

# INSPECTION REPORT

**TARLETON COMMUNITY  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Tarleton, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119158

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Fleming

Reporting inspector: Diane Wilkinson  
23048

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225256

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hesketh Lane Tarleton Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR4 6AT
Telephone number:	01772 812547
Fax number:	01772 816298
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Helen Dicker
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Diane Wilkinson 23048	Registered inspector	Mathematics Religious education History	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Lee Kuraishi 11450	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Sonja Oyen 7167	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
Jennifer Young 22396	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Art and design	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mohindar Galowalia 20832	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography	How well the school cultivates pupils' personal – including spiritual, moral, social and cultural – development The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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TWA Inspections Ltd  
5 Lakeside  
Werrington  
Peterborough  
Cambs  
PE4 6QZ

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33 Kingsway  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Tarleton Community Primary is a village school about nine miles from Preston admitting children mainly from Tarleton and Hesketh Bank. It is in an expanding area, with several new housing estates, and most homes are owner occupied. Most children who enter the reception class at the start of the academic year in which they are five come from advantaged backgrounds and their attainment is above average. There are two reception classes and nine other classes, some of which contain pupils from more than one year group. Currently there are 297 pupils (168 boys and 129 girls) on roll. The school is larger than the average size primary school, but slightly smaller than at the last inspection, although numbers are now increasing again. Problems caused by the absence of the previous headteacher due to illness over the past few years have been resolved with the appointment of a new headteacher. There is an acting deputy headteacher. Twenty pupils (7.5 per cent) are entitled to free school meals which is below average. There are no pupils from non-European families. The school has 35 pupils (11.8 per cent) with special educational needs which is below average. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational need<sup>1</sup>, which is well above average.

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

**This is an effective school which has worked hard over the past year to improve its provision. There is now a shared sense of purpose between all members of the school community and a commitment to raise the quality of its provision and standards further. The headteacher leads the school well and, together with the senior management team and governing body, she has put in place a number of strategies which are now helping the school to move forward. These have helped to further improve the quality of teaching and raise standards which had previously fallen. Currently the quality of education is satisfactory overall and pupils make at least satisfactory progress, although standards are not yet as high in English and science as they could be, compared with similar schools. The income and expenditure per pupil are similar to many schools and the school gives satisfactory value for money.**

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

- Pupils achieve standards above the national average.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes and enthusiasm for school support their learning very well.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- There are high levels of good and very good teaching.
- The partnership with parents is very strong and parents support children's learning very well.
- Due to the very good teaching and curriculum, provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.

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

- Provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and pupils do not reach the standards expected.
- Key Stage 2 pupils do not achieve the standards in writing of which they are capable because teachers do not always have high enough expectations and do not give pupils enough advice on how to improve the effectiveness of their writing.
- Assessment is not used sufficiently to help plan the next steps in learning.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is under-developed and does not fully support the school's work.
- The school's procedures for analysing its effectiveness and taking appropriate steps to raise standards are not yet fully in place.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in September 1996, satisfactory progress has been made overall. However, further improvements still need to be made in some aspects. There is now more effective school leadership, particularly since the appointment of the new headteacher, but there are continuing weaknesses in curriculum leadership. The quality of teaching has improved and good progress has been made in the provision for religious education. The school is meeting its aims of developing pupils' personal qualities, but further progress is needed to ensure that it fulfils its commitment to excellence. In particular, improvements still need to be made in the provision for information and communication technology, the use of assessment and more effective use of time and resources identified in the key issues of the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	A	C	D
Mathematics	C	C	B	C
Science	C	C	C	E

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

Standards on entry to the school are above average. Very good provision in the reception classes means all children achieve well and by entry to Key Stage 1 most exceed the expected levels. By the end of both key stages standards are above average in English and mathematics. Standards are above average in science at Key Stage 1 and average in science at Key Stage 2. In last year's Key Stage 2 tests the school's performance in English was not as high as inspection findings. This is partly because 70 per cent of the cohort were boys, who nationally do not reach standards as high as those of girls. The unfavourable comparison of the school's performance in English and science with that of similar school is largely because not enough pupils achieved the higher levels. Over the past four years standards fell initially, particularly in writing and in all subjects at Key Stage 2. However, they began to rise again last year, to a great extent due to the improvements initiated by the new headteacher. Because of a lack of resources and teacher expertise, standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations at both key stages. In all other subjects, including religious education, throughout the school the majority of pupils reach the standards expected. In most subjects at both key stages all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, achieve appropriately for their abilities. However, pupils do not achieve well enough for their abilities in information and communication technology nor in writing in English, particularly at Key Stage 2, where teachers do not use effective strategies to develop pupils' skills and do not have high enough expectations of them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are enthusiastic, work hard and achieve good standards.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in the classroom and around the school. The school is a harmonious and happy place which creates a very good environment for learning.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils take very good responsibility both for their own learning and in tasks around the school. This helps the progress they make.
Attendance	Very good and above the national average. Although few pupils arrive late, the school has not made specific plans to improve punctuality.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The majority of teaching is good (67 per cent) and only two unsatisfactory lessons were seen, both at Key Stage 2. A high proportion (30 per cent) is very good or better and five excellent lessons were seen. The very good teaching is in all key stages and in a range of subjects. A significant strength is the management of pupils, which helps to create an effective learning environment. Teaching is better than was seen at the last inspection, although most improvements have taken place over the past year because of the influence of new management. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented is satisfactory. A general weakness is that assessment is not used effectively to help teachers plan the next steps in learning, partly because assessment systems have only recently been put in place. Teaching in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2 because teachers do not have sufficient expertise.

Teaching is very good (60 per cent) in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> and good at Key Stage 1, where a high proportion (35 per cent) is very good. The high levels of good and very good teaching at these stages is because very strong teams have been forged to provide good support and sharing of expertise. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. There has been less improvement at Key Stage 2 largely because of changes in staffing and the lack of a co-ordinator. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. Forty-nine per cent is good or better and 19 per cent is very good. In the best lessons, pupils are enthusiastic, and high expectations help them to make very good and sometimes excellent progress. When teaching is less stimulating, it is often the excellent attitudes of pupils and their good relationship with teachers which ensure they make at least satisfactory progress. A common weakness is that teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing, nor do they give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work. This limits the quality of the teaching of literacy skills, although it is satisfactory. Numeracy skills are taught well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall, but good for pupils' personal development and very good in the Foundation Stage. It is unsatisfactory for information and communication technology where statutory requirements are not met, partly because of lack of resources in the subject.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils have access to the full curriculum and receive extra support when necessary. They make satisfactory progress towards their set targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>Good for pupils' moral and social development where it supports their behaviour, development of responsibility and independence in learning well. Satisfactory for spiritual and cultural development. The multi-cultural diversity of society is not promoted so well.</b>
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The monitoring and promotion of good behaviour are good. Assessment is not used effectively to set targets or guide curricular planning.

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and the last year of this stage is often described in school as the reception year. During this period children's learning is based on fostering, nurturing and developing their: personal, social and emotional well-being; skills in language and literacy; mathematics development, particularly numeracy; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.



**The school's partnership with its parents is very good. They share the school's aims and support its work very well. This has a very positive impact on their children's learning.**

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and has created a shared sense of purpose among all staff. The new senior management team has begun to have a positive impact on the work of the school. Not all subject co-ordinators have the leadership expertise and experience to carry out their roles effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Although many are relatively new, they support the school's work well through their professional expertise. They are developing a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan does not provide sufficiently precise priorities or targets.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good steps have been taken under the new headteacher, although these are in the early stages and are not fully effective. The links between the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and standards are not strong enough.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Educational priorities are supported well by financial planning. The school makes good efforts in seeking additional funding to help its work and ensures it obtains good value for its purchases.

The staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The lack of resources and teacher expertise, as well as the small area in which to effectively teach information and communication technology in some classrooms are all factors which contribute to the below average standards in the subject. The accommodation and resources for physical education are limited.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

31 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 29 per cent of all parents returned the questionnaire.

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and want to attend.</li> <li>• They say teaching is good and teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve.</li> <li>• They feel children make good progress in both their academic and personal development.</li> <li>• Parents' involvement in the work of the school.</li> <li>• Staff are always available and the school readily responds to parents' concerns.</li> <li>• Pupils behave well.</li> <li>• The current leadership and management are good and the school has dealt effectively with difficult staffing problems in the past.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They would like more information about the progress their children make and in particular would like this earlier in the year.</li> <li>• They would like fuller information on the rewards and sanctions used to support good behaviour.</li> <li>• Around 10 per cent of parents are concerned about the amount of homework set and the information given to them about what is expected.</li> <li>• Around 10 per cent of parents would like more after school activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors mainly agree with parents' positive views although expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough, particularly in English. The information the school gives parents about their children's progress is good. The pattern for parents' evenings is similar to that in many schools. Behaviour management systems are good and any discrepancies in informing parents about these are largely due to changes in staff. The amount and regularity of homework set are similar to those in most schools. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for children of this age.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The assessments of pupils' ability when they enter the school shows overall attainment to be above that seen in most schools, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. It is slightly below that expected in mathematics. Although overall attainment is above average, there is a wide spread of ability. Due to very good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, all children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well for their abilities. By the time they leave the reception classes, children are working beyond the expected levels in all areas of learning except their personal and social development, which is well above the expected level. Children are very well prepared to begin work within Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.
2. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2000 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Level 2 or above) were well above the national average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher levels was around average in all subjects. These results show that the school is performing above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When the results are compared with those of schools in similar contexts (with less than 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals), they are average in writing and below average in reading and mathematics. Teacher assessments largely matched the tests. In the 2000 teacher assessments for science, the number of pupils reaching the expected levels (Level 2 or above) were close to the national average, although the number reaching the higher levels was below average.
3. Taken over the last four years, pupils' performance is well above the national average in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics. Pupils' performance varies from year to year and from subject to subject. Attainment is improving at a faster rate than that seen nationally in reading and close to the national trend in writing. In mathematics pupils' performance fell over the past four years, but it rose again this year and for current pupils is rising further. In the previous four years, Key Stage 1 boys performed better than girls which is different from the national picture. This is mainly because there was a higher number of more able boys.
4. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2000 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 (Level 4 or above) was well above the national average. However, the fact that only an average proportion reached the higher levels meant the school's overall performance in English was around average. The school's performance was above the national average in mathematics and close to average in science. The higher standards in mathematics are the result of the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, better teaching in the subject and good curriculum leadership. When compared with schools in similar contexts, the school's performance was around average in mathematics. It was below the average in English and well below average in science, mainly because fewer pupils reached the above average levels in these subjects than in similar schools. Teacher assessments slightly under-estimated the tests, largely because the new assessment procedures are not yet used sufficiently to help identify pupils' progress. This year's results were affected, particularly in English, by the much higher number of boys in Year 6 where they comprised 70 per cent of the year group. Since boys, both in this school and also nationally, tend to reach standards below those of girls this has had an impact on the school's results.

5. Taken over the last four years, pupils' performance is well above the national average in English and close to average in mathematics and science. Girls perform better than boys, as they do nationally. Pupils' performance varies considerably from year to year. There was a significant fall in standards in 1998, largely because of the lack of curriculum development and identification of weaknesses in teaching. This situation changed with the arrival the new deputy headteacher, now the current headteacher. Standards improved well in 1999 and also in science this year. Standards in 2000 in English and mathematics show a slight improvement on 1999. It is more difficult to judge the overall progress that cohorts of pupils make as they move through the school because the number of pupils joining the school other than in the reception class is increasing. A significant number of these new pupils have a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils joining throughout the school is largely because the village has several new housing estates and families are regularly moving into the area.
6. The school has begun to take steps to improve the quality of the teaching and curriculum, particularly in the last year. The new headteacher correctly identified this as a priority in order to raise standards further, in particular so that the school can compare favourably with similar schools. Good systems, including the observation of lessons, have been put in place to improve the quality of teaching and this, in turn, is helping pupils to make better progress and achieve higher standards. The headteacher has also put in place good systems to monitor and track the yearly progress pupils make between entry to the school and the end of each key stage. Data from the assessment made on entry to the school and other assessment in the reception class are effectively used to help identify the specific needs of individual pupils. National assessments in each year group are also helping to build up a profile which is beginning to track progress and help teachers to set targets. Although these new systems have only had a short time to have an impact, this year the school slightly exceeded its targets in the Key Stage 2 tests and is likely to achieve them next year, although it hopes to raise them in future. The school is aware that further strategies need to be put in place. This term it has adopted assessment procedures to track progress throughout the year, although these are not fully implemented at present. As a response to the need to help more pupils reach levels above the national average, the school has identified a group of gifted and talented pupils at Key Stage 2 and put in place provision to meet their needs more closely.
7. By the end of both key stages, current pupils reach standards above the national average in English and mathematics. Key Stage 1 pupils also reach above average standards in science. Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 are average. In information and communication technology, standards at both key stages are below national expectations. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 reach the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In all other subjects, throughout the school, the majority of pupils reach the standards expected. At both key stages all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, achieve appropriately for their abilities. However, achievement is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology because pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise and improve the skills they have learnt. Nor are teachers fully competent in the skills needed to deliver the full information and communication technology curriculum. Pupils do not achieve well enough for their abilities in writing, particularly at Key Stage 2. This is because teachers do not use effective strategies to develop pupils' writing skills and do not have high enough expectations of them.
8. Any difference between the attainment of boys and girls is largely a result of their ability rather than the school's provision. The school is aware of the need to raise standards in writing for boys at Key Stage 2 and has introduced some strategies to address this. However, these are not as effective as they could be.

9. For pupils at both key stages, overall standards in English are above average. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are good. Year 2 pupils are mature conversationalists and Year 6 pupils listen critically and talk with assurance in formal and informal situations. Year 2 pupils read both fiction and non-fiction books independently and talk confidently about authors and themes. Year 6 pupils are discerning, confident readers who talk knowledgeably about authors' styles and their own preferences. At both key stages pupils use their reading and speaking and listening skills effectively to help their work in other subjects. In writing most pupils reach standards which match the national average and many do better, although few reach the standards of which they are capable. Most Year 2 pupils write in correctly punctuated sentences, showing good storylines, imagination and detail. Year 6 pupils plan and redraft their work, writing for a wide range of purposes and audience. However, standards in writing are not high enough, especially at Key Stage 2. This is particularly seen in the style, vocabulary usage and presentation of written work. Pupils' good skills in spoken language and their wide vocabulary are not reflected fully in the quality of what they write. At both key stages, pupils use their writing skills satisfactorily to record their work in other subjects, however, the standards they reach are not as high as they should be.
10. At both key stages pupils reach above average standards in all aspects of mathematics. They use the skills they have learnt well when solving problems. However, although standards in this aspect are above the national average, they are not as high as they could be because many of the tasks are planned by their teachers which limits pupils' skills in planning and organising their work. In addition, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects. In their number work, Year 2 pupils show a good understanding of place value and computation. Year 6 pupils accurately work with numbers up to 1,000 and have a good understanding of fractions and data handling. In their work on shape, space and measures Year 2 pupils know the properties of shapes, estimate and measure quantities and tell the time accurately. Year 6 pupils build well on these skills. Their knowledge and use of shape and standard measures is good.
11. Key Stage 1 pupils reach above average standards in science. They know the importance of fair testing and use this well in their experimental work. By Year 2, pupils' scientific knowledge and skills are above average. They know the importance of the senses, accurately identify types of living things and the conditions which will allow them to grow and thrive. By the end of Key Stage 2, although standards are rising, they are close to average. Through sound investigation and experimentation skills pupils gain new knowledge and understanding, particularly in physical and natural science. For example, they know the properties of different materials and identify reversible and irreversible change. Pupils also develop a good ecological awareness.
12. Standards in information and communication technology are below expectations at the end of both key stages, although this is an improvement on standards seen at the last inspection. In basic word processing, entering and presenting data and use of the Internet, pupils at both key stages reach the standards expected. Standards are below expectations in the use of multimedia presentations, interrogating information, modelling, controlling devices and monitoring external data, for example temperature, using a computer. This is caused by insufficient provision of computers and software, weaknesses in teachers' subject expertise, insufficient time for pupils to practise what they have learnt as a class and insufficient use of computers in other subjects.
13. At both key stages pupils reach the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Key Stage 1 pupils understand the importance of celebrations, rites of passage and symbolism in Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. They recognise how

people's lives are affected by their religious beliefs, for example Mother Teresa. Pupils make sound progress in their learning and, by the end of Key Stage 2, they have a satisfactory knowledge of world religions, including Buddhism and Judaism. They understand the significance of holy writings and use these effectively to gain information and understanding.

14. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in meeting the targets in their individual learning programmes. Their progress is generally good when they work with an adult in class. The guidance, encouragement and support given at such times help pupils to tackle the work with confidence. However, the teachers do not always refer to the pupils' targets in planning lessons and occasionally expect too much of pupils in literacy and numeracy.
15. Higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils reach the standards expected for their ability in most subjects. They are sometimes given differentiated work, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. On most occasions this is sufficiently challenging and they make satisfactory progress to attain the standards of which they are capable. However, particularly in writing in English and in information and communication technology, the lack of teacher expertise and insufficient expectations of what pupils can achieve limit their progress and the standards they reach.

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

16. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Together with the responsibility they take towards their learning and the quality of relationships at all levels, these aspects are significant factors in helping pupils to achieve above average standards.
17. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. Many pupils name their favourite subjects and activities and give good reasons for their choice. The youngest children have no difficulty in coming to school and leaving their parents or carers. Parents answering the inspection questionnaire and those interviewed during the inspection strongly endorse the view that their children enjoy the school and are happy in it.
18. Pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. They concentrate very well and listen attentively to the teachers and to each other. Pupils particularly enjoy practical activities such as games and investigations in science and most teachers provide well for these. Whenever pupils feel it is appropriate to use their initiative, they organise their work well and take pride in their finished product. For example, pupils in Year 2 proudly show the results of their fair testing to the visitors. The inspection findings closely reflect those of the last inspection, indicating that the school has maintained high standards of attitude and behaviour.
19. The school provides a range of non-classroom based activities, such as visits to historical and cultural places. Pupils in Key Stage 2 had the opportunity to visit the Museum of Lancashire and Year 3 visited the Rufford Old Hall as part of a topic on the Tudors. The school offers a very good range of enrichment activities such as concerts, singing, music and lots of after school clubs. These all add to pupils' enthusiasm for the school.
20. Pupils' behaviour in class is very good. There are clear school rules which pupils know well and observe. Pupils appreciate the recognition which the regular praise by class teachers gives to outstanding effort or behaviour. Around the school behaviour is very good. Pupils play well together at playtime and at lunchtime. There is good adult supervision and no unsatisfactory behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils are delighted to be selected to help during assemblies and in the classroom. They carry

out their duties with care and pride. Parental comments indicated that their children behave well in the school and inspection evidence confirms this view. The school's behaviour policy is strongly reinforced at every opportunity, especially in personal, social and health lessons and assemblies.

21. Adults provide very good role models for the pupils. There is good evidence that pupils respect the values and beliefs of others. They listen carefully to their teachers and other people, particularly in assemblies and the playground. They show good understanding that other people's beliefs may be different from their own.
22. Opportunities are available for pupils to assume a wider range of responsibilities within the school. The range of duties which older pupils undertake is extensive. They help in the school assemblies with setting up music, operating lighting systems and arranging seating for teachers and visitors. There is strong emphasis on all pupils taking responsibility for their actions and behaviour. Pupils are helpful and polite, holding doors for adults and cheerfully undertaking prefect duties and tidying tasks in the classroom and around the school. Their personal responsibility is very good.
23. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect their teachers and other adults. They respond to good teaching and are anxious to succeed and make progress. In group work, pupils co-operate well, discussing issues sensibly, handling and sharing materials and equipment with respect. In lessons such as science and drama pupils work extremely well in groups and produce excellent finished work.
24. Attendance registers are correctly completed twice daily. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school meets statutory requirements for safe keeping of attendance records. Pupils arrive at school punctually and their attendance level is above the national level. There are no unauthorised absences during the year.

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

25. Most of the teaching is good. In the lessons observed during this inspection 67 per cent were good or better. Unsatisfactory teaching was only seen in two lessons (3 per cent), both at Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved, particularly in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. There are now more lessons in which teaching is good or better. Very good teaching was observed in 23 per cent of lessons and in 7 per cent of lessons teaching was excellent. Very good and excellent teaching was seen in all key stages. Across the school teaching of the basic skills in numeracy is good. It is also good in literacy in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. It is satisfactory overall in teaching literacy skills at Key Stage 2. The use of homework to support learning is satisfactory at all key stages. Improvements in the quality of teaching have mainly taken place over the last year when the new senior management began to have an impact on the school. Less improvement has taken place at Key Stage 2 partly due to the fact that staffing problems meant there was no key stage co-ordinator for two terms. In addition, many of the staff are relatively new to the school. No lessons were observed in art and so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in this subject.
26. In the reception classes teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is always at least good and the majority (60 per cent) is very good. There is a very good understanding of the needs of young children. Lessons are very well planned to meet the specific needs of children. Children learn well because the choice, variety and availability of tasks ensure there is a continuing enthusiasm and excitement about learning. Very good classroom organisation and management help children to take responsibility for their learning. The very supportive environment ensures children respond positively, think for themselves

and try hard, often making very good progress in lessons. Less able children and those with special educational needs are supported well because in whole class sessions teachers make sure that a range of suitable questions are asked. When working in groups or on their own, children are always given the right support to ensure that good learning takes place.

27. At Key Stage 1 the teaching is mainly good or better (83 per cent). Very good teaching was observed in 22 per cent of lessons and in 13 per cent of lessons teaching was excellent. Teaching and learning are very good in mathematics and good in science, religious education, geography and music. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects except information and communication technology. The high level of good and better teaching is the result of very good support given by the key stage co-ordinator and senior management. A very effective team has been built which ensures that good practice is shared. As a result, the teacher on a graduate training programme is being supported well to make a good contribution to the quality of teaching. Because of the good quality teaching, good learning takes place in almost all lessons. However, improvements are fairly recent, having taken place mainly over the past year; progress in learning over time is therefore satisfactory.
28. As a result of the excellent relationships Key Stage 1 teachers have with their pupils, the management of pupils is very good which supports their learning very well. Pupils' interest in their work, the very high level of concentration and the responsibility they take for their tasks all play an important part in helping them to make good gains in their skills and knowledge. Teachers have a good knowledge of the curriculum and they teach the basic skills well in both literacy and numeracy. Planning is effective and well matched to the needs of all children according to their age and ability; a good example was seen in a very good science lesson on 'the senses'. Throughout lessons pupils are constantly reminded of their teacher's high expectations. Questioning is also used very effectively to ensure that all pupils have understood, as was seen in a good geography lesson comparing France with England. There is a good mix of whole class, group and individual activities which means pupils can gain new understanding and then practise and apply their skills. Teachers use effective methods to explain and demonstrate. All are very good at explaining new concepts; for example, excellent learning took place in a mathematics lesson on ordering numbers.
29. At Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory overall (95 per cent) and only two unsatisfactory lessons (5 per cent) were observed. In the lessons seen 49 per cent of the teaching was good or better, 1 per cent was very good and 5 per cent was excellent. Teaching is very good in mathematics where it is helping to contribute to the raising of standards. Teaching is good in science, geography and music and satisfactory in all other subjects except information and communication technology. However, although teaching in English is satisfactory overall, teachers' expertise and expectations of pupils are not high enough. As at Key Stage 1, the strongest element of teaching is in the management of pupils, although it is not as good as for the younger key stage. There is a strong correlation between the quality of teaching and learning. However, when teaching is less stimulating, the excellent attitudes that pupils have towards their work and their very good behaviour and relationships play a major part in the learning that takes place. Often pupils set their own expectations for the quality of work required. The lack of higher expectations set by teachers in these lessons limits the progress that pupils make and the pace at which they work. In the best lessons teachers introduce the work very well which enthuses and excites pupils. This was seen in an excellent geography lesson on the quality of river water. The good relationships with pupils encourage their participation as was observed in a very good lesson in which pupils talked over issues which faced them as part of everyday life. The higher expectations and good pace seen in the best lessons help good learning to take place. When lessons are less successful teachers rely too

heavily on the activity planned to promote learning rather than giving pupils extra guidance to promote greater progress. This was most noticeable in lessons in English.

30. At both key stages, the least successful feature of teaching is the use of assessment to help build on and extend pupils' learning. In most lessons on-going assessment was satisfactory as teachers moved around, sensitively correcting mistakes and engaging in discussions with pupils to help them understand and improve their work. However, marking and assessment do not support pupils sufficiently in helping them to achieve well for their abilities. This is partly because current assessment procedures are new and have not been fully implemented. As a result, not enough thought is given to planning for the next steps in learning. Teaching in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory at both key stages because teachers do not have sufficient expertise to teach all aspects of the subject effectively. They do not have enough knowledge of multimedia presentations, controlling devices and monitoring external data using a computer. The school is aware of this weakness and has already planned in-service training to address the issue.
31. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good in the reception year and satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. The youngest pupils benefit from many practical, active experiences when they can repeat, rehearse and practise their skills. One of the reception teachers is the special educational needs co-ordinator and she uses her knowledge and expertise well to observe the pupils in the reception year and indicate any concerns.
32. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the teachers are aware of the special educational needs of the pupils in their class, but do not always indicate on their lesson plans how these needs will be met. In too many cases, pupils are expected to do the same as the other pupils. Although the teacher, or a support adult, often works alongside pupils, especially in Literacy Hours or mathematics lessons, there are few occasions when the teachers provide relevant support resources or adapt the task to reflect individual needs. Teachers give good oral feedback to pupils on their progress in meeting targets related to behaviour and attitude. However, marking does not give sufficient help in showing pupils where they have made progress in meeting specific targets in their individual programmes.
33. The school has recognised the need to increase the number of pupils reaching levels above the national average in the national tests, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a crucial factor in helping the school to reach standards close to those of schools in similar contexts. Different activities are planned for the more able pupils in some lessons but, because assessment is not used sufficiently, these do not build effectively enough on their prior attainment. Good thought has been given to providing for the needs of gifted and talented pupils and a small group are taught by staff from a local secondary school on one afternoon a week. However, this strategy is fairly new and it is too soon for it to have had a significant impact on standards.

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

34. The school provides sound provision over the full range of subjects and areas of learning. Appropriate emphasis is given to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as suitable provision being made for other subjects. The curriculum for pupils' personal and social development is good and that planned for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The weaknesses identified at the previous inspection are now well on the way to being addressed. There is now an overview for how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding will be developed as they move through the school. These



plans are then effectively expanded to identify what is to be taught in each term. This enables the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage of education and the National Curriculum programmes of study to be planned systematically throughout school. Practical and investigative work in mathematics and science now have high priority.

35. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and a strength of the school. It provides very good access to all the areas of learning and is related very well to children's needs. The specific skills identified for each stage of learning are effectively used to ensure that the activities planned are well matched to children's maturity and ability. These activities provide a range of tasks to help them develop linguistically, mathematically and socially. The Foundation Stage curriculum and the National Curriculum, taught when children reach Year 1, are planned to fit together well. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities which helps children to develop independence and make decisions about what techniques or resources they will use.
36. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is satisfactory. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and meets statutory requirements apart from information and communication technology in Key Stage 2. Requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are fully met. Teachers plan and review their work together regularly in order to ensure that key skills and concepts are appropriately developed. They identify what is to be taught to each year group of pupils and when it is going to take place. However, in the mixed age classes in Key Stage 2, this is not always the case. Sometimes the planning does not take sufficient account of the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities. The school is reviewing and evaluating its curriculum structure and is revising some policies and schemes of work to conform to new government requirements. The gaps and lack of emphasis on certain areas identified in the previous report are being successfully addressed. The key issue from the previous inspection to ensure the information and communication technology curriculum met requirements has still to be addressed in Key Stage 2. Children in Key Stage 1 are now being taught the key skills and have regular access to computers.
37. The school has responded positively to the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. High priority is given to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. The well-organised literacy and numeracy lessons develop pupils' skills well. This is beginning to raise standards in mathematics. Pupils are sometimes encouraged to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, for example designing routes, writing reports and collating information from scientific experiments. However, these opportunities are not sufficient to help raise standards. The application of literacy skills, particularly in writing, is not as high as it could be because pupils have too few opportunities to use and extend the skills taught in the Literacy Hour particularly in their written work for other subjects.
38. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. A rich curriculum helps pupils to develop self-awareness, confidence and independence in every aspect of their learning. In assemblies and lessons, pupils are given opportunities to discuss personal issues and talk about the consequences of their behaviour and actions. They learn about the impact of their actions on others, co-operation and teamwork in lessons, sporting activities, personal research tasks and visits. As a result, pupils develop positive attitudes, behave very well and form very good relationships with adults and other pupils. The provision for sex education and drugs awareness is in place appropriately in the science curriculum.
39. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and none is withdrawn from religious education or collective worship. The school fulfils its aim of meeting the needs of all its

pupils.

40. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Lunchtime and after-school sports, music and line dancing clubs are well attended. The school choir, band and recorder groups regularly perform in assembly and for local community events.
41. The local community supports pupils' learning well. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. Good links have been established with the local playgroups and nurseries. The school makes good use of the locality to support work in art, geography, history and science. Visitors offer opportunities for pupils to develop musical and sporting skills. There is close liaison with the local high school. Use is made of its swimming facilities and a group of Year 6 pupils visit one afternoon a week for extension studies in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are given an insight into the world of work as they participate in the design and development of their Millennium Garden. The aim of this project is to offer a facility to the community as well as those who are members of the school.
42. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils have access to the full curriculum, and adult support is provided at key times such as in literacy and physical education lessons. The school has identified several Years 3 and 4 pupils who did not do as well as expected for their age in literacy tests and they take part in additional literacy support sessions led by a trained support assistant. More able pupils are sometimes given specific tasks well matched to their abilities or the teachers ensure pupils know that they have higher expectations of their work. The school has recently identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils at Key Stage 2 and introduced specific provision for their needs. However, this only began at the start of term and has not yet had sufficient time to have a significant impact on their achievement.
43. The school's overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, maintaining the standards seen at the last inspection.
44. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Each week assemblies follow a theme such as the significance of the harvest festival or stories depicting emotions and encouraging awe and wonder. There is appropriate focus on thinking about others, for example responding to famine and the homeless. Religious and moral teaching is encouraged through the school prayer which is used in most assemblies. In religious education lessons, pupils reflect on the lives of founders and leaders. In history and geography lessons pupils are inspired by stories. All these features are an improvement since the last inspection. The statutory requirements of a daily act of collective worship are fully met through key stage or class assemblies.
45. The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development is good, as it was at the last inspection. Teachers are good role models and promote harmonious relationships well. Assemblies are used effectively to teach the difference between right and wrong and to help pupils recognise the benefits of co-operation, respect, kindness and friendship. Pupils are made aware of the consequences of unkind behaviour, such as bullying. Year 6 pupils are given a good range of responsibilities, including acting as monitors, paired readers and looking after the younger pupils. All pupils are given responsibility for giving out resources and tidying up classrooms. Through sports days and team games, pupils develop the spirit of competition and co-operation as well as respect for rules and fair play. Personal and social education lessons are used effectively to develop moral values, especially in making pupils think about how to manage their actions, for example when they are angry. Although there is no school council, pupils are informally consulted, for example about how to prevent injuries in the playground. Pupils also help to form their own class rules.

46. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, although less emphasis is given to teaching them about the cultural diversity of society. A good range of activities includes concerts, music and singing and participation in events such as a Victorian day. However, visitors from non-Western cultures are very few. There is a satisfactory number of musical instruments, artefacts and displays depicting other cultures which is an improvement since the last inspection.

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

47. The school is a calm and caring establishment, which has well organised procedures for ensuring the well-being and safety of its pupils. As a result, pupils are very happy to come to school. Child protection procedures are in place and close attention is paid to health and safety issues. Teachers pay good attention to health and safety matters, particularly in physical education and science lessons. The general cleanliness of the buildings and maintenance of the grounds is of the highest standard, as was seen at the last inspection.
48. All staff make it a priority to settle children well, with an established routine. A pre-school meeting between teachers and parents/carers establishes mutual responsibilities in terms of behaviour, attendance and school rules. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour are good and understood by pupils and parents. The school pays good attention to pupils' educational and emotional needs and provides good support through an open door policy where parents and pupils can talk to the teachers and the staff without making a prior appointment. Sound provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Individual needs and concerns are effectively identified in the early years and the school works with external agencies to ensure appropriate professional support for pupils. The special educational needs co-ordinator works with class teachers to compile pupils' individual learning programmes. The quality of these programmes varies, especially in the preciseness of the learning targets. The most detailed and systematic are those compiled by members of the local education authority support service. The clarity and specificity in the learning targets and the strategies to achieve them serve as good models to improve the quality overall.
49. Teachers and support workers know the children well and are sensitive to their needs, providing suitable opportunities for them to discuss any concern or problem. Account is taken of pupils' medical needs, and the caring environment, sensitively supervised by the staff, ensures that sick and vulnerable children are adequately cared for. The school makes good safety arrangements prior to school visits.
50. The very good behaviour seen in the school is effectively supported through a system of mutually agreed simple classroom rules. These are incorporated in the whole school policy and displayed in most classrooms. All pupils know that good behaviour is required for them to work and play harmoniously. A system of incentives is effective and parents and their children understand the hierarchy for incentives and sanctions for inappropriate behaviour. The behaviour policy incorporates guidance on dealing with incidents of bullying and midday staff have received appropriate training for dealing with difficult children. The success of these strategies is reflected in the fact that no bullying or unkind behaviour was observed during the inspection.
51. The health and safety policy has recently been revised and adopted by the governing body, although it is not yet fully implemented in line with the local authority guidelines. There are suitable arrangements for first aid procedures. The school caretaker makes informal checks on a daily basis and any hazards are promptly dealt with. Some health and safety issues have been drawn to the attention of the school caretaker and the

governing body. The school promotes hygiene effectively; for example, pupils are encouraged to wash their hands before handling food. Pupils are taught how to use tools safely in science lessons and discouraged from running when moving about the school.

52. Any unexpected or unexplained absences are promptly followed up. However, the school does not prepare data regularly to monitor patterns of unsatisfactory attendance or late arrivals. The result is that the school, whilst enjoying good levels of attendance, has not effectively improved punctuality by targeting those with a poor record. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were unaware of the school's known strategies for supporting children who may be away from school for a length of time.
53. The school now has an assessment policy, which it did not have at the time of the previous report. The necessary procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are now in place for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Children are assessed shortly after they begin school and at the end of the Foundation Stage of education. Reception children are grouped for English and mathematics tasks according to the results of the assessment carried out soon after they join the school. Pupils continue to be grouped for their literacy and numeracy lessons throughout school. These groupings are sufficiently flexible and teachers are continuing to develop strategies to monitor individual pupils' progress and alter groups to meet various needs as they arise. New systems have been introduced or changed recently to aid the recording of pupil progress in English, mathematics and science, but teachers have not had sufficient time to use and evaluate them. As a result, inconsistencies are still arising. For example, in the Foundation Stage, individual records are kept indicating how children are progressing with various aspects of their learning. Adults keep a check on the choices children make in the resource area. In Key Stages 1 and 2, individual teachers complete evaluation sheets at the end of the week, indicating how the class, groups and sometimes individual pupils are progressing in their learning in aspects of the core subjects. Some, but not all, teachers have begun to use these effectively to help planning for the next steps in learning.
54. For the last year, two samples of work in English and mathematics have been kept for each pupil in order to track improvement over time. These procedures have identified high achieving pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 and also pupils who are not achieving as well as they should be. To support the latter group, a Booster Class has been set up in Year 6. However, the school has still not reached the stage where individual pupils' progress is identified and monitored systematically throughout the year in each class and year group. This makes it more difficult to set appropriate targets for pupils of all abilities and to rigorously monitor their progress over time in English, mathematics and science. It is hard to identify where the use of previous assessment guides the next stage of teachers' planning. This was considered unsatisfactory and a key issue in the previous report. Although the school has begun to address this area, a weakness still remains.

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

55. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire or who were interviewed during the inspection agreed that their children like coming to school, a view supported by inspectors. Parents at the meeting or who were interviewed were generally satisfied with the quality of education provided and the standards achieved by their children. They felt that the teaching is good and most of the children behave very well in the school, and that this enables them to make good progress overall. Inspection evidence shows that teaching is good overall and a high percentage is very good.
56. Most of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were satisfied that their children receive the right amount of work to do at home. A quarter of parents felt that they were

not well informed about how their child is progressing in the school. The inspection team found the amount of homework given to be appropriate for children's age and the information given to parents on their children's progress is satisfactory. The 11 per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they felt the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside school hours. The inspectors' view is that the quantity and range of extra-curricular activities is good: the school provides a variety of sporting activities outside the school hours and pupils support them well

57. Most parents who were interviewed during the inspection are happy about the information received from the school and feel comfortable in approaching the school with concern about their children's welfare. Inspection evidence suggests that parents are very supportive of the school and staff are appreciative of their help with reading and various other activities in the school.
58. 'Meet the teacher' evenings in the autumn and parents' evenings in the spring are well attended. Some parents feel that the middle of the spring term is late to find out about any problem with their children's learning. However, staff are readily available to talk to parents about their children's progress at any time during the year. Parents feel that the annual written reports at the end of the summer term are good; on inspection, these are found to be satisfactory. There are many other opportunities for informal meetings between parents and teachers. There are regular newsletters regarding work to be covered in a year/term, school visits, diary dates and other school events, which keep parents/carers informed about the school events.
59. A series of pre-school visits is arranged for reception children and their parents. At an introductory meeting the school establishes mutual expectations and responsibilities of parents and the school. The school provides satisfactory information for Year 6 pupils for their next stage of learning and, where appropriate, arranges meetings with Year 7 teachers from the neighbouring schools. This is much appreciated by the parents and the pupils. The school prospectus and governors' annual report are thorough, written in plain English and contain all statutory information.
60. Very good links between parents and the school contribute to pupils' excellent attitudes to school. This is instrumental in ensuring good attendance and punctuality. Easy access to the class teachers and the headteacher ensures prompt attention to complaints and suggestions and helps resolve any behaviour problems.
61. Parents feel that there is a marvellous group of parents and friends of the school who give valuable support to the school and raise funds. This makes a significant contribution to the resources of the school. A large number of parents and some grandparents are actively involved in the school life. They regularly attend events and celebrations and are invited to the school assemblies. Some parents help their children with homework, but this is not consistent throughout the school.
62. The majority of parents have signed the home-school agreement and there is an effective working relationship between parents, carers and staff. This enables them to share information about children's attitudes to learning and the progress made. Parents of children with special educational needs are properly involved in their child's individual education plan and the school invites them to participate in annual reviews of their child's progress as well as discussing ways in which they can help their child at home.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63. The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Much has been done to deal with the underlying weakness in the leadership and management of the school highlighted in the last inspection. Key to this has been the appointment of the school's deputy headteacher as headteacher from September 2000. In her periods as acting headteacher she raised staff morale and created a renewed sense of stability. However, it is only this term that she and the governing body have been able to make significant changes and to accelerate school improvement. The school is still in the early stages of analysing its own effectiveness critically and taking appropriate steps to raise standards. The strengths of the headteacher and governing body outweigh weaknesses in the effectiveness of other key staff. Subject and key stage co-ordinators have good organisational and management skills, but have less expertise and have had little experience in leading initiatives, especially in ensuring whole school improvement.
64. The progress made to address the four key issues from the last inspection has been satisfactory overall, but weaknesses still remain. Good progress has been made in promoting more effective school leadership, but there are continuing weaknesses in curriculum leadership. A good model has been set in the successful work done to raise standards in religious education. The school management structure has yet to be resolved and is dependent on the appointment of a deputy headteacher. The governors are prudently looking for experience and calibre to strengthen school management. Generally, the school is successfully meeting its aim of developing pupils' personal qualities, but has some way to go to ensure that its motto "committed to excellence" is carried out in all strands of its work. This particularly applies to the provision of information and communication technology, the use of assessment and more effective use of time and resources identified in the key issues of the last inspection.
65. The headteacher is providing good leadership and has the full support of the governors and parents. She has taken the lead in analysing test results, recognising weaker areas, setting targets and planning action to raise standards both in the quality of provision and in pupils' attainment. Her close work with the governing body to look critically at the school's achievements and to set the direction for the school over the next few years has considerably strengthened the quality of strategic planning which was judged to be weak in the last inspection. The headteacher and governors are acutely aware of the considerable amount of work remaining to be done to establish effective, efficient systems and procedures to take the school forward. Although many governors are relatively new, all show a high level of commitment to the school and take very good responsibility for their roles. In committees, governors are using professional expertise and acumen to good effect. As a result, they have a good awareness of the areas needing improvement and the reasons why. Statutory requirements are fully met except for provision in information and communication technology.
66. The school development plan includes relevant areas for improvement. Weaknesses identified in this inspection, such as standards in writing and curriculum leadership, have been identified and are already included. The headteacher has responsibly consulted governors and all teaching staff in compiling the plan and this initiative has given a common sense of purpose and shared responsibility. However, too many priorities are couched in general terms such as "to raise standards in mathematics". The targets for English are more specific as they draw on a close analysis of test results. The absence of fully costed and detailed action tasks/strategies limits the governors' success in tracking progress and in critically evaluating the effectiveness of decisions taken.
67. The headteacher manages and runs the school well. She and the acting deputy headteacher have an effective working partnership which ensures that the school runs

smoothly day-to-day. Their highly visible presence around school adds greatly to the easy, good relationships between pupils, staff and parents.

68. The quality of financial management and control is good. The systems to deal with everyday finance are efficient. The headteacher and finance committee of the governing body monitor spending closely. They have rightly considered the financial implications of the projected increase in the number of pupils on roll in the next few years. Governors have a good understanding of ways to ensure value for money and cost effectiveness. They actively seek additional funding and support, such as finance and gifts to develop the Millennium Garden, and use specific grants appropriately. The considerable amount of money raised by parents is used to fund specific resources and projects.
69. The acting deputy headteacher manages the provision for children in the Foundation Stage very effectively. She has created a very good team which means that the organisation and management of the reception classes are very good. As a result, both the quality of teaching and the curriculum provided are of a high standard for all children. This gives significant support to the good progress they make in their learning.
70. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The school recognises that this is an area for improvement as the previous headteacher had allowed systems and procedures to slip. The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator has worked successfully to draw up a register of special educational needs in the school, to organise the documentation and to set up systems to ensure regular reviews. The special educational needs governor has been involved in this process and has kept the governing body well informed of changes and the current situation. At the beginning of this term the governing body agreed a policy for special educational needs and intends to review this when new national guidance is received.
71. The special educational needs co-ordinator is aware of the need to tighten monitoring procedures and to assist the teachers not only in compiling pupils' individual programmes, but also in ensuring that the recommended strategies are carried out in practice. Two members of staff are currently taking a course to update their knowledge of specific educational needs, including autism, and how to support pupils in school. This is highlighting gaps in resources and also ways in which the school can make even more effective use of support staff and external agency expertise.
72. The school has a good blend of experienced and comparatively new staff. However, the fact that the majority of Key Stage 2 teachers are fairly new to the school has limited improvements in the quality of teaching at this key stage. The match between the expertise of staff and the curriculum areas they lead is satisfactory. This marks an improvement since the last inspection when it was less well matched. Whilst most teachers have the expertise and confidence to teach the full range of the National Curriculum, there are some who feel less secure in some subjects. For example, some staff lack expertise and confidence to teach several areas of information and communication technology and this affects teaching and learning, with the result that pupils do not reach the standards expected. There are enough support assistants for pupils with statements of special educational needs. The number of ancillary staff is adequate to provide the support needed. The school has a sound performance management policy and is well prepared to implement it; all staff have already been given substantial training. The arrangements for staff induction for newly qualified teachers are satisfactory. The school is effectively providing training for a graduate teacher and the success of this initiative is seen in the high levels of good and very good teaching seen at Key Stage 1.

73. The quality of accommodation for the delivery of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The last inspection judged it to be good. The demands of some aspects of the curriculum are now not met as well as before. The size and location of the library are good and the size of classrooms is satisfactory. There is good-sized hard-surface area for safe play and a large field for games and athletics. There is a lack of accommodation for teaching information and communication technology to a whole class. This limits the progress pupils make and the standards they achieve. The small sized hall restricts the development of some aspects of physical education, for example gymnastics, especially when it is wet. The storage area for physical education equipment is also barely satisfactory.
74. The resources for most subjects of the curriculum are satisfactory and easily accessible. The last inspection found inadequate allocation of money, affecting resources in science, information technology, religious education, history and large print books for pupils with special educational needs. These areas now have been largely addressed. The library is well resourced and there is good stock of books for English. There is shortage of computers and software which restrict opportunities for pupils to have sufficient time to learn and consolidate their skills and for using these resources for learning in other subjects. This shortage also has an impact on the school's ability to teach the full curriculum in the subject. The range of equipment for physical education is also rather limited, for example in gymnastics.
75. The school gives satisfactory value for money. It receives and spends a similar amount per pupil to many schools. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress over time and receive a satisfactory quality of education. The school has sustained high standards in pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning and has kept pace with national trends in raising standards. However, standards are not as high as they could in English and science when compared with similar schools.



## WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

76. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. To improve the standards achieved and the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. raise standards in information and communication technology by:
  - ensuring that there are enough computers and software programs for all pupils to have the chance to develop their skills and use them to help their learning in other subjects and to allow statutory requirements for the subject to be met;
  - increasing teachers' expertise and confidence in using information and communication technology;

(See paragraphs 7, 12, 15, 29-30, 36, 64, 72-74, 115, 138 and 141-144)

2. raise standards in writing and ensure pupils achieve well by:
  - strengthening the quality of teaching by developing teachers' subject knowledge and awareness of effective strategies to develop writing skills;
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially at upper Key Stage 2;
  - paying greater attention to the development of writing skills in other subjects;
  - using information from the marking and assessment of pupils' work to record their progress systematically and identify clearly what pupils need to learn next;

(See paragraphs 7-9, 15, 30-31, 37, 86-87, 93 and 95-97)

3. improve the use of assessment to help promote pupils' progress by:
  - agreeing and establishing consistent procedures across the school for assessing pupils' work, which enable teachers to monitor the progress they are making throughout the year;
  - ensuring that assessment is used to plan appropriately for all pupils, so that they can build on and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding;

(See paragraphs 6, 29, 33, 53-54, 64, 86, 97, 121, 126, 131, 137, 144, 148, 155 and 160)

4. increase the effectiveness of the role of the curriculum co-ordinators in ensuring school development by:
  - providing opportunities for them to strengthen their leadership and management skills;
  - giving them greater responsibility for the monitoring and planning of the teaching in their subject, evaluating pupils' work and judging standards across the school;

(See paragraphs 63-64, 137 and 144)

5. strengthen the strategies for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and taking steps to improve provision and standards by:
  - identifying more precise priorities in the school development plan for the short term;
  - ensuring that targets for improvement are measurable and realistic;
  - when monitoring teaching, focusing more closely on the progress pupils are making in lessons.

(See paragraphs 63 and 65-66)

### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

1. In order to raise standards even further, give pupils more responsibility for planning and organising activities in which they use and apply their mathematical skills.  
(Paragraphs 10 and 102)
2. Give more thought in class lessons to planning for pupils with special educational needs., providing resources well matched to their needs, assessing and setting new targets.  
(Paragraphs 14, 32, 71 and 113)
3. Take more account of pupils' needs by planning activities well matched to both pupils' age and ability in the mixed-age classes.  
(Paragraph 36)
4. Fully implement the new health and safety policy in line with local education authority guidelines.  
(Paragraph 51)
5. Give further consideration to the organisation of teaching and learning in physical education, particularly in gymnastics, to make best use of the small school hall.  
(Paragraphs 73-74 and 155)

### **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

## Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
6	23	39	29	3	0	0

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

## Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	297
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	16	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	35	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (97)	95 (97)	97 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	18
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	35	36	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (95)	97 (89)	92 (92)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	34	15	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	28	29
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	43	41	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (85)	84 (76)	90 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	27	26
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	39	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (80)	80 (74)	83 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

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

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

*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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	26.9

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52.25

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	464,738
Total expenditure	452,324
Expenditure per pupil	1,560
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,808
Balance carried forward to next year	29,222

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 28.7%

Number of questionnaires sent out	296
Number of questionnaires returned	85

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	37	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	46	4	1	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	36	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	9	1	7
The teaching is good.	48	44	1	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	52	24	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	1	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	49	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	46	37	7	2	8
The school is well led and managed.	51	35	5	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	52	4	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	36	11	0	10

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

**AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

76. The procedures, practice and teaching in the Foundation Stage of learning are very good and a major strength of the school. This is an area of improvement since the previous inspection.
77. Children are admitted to one of two parallel reception classes in the September before their fifth birthday. Although there is a wide spread of ability, the assessment of their ability completed soon after admission shows attainment to be above that expected in most schools for a significant number of children in language and literacy skills and slightly below in mathematical learning. By the time they leave the reception classes, they are working beyond the expected levels in language and literacy, mathematics, creative and physical development, and in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their personal and social development is well above the expected level. Children are very well prepared to begin work within Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.
78. The quality of teaching for children under five is very good. It is particularly effective because the lessons are very well planned to challenge children of all ability levels and move them along at a pace that suits best. Teachers and all the adults who support them have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. Carefully prepared topic activities ensure that children's interest levels remain high. The choice, variety and availability of tasks ensure there is a continuing enthusiasm and excitement about learning. Both the reception classrooms are designed to be as 'self-manageable' as possible for the children. Equipment such as scissors and sticking materials are kept in the same places so children always know where to find the resources when working in different classrooms. Children sense that their teachers want them to be happy and successful, and they respond extremely positively to this trust. They think for themselves and try hard. This is why they often make very good progress in lessons. Teachers take great care to make sure that children are given tasks that are appropriate for their age. When the whole class is together at the start of literacy or numeracy sessions, the youngest children and those who have special educational needs are catered for well because teachers make sure that a range of suitable questions are asked. Different groups of children are set to work and time is then spent helping those who need extra support. This practice significantly improves the quality of the learning of all children.
79. The school makes very good provision for children's personal and social development. They make very good progress in this area and soon develop a mature approach to school and each other. They quickly settle because they feel happy, secure and valued for the contributions they make. The Foundation Stage environment is an interesting, exciting and enjoyable place to be. Older pupils welcome the youngest children into the playground and their special prefects look after them. They are quickly made to feel part of the school community. As a result, children respond very positively to school and behave very well. They have very good manners. They quickly gain in confidence, learn to play and work collaboratively and show concern and respect for each other. Children have a growing understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The high quality teaching by all adults develops their sense of curiosity and wonder, and makes learning fun. Those with special educational needs are identified early, supported and included in all activities and given the particular help they need.
80. Children in the Foundation Stage work hard and develop above average skills in speaking and listening. They make good progress over time and often very good progress in

lessons. They strive to be as fluent and attentive as their friends are. Teachers are very skilled in ensuring that children have plenty of opportunities to express themselves orally to the class, in a group situation and individually in order to strengthen their widening spoken vocabulary. Children are becoming confident in the early stages of writing and reading and are well prepared to start the National Curriculum. They enjoy books and know that the pages tell the story in a sequence. They know that books are for enjoyment as well as helping them to find out things. Many children are competent early readers. Most children have begun to develop their early writing skills effectively. They can write their own names, using capital letters correctly. Teachers work very hard and manage to keep an appropriate balance between the teaching of the conventions of writing English with the imaginative emergent stage of the children's own story writing. Class books created by the children about 'How butterflies become butterflies' or the life cycle of a frog portray beautifully the conventions of how to write simple sentences that build into a story. The Writing Gallery displays children's own exciting stories and illustrations.

81. Children's attainment in mathematics is above nationally expected levels because they are offered a wealth of practical mathematical problem-solving opportunities. The early stage of the National Numeracy Strategy has been adapted very skilfully to fit closely to the classes' needs. Because they are absorbed in the activity, they concentrate for longer than expected when focusing on a task and try hard to offer solutions to mathematical problems. Whilst adding dots on their pigs, one child noticed his dots when added to his friend's made eight in total. His friend offered the suggestion that they needed another two dots to make ten. Another participator in the group ordered her nine dots into two, three and four. Others, whilst making pig faces on their biscuits, observed that eight eyes were needed for four pigs and only 'half' the number of noses and smiles! Groups of children make good use of computer programs to demonstrate their knowledge of numbers to ten. They show an increasing familiarity with the use of number in all aspects of their daily classroom routines, enjoy counting games and rhymes, and are starting to show a high awareness of addition and subtraction in counting activities. They know the names of shapes such as circles, squares and triangles as they match and sort whilst playing different shape games.
82. Children gain much knowledge and understanding of the world through their daily experiences in class. The daily routine includes discussion of the day of the week and the date, remembering what comes before and after. When comparing and contrasting weather conditions, children explain the consequences of a wet, rainy or windy day. Opportunities are also offered for individuals' special news. Every day teachers display a visual daily time-line indicating the structure of the school day as well as prompts for the class helpers. Often children talk about where they live, their families and events in their lives. They share baby photographs, comparing physical and mental changes over time. Children enjoy exploring and learning about living things. They watch tadpoles grow legs and lose their tails. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of different materials, as they build houses for the Three Little Pigs. Excitedly, they watch what happens to the straw and stick houses as their teachers, pretending to be the wolf, 'blow' the houses down using hairdryers. Children make very good progress in lessons. The consistently high quality teaching ensures children of all abilities learn as effectively they can. Attainment is better than that expected for their age.
83. Progress in physical development is good and most children will exceed the expected level of attainment by the time they finish their first year in school. They are given a variety of activities that extend their manipulative skills. They gain finer control through cutting, painting and building. Children benefit from the times allocated to carefully showing them how to use tools, equipment and materials. They are learning to move confidently, imaginatively and with increasingly good directional control. At playtimes, they make up



rules and join in playground games. They show an understanding of control and balance as they perform fast, slow, high and low movements. Teachers encourage them to persevere in order to improve their skills further. During a lesson in the hall, the available space is used sensibly and confidently. Very good progress is shown in investigating different ways of travelling, when finding and returning to 'a special place'. Children try very hard to follow the rules and instructions when remembering their original starting point. Access to fixed climbing apparatus is in the hall, but there are opportunities outside the classroom to ride and use wheeled toys. They use their physical skills as they fix construction apparatus of different sizes to make a range of vehicles and designs. Confidence is shown when handling tools and materials to make a Big Bad Wolf stick puppet. Dough, pipe cleaners and adhesive tape are manoeuvred adeptly to form straw or sticks into a house for The Little Pigs. Children enthusiastically try to master basic computer skills in order to write their name or a sentence successfully and enable the computer to 'talk'.

84. In creative activities children's attainment by the end of the reception year is likely to have exceeded the level expected in most schools. The quality of teaching and provision is very good. As they mature, many children are developing a range of creative skills. Opportunities are provided for them to explore colour and texture as they talk about skin tones, different shades of hair and eyes in order to complete a portrait gallery of themselves and their classmates. They colour-wash and test the results in abstract designs of autumn colours. Children are offered a range of media as they draw, paint, design and make models, houses and books for the 'Little Pigs' topic. When choosing colours and materials they show growing understanding of how to blend materials, as they experiment with pattern and shape. Creative opportunities are very well planned, often as part of resource area tasks which each child selects each day. A good example was seen when the children sang tunefully and varied the level of their voices in a series of experiments about sound. Children listen to music carefully and use their imagination creatively in their stories and play in the puppet theatre and home corner. They use pencils, crayons and brushes accurately when they paint, draw and colour. They listen carefully to music, sing songs and recite well known rhymes as they create sound-rhythms and accompaniments for their ideas in the music corner. Small groups make sound effects for their show about the wolf and the pigs. Others roll and shape dough to form a solid base in which to fix straw for a Little Pig's house.

## ENGLISH

85. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2000 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Level 2 or above) was well above the national average in reading and writing. The proportion reaching the higher levels was around average. These results show that the school is performing above the national average. When these results are compared with those of schools in similar contexts, they are average in writing and below average in reading. Teacher assessments largely matched the tests. Taken over the last four years, pupils' performance is well above the national average. Their performance varies from year to year, but it is improving at a faster rate than that seen nationally in reading and is close to the national trend in writing. As a group, boys perform better than girls which is different from the national trend. This is mainly because their prior attainment is higher.
86. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2000 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Level 4 or above) was well above the national average. However, the proportion reaching the higher levels was around average and this means that the school's overall performance is around average. When compared with schools in similar

contexts, the school's performance was below average, mainly because fewer pupils reached the above average levels. The under-estimation in teacher assessments was because assessment procedures are not used sufficiently to identify pupils' progress. This year's results, particularly in writing, were affected by the fact that 70 per cent of the year group were boys who, in this school and also nationally, tend to reach standards below those of girls. Taken over the last four years, pupils' performance is well above the national average and girls performed better than boys, as they do nationally. Pupils' performance varies considerably from year to year. After a significant fall in standards in 1998, they improved well in 1999 and slightly this year.

87. For current pupils at both key stages, standards in English are good. Most pupils reach the standard expected for their age and many do better. However, standards in writing are not high enough, especially at Key Stage 2. In the writing element of the 2000 national tests in English not enough Year 6 pupils reached Level 4 as expected for their age, or reached the higher Level 5, when compared with their high attainment in reading. Pupils' easy facility in spoken language and their wide vocabulary are not reflected fully in the quality of what they write. In addition, while a small number of pupils take pride in their work, too many have immature joined handwriting and make careless errors in spelling and punctuation. As noted in the last inspection, "standards are good within a narrow context". Not enough progress has been made to raise writing standards overall.
88. Standards in speaking and listening are above average and have a significant impact on pupils' achievement across the curriculum. Pupils are confident language users when they start school. They make at least satisfactory progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 in developing their ability to speak at length, to explain their views and to listen attentively to others. In all year groups, pupils use language effectively and most are highly articulate. By Year 2, pupils express their opinions clearly and are mature conversationalists. They rarely need to have things repeated or rephrased. In all classes, pupils listen appreciatively to adults and often engage in banter. By Year 6, pupils talk with assurance in formal and informal situations. Their comments show a critical listening ear and a well-developed ability to take others' views into account. This adds much to their learning and to the high quality of their relationships with adults and peers. Although the teachers ask pupils to explain their thinking processes in mathematics and science, fewer take the same approach in English and this weakens pupils' progress in literacy overall.
89. Standards in reading are above average. A common element in all year groups is the pupils' willingness, and often eagerness, to share books and to talk about what they have read. A significant number of pupils get off to a flying start and are already fluent, confident readers by the end of the reception year. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in acquiring strategies to recognise words and to read with expression and characterisation. Parents' help in hearing their children read regularly at school and at home, and in learning new words, spellings and answering comprehension questions, adds considerably to the steady rate of progress. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read independently and accurately. They talk confidently about authors and themes and how to use the contents and index pages to find information in non-fiction books. A small number of pupils are slower to read with confidence. Even at the end of Key Stage 1, they need much help in using their knowledge of letter sounds to work out words, and to use the context to predict words.
90. At Key Stage 2, pupils refine their skills in reading and interpreting text. They develop the skills of skimming and scanning and use these skills effectively in work in other subjects. Year 6 pupils are discerning, confident readers who talk knowledgeably about authors' styles and their own preferences. They highlight features in the text,

such as hyphens and dots, which give cues on how they should read it. Many have an intuitive awareness of imagery and personification but are less skilled in evaluating and explaining how it is achieved. They gave only superficial interpretations of stylistic features of poems and their formats. This reflects an area of weakness in the teaching.

91. Too many pupils continue to read books from a structured reading scheme long after they are competent readers. The challenge is often too low in the books chosen by the teachers for group reading sessions. Recent purchases have increased the range of books but there are still gaps in items such as playscripts, recent publications and literature from other cultures.
92. Pupils are very responsive in lessons. They make satisfactory progress in writing at Key Stage 1 but less so at Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in spelling, grammar and punctuation, although they do not always apply this knowledge consistently when writing independently. The main weakness lies in the lack of development and improvement in the content of pupils' writing. This reflects weaknesses in the teachers' expertise in teaching writing, including word processing and desk top publishing, and in the lack of high enough expectations of what the pupils can achieve.
93. By the end of Year 2, nearly all pupils reach the standard expected in writing for their age. They write in correctly punctuated sentences and show good storylines and detail in accounts. They had imaginative ideas when writing in the style of the poem "Down behind the dustbins" and showed a developing sense of rhythm and rhyme. A scrutiny of work from last year shows many pupils drew on what they had read when writing their own pirate adventures and their booklets about toys. However, only a few showed sufficiently well-developed stories and the use of more complex punctuation such as speech marks typical of a high standard for their age. In many respects, this situation continues at Key Stage 2. Pupils learn to plan and draft their work as they write poems, reports, pamphlets, playscripts, biographies and instructions. By Year 6, many show a good feel for effective words and phrases such as "Take a journey through the life of an author" in a blurb for Dahl's autobiography. However, for most pupils, there is too little development in the quality of the content and how it is presented. During the inspection, all year groups were looking at and writing poems where the words take on the shape of the subject matter, but those by Year 6 pupils showed little development in ideas and quality from those written by Year 3 pupils.
94. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Progress is best when pupils receive adult support and when the work is closely matched to the content of their individual education programmes. A small number of lower attaining pupils make slower progress in both reading and writing as they are not being given the close support they need to practise and develop relevant strategies and skills.
95. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. In the daily Literacy Hours, the quality of teaching varies from good to unsatisfactory. It is of better quality at Key Stage 1 where the teaching is generally more lively and purposeful and where good teaching in the links between letters and sounds effectively promotes pupils' reading and spelling development. In all Key Stage 1 classes, the teachers made the most of opportunities to encourage the pupils to spell words independently. At Key Stage 2, the pupils are not challenged enough to acquire new understanding about language or to use relevant terms to talk about language. Teachers' planning follows the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy but, in practice, the teaching lacks sufficient impetus to sharpen pupils' knowledge of language features and ensure that they achieve well. Too few teachers explore texts in depth or record aspects for future

class reference such as the key effective features of a 'shape' poem. Teachers often tell the pupils what to write about without showing them explicitly how to achieve it. Similarly, although teachers end the Literacy Hours with a plenary, too much time is spent sharing work and not enough on clarifying key points and what pupils have learnt.

96. Although all teachers use a mix of questioning, explanation and discussion, too many tend to direct the pupils rather than help them make their own connections between what they already know and the new material. This also typifies many of the sessions when the teacher works with a group. Teaching is at its best when the teacher prompts and guides pupils to apply their knowledge. The teacher's good questioning and trial of Year 2 pupils' ideas ensured a group made good progress in understanding not only how a holiday diary could be improved through more accurate punctuation and inclusion of detail, but also how this was done on the computer. The weaker aspects of teaching have an impact on the quality of the teaching of literacy skills and pupils' ability to use these well in other subjects. Although this aspect of teaching is satisfactory overall, it is not as effective as it could be and limits the progress pupils make.
97. A common weakness throughout the school is the limited use of assessment to guide planning. The school is effectively using annual tests to predict pupils' attainment and also to identify trends and gaps in standards. However, teachers record little of pupils' ongoing progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Nor do they all use information from daily group reading and writing sessions to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. As a result, opportunities are missed to amend planning and to provide experiences specifically targeted to individuals, groups or the class to help them achieve higher standards. Good practice, such as setting handwriting targets as seen in the class of Years 3 and 4 pupils or writing comments such as "you have set the scene well" that indicate where pupils have made progress or what they can do to improve, is not yet present in all classes.
98. The management of English across the school is in the early stages. The co-ordinator joined the school this term and has made a sound start in identifying gaps in resources and areas for staff development and partnership with parents to improve the quality of provision overall. She has observed some lessons and has plans to monitor the quality of teaching and learning as identified as a priority in the school development plan.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99. For current pupils, standards are above average at the end of both key stages in all aspects of the subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, achieve appropriately for their abilities. This is because of the high levels of good and very good teaching seen and a broad and balanced curriculum which provides good opportunities for all pupils to make progress. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator is working hard to improve provision and standards. All these factors show that the school had made good progress in the subject since the last inspection, particularly over the past year, and is continuing to do so.
100. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2000 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Level 2 or above) was above average. The proportion reaching the higher levels was around average. These results show that the school is performing above the national average, although below the average of schools in a similar context. Teacher

assessments largely matched the tests. Taken over the last four years, pupils' performance is below average. Boys perform better than girls do because they are more able. Pupils' performance fell over the past four years but, due to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and improvements in teaching, it rose again in 2000 and for current pupils is rising further.

101. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2000 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment (Level 4 and above) and also the higher levels were above average, which resulted in the school's performance being above the national average. However, when compared with schools in similar contexts, the performance was around average. Taken over the last four years, pupils' performance is close to average. Girls outperform boys, in line with the national trend. Pupils' performance varies considerably from year to year. After a significant fall in standards in 1998, due to improvements in teaching and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, they improved well in 1999 and slightly this year.
102. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are good at applying the skills and concepts they have learnt in solving mathematical problems, for example in number and money puzzles. The more able pupils do so easily, covering a range of activities associated with number patterns and measures. The standards reached by pupils with special educational needs are not far below those of average pupils. However, the standards reached by most pupils are not as high as they could be because they are not given enough opportunities to develop their own approaches further. This limits their progress and the standards they attain in applying their skills, both in mathematical investigations and also in other subjects, for example science. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, confidently apply their knowledge and skills in a range of circumstances. A particularly good example of this was seen in a geography lesson when both mathematical and scientific skills were applied very effectively in determining the quality of river water. Pupils' very good independent learning skills and their excellent attitudes to work as well as their above average standards help support this. Gifted and talented and more able pupils use their skills to a very high level, requiring only the minimum of teacher input. However, not enough thought has been given to planning opportunities to raise these standards further.
103. At the end of both key stages, standards in number are above average. Key Stage 1 pupils have a secure understanding of place value in numbers up to 100. They recognise the multiples and factors associated with 2, 5 and 10 and also odd and even numbers. All pupils confidently add and subtract numbers of two digits and understand simple fractions. Average and the more able pupils multiply and divide to a good standard, although some pupils with special educational needs are less confident in this aspect. More able pupils have a very good understanding of the four rules of computation and also fractions; for example, what three-quarters or two-thirds of a given number will be. They work accurately with three digit numbers. Data handling is given less emphasis than other aspects of number work, mainly because few opportunities are identified for its use in other subjects. However, most pupils reach the standards expected in this aspect. Most Key Stage 2 pupils are accurate in the four rules of computation with numbers up to 1,000. Average and more able pupils accurately multiply and divide by two-digit numbers. They have a good understanding of the equivalence of fractions, decimals, percentages and ratio, and data handling using graphs and frequency tables, understanding the difference between mean and mode. The more able and gifted and talented pupils have a well above average understanding of number, confidently using their skills in a range of computation work and interpreting co-ordinates in four quadrants. Below average pupils are not fully secure on place value when working with decimals.

104. Standards in shape, space and measure at both key stages are above average overall. The standards that Key Stage 1 pupils reach in their understanding of shape and time are well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs recognise two and three-dimensional shapes, identifying the number of sides and vertices. Good opportunities to use a programmable robot help pupils to understand angles as turning measurements. Pupils are skilled in estimating and using both standard and non-standard measures to compare amounts accurately. All pupils can tell the time and the more able use their knowledge very confidently to identify the length of journeys and departure and arrival times. At Key Stage 2 pupils build well on these skills. They have a good knowledge of shape and standard measures and use it to work accurately with angles, perimeter, capacity, mass and time.
105. When asked to do so, pupils are good at using their numeracy skills in other subjects such as science and design and technology. However, progress is limited because the school does not specifically plan to promote this use. The lack of sufficient computers and teachers' expertise means that information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning in mathematics.
106. In the lessons observed, the majority of teaching was very good at both key stages, as was pupils' learning. At both key stages some excellent lessons were seen. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection. However, much of the improvement has taken place during the last year and, by the end of both key stages, current pupils will have made good progress in their learning. In all year groups, teachers' planning is securely based on the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines and it is good. As a result, lessons are well structured and mostly move at a fairly brisk pace, particularly at Key Stage 1. The rate at which pupils learn is also supported well by their excellent attitudes to their work and very good behaviour. This means that they work at a very good pace and concentrate well, putting great effort into their work and trying hard to do their best. All teachers have good subject expertise and teach the basic skills of numeracy well, this aspect being very good at Key Stage 1. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly at Key Stage 1. The learning objectives are effectively shared with pupils and they are very clear about what is expected of them. Teaching methods are very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. They are well matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils and classroom assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs. Some good on-going assessment was observed in lessons, for example when errors were explained well and a good discussion was entered into so that pupils could easily put right their mistakes. However, the quality and use of ongoing assessment, which is closely linked to the National Numeracy Strategy, are satisfactory overall. Homework is set in most year groups and gives satisfactory support to the work in the classroom.

## **SCIENCE**

107. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards of attainment are above the national average. Standards are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Although Key Stage 2 standards were judged to be above average at the last inspection, this judgement was made largely in respect of the number of pupils achieving average levels in the national tests alone. Significant gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills were identified and the curriculum was found to be incomplete. Standards did fall subsequently, but in 1999 they improved to a similar position to when the school was last inspected and they also improved this year.
108. In the 2000 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments the number of pupils reaching the expected levels (Level 2 or above) were close to the national average, although the number reaching the higher levels was below average. At Key Stage 2, the results of the

2000 statutory assessments show that the proportions of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment (Level 4 or above) and also the higher levels were close to the national average, as was the school's overall performance. However, when compared with schools in similar contexts, the school performed well below average. Teacher assessments under-estimated the tests mainly because assessment procedures are not yet used sufficiently to help identify pupils' progress. Taken over the last four years, Key Stage 2 pupils' performance was close to average. Girls perform better than boys and this replicates the national trend.

109. Inspection evidence, teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 and statutory test results at Key Stage 2 in the current year show that standards have risen. In Key Stage 2 many pupils are achieving in line with national expectations, with increasing numbers exceeding the expected level, Level 4. Further evidence gained during discussions with pupils indicates that there is now a growing percentage of pupils reaching higher levels in all aspects of science work in both key stages. Although standards are similar to the findings of the previous inspection, the school has made considerable improvement, particularly in investigational science. Pupils are now offered many opportunities to experiment, think for themselves, predict what might happen and form their own conclusions. This improved curricular provision is already having a marked impact on how pupils learn at both key stages whilst enabling them to easily transfer their knowledge as they solve problems in everyday situations. For example, Year 6 pupils who made burglar alarms recalled their need to adapt their equipment to prevent the buzzer reacting when there was no extra pressure on the alarm pad. In the same way, younger pupils after experimenting with water know exactly why flat roofs leak more than sloping ones.
110. By the time they are seven, at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above the expected level nationally. Pupils understand the difference between a fair and unfair test as they investigate what happens when the distance between a sound and the listener is changed. Year 1 pupils take a 'listening walk' in order to appreciate that the sense of hearing helps animals and humans to find things out. When investigating taste, pupils know which part of the tongue detects sweet, sour and salty flavours. They sort fruit and vegetables into sets. When they smell, feel and taste samples they are less familiar with, their knowledge and understanding of the senses is enhanced significantly because intuitive teaching ensures that pupils are asked the questions that will move them on in their thinking. Then, pupils readily make connections between other aspects of their topic. A comparison between foods that animals and human beings need to grow and keep healthy develops. Careful teacher intervention allows higher attaining pupils to identify water as a common requirement for plants, animals and human beings to live.
111. By the end of Key Stage 2, although standards are rising, pupils only achieve the same as in most schools. The higher attaining pupils are already benefiting from their weekly visits to the high school. When discussing aspects of recent topics, they identified that studies at the high school have increased their knowledge of how the major organs of the human body work. Their experiment to test the heart's reaction to rest and exercise in class enabled them to further test their own theories whilst aiding other group members to form opinions.
112. In Year 3, pupils plan an experiment to find out which materials conduct electricity. After making their electrical circuit, group discussion focused on how to test and record whether different materials also act as conductors. Year 4 pupils take this idea a stage further by devising and recording an experiment to identify which materials are conductors and which are not. Year 5 pupils spend time defining terms, such as aim, prediction, hypothesis and apparatus. By the age of 11, pupils' scientific knowledge has developed well. Many have a good knowledge of physical and natural science. They understand the principles of an electric circuit, including the differences between a simple

and series circuit. Water is investigated and the properties of different materials are tested. Pupils know how to identify reversible and irreversible change. Within health education, the life processes of people and plants are researched and pupils are gaining a growing ecological awareness. Environmental issues and drugs awareness are often raised and discussed competently.

113. Within classes, attention is given to the individual learning needs of pupils. Extension tasks and challenges are sometimes available when the more able pupils have finished their given task. Less able pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported when an extra adult is available in the classroom. This enables them to participate fully in activities and share in discussions. There are times, however, when pupils find it hard to record their work because they do not have sufficient visual prompts, such as key spellings or a guide to how to construct a chart to present their findings. This is particularly important in classes where two different year groups of pupils are taught. As a result, sometimes pupils do not have time to finish a written activity.
114. Throughout both key stages, a particular strength is pupils' attitude to their work. From Year 1, they work responsibly and independently. Throughout school, pupils are extremely enthusiastic about their work. Very good relationships exist between adults and pupils. Pupils share equipment very well. They are supportive of each other and value contributions to discussions, applauding each other's successes. The participation in collaborative group tasks has a significant positive impact on their learning potential because of the high level of co-operation that exists.
115. Pupils are keen to make a note of the results of their experiments. They often show much aptitude and ability in the original way in which they write up evidence. At present, however, teachers do not give a clear enough indication to pupils of what they expect their final written work to look like. As a result, pupils are not sure of what is expected of them and neglect the appearance of their finished tasks. This detracts from the quality of the content. Although pupils use accurate diagrams and written accounts to record and interpret some of their findings, the recording of data in graphic form to identify trends, patterns and draw conclusions is developing more slowly throughout the key stages, particularly with reference to the use of information and communication technology.
116. The teaching is consistently good with examples of very good teaching in both key stages. An important feature of the teaching is the high profile now given to the development of investigative skills and the use of specific scientific language. Their effective response in putting greater emphasis on these two aspects is raising standards significantly. Strengths in teaching lie in good subject knowledge and the way that questions are posed carefully to focus the pupils' thinking and help their understanding. Teachers enjoy very positive relationships with their pupils and provide very good opportunities to develop positive attitudes. Through investigation and observation, pupils have opportunities to reflect on the wonders of life, for example during the healthy eating topic in Key Stage 1 and the investigation of rivers and water in upper Key Stage 2. Good classroom management and appropriate attention to health and safety allow pupils to have responsible attitudes, use resources sensibly and work together safely. The support staff are used well to give individual assistance to those pupils who need it.
117. The co-ordinator has been in post for three years. She is developing the subject and assessment procedures systematically. She has conducted a curriculum audit of the subject and has a clear vision for further improvements. These are identified in the subject action plan and part of the current school development plan.

## **ART AND DESIGN**



118. Timetable arrangements during the inspection meant that little direct teaching was observed in this subject. However, scrutiny of art portfolios and individual samples of work indicates that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their practical application and skills development. Their attainment by the end of both key stages is at the level expected for their age. These findings are similar to those of the previous report.
119. In both key stages, pupils are given opportunities to draw what they see using a variety of media. Progression in learning can be seen in the increasing amount of detail included in sketches and the use of a range of more sophisticated techniques to show style, tone and shading as the pupils mature. Abstract designs are created using chalk, different pastels, pencils and paint. The ideas become more complex and show greater awareness of shade and colour co-ordination in Key Stage 2. Whilst drawing and painting, pupils are encouraged to experiment with line, shape and texture whilst discovering and comparing the styles of famous artists such as Mondrian, Picasso and David Hockney. The skills of colour mixing improve as they learn to match and blend colours when, for example, printing from autumn leaves. Older pupils show a good understanding of how to create particular effects such as colour washing, block, sponge, finger or hand painting when creating suitable backgrounds for their work. By including people in their pictures, they realise they can create atmosphere and excitement in the same way as Lowry. Upper Key Stage 2 extend their knowledge by producing a range of original line designs whilst investigating the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Others use different methods of presenting three-dimensional results. They use papier-mâché, tissue and various paints and glue to create backgrounds and artefacts with a layered effect. There is less opportunity for pupils throughout school to experience working alongside artists, crafts people and designers.
120. The pupils in both key stages enjoy opportunities to express themselves. They are eager to describe their ideas and experiences. Their enthusiasm is obvious as they discuss their finished products or design plans. They have positive attitudes and pride in their achievements and displays. They support one another well and co-operate when sharing materials and resources. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show increasing control of drawing implements. Those in Key Stage 2 have a clear idea of the tools and resources they need to complete their tasks. They show self-reliance and have a mature attitude to their work.
121. Because of the lack of direct lesson observation no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. Long and medium term plans show that the curriculum covers a wide range of media and styles. Good attention is given to promoting both skills and knowledge. Assessment is not yet fully developed and does not contribute effectively to curriculum planning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. Pupils at the end of both key stages attain standards which broadly reflect the national expectations. The standards are similar to those noted in the last inspection. Year 6 pupils develop average knowledge, skills and understanding through carrying out projects such as a fairground ride, cooking and embroidery. They investigate mechanisms involving pulleys, drive belts and electric motors in products such as curtains, vacuum cleaners and washing machines. Pupils produce step-by-step plans, list required materials and components and communicate their design through annotated sketches and models. They evaluate finished products and express views on how these can be improved, for example the rotation of the fairground ride. The skills for using junk material, for example, measuring, marking, cutting, joining and finishing are well

developed, but the skills for using wood are weak. Pupils follow instructions, investigate mechanical component and assemble these to make a crane.

123. Year 2 pupils plan to the expected standard and their designs are reflected in their products such as sock puppets, puppets with moving parts, boats with sails and wheeled vehicles. They make biscuits with assistance. They have average standards in weaving and designing dresses.
124. The level of interest displayed by pupils is very good. They talk about their design and technology experience with interest, showing awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, for example handling tools such as a saw and materials such as wood.
125. Although no teaching was observed, its satisfactory quality is reflected in pupils' work in both key stages and in discussions with pupils and staff.
126. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, as is the curricular provision which is based on the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's model in Key Stage 2. It is topic based in Key Stage 1. However, there is no monitoring of teaching or of curriculum planning to ensure that pupils cover all the elements of the subject and build on and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding. There are no effective assessment procedures to inform the curriculum. Teachers are aware that they need to update their skills in order to teach the subject more effectively.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

127. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of both key stages are similar to the national expectations and to those found in the last inspection. The seven-year-olds compare and contrast localities with respect to children's lives in French and English schools. The oldest pupils use secondary sources of evidence to learn about distant places such as Ethiopia and Mozambique and world rivers such as the Nile, the Mississippi and the Amazon. They competently investigate environmental issues such as the quality of water in terms of nitrates, hardness, pH, turbidity and temperature. They know how these factors, for example nitrate levels, affect the animals and plant life in the river. Pupils use the subject vocabulary appropriately, for example to describe the course of a river. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are below average in some areas such as settlements, map work at different scales, and aspects of patterns and processes and how these changes affect the lives and activities of people living there .
128. All boys and girls take a very keen interest and enjoy learning. They demonstrate high levels of motivation and concentration, taking an active part in discussions. These highly positive features of their attitude create a very good ethos for all pupils to learn effectively and achieve, overall, the expected standards.
129. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. In Key Stage 1, very good planning provides very good lesson structures with clearly conceived objectives to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills consistent with the elements of the National Curriculum. Very good attention is paid to developing pupils' vocabulary which enhances their skills in comparing and contrasting information such as what people eat for breakfast and what schooling is like in different countries. The lesson structure and skilful use of questioning, method and pace make sure that pupils learn quickly. Good individual attention to pupils with special educational needs and the good spread of questioning to both boys and girls involve all pupils equally in learning.

130. In Key Stage 2, very well planned lessons provide challenging learning opportunities such as investigating the quality of water of a local river. Confident demonstration, for example of how to test the amount of oxygen, and the requirement of each group of pupils to carry out one test to find out about the quality of water, raise pupils' understanding of factors that affect plant and animal life in a stream. The conclusion of lessons, with the whole class sharing of information, improve pupils' grasp of what has been learnt.
131. The subject leadership is satisfactory, as is the overall provision of the curriculum. In Key Stage 2, it is guided by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's model scheme of work. In Key Stage 1, it is topic based which, when delivered with a clear focus on elements of geography curriculum, secures good progress. However, there is no monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work or assessment to assure successive development of pupils' learning. The co-ordinator regularly attends the cluster meetings and keeps the staff well informed of developments in the subject.

## HISTORY

132. At both key stages attainment is in line with national expectations and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve appropriately for their abilities. In all aspects of the subject, the school has maintained the provision and standards seen at the last inspection.
133. At Key Stage 1 pupils explore how life has changed over time when they compare their lives with those of their parents and grandparents. For example, they know that types of toys change through the years and why. They are gaining a secure knowledge about life in the past, for example in Tudor times.
134. At Key Stage 2 pupils show a secure understanding of the skills they need to find out about the past. They use written and pictorial evidence as well as historical artefacts to identify how people lived in past times. They are aware of the differences between primary and secondary sources and compare pictures and accounts of life in the past. They develop a secure understanding of the passing of time when they draw a family tree for the Victorian royal family. Through the good opportunities provided, pupils also experience what life was like at different times, for example when they role play the life of servants in Victorian times on their visit to Croxteth Hall and sample the diet of Vikings on a Viking Day in school. They gain a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different eras, for example Ancient Greek and Tudor times.
135. All pupils show a very good interest in historical topics and participate enthusiastically in lessons. This is because of the excellent attitudes to learning in the school. They concentrate well and ask effective questions to help their understanding.
136. Although no lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, the scrutiny of work shows pupils are making satisfactory progress in gaining skills and knowledge so teaching is judged to be satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall and some good teaching was seen. Teachers explain clearly and manage discussions well, focusing on the important features and historical vocabulary. They provide good opportunities for pupils to find out historical facts for themselves. These strategies, together with the excellent attitudes to work, means that learning is always at least satisfactory at both key stages.
137. Planning is satisfactory overall. The development of history enquiry skills and coverage of historical themes and eras are provided for. However, planning through the topic approach means it is not related closely enough to the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has already identified this need and plans to address it during the year. A good programme of visits to the local area and beyond, for example The

Museum of Lancashire, as well as visitors to the school enrich learning and help pupils' understanding. Assessment and recording of the progress pupils make are underdeveloped and are not used sufficiently in planning for the next steps in learning. Resources, including a suitable number of artefacts, are used effectively to help learning. The school has recently acquired a number of CD-ROMs to help learning in history, but their use has not yet had time to have an effect. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and enthusiastic and monitors the school's provision through scrutinising teachers' planning. However, she does not have enough opportunities to monitor teaching and learning or the work produced by pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

138. The standards attained by pupils at the end of each key stage are below the national expectations. In this respect, there has been some improvement since the last inspection when the standards were found to be well below average. However, this improvement is not enough to raise standards to national expectations. In particular, standards are below those expected in using multimedia presentations, interrogating information, modelling, controlling devices and monitoring external data, for example temperature, using a computer. The below average standards are caused by too few computers and not enough software, weaknesses in teachers' subject expertise, not enough time for pupils to practise what they have learnt as a class and not enough use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
139. The oldest pupils at Key Stage 2 are developing skills to use the Internet, for example in finding out information on global warming. Most pupils have basic word processing skills, for example copying, cutting, pasting, deleting, editing and changing font and its size and colour. Pupils also effectively use a basic spreadsheet, for example when entering data and drawing bar charts. More able seven-year-olds use information and communication technology for drawing a bar chart and for communicating ideas, for example in a poem. They have secure word processing skills.
140. Throughout the school pupils are highly motivated and show very positive attitudes to learning about information and communication technology. They engage in the activities provided with a high level of co-operation and concentration. These attributes help them to learn as well as they can within the limit imposed by insufficient opportunities.
141. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory at both key stages. However, most teachers do not have sufficient expertise in the more recent skills required in the subject, particularly in working with multimedia presentations and sensing physical data and controlling devices. The school has arranged a programme of in-service training for all staff to address this issue, but at present teachers cannot effectively deliver the curriculum required and therefore teaching is unsatisfactory overall.
142. Key Stage 1 teachers use their confident subject knowledge to impart correct vocabulary and word processing skills such as using backspace, delete, cursor, cursor keys and typing capital letters. Good equal opportunities are provided for all pupils to practise these skills. However, because there is only one computer for each class, each pupil has only a few minutes to practise the skills. Consequently the overall standards achieved are depressed. The good attention paid to the needs of left-handed pupils helps them to learn at the same pace as others in the class. Good management of pupils contributes to the lesson productivity. Occasionally, insufficient focus on the planned key vocabulary hampers pupils' acquisition of skills.
143. In Key Stage 2, the benefits of good planning and whole class direct teaching do not compensate sufficiently for the shortage of hardware and time for pupils to practise what

they have learnt in theory, for example using the Internet for accessing information. In addition, teachers do not have sufficient expertise to deliver all elements of the subject. Occasionally lesson planning does not integrate information and communication technology well enough with other subjects, for example when measuring pupils' height or the size of a table limits the time available for pupils to use the computer to process the information for graphical illustration. However, in the lessons observed, clear instructions, good management of pupils and focus on work ethics are positive features which create a good ethos for learning.

144. Although relatively new to the role, the subject co-ordinator is already having an effect. She has devised a well-considered action plan to provide a clear educational direction in order to improve provision and raise standards. Although effectively based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's model scheme of work, the curriculum actually taught does not meet the statutory requirements because there is not enough equipment or software and not enough time for pupils to practise the skills. There are no opportunities for the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum delivered in each class nor is there monitoring or assessment of pupils' work to ensure that they reach the expected standards.

## MUSIC

145. By the end of both key stages, standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. These findings are similar to those of the previous report. A particular strength of the curriculum is the way the school encourages pupils to play musical instruments. Half the pupils in Key Stage 2 have woodwind, brass or keyboard instrumental lessons in school each week. This significantly encourages pupils' interest, enthusiasm and achievement in various aspects of this subject.
146. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing in tune and are able to maintain a pulse when clapping to accompany songs. They interpret mood and character well when playing a range of percussion instruments. When singing together in assembly, they are enthusiastic and rhythmical. The pupils know a good range of songs that they sing from memory. In Reception and Year 1 they learn many nursery rhymes and counting songs that support literacy and numeracy well. Pupils in Year 2 organise themselves in pairs and perform complicated rhythms for the audience to copy. The leader adds tone and dynamics to the original idea successfully to produce a sequence of sound. Other small groups produce appropriate dramatic outcomes, using their voices to produce a range of sounds.
147. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils have a good understanding of musical notation. Their knowledge of notation is enhanced because of their involvement in individual music tuition each week. The pupils learn to sing and play rhythms in rounds very successfully. Year 4 pupils accompany and participate in a three-part round as they sing 'Let's make soup' using major and minor key structures. They learn successfully what texture in music is and are able to show their understanding as they perform. By Year 6 pupils show their instrumental skills as they play instruments in order to aid classmates to identify the different sounds that instruments make to set the scene for a recorded lesson, 'Lights, Camera, Action'.
148. Teaching is good in both key stages. There is a good mix of teachers with some form of background in music whilst others have an interest and enthusiasm for the subject. As a result, pupils gain positive attitudes and a love of music. Teachers use resources well and encourage pupils to handle them carefully. Pupils respond well to their music making and willingly share instruments in order to produce complicated rhythmical effects and accompaniments. The particular expertise of two teachers is used well to support other

staff and has a good effect on pupils' progress. They are able to participate in performances at the end of term and offer good guidance to help raise standards. Specialist visiting teachers support learning effectively by helping pupils to develop the ability to critically appraise aspects of their playing and performance. The use of assessment is under-developed and is not used effectively to help teachers build on pupils' skills and knowledge.

149. The opportunities for extra-curricular activities and school performances at the end of term and within the local community support pupils' personal development and learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

150. Pupils' overall attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2 is similar to that in most schools. Although standards are good in gymnastics for many pupils at Key Stage 1, standards in gymnastics and dance could be higher for most at Key Stage 2. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. Action taken this term by the co-ordinator to strengthen the teaching of skills at Key Stage 2 and to widen the curriculum through the introduction of netball, places the school in a good position to raise standards overall.
151. As noted in the last inspection, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good initial progress. Pupils who have special physical needs work closely with an adult helper and take full part in activities. By the end of the reception year, pupils show good co-ordination and well-developed skills in running, jumping and balancing. They know how to work co-operatively to get and put away gymnastics apparatus.
152. At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils build on these skills. They learn to travel in different ways and how to perform particular movements such as a forward roll. In dance, pupils learn to control their movements by varying their body contour, speed and direction. By Year 6, pupils show an awareness of strategy and tactics in playing games and a good appreciation of the impact of physical exercise on their body. In all years, the pupils show good skills in teamwork and a sense of fair play. Even in cold weather conditions, Year 6 pupils remained good-humoured and enthusiastic as well as showing a competitive edge.
153. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages although it varies from unsatisfactory to good. The teaching by the co-ordinator is good and is boosting the progress of her class of Year 6 pupils. She uses her good subject knowledge to teach skills and techniques such as running with a ball and dodging opponents. Strengths in teaching at Key Stage 1 are ensuring that pupils are developing a good awareness of different ways to move on the floor and on gymnastics apparatus.
154. However, the teachers' expectations of what the pupils can do are not consistently high enough. As a result the pupils, although willing, do not always over-exert themselves or extend their performance. When the teachers demonstrate, participate and explain clearly what is required and how it can be achieved, the pupils' positive response is reflected in the better quality of their work. The teacher's frequent encouragement to Years 1 and 2 pupils to "be like gymnasts" ensured that they all tried harder to stand smartly after rolling along the mat. Similarly, when shown how to transfer their weight from foot to foot, Year 4 pupils improved the quality of their swaying and swinging movements as they interpreted music. Pupils made little progress in lessons when the teacher did not identify explicit skills and features or discussed with pupils how they could improve.
155. The subject co-ordinator has used effectively information gained from courses to revise the curriculum and to alert staff to ways to improve the quality of provision. Whilst

teachers monitor pupils' performance during lessons, there are no systems to record the pupils' progress. After-school sporting activities, including coaching in football and gymnastics, are very well attended but the smallness of the hall restricts the scope of activities, especially in gymnastics. Visits to Howtown Outdoor Education Centre provide opportunities for older pupils to engage in water sports and outdoor pursuits. The school's use of the field and playground for athletics and team games is effective, but its potential for activities such as orienteering has not been utilised.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

156. At the time of the last inspection, both provision and standards were unsatisfactory. The school has made good improvement since then and addressed all the weaknesses identified. As a result, at both key stages, all pupils make satisfactory progress and gain insights into the world's major religions as well as Christianity. Their achievement is appropriate for their abilities and pupils reach the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus. The school makes satisfactory links between the provision for religious education and the collective acts of worship as well as with personal and social education. This contributes to the good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
157. At Key Stage 1 pupils explore their own feelings and response to celebrations, for example Christian or Islamic festivals and Rites of Passage such as Christian baptism and marriage. They learn about people whose lives are affected by their religious beliefs, like Mother Teresa, and understand the importance of symbolism in religion, such as the Five Ks in Sikhism. At Key Stage 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of important features of world religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism. They recognise the significance of holy writings such as the Bible and the Qu'ran. Older pupils use religious texts well; for example, they compare the accounts of the Nativity in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.
158. Pupils' attitudes are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Pupils are attentive and concentrate well. Due to the high levels of very good teaching at Key Stage 1, pupils show great enthusiasm for their work.
159. At Key Stage 1 teaching is very good and one excellent lesson was seen. Teachers are skilled at providing activities which inspire pupils' interest and therefore very good learning takes place. At Key Stage 2 teaching and learning are satisfactory. At both key stages teachers have sound subject knowledge and lead discussions effectively. They are good at using their own or pupils' experiences to encourage understanding. All pupils' views are sought and respected. Lessons are carefully planned with appropriate resources which are used well.
160. The curriculum is based on the local authority agreed syllabus and is satisfactorily planned to give pupils a wide range of experiences and build on their knowledge and understanding. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who has worked hard to improve the subject since the last inspection. Assessment is under-developed and therefore it is not used sufficiently to help plan the next steps in learning. The school is currently awaiting the local authority guidance before adopting a more systematic scheme. Resources are now satisfactory and are used effectively to support learning. They also include an appropriate range of artefacts.