ICT programs of study except they are not currently having enough opportunities to work with data on the computer.

17. In music at Year 2 and Year 4, most pupils attain standards beyond those that might reasonably be expected for their ages. Year 2 pupils sing expressively and many discriminate small variations in pitch. They begin to use simple musical notation and recognise the value of notes. The oldest pupils sing tunefully and perform their own notated compositions confidently on tuned percussion instruments.

18. In physical education, pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 perform above the level that would be expected for their age groups. Year 2 pupils create imaginative gymnastic sequences of their own and manage a good standard of performance. Year 4 pupils show a high standard of dance performance that involves very effective collaboration and particularly creative ways of working together.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that, without exception, their children enjoyed school. In lessons, most pupils are interested and enthusiastic, as for example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, where pupils were using segments of pizza to solve problems involving fractions. Pupils persevere in the face of difficulty and successfully generate ideas for resolving those problems. Pupils show confidence in performance, whether in physical education or music. Attitudes are very good where teaching is stimulating and pupils are positively encouraged. Pupils respond well to enthusiasm; for example in a music lesson, Year 4 were told to 'have fun' - and they did, with a consequently beneficial effect upon their learning. Attitudes are, however, less positive in lower Key Stage 1, where lessons are less challenging and pupil management more tense. Overall, pupils' attitudes show an improvement over the good standards noted at the time of the last inspection.

20. Behaviour is very good, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were virtually unanimous in their satisfaction with children's behaviour. Pupils are friendly and polite and eager to tell visitors about their work - for example, why they were dressed in various costumes on 'Book Day'. In class, they comply with the school's behavioural requirements. Children under the age of five in the Foundation Stage know that they must share, take turns and put up a hand to speak. Lunch-time is generally orderly; pupils join in a Grace before eating and comply with their mealtime supervisors' instructions. Play is lively and vigorous but no instances of inappropriate or threatening behaviour were seen. Pupils of both genders, all ages, ethnic backgrounds and abilities play well together. There is no evidence of any sexual or racial harassment. Whilst moving about school, however, pupils can be thoughtless - running where they should walk, for example, and pushing through doors regardless of whether anyone is going the other way. The school appears to have no protocol as to right of way on the stairs, so that pupils pushing up collide with others rushing down.

21. Personal development and relationships are very good. Relationships were noted as being very good during the last inspection and this has clearly been sustained. Relationships between pupils are very positive and supportive, and a real strength of the school. Pupils support each other in class, working collaboratively in pairs and groups. The good working atmosphere encourages all pupils to develop a confident approach towards joining in class discussions. The school system of 'playground helpers' (a rota of children in Years 2 and 4) is particularly effective in promoting good relationships - on several occasions, these 'helpers' were seen comforting younger children who had sustained minor

cuts and grazes in play. A genuinely caring ethos has been created in the school. Pupils with duties, such as looking after the music in assemblies or picking up litter in the playground, carry them out efficiently and with minimal fuss. Pupils in charge of the assembly music (which they themselves select) are encouraged to research the piece and its composer, thus promoting skills of independent study. The school is an inclusive community - pupils with special needs, with physical handicaps and from minority groups including Travellers, mix together very well. Relationships between staff and pupils are generally strong; teachers treat children with respect, valuing their contributions in lessons. Relationships between children and classroom assistants are notably good.

22. Attendance is satisfactory, authorised absences being broadly in line with the national average for primary schools. This mirrors the finding of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence, as at the last inspection, is above average. There are three reasons for this: the school has one family whose attendance problems are dealt with by the education welfare officer; there is a growing tendency for parents to take family holidays in term-time; and the school takes an untypically firm line with lateness. Any child who arrives after the register has been closed (about ten minutes after school starts) is recorded as having an unauthorised absence. Attendance is, therefore, better than the statistics might suggest.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Overall, 91 per cent of lessons seen were satisfactory or better, 35 per cent were good, 21 per cent of lessons were very good and nine per cent (four lessons) were unsatisfactory. With 56 per cent of the teaching being good or better, the overall teaching across the school is therefore of good quality. This is a slight improvement upon the quality of teaching observed during the last inspection, with a lower percentage of unsatisfactory lessons seen during this inspection. However within this broad picture lies a good deal of variability both between the quality of teaching in different year groups and in the quality of teaching between different subject areas.

24. Teaching for the children in the foundation stage (reception class) is good overall and occasionally very good. Children are well settled into their classroom routines and lessons are well organised so that all children know what to do. A good balance of activities is planned to enable pupils to progress through the stepping stones within the Early learning Goals for the foundation stage as well as to provide children with relevant experiences in appropriate areas of literacy and numeracy. In this way the children are well prepared for progressing onto the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Activities are generally well matched to children's attainment levels. Tasks are often organised effectively to enhance opportunities for direct teaching either in small groups or on a one-to-one basis. As a result, overall, children make good progress. They benefit, in particular, from the high level of interaction between themselves and the adults in the classroom. The teacher explains ideas very carefully and at an appropriate level and asks a good range of questions to encourage participation by all children. Very good lessons are characterised by the provision of activities that fully engage children's interest and attention.

25. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. However, in the lower Key Stage 1 class, lessons were satisfactory at best and unsatisfactory teaching was observed in mathematics, science and music. Interesting work is often planned for the pupils in this class and mainly clear explanations are given. However the pace of work is often too slow, causing pupils to lose interest and become restless. Expectations of pupils' attainment are often set too low, particularly for the higher attaining pupils in mathematics, who, as a result, progress too slowly with their learning. Teaching in Year 2 is consistently good in all subjects and occasionally very good, but does not have enough time to impact upon and make up the lost ground in mathematics especially with the higher attaining pupils. This is

reflected in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests where the results in mathematics are not as good as those for reading and writing. Lessons in Year 2 are well organised and run at a good pace so that pupils remain interested and participate fully in all activities. Activities are often well modelled so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them and consequently progress well when they execute the activities themselves. Lessons are well planned and explanations and questions are suitably geared to challenge pupils of all attainment levels. Very occasionally the pace of work during class discussions slows when the level of questioning is too difficult for the individuals involved.

26. Teaching at Key Stage 2, for Year 3 and Year 4 is good overall. Music and physical education teaching is very good. In these lessons the work is particularly challenging and matched very precisely to pupils' current attainment levels. The pupils respond very well to the teachers' enthusiasm, work at a very good pace and make rapid gains in their learning. The work in these sessions also enables pupils to progress very well with their personal development in terms of gaining confidence and learning to collaborate very effectively with one another. In most other subjects teaching is good. Lesson objectives are clearly explained so that pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers generally use questioning well to gauge and promote pupils' understanding. Lessons are well planned and resources are often used very effectively to help pupils move on rapidly with their understanding. In a few lessons, the pace of work occasionally slows too much due to either the instructions being unclear or the tasks lacking a sufficient level of challenge - this was the case in the one unsatisfactory science lesson seen in Year 4. Occasionally, opportunities to extend higher attaining pupils are not fully utilised.

27. In all classes, ancillary welfare assistants work very closely with the class teachers, are very well deployed and provide very strong support for individuals and groups of children, especially for children with special educational needs. The extra guidance and support that these pupils receive help them to progress well through all activities. Parent helpers are also well deployed and provide good support for pupils.

28. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been satisfactorily implemented throughout the school and teachers generally show a good subject knowledge in English and mathematics. However, as mentioned above, expectations are not set high enough for pupils' learning in numeracy in the lower Key Stage 1 class. In all other classes English and mathematics are mainly well taught.

29. Generally, teachers plan lessons carefully and in detail and ensure that lessons are geared to promote the full participation of all individuals in the classes. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work together, use their initiative and build up their confidence. The school has rightly recognised the need to ensure that higher attaining pupils are always provided with sufficiently challenging work.

30. Teachers use a variety of useful and appropriate procedures for testing and assessing pupils' progress. However, information from such assessment is not made full use of to help teachers plan the next stages in their pupils' learning.

31. Homework is well used throughout the school to promote pupils' learning. In the younger age group classes, reading is well promoted and for older pupils suitable homework tasks are provided which enhance or extend work carried out at school.

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

32. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to the pupils are satisfactory. Since the last inspection there has been a satisfactory improvement in the overall curricular provision. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the adoption of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes of work provide for greater continuity and progression across the single-age year groups. Teachers now produce long, medium and short-term plans. However, there is no agreed format for the medium term planning and the clarity with which the learning objectives are identified is variable. The best planning pinpoints very clearly what is to be taught and how it will be taught.

33. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that successfully meets the needs of its pupils who are well prepared to undertake the next stage of their education when they leave the school. Statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are met and the curriculum for the under-fives is based appropriately on the QCA guidelines for the Foundation Stage. The youngest pupils are suitably prepared in both their personal and academic development to undertake the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

34. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented. Literacy skills are used well to support work in history. Since the last inspection the resources for the information and communication technology curriculum have been increased, and teachers generally plan effectively for this subject. However computers are not always used sufficiently to support work across the curriculum.

35. There is appropriate provision for the pupils' health education and opportunities for promoting it are identified across the curriculum. In physical education, for instance, the pupils are helped to develop an understanding of the effect of exercise on the body. A Life Education Group visits the school once a year to teach the pupils about their bodies and how to care for them. Since the last inspection, the governing body has suitably agreed a policy for sex education.

36. At Key Stages 1 and 2 teachers plan a range of interesting and varied learning experiences. They provide as many first hand experiences as they can to promote the pupils' understanding through educational visits and by bringing people into school to share their expertise with the pupils, for example, parents, writers and poets. The provision in the foundation years does not consistently provide for good play activities to encourage investigation and imagination. In all classes the teachers make effective cross-curricular links in order to promote the pupils' understanding of what they are taught. For example, Year 2 pupils were 'drilled' in physical education to help them understand the strict regime of the Victorian classroom, a topic they had studied in history.

37. Nearly fifty per cent of the pupils travel to and from school by bus so extra-curricular activities are run at lunch-time. The range is satisfactory and the activities provide good opportunities for the pupils to develop their interests in music and sport. In addition, Year 4 pupils are offered a residential visit to an outdoor activity centre.

38. Parents are strongly involved with their children's education and, along with other members of the community, are invited to share their interests and talents with the pupils and this contributes significantly to the pupils' progress. The local clergy participate in such activities as the school's programme of assemblies and thereby enhance the provision for pupils' spiritual development.

39. Links with the community make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. Year 4 benefit from a link with a local hotel, which enabled them to study the commercial application of mathematical skills. The local wildlife ranger has worked with pupils and parents on the school's wildlife pond. Parents and the community work with pupils on the construction of a millennium hedge and a memorial path in the

school grounds, thus making a significant contribution to pupils' environmental education. Local figures such as a fireman, policeman, paramedic, doctor and nurse visit the school to talk about their work.

40. Links with other local schools are very good. The exchange of expertise benefits the curriculum. The schools have worked on a joint scheme of work for physical education and this has contributed to a significant rise in standards in this subject. The reception class teacher usefully liaises with local pre-school groups and the children have opportunities to visit school before they commence formal education. The local comprehensive school has sports college status and offers pupils coaching in cricket. There is valuable co-operation between the school and two other small first schools on both social and curricular matters. The groups combine for special events such as a mathematics week or music workshops led by members of the nearby Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Effective liaison procedures are in place to smooth pupils' transfer from first school to middle school.

41. Equality of access and opportunity is sound. All pupils have access to the National Curriculum. The school is monitoring the performance of boys and girls in reading and writing to ensure appropriate provision is made. Extra-curricular activities are open to all. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good and they are very well supported by the learning support staff. They have access to the same curriculum as other pupils and integrate well. Overall, the higher attainers do not receive the same level of support to optimise their potential and the pupils at the lower end of Key Stage 1 are not taught consistently well. The special achievements of all pupils are publicly recognised in the weekly 'good work assemblies'.

42. As at the time of the last inspection, provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory. In the assemblies, good opportunities are made for the pupils to reflect on non-materialistic matters and to consider one another's achievements. In the foundation years the calm environment provides the children with good opportunities for quiet reflection. However, at all key stages opportunities to promote spiritual development through the day-to-day activities are missed. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good. The moral code is based firmly on Christian principles. The 'golden' rules emphasise positive actions and the staff and other supporting adults are good role models in promoting right from wrong. Provision for the pupils' social development is good. They are treated respectfully by the adults and encouraged to appreciate their own role in contributing to the ethos and smooth-running of the school. They undertake responsibilities such as operating the overhead projector in assemblies and being responsible for the choice of music. They are given useful opportunities to represent their school at local events such as the choir festival and sporting competitions. 'Golden' time gives the pupils the chance to choose their own activities and co-operate with pupils across the age range. In group work they listen to others and pool ideas to the benefit of their learning. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities are made for them to learn about other cultures and traditions through geography, history, religious education, music and literature. There is a good range of musical instruments to support this. Art does not play a significant role in extending the pupils' cultural understanding. Limited opportunity is made for them to learn about the cultural traditions of their own area. In part this is because local studies form part of the middle school curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. As at the time of the last inspection, overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Very good procedures exist to promote pupils' personal development. Appropriately, the head teacher is the designated person for child protection purposes. All staff, including support staff, are suitably aware of the procedures to be followed in cases of concern. The school rightly

works to the local education authority's guidelines on child protection matters. The governing body, however, has not ratified a child protection policy for the school.

44. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory. A member of the governing body (with professional experience in this area) has responsibility for the matter. The premises are inspected regularly. The school has satisfactory arrangements for first aid and dealing with medical emergencies. Contracts are in place for regular safety inspections of play and physical education apparatus, electrical and fire equipment. Regular fire drills are held.

45. Attendance is promoted satisfactorily. The education welfare officer pursues instances of irregular attendance. Unexplained absences are followed up and if no satisfactory explanation is received, the absence is recorded as unauthorised. The school is particularly vigorous in promoting punctuality and any pupil who arrives after the register has been called is recorded as being absent without authority. As a result punctuality is good but unauthorised absence is above the national average.

46. The school is successful in promoting high standards of behaviour based upon very effective procedures. There are a few simple rules - 'Golden Rules' - and a few equally simple sanctions. The last lesson on Friday afternoon is called 'Golden Time' and it is a time in which a useful opportunity is provided for pupils choose an activity. Unsatisfactory behaviour results in a loss of part of that time. The system is effective and clearly understood and appreciated by pupils. 'Golden Rules' are discussed with pupils at the beginning of the academic year to ensure that they share in the ownership of the rules. The very good behaviour seen, however, owes more to the school's ethos and staff's expectations than to compliance with a set of rules. Behavioural expectations are made clear from the earliest days in the reception class and underpinned by the regularity of daily routines - pupils know what is required of them. Staff are largely consistent in their approach to discipline. Some mealtime supervisors have been trained in pupil management, and the school's thoughtful provision of items such as skipping ropes helps to make play break times more constructive. The school has created an atmosphere in which all pupils are equally valued - there was no evidence of any sort of racial or gender harassment. The headteacher reports that there has been one instance in the recent past, which was dealt with appropriately. The school does not maintain a specific record of racial incidents, but there is a suitable behaviour incident book. Bullying is said by both parents and pupils not to be a problem. There was one instance in the preceding twelve months that, although it resulted in a brief fixed period exclusion, was carefully and conscientiously dealt with by the school.

47. Arrangements for the educational and personal support of pupils are satisfactory. All pupils are known to staff as individuals and the high quality of relationships between staff and pupils provides pupils with the day-to-day support they need. Weekly 'good work' assemblies provide encouragement and public celebration of good effort and achievement. Good use is made of the local education authority's Traveller Education service to support pupils with a nomadic lifestyle. Circle Time - an opportunity for pupils to discuss matters of concern to them such as friendships - is not regularly timetabled but provided as and when the need arises. External speakers, such as a police officer, doctor or nurse, usefully visit the school to address issues of social development and, once a year, the school is visited by the Life Education Centre - a travelling roadshow which addresses issues such as healthy living.

48. The monitoring and support of the pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has improved its procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment considerably. At the foundation stage baseline assessments are carried out on entry to school and form the basis from which the pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school. In addition to the end of Key Stage 1 statutory assessments, the school undertakes reading tests at Years 1-3 and uses the QCA

non-statutory literacy and numeracy assessments at the end of Years 3 and 4. Using the information gained from the statutory and other assessments, individual targets are set. The potential value of analysing the test results is not fully realised because the specific weaknesses in the overall performance are not identified for the purpose of improving provision. Pupils are also required to produce a piece of work each month for their profile book and it is assessed by the class teacher. However, the nature of the tasks are too diverse for rigorous monitoring of progress to be made. The time and effort given by teachers to this task are not justified by the outcome.

49. Individual class teachers regularly monitor and record pupils' attainment and progress. However, these assessments do not consistently inform the planning and, as a result, the work in the core subjects is not always at an appropriate level to meet all pupils' needs. This is particularly the case in mathematics where the work is not always sufficiently challenging for the higher attainers. Teachers' marking of pupils' work recognises achievements, but praise is sometimes given without it being made clear what has been achieved. The value of the marking is best when it suggests points for improvement. Individual education plans for the pupils with special educational needs are well planned with clear targets and they are adapted appropriately as a result of continuous day-to-day assessment.

50. The school provides a very good level of personal support for its pupils. Because it is a relatively small school, teachers and ancillary welfare assistants know their pupils very well and have a clear picture of their social and emotional needs. Support for the pupils' personal development arises as a natural outcome of the good relationship between pupils and adults. The youngest pupils gain confidence in a caring and consistently supportive environment. Information is shared with the parents to the benefit of the pupils. The teachers' expectations for the pupils' attitudes and behaviour are mainly high and pupils are given strong encouragement to develop positive responses to learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. This aspect of the school has improved since the last inspection. In particular, the quality of information provided for parents, which was judged unsatisfactory during the last inspection is now found to be satisfactory. Also, written reports on pupils' progress, which were criticised last time are now judged to be of sound quality. Parents comment that they now feel better informed and have closer links with the school than was previously the case. Parents hold the school in high regard. They appreciate the family atmosphere and caring ethos of the school and the fact that their children are happy to attend. They are impressed by the standards of behaviour the school promotes. A significant number of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were less than happy with the level of out-of-school activity provided. However, in view of the pupils' ages and the fact that nearly half of them travel to school by bus, the inspection team considers that the range of additional activities provided in the lunch break is reasonable. The school's 'Golden Time' provides an opportunity for pupils to try various activities. In addition, pupils in Year 4 are given the opportunity to make a residential visit to an outdoor activity centre. The school focuses upon both sport and environmental education and the number and range of visits and activities compensates for the absence of the after-school clubs frequently provided by larger schools.

52. The school's links with parents are good overall. Appropriate information is provided about the school and pupils' progress. Parents have two formal opportunities a year to meet their children's teachers. The school prospectus is informative. Regular, serially-numbered, newsletters are issued giving good notice of school events, advance notice of the topics the children will be studying and information regarding staffing issues. The governing body's annual report, however, is statutorily deficient in several respects - there is no mention, for example, of the work the school is doing to make the premises more accessible for the disabled, nor is there a detailed financial report. Parents of

children with special educational needs are fully involved in regular reviews of progress. Parents find staff open and approachable.

53. Parents make a strong contribution to children's learning both at home and at school. Pupils' home-school reading records are well used by both school and parents; they form a valuable vehicle for home-school dialogue. The school's approach to homework is understood and appreciated by the majority of parents. Parents are encouraged to volunteer their services in school and a number do so. Good efforts are made to involve parents by assessing their opinions via the use of questionnaires. In addition, parents join working parties in the grounds and assist with out-of-school activities. The working parties make a strong impact upon improving facilities in the school such as pathways across the grounds and the building of and care of the school's conservation area and pond. There is an active parent-teacher association which, as well being a vigorous fund raising body, acts as a good link between school and parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. As at the time of the school's last inspection, the overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher and staff work together effectively to provide a caring Christian ethos in the school which helps pupils develop confident and enthusiastic attitudes and generally progress well with their personal and academic development as they move through the school. The aims of the school are clear and staff work hard to achieve them. The school has a useful list of areas for improvement within its development plan. However, there is not enough detail concerning priorities for development and their accompanying actions over the next few years and, as a result, the vision for the school's educational direction is unclear. In addition, there are useful areas of development that the school is pursuing that are not incorporated into the overall development plan.

55. Governors fully support the work of the headteacher and staff of the school, generally fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities and play a satisfactory part in the overall management of the school. However, there are a few items of information missing from the governors' annual report to parents. Through very good communication systems such as the regular weekly meetings between the headteacher, chair and vice chair, governors are kept fully informed about the on-going operation of the school. Many governors have an active and often practical involvement in helping the school move forward with initiatives to improve the quality of education. However, the governors' school development planning committee is not currently active enough in promoting the formulation of the school's development plan. This limits the governors' overall ability to shape the direction of the school. However, governors have been active in pursuing ways of bringing about school improvement. For example, the decision to make the role of the headteacher non-class based and ensure that each class caters only for one year group are moves that clearly target improvement in management and promote the aim of driving up standards. The change in the headteacher's role has enabled her to increase the level of the monitoring of teaching and learning that she carries out. She has, for example, usefully monitored lessons in numeracy in all classes in the school. However, the headteacher rightly recognises the need to introduce a more formalised system for monitoring teaching and learning so that it can be carried out in a systematic, regular and well-focused manner. Similarly, although many of the governors visit the school on a regular basis, they do not have clear and effective procedures to assist them in monitoring and gauging the overall effectiveness of the school. For example, governors are allocated subjects of the curriculum but do not always liaise with the teacher who carries the subject responsibility in the school.

56. There are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils. They are given sufficient and appropriate opportunities to further their

professional development. New staff and trainee teachers are very well supported by the school and especially by the guidance and support they receive from the headteacher. All staff work hard to co-ordinate and promote areas of the curriculum for which they are responsible. However, their roles as subject co-ordinators are not clearly defined and there is no information in their job descriptions relating to the subject responsibilities they hold. The lack of proper guidance means that their approach towards improving provision and raising standards in the subject for which they are responsible is unclear. This also results in insufficient linkage of the subject co-ordinators' work to the formulation of actions within the school development plan. For example, there is currently no fully detailed development plan for information technology either as part of or separate from the overall school development plan. Much discussion clearly takes place between staff in the school, and many very useful ideas for future development in subjects have been identified. The headteacher now recognises the clear need for all staff and governors to commit all of these ideas to the next phase of school development planning, so that all new initiatives can be tackled in a prioritised and measured fashion.

57. Special educational needs is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Detailed and very clear records are maintained. Good quality individual education plans are carefully constructed for individual pupils and strong links are established between parents and the school and between the school and outside agencies where appropriate so that pupils with special educational needs are given every opportunity to progress at a good rate. Close liaison is generally maintained between all parties concerned but there is not enough regular liaison between the special needs co-ordinator and the ancillary welfare assistants who provide much of the in-class support for pupils with special educational needs.

58. Full use is made of all available funding, including all grants provided for specific purposes - such as recently acquired funds to help upgrade the school's information technology equipment. Governors are fully involved in the process of scrutinising the budget. Close liaison between those centrally involved in handling the finances ensures that all matters with funding implications are carefully considered. For example, use of the funds in the school's slightly large carry forward figure have been prudently laid aside to help pay for the cost of furniture in the new classroom that is due to be built. Prudent budgeting and comparison of costs and quotations enables the school to obtain the best value with all spending decisions.

59. The school has thoroughly pursued all procedures that will help to implement the new performance management systems, currently being introduced into all schools nationally.

60. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school occupies a steeply sloping site, but good use has been made of the available space, with play areas on two levels and a large sports field at the lowest level. The field contains adventure play equipment and an environmental area with a professionally designed wildlife pond. Classrooms are adequate for the numbers and ages of pupils with the exception of the Year 2 classroom. This room - a former kitchen - is too small for the comfortable teaching of practical subjects such as art. The premises are well maintained by the cleaner-in-charge.

61. There are generally sufficient resources to teach the curriculum but they are not of consistently good quality. There are gaps in the provision for the reception class where there is no equipment at all for outdoor activities and no large construction equipment. The book corner furniture is not appropriate for pupils of this age. Resources for science are unsatisfactory with a shortage apparent for teaching electricity for example and the co-ordinator rightly recognises that much equipment is worn and in need of replacement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to continue current school development the staff and governors should now:

- (1) Improve the teaching for Year 1 pupils by ensuring that lessons provide activities that match precisely with the attainment levels of pupils in the class and, in particular, cater fully for the needs of the higher attaining pupils - to improve their rate of progress particularly in mathematics. (Paragraphs 23, 25, 93, 99 and 127)
- (2) *Ensure that all teachers make full use of assessment information to inform their lesson planning and improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 by providing opportunities for cross moderation of pupils' work. (Paragraphs 7, 30, 49, 82, 94 and 95)
- (3) *Provide a fully detailed school development plan that shows clearly how the school is going to improve over the next few years. (Paragraphs 55, 56 and 124)
- (4) *Provide and implement formalised and systematic procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning throughout the school. (Paragraphs 55, 101 and 120)
- (5) Introduce and implement clear systems and procedures to assist the governors in monitoring the overall effectiveness of the school. (Paragraph 55)
- (6) Develop clear guidelines to help subject co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities and, which help them to develop their subject areas in line with the school development plan objectives. (Paragraph 56, 101, 108, 112, 116, 120 and 124)

*These items - already identified by the school as areas for development.

In addition to the above points, the school should consider the following areas for inclusion in its action plan:

- Ensure that all required items are included in the governors' annual report to parents. (Paragraph 52 and 55)
- Extend the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. (Paragraphs 16, 34 and 121 - 124)
- Improve resources for some areas of teaching and learning in science and for the reception age group class. (Paragraphs 61, 70 and 102)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
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
0	21	35	35	9	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 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		118
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		27

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	9	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	12	12	14
	Total	21	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (95)	91 (75)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	13	14	13
	Total	22	23	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (90)	100 (100)	96 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	90
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	23.6

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	[]
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	207780
Total expenditure	196712
Expenditure per pupil	1741
Balance brought forward from previous year	1946
Balance carried forward to next year	13014

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	118
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	47	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	44	5	2	19
The teaching is good.	51	47	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	51	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	12	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	37	2	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	44	42	7	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	37	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	35	23	2	14

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

²AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. The children enter the reception class at the age of four and attend part time until the term in which they reach their fifth birthday. Many children have attended pre-school playgroup or nursery. Baseline assessments indicate that their attainment on entry to school is average overall, however, their linguistic skills tend to be more advanced than their mathematical ability.

64. The children make a very positive start to school in the reception class.

65. By the age of five the majority of the children achieve the Early Learning Goals set out by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for pupils of this age. Overall progress made by children at this age is good. In particular they make good progress in their personal and social development, language development, mathematical development and physical development. They make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding and creative development.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The children's responses show that they are very happy to come to school. They are well taught in this area of learning and make good progress. As an outcome of the strong support and encouragement they are given by the early years team, they are confident and willing to carry out the activities which they sometimes find challenging. The children are helped to develop an understanding of their own learning and grow in self-esteem. For example, the teacher records their achievements as she sits with them; praise and 'stickers' are used appropriately and the children share their good work with the rest of the school. Relationships with adults and with one another are very good. The teacher and the ancillary welfare assistants set a good model of co-operation and respect for others which is reflected in the children's attitudes. The children share equipment and take turns amicably. Their behaviour is very good both in and out of the classroom. The classroom is a calm and orderly environment and the adults' expectations are consistent. During registration, in assembly and in the playground, the children know what is required of them and behave accordingly. They are attentive when they are being taught. Proper attention is paid to ensuring the children's safety. Some provision is made for the children to develop independence and make decisions for themselves. For example, when they have an opportunity to select their own activities, they do so responsibly. Not enough opportunities are provided for them to make decisions about their own learning, particularly in their art and craft work and they are not sufficiently encouraged to participate in the day-to-day running of the classroom - such as setting out and putting away their own equipment or changing the date. Satisfactory provision is made for the children's spiritual development. They participate appropriately in the quiet moments of reflection during prayer time and assemblies and respond well to the ethos and emotions inspired by stories they are read.

Language and literacy

67. By the age of five the children have made good progress in their language and literacy development, particularly in speaking and listening and in reading. A few work comfortably towards level one of the National Curriculum. Most are competent speakers and can express their ideas fluently. Teaching for this area of learning is good. The teacher has taught the children to use sign language to ensure that all members of the class can share in the exchange of ideas. This has helped

² Previous report did not contain this section so no comparison can be drawn with the previous inspection in this area.

them to gain understanding that communication is not limited to words. Elements of the Framework for Literacy are used effectively. Good use is made of stories and poetry to help the children develop speaking and early reading skills. When a poet visited them, they listened intently and had great fun helping him to finish the lines. The children enjoy books very much, particularly the big books used in group reading. They are encouraged to talk articulately about the pictures. They can anticipate the plot and join in enthusiastically with 'reading' the text. Most children have acquired at least the basic reading skills by the age of five. Resources such as illustrated first dictionaries are used well to stimulate their interest in words and develop their phonic knowledge. Most quickly learn to identify letter sounds and some children recognize core vocabulary words.

68. Particular attention is paid to helping the children to develop their handwriting, with the result that most form their letters correctly and can copy words or write their names without undue difficulty. Although a writing table had been set up with headed notepaper, it was significantly underused during the inspection.

Mathematical development

69. In mathematics the children are well taught, make good progress and achieve an appropriate level. Activities are well organised so that all children become fully involved. They can count at least to ten, have a secure understanding of the value of small numbers and begin to add on and take away. Regular use is made of singing rhymes and games which help the children to consolidate what they know, for example, when a pupil was invited to quiz the teacher about missing numbers in a sequence. The fun element in these situations motivates the children and stimulates their enjoyment of number work. The computer is also used effectively to sharpen number and shape recognition.

Knowledge and understanding

70. In acquiring knowledge and understanding about the world the children make satisfactory progress. In contrast to a study of their own familiar environment earlier in the term the focus has moved to looking at the unfamiliar surroundings of the tropical jungle. The role play area had been suitably changed into a jungle. The children identify the animals from the display of books and label the animal paintings. They look closely at a range of different fruits and make drawings. Visits to the local church help them to learn about the features and purpose of special buildings. Some children understand the properties of familiar materials. For example, they explain why it is better to build with sand that is wet or why the wheel moves in the water tray under the flow. Teaching provision is sound and the teacher provides good opportunities for the children to acquire well-developed computer skills. They operate the relevant keys and the mouse competently to control the effects on the screen, for instance, when they want to change the colour of their design.

Physical development

71. To promote their physical development there is planned provision for the reception class to use the school hall. This provides them with the opportunity to move about in a large space and use equipment and small apparatus. In the one very well planned session observed, teaching was very good with four adults involved in coaching the children. As a result, the children made very good progress and performed well. They successfully followed instructions - marching on the spot with good co-ordination being demonstrated by most children. They confidently moved with 'giant steps' and 'noisy steps' and the majority skipped well and used the hall space with good awareness for safety and the movement of others around them. Overall, the children move in a controlled and co-ordinated way. This is also evident when they play action rhymes in the classroom or when they use the limited playground space at breaktimes. The lack of any mobile or static outdoor equipment is a gap in the

school's provision. The children use the day-to-day- equipment in the classroom competently and pencil control is good.

Creative development

72. In their creative development the children make sound progress. In their art, they are taught how to mix paints but are not encouraged to use these skills in their individual paintings. In the class projects such as the jungle mural for the role play corner or the large illustration from one of their stories, the children demonstrate their ability to use their brushes in different ways and to apply paint and other materials carefully. However, there is insufficient provision for the children to create their own large and small-scale representations. It is overly directed by adults. There is little evidence of three-dimensional work. The children sing enthusiastically and in tune and effective use is made of short periods of time to enable them to participate in this pleasurable, social activity. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall.

73. Overall, most of the teaching is good and is very well supported by the skills and understanding of the ancillary welfare assistants. In particular, they make a valuable contribution to the good progress made by the pupils with special educational needs and those pupils whose skills are less well developed. Strengths in the teaching include the creation of a calm and caring environment in which the children feel content and confident about learning. There are good opportunities for the children to express their ideas that successfully promote their competence in speaking. Effective questioning encourages them to think, for example, when they explored the original sources of butter and honey while reading the story of The Hungry Giant. The organization and timing of sessions effectively ensure that the children sustain their interest and develop good working habits. On occasions, very good teaching occurs where the organisation of sessions enables intensive direct teaching to individuals that helps children to progress at a very good rate. A weakness in the teaching lies in the planning and provision for some of the play activities that lack sufficient purpose and rigour and so do not build sufficiently on the children's previous learning.

74. There is a long-term programme to guide what the children are taught over the year and it prepares the pupils effectively for work at Key Stage 1. The curriculum for the under-fives is suitably based upon the QCA guidelines for the Foundation Stage, although the teacher for this age group rightly recognises the need to refine planning further to match up more precisely with the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum is broad and balanced but more opportunities could be made for the children to engage in a wider range of practical and play activities. Assessments of attainment and progress, including baseline assessment, are made regularly and inform provision. Consultation and liaison with the parents effectively promote good relationships with the families and encourages valuable support both in and out of the classroom.

75. Although there are adequate resources to support the curriculum, they are not of good quality. There is insufficient large construction equipment and, as stated previously, no outdoor play equipment to develop physical skills and co-operative activities. The furniture in the book-corner is unattractive and inappropriate because it does not enable the children to select their books easily.

ENGLISH

76. In 2000, standards attained by pupils in the national tests results for seven year olds were above average in reading and well above average in writing. The percentage reaching higher than average levels in reading and writing was close to the national average. When compared to schools where the pupils have similar backgrounds, the school's performance in reading was below average and close to the average in writing. Schools are grouped using the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The comparisons with similar schools may not be wholly accurate if the numbers claiming free school meals are less than the number entitled to claim them. There is a strong likelihood of this being the case in respect of this school where the percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is very low while the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is just above average. Since 1996 the results reflect the ongoing improvement being made by the school in raising standards.

77. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1 the great majority of the pupils attain average levels in English and a significant number attain beyond these. Overall standards in literacy are very sound at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 of Key Stage 2. The pupils' competence in literacy skills enables them to read and record without undue difficulty as they acquire knowledge and understanding in other subjects. These judgements are broadly similar to those of the previous inspection

78. After a good start to their language development in the reception class the pupils make satisfactory progress at Year 1. Their overall progress accelerates in Year 2 and continues steadily as they move through Key Stage 2. At both key stages, the pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well

79. The majority of pupils listen very well to adults and to one another and this enables them to appreciate and learn from the work shared during the plenary sessions of the literacy hour. During a plenary in Year 2, the pupils presented group readings of poems to the rest of the class. After each performance the teacher encouraged them to suggest points for improvement. The suggestions were clearly noted and led to an overall improvement in the readings. The teachers themselves are good models. Most listen well to the pupils' comments and respond constructively. Overall, the pupils are given ample opportunities to develop their oral language and teachers provide good opportunities for them to participate in discussions. Most pupils are articulate and enjoy debate. Older pupils are aware of the listener, as was evident in their discussions with the inspection team. As an outcome of good questioning techniques, the pupils are encouraged to think. The dialogue between ancillary welfare assistants and the pupils with special educational needs plays a significant part in helping the pupils to organize their ideas for writing. Limited opportunities are made for the older pupils to speak in public, for example, when they present their choice of music to the rest of the school during the Monday assembly.

80. At Key Stage 1, standards in reading are in line with the national average. A small number of the higher attainers reach above average standards and achieve well. The sharing of stories and poems during the literacy hour promotes the pupils' enjoyment of literature. Regular opportunities are made for them to read to the staff and adult helpers. Homework is used effectively to develop the pupils' skills. Parents regularly hear their children read at home and occasionally are asked to give help to particular assignments, for example, practising reading a poem in preparation for class work. The pupils read with reasonable fluency and have an appropriate sight vocabulary. Most pupils use phonics and common spelling patterns correctly to read unknown words. The pupils in Year 2 do not apply their phonic knowledge as quickly as might be expected. The school has already taken steps to improve this. There is little evidence that the pupils are encouraged sufficiently to read for information. At Key Stage 2 standards in reading are at least average with a significant number

achieving beyond this. The pupils convey a real enjoyment of literature as they talk about their books. Most read accurately and some read aloud very expressively. The ability to do so is promoted well during group reading sessions. They make good progress in being able to respond critically to the text and begin to understand characterisation and plot. This was very well encouraged in Year 3. The pupils were asked to comment on their favourite fictional character for homework. They came to school dressed up as that character and shared their opinions with the rest of the class. The activity also served to introduce pupils to a range of books with which they were not familiar. By Year 4 the pupils have secure library skills but their research skills are not well developed overall.

81. At Key Stage 1 the pupils attain average standards in their writing. They are able to write several sentences using the correct punctuation. Higher attainers begin to write at length making sensible attempts at unknown words. The spelling of frequently used words is often incorrect and the same mistakes are repeated over time. Insufficient analysis is made of errors to ensure that effective steps are taken to improve individual weaknesses. Handwriting is taught well and expectations for the practice work are high. The expectations for presentation in the day-to-day writing are not consistently high. The teachers provide suitable opportunities for the pupils to write for different purposes. During the inspection week there was a focus on poetry. The workshop led by a visiting poet effectively improved the pupils' understanding of the patterns in verse and alliteration. They subsequently made good progress in composing their own poem. By age nine pupils attain average standards in writing. At Key Stage 2, the pupils use an imaginative range of descriptive vocabulary. In Years 3 and 4 the teachers promote this aspect of writing well. Pupils are encouraged to use a thesaurus as well as a dictionary. In their poems they recreated effectively the sounds of machines and the force of volcanoes. Written work is usually appropriately punctuated and written in cursive style. The majority spell common words correctly. However, insufficient attention is given to improving recurring weaknesses and spelling rules are not taught consistently well. The school has recently introduced workbooks at Key Stage 2 to improve the pupils' knowledge about language and their skills of using it. Currently, the pupils are required to complete too many exercises rather than applying what they know in their own compositions. This does not always present a suitable challenge for the higher attainers, in particular. The co-ordinator has recognized this.

82. Throughout the school the quality of teaching in this subject is at least satisfactory and often good. An appropriate balance is achieved in the organization of the literacy hour. For the most part, the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good and enable them to plan effectively for lessons with clear learning objectives. The pupils usually have a clear understanding about what they are expected to learn or improve and the plenary session is used appropriately to review their achievements. The teachers make regular assessments of the pupils' attainment and have a good knowledge of their progress. A weakness is that assessments do not consistently inform the planning to make sure that individual needs are met. One of the strengths of the teaching across the school is that it promotes the pupils' enjoyment in the subject. This is achieved by different methods, for example, the choice of story or poem, the way they are read, the manner in which the pupils' opinions and ideas are shared and respected, the visit of a poet or a dressing-up day. The teachers instruct the pupils well. In discussions, their expectations are generally good and they intervene appropriately to challenge the pupils and encourage them to think harder. Although pupils concentrate well on their immediate tasks, over the long term they are not required to complete sufficient written work. Expectations for the presentation of work are good at Key Stage 2 and the pupils take pride in setting out their work neatly. The contribution of the ancillary welfare assistants is well managed to give very effective support to the lower attainers. These pupils are confident learners and take pride in their achievements in English.

83. The co-ordinator leads the subject effectively. Since the last inspection the school has made sound progress in its work to raise standards. The literacy strategy has been successfully introduced.

Significant improvements have been made to the planning. Regular assessment procedures have been introduced through which the pupils' progress is tracked. This enables early identification to be made of the pupils requiring additional support. Successful steps have been taken to bring about an improvement in writing standards over the past year.

84. There are sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in this subject. There is a good quantity of fiction and non-fiction books but these are not consistently well organized to enable the pupils to make informed choices, for example, if a pupil wishes to select from a range of books by the same author. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support work in this subject.

MATHEMATICS

85. The 2000 test results for seven year olds indicate that progress in mathematics at Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory with pupils attaining below average results compared to schools nationally and well below average compared to similar schools. The low performance in mathematics is clearly linked to weaknesses in the teaching of the lower Key Stage 1 class where low expectations mean that higher attaining pupils in particular are making insufficient progress in their learning. Even though there are some clear distortion factors that make the use of the similar schools comparison suspect (see standards paragraph), overall the results in recent years show consistent underachievement in mathematics. Although results in mathematics have improved since 1996, the levels attained have been consistently too low.

86. Within the school's mathematics results, it is important to recognise that, as a result of good teaching at Year 2, the school is successful in getting an above average number of pupils to reach the expected national level (Level 2). The overall results are low because very few pupils reach the upper levels at Level 2A and 2B and Level 3. This very clearly points to the fact, also recognised by the school, that higher attaining pupils are making too little progress at Key Stage 1. The good teaching at Year 2 does not have sufficient time to impact upon improving the level of performance of these pupils.

87. Pupils make good progress in their learning in Year 3 and Year 4 and the optional 2000 national tests show that nearly all pupils reached an appropriate level for their age and 44 per cent exceeded this level.

88. Inspection lesson observations and a scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work since the beginning of the year largely confirm the test results, with the great majority of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils on course to attain the nationally expected levels. This is a broadly similar picture to that reported at the time of the last inspection. In Year 4, fewer pupils currently attain the upper levels than was the case for last year's Year 4 cohort, but with relatively low size cohorts such variations are to be expected from year to year.

89. In Year 1, pupils work at appropriate levels with using and applying mathematics; for example recognising simple relationships in repeating shape patterns. They competently count and sequence numbers and work through calculations involving working out change from 10p and learn to measure using non-standard units. In one lesson observed, the class worked on activities with counting to 20 and back and matching numbers with groups of objects. Much of this work was too easy for the higher attaining pupils. For example five pupils spoken to showed the capability to easily count and recognise numbers beyond 20 and, while the work appropriately consolidated their current skills, it did not enable them to move forward with their learning. Work seen in the scrutiny of pupils' books also indicates a lack of sufficient challenge for higher attaining individuals.

90. Year 2 pupils are beginning to show confident ability to discuss work using the correct mathematical language - describing for example how to complete various calculations. They work confidently with recording simple addition, subtraction, division and multiplication calculations and have sound knowledge of measuring lines to the nearest centimetre. In mental/oral work observed pupils showed the ability to count in tens from different starting points while a small minority of higher attaining pupils competently work out the differences between two digit numbers.

91. Year 3 and 4 pupils confidently discuss their work and articulate their mathematical thinking either during class discussions or frequently while collaborating in group tasks. A small number of Year 4 pupils work at an above average level, showing the ability to think of their own strategies when trying to solve problems. Year 4 pupils show a reasonable understanding of place value to 1000 and have an appropriate mastery of their multiplication tables for their age. Year 3 pupils show suitable skills with estimating and measuring length and develop more advanced skills in this respect - accurately measuring lines to the nearest millimetre. In lessons seen, pupils in both classes gained a solid understanding of fractions appropriate to their age groups. Year 4 pupils are beginning to grasp the concept of finding fractional quantities of numbers and in one session observed, attempted challenging work that required them to understand the relationship between fractions and division. However, at times in both classes, a few higher attaining pupils found the work too easy and were not fully extended by the tasks provided.

92. Pupils generally work in a well motivated fashion and behave well. They listen carefully and collaborate together very effectively.

93. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. It is good in Year 2, but unsatisfactory on occasions in Year 1. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good overall. Teachers generally show confident subject knowledge and prepare their lessons and resources very carefully. The numeracy strategy has been effectively implemented and mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding are mainly well taught across the school. Teachers make lesson objectives clear to pupils and usually explain new concepts and activities clearly. A strong emphasis is placed upon providing good opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas and articulate their mathematical thinking. This very usefully encourages pupils to develop their confidence in this subject. Activities are usually presented in an interesting way that engages the pupils' attention. As a result, pupils develop an enthusiastic approach and, in this way, made good progress in their learning in most of the lessons observed. Most of the work set matches well to pupils' attainment levels and pupils with special educational needs, in particular, make good progress. These pupils receive strong support from teachers and also from ancillary welfare assistants who work very well with individuals and groups of pupils. However, on occasions, the work planned did not include the potential for fully extending higher attaining pupils at a higher level of work than the rest of the class. This was the particular problem with the unsatisfactory lesson observed in Year 1 where the work set was too low level for the more able pupils. Also in this lesson the pace of work moved too slowly during the mental/oral session and pupils became restless with a few pupils forgetting to put their hands up and calling out to the teacher. One of the tasks set was inappropriate as the pupils were unable to progress because they could not read the words in the numeracy work books provided.

94. Teachers generally plan their work effectively using the numeracy framework teaching programmes alongside a commercial scheme of work adopted by the school. Teachers assess pupils' work and set targets for the end of the year. However, it is not clear that assessment information acquired is used as effectively as it could be to inform the planning of future lessons. The school has a detailed mathematics policy but this is out of date and does not take reference of the national

numeracy strategy, the commercial scheme of work adopted by the school, or curriculum 2000. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate and well used.

SCIENCE

95. Year 2000 end of Key Stage 1 teachers' assessments in science indicate that pupils' attain standards that are above average but evidence from the inspection shows that most pupils attain an average standard. This difference is partly explained by the variations that can be expected from one cohort of pupils to the next in a small school, but the wide difference tends to indicate an inaccuracy in teachers' assessment. Work seen also indicates that most Year 4 pupils are on course to achieve the nationally expected level by the time they leave the school. These findings reflect a similar picture to that of the last inspection except that fewer pupils are set to reach the upper levels of attainment than reported at that time. However, this difference has more to do with the variation of standards within cohorts from year to year in small primary schools rather than any decline in standards. Overall pupils achieve at a satisfactory level as they progress through the school.

96. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to suitably describe the features of things that they see and communicate their ideas. For example, Year 1 pupils make a graph to show variation in eye colour. Year 2 pupils confidently respond to suggestions about how to find things out and carefully record 'what I think will happen, what we found out, what I used and what I saw.' Year 4 pupils carrying out investigations into light show an appropriate understanding of the principle of 'fair testing'.

97. At Key Stage 1, through drawings that they make, Year 1 pupils gain a suitable knowledge for their age of the parts of a flowering plant. Through their investigations into sound and taste they gain appropriate knowledge of how our senses give us an awareness of the world in which we live. Year 2 pupils gain sound knowledge of the differences between materials such as man made and natural materials and investigate, for example, to test the different rates at which different cloth materials dry. They gain a good basic understanding of how simple series electrical circuits are wired up using bulbs and batteries. Year 4 pupils carry out similar work at a suitably higher level and learn to use the correct circuit symbols when recording. They also link this work to an information and communication technology project where they learn to control sequences of flashing lights by using a computer program. Pupils study the topic of light, gain suitable understanding about the processes of reflection and learn how shadows form. At Year 3 pupils acquire suitable factual knowledge for their age about the planets in the Solar System.

98. Although no evidence was available to show work in life processes and living things and materials and their properties at Key Stage 2, planning indicates that appropriate coverage is given to these areas.

99. Pupils mainly show good attitudes. They enjoy their science work and, in the lessons seen, they collaborated very effectively when carrying out practical activities together. Pupils usually concentrate fully, behave well and join in discussions confidently. However, they occasionally become restless when the work does not move at a sufficiently rapid pace or the tasks are not challenging enough. This was the case in one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1 where an activity asking pupils about sounds that they liked or disliked ran for too long and did not sufficiently extend the higher attaining pupils. As a result, the pupils became fidgety after some time, occasional inappropriate behaviour with pupils calling out began to occur and progress with learning was too slow. In an unsatisfactory lesson in Year 4, there was too much emphasis on written work and not enough emphasis on practical investigation of electrical circuits, which meant that pupils' acquisition of new scientific learning was too slow. This situation was partly caused by the lack of available science resources for work in circuitry - most of the available equipment being in use by the Year 2 class. These points were the main weaknesses within the science teaching and learning seen, which were satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 in the one lesson seen. At Key Stage 1, good teaching was observed in Year 2, where carefully planned practical activities fully extended all of the pupils and

helped them make rapid gains in learning to develop their skills of scientific investigation. Good modelling of the activities primed pupils well to explore the work with electrical circuits in a determined manner such that there was almost a mood of celebration when the first person discovered how to make a bulb light in the circuit. In all classes teachers provide clear explanations of concepts.

100. Pupils with special educational needs are very effectively supported in all tasks and, as a result, they generally make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

101. The school's science policy is now five years old and the co-ordinator rightly recognises the need to review this policy in the near future - in line with the fact that science is scheduled to become a priority area for development within the next phase of the school development plan. Science planning is suitably based upon the use of the nationally produced guidelines. The role of the co-ordinator in developing science throughout the school is currently unclear, with no clear specification about how the role should operate. The teaching in this subject does not currently feature as an area for monitoring and there is therefore no clear mechanism to identify weaknesses and strengths and enable improvement. Teachers assess their pupils and maintain records of progress but this information is not used sufficiently well to inform the planning of future lessons.

102. Resources for science are unsatisfactory. It is some time since new equipment was purchased, much of what exists is rather worn and there are some shortages, as noted above in the lack of available electrical kits when two classes are studying the same theme.

ART

103. Standards in art are above the level expected at the end of Key Stage 1 where pupils' drawing is particularly good. Pupils in Year 4 are on course to attain appropriate standards for their age by the time they leave the school. The last inspection noted standards as well above the expected level for nine year olds. However, this fall in standards is partly connected with the variations to be expected with different cohorts of pupils in a small school.

104. Year 1 pupils use pencils and paint confidently to produce lively images, for example, the portraits of themselves in which they had mixed their paints to produce flesh tones. They select their materials to good effect when they make a collage. Year 2 pupils build on these skills and generally achieve well in their artwork. For example, in their observational drawings of the school they reproduced the texture of the building and the shadows very well using charcoal. They understand how to use a range of media, including pastels and paint, to achieve the effects they want. At Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to work carefully and achieve at a satisfactory level overall. Year 3 pupils co-operated in groups to plan their pictures on the theme of friendship. They interpreted the theme in an interesting way and used space well. Year 4 pupils begin to understand how works of art, craft and design are affected by their purpose. They demonstrated their ability to transpose ideas successfully from a small to a larger scale when they painted items of church furniture from sketches they had made in the church.

105. Two art lessons were observed, one at each key stage. In these, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better. One very well taught lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 where the teacher showed good subject knowledge and understanding. Pupils were shown three interpretations of the same subject by different artists. The teacher's input combined an appropriate balance of instruction and demonstration with ample opportunities for the pupils to experiment. The result was that the pupils spent time developing techniques before applying these to the images they wanted to paint. It enabled the teacher to assess pupils' progress quickly and suggest points for improvement. The pupils obviously enjoy the practical elements of the subject and apply effort to their activities. In the one

lesson seen at Key Stage 2, the teaching was satisfactory. Year 4 pupils were encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and did so. The teacher guided pupils carefully when, as part of their study of Islam, they made cards to celebrate the Festival of Id. Pupils were suitably encouraged to pay good attention to including appropriate motifs and patterns, and worked neatly. Good opportunities were given for pupils to evaluate the work of their peers and this enabled them to sharpen their critical faculties and develop the appropriate language.

106. Although planning includes the two elements of making and designing, and knowledge and understanding of art, there is limited evidence of the latter. Year 4 pupils were able to refer to one artist only. The school environment is enhanced by the fabric wall hangings which were created several years ago with the help of non-teaching adults.

107. The considerable creative talents of the ancillary welfare assistants are a valuable asset to the school.

108. The subject leader's role is not defined and the co-ordinator has not got a clear overview of provision across the school. Each class has sufficient basic resources to support teaching and learning in this subject. There is an adequate range of prints but no collection of artifacts.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards achieved by pupils in this subject at the time of the last inspection were categorised as above average. However, samples of pupils work seen and evidence of one lesson in Year 1, indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4, pupils are likely to attain appropriate standards for their ages by the end of the year. In a school of this size, variations in standards are likely to occur from one year to the next. As only one lesson was observed in design and technology, it is not possible to make overall judgements about teaching and learning or pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

110. In the lesson seen at Year 1, Year 1 pupils generated ideas for making 'shakers'. They chose from a limited range of materials to make their shaker, adjusting the designs as they worked to make improvements from their discoveries. Pupils mainly used scissors and materials with care except in one case where a pupil was noted walking around the room with the pointed end of the scissors facing forward. Pupils put their ideas of what they wanted to make into practice and most managed to make a functional and attractive shaker having filled, sealed and decorated the container appropriately. Pupils worked with enjoyment and enthusiasm. The activity was well chosen to compliment work in sound currently on-going in science. The lesson was satisfactory overall but the pace of work was slowed at times due to the rather awkward organisation of resources and materials in places that were difficult for pupils to access quickly - this resulted in occasional queues to collect materials.

111. Year 2 pupils design and make suitably attractive model houses using a range of materials including fabric, card, plastic materials and patterned wallpaper. Items have been carefully assembled working from plans and pieces joined together using a variety of methods. The final models have been produced with care and attention to detail. Year 3 also show a careful approach towards making models such as the planet models for their science work and have produced an attractive Arctic/Antarctic collage that involving careful cutting and joining together of a range of cloth materials and sequins to make an attractive finished product. Year 4 pupils design and make shadow puppets after evaluating Indonesian shadow puppets. A few of the final puppets made show an above average attention to detailed and careful finishing with good use of components to meet the needs of the design task. A display of items made from the 'Technic Lego' construction kits shows that pupils have carefully considered the designs of mechanical devices in everyday use and looked at how cogs, levers and gears are involved in such designs.

112. A suitable draft policy is in place for this subject and teachers' planning is appropriately based upon the nationally produced scheme of work for design and technology. The role of the co-ordinator is not clearly defined and, although she liaises closely with other staff, it is difficult for her to form a view of how effectively the subject is taught across the school. Resources for teaching and learning are basically adequate although the co-ordinator rightly recognises the need to acquire more tools and equipment for food technology in the future.

GEOGRAPHY

113. In the last inspection standards were judged to be above average and the pupils made good progress. Geography is taught in termly blocks and only one class included it in this autumn term's curriculum. There was, therefore, insufficient work available on which to base judgements of standards of attainment.

114. In the one lesson observed at Key Stage 2 the pupils were studying some of the key physical features of the world, in particular, the impact of plate tectonics. The pupils were keenly interested and hands shot up during the discussion. They had retained information from the previous week and many were able to give clear explanations about the impact of the plates. Their responses indicated that they had been taught well. During the lesson good questioning kept the pupils 'on their toes'; diagrams on the board helped them to understand the process. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of volcanoes and their impact on human lives were consolidated by the use of a video specially edited for the purpose.

115. Sound provision is made for the pupils to develop literacy skills through their writing in this subject. Year three pupils adapted a poem on volcanoes by providing their own descriptive words. This not only made them aware of the physical features of volcanoes but also extended the range of their vocabulary and encouraged the use of the thesaurus. At the lower end of Key Stage 2 they are not able to use their reading effectively to extract and use the relevant information from books. Not enough teaching of research skills occurs as pupils progress through the school. Good provision is made for the development of information and technology skills with pupils being taught how to get information from the Internet. Year 4 pupils make a residential visit to Leeson House which successfully promotes their knowledge of the area in which they live as well as their personal and social development.

116. The subject leader's role is not defined and the co-ordinator does not have a clear view of the quality of provision across the school. The co-ordinator appreciates the interest and support of the governor assigned to this subject. There are adequate resources to teach the curriculum but some of the atlases are out of date.

HISTORY

117. Standards were not judged at the last inspection in this subject. During this inspection, at Year 2 and Year 4, pupils work at levels that are appropriate for their ages and their progress is good. At Key Stage 1 they develop a secure understanding of how things change over time. In their study of Victorian schools, they make clear contrasts between practice then and now. When they re-enacted the classroom situation their actions showed how strongly they empathised with Victorian pupils. Year 4 pupils were also studying life in Victorian times. They have a good understanding of a century's time-span; they retain historical facts well, and they begin to gain an understanding of the key features of an era, for example, they are able to comment on the contrasts in social conditions.

118. Only one history lesson was seen at Key Stage 1 where the teaching was satisfactory. Effective questioning by the teacher successfully aided pupils in drawing out ideas from a video they had watched and encouraged them to participate in discussion work. It is clear from discussions with teachers and pupils that the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject enthuses the pupils. They enjoy learning about the past. Primary and secondary sources of evidence are effectively selected to help the pupils to learn more and to become keen history 'detectives'. The current topics are supported by a collection of artifacts in each room and a video provided a very good starting point for discussion about classrooms. The teaching methods motivate the pupils and help to bring the subject 'alive', for example, role-play. Pupils questioned a Victorian 'rough-sleeper'. Educational visits are made when appropriate.

119. At both key stages, the pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, often prompted by the teachers' questioning. It is noticeable that the younger pupils frequently use the word 'because' as they seek to justify their statements. At Key Stage 2 the subject is used effectively to help the pupils develop their literacy skills. The writing includes first person narrative, poetry and letters.

120. The co-ordinator's role is poorly defined and it does not include monitoring and evaluation to ensure consistent practice and high standards across the school. The school does not have a collection of historical artifacts: these are usually provided by individual teachers or parents who also contribute information, for example, about their own schooldays. There is a sufficient number of books in the school's library but the collection is not very wide-ranging.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

121. During the last inspection pupils reached appropriate standards for their ages in this subject. This inspection reflects a similar picture for pupils at Year 4. Very few opportunities were available during the inspection to observe lessons where information technology was taught. As a result there is not enough evidence to enable judgements to be made about the quality of teaching and learning and about pupils' attitudes and behaviour in relation to ICT at the end of Key Stage 1.

122. Discussions were held with pupils and samples of work were scrutinised. However, this provided insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1. Conversations with Year 2 pupils shows that they have some satisfactory basic knowledge relating to ICT. However, the lack of evidence of pupils using the computers during the inspection indicates that pupils are not involved in enough opportunities to extend their skills in this subject or in using information technology to support work across the curriculum. Pupils gain the appropriate knowledge that they can present their work attractively and effectively through the use of computers. They have experience of saving their work and retrieving items from the computer. Pupils suitably develop their own ideas and learning through the use of programs to support work in mathematics. They make appropriate use of an art program to draw pictures.

123. At Key Stage 2 pupils use computers in a useful range of situations. As reported at the time of the last inspection, Year 4 pupils are on course to reach appropriate standard for their age by the time they leave the school. Year 3 pupils use word processing facilities competently to edit, organise and amend their ideas - they have produced well written poems as part of their literacy work through this means. Pupils use the Internet facilities for research, for example, finding out information about the planets that they are studying in science. They gain an appropriate understanding of using 'Wordart' graphic design features, and are also being introduced to the ideas of using electronic mail on the computer. Year 4 pupils build on their experiences with using word processing on a regular basis and pupils have a good understanding of how to change font size, style and colour of text. They use

computers appropriately to research for information about famous composers or authors via Internet facilities. They support work in numeracy through the use of a challenging program to test their ability to carry out calculations mentally at different levels. Pupils are familiar with using simulation style programs for example to enhance their learning about the Victorians. They are also just starting to learn how to make a series of instructions for controlling events within a computer program and are usefully working on this area in association with work on electrical circuits in science. Generally, pupils are covering all of the necessary areas within the ICT programs of study except they are not currently having enough opportunities to work with data on the computer.

124. A clear draft ICT policy has been created by the co-ordinator and teachers suitably base their planning upon the nationally produced guidelines for the subject. The co-ordinator rightly recognises the fact that staff confidence and subject knowledge are variable and in some cases unsatisfactory. This area is therefore rightly featured within the school's development plan. The co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor the teaching of information technology across the school and therefore has difficulty in gaining an overview of how effectively resources are being used. There is insufficient clarity as to how the role of the co-ordinator should operate. Although there are clear strands for development of the subject within the overall school development plan, there is no fully detailed plan to show how ICT will be developed throughout the school. The school has a satisfactory range of software and hardware and has made significant improvements in this area over recent times. However, the school recognises that there is much potential for further improvement to be made in order to raise the school's capability for making fuller use of ICT.

MUSIC

125. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by age nine, most pupils attain standards beyond those that might reasonably be expected for their ages. They make steady progress as they move through the school and achieve well. There was insufficient evidence for music during the last inspection to enable judgements for attainment to be reached.

126. The youngest pupils sing familiar songs in time and in tune and control the volume of their singing. They compare the sound made by a variety of untuned percussion instruments and perform simple accompaniments to their songs. By Year 2 the expressiveness of their singing has developed significantly. Many discriminate small variations in pitch. They begin to use simple musical notation and recognise the value of notes. The pupils learning to play the recorder read their music competently. In Year 3, the pupils begin to write their own compositions using proper notation and sing rounds that have two parts. The oldest pupils sing tunefully and perform their own notated compositions confidently on tuned percussion instruments. Most pupils listen attentively to music and, at their own level, comment with discrimination on its qualities.

127. Two teachers have musical expertise and are responsible for much of the teaching that is mainly good or better throughout the school. They clearly enthuse the pupils who enjoy making music: in particular, they enjoy singing. The teachers' secure subject knowledge and understanding enable them to plan lessons that present appropriate challenges, have clear objectives for learning, and use teaching methods that are fun and motivate the pupils. In a Year 2 musical game the pupils were inspired to listen very keenly to nuances of pitch in order to avoid 'falling into the swamp!' Lessons appropriately begin with a warm-up session and where the teaching is best, the challenge of the activities is increased as the lesson progresses. In the good lessons the teachers continually assess the pupils' performance and intervene to help them to improve what they are doing. The outcome is that the pupils try hard to meet the expectations. Teachers successfully use the tonic sol-fa and hand signs to help the pupils make the link between the sound and its symbolic representation. In one lesson in the lower Key Stage 1 class where teaching was unsatisfactory, the use of familiar material was

repeated without any additional challenge in performance. As a result, the pupils became disinterested and their work was unsatisfactory.

128. Music has a high profile in the school. There are seven recorder groups which are taught during the lunch-time. Music work is enhanced by activities such as the school choir participating in county events and their recent recording of a compact disc. A music teacher usefully visits to teach violin. Pupils in Year 4 present their choice of music in assembly and give the rest of the school some information about the composer which they have researched using ICT.

129. Over the year, the co-ordinator teaches music in most classes and so has a clear view of standards. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the planning is good. Each class has a sufficient range and quantity of musical instruments which include instruments used in other countries. The school does not have a central collection of music for listening.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Work in physical education lessons shows pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 performing above the level that would be expected for their age groups. This is an improvement in standards since the last inspection.

131. At Key Stage 1, pupils show good co-ordination in their movements. Year 1 pupils put together a series of appropriate simple movements and learn new methods of jumping. During their gymnastics lesson, Year 2 pupils choose and use appropriate actions and ideas as they explore ways of travelling over equipment. Many do so with imagination - inventing original methods of their own. Most manage a good standard, well executed 'star jump' and more than half of the class perform a forward roll from the bench onto a mat. By watching others they learn to improve their own performances. Year 3 pupils produce a good variety of balances working with a partner. They know the front and back support positions and many are able to perform reasonable quality handstands. Many pupils are beginning to show above average precision and control within their movements. In one Year 4 lesson pupils demonstrated good control skills with their indoor hockey work. In another lesson they performed dance sequence movements at a well above average level for their age. After 20 minutes of vigorous practise of movements together in groups they eventually performed as a class - performing a very good characterisation of the machinery in a cotton factory. The movements worked in sequence and continuous motion, so that all groups had to be acutely aware of synchronising their movements with the other groups. There was much use of pupils' imagination in this work and they were thoroughly absorbed by the task.

132. A major strength of the work seen in physical education, is the highly effective collaboration between pupils. All pupils participate fully in lessons and work with much enthusiasm. Pupils in all classes show much enjoyment in the activities they carry out.

133. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned and the objectives of the lessons are very clearly described to pupils. Activities are well explained and teachers ensure that full use of the time is made during the lessons. In nearly all of the sessions observed, the pace of work moved rapidly so that pupils received a vigorous work-out during each lesson. Lessons are very well organised so that equipment is taken out with the minimum of fuss and pupils are given a clear understanding of how the equipment is moved and stored. Teachers use a good range of interesting ideas that capture pupils interest as in the case of the good cross-curricular link in the Year 2 session seen. The teacher skilfully linked the lesson to a history topic currently being studied and pupils enjoyed the teacher's role play with them, imagining the lesson to be a 'Victorian School Drill Lesson'. They made good progress in their learning partly because of the enthusiasm

generated by the teacher. Similarly the Year 4 lesson was suitably linked to a current history theme. The very good teaching in Year 4 was particularly effective in enabling pupils to progress very rapidly with their ideas and gain much experience in learning to work in an independent and creative manner.

134. The school has an appropriate physical education policy and teachers base their planning on a combination of the nationally produced guidelines and a scheme of work for gymnastics produced by the local sports college with which the school has established close links. This linkage means that Year 2, 3 and 4 pupils usefully receive specialist teaching from the Sports College teachers for blocked periods of time. As staff participate in the lessons taken in this way - they gain a good deal of intensive professional development training. This partnership is clearly having a very beneficial effect upon both standards of physical education and the quality of physical education teaching in the school.

135. Pupils also have appropriate opportunities to take part in a range of sports extra-curricular activities during the year and the school plays a good range of sports matches with other schools. No swimming currently takes place at the school; this is left for the Middle School to cover when pupils move on at the end of Year 4. The school has overall satisfactory resources for teaching and learning in physical education, including good outdoor facilities.