

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **PICKNALLS FIRST SCHOOL**

Uttoxeter

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124142

Head teacher: Mr D Shooter

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman  
17794

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225298

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oldfields Road Uttoxeter Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST14 7QL
Telephone number:	01889 256416
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Postlethwaite
Date of previous inspection:	30 <sup>th</sup> April 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D Hardman 17794	Registered inspector	Religious education Art and design Special educational needs	Characteristics Standards and the school's results Teaching Leadership and management
Mrs L Buller 12511	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Partnership with parents The school's care for the pupils
Mr C Loizou 18645	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	Assessment
Mr K Oglesby 11510	Team inspector	Science Geography History	Curricular opportunities Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs L Smith 28173	Team inspector	English Music Under fives	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Picknalls First School is a large school situated on the edge of the market town of Uttoxeter in Staffordshire. The school serves a widely diversant socio economic neighbourhood. There is a broad social mixture in the school. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. There are 160 boys and 144 girls currently on roll. There are very few pupils who have English as an additional language and very few from ethnic minorities. Approximately 5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There are 17 per cent of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs, this is in line with the national average and 1.3 per cent have statements of special educational need, which is also in line with the national average. The number of newcomers to the area has increased the proportion of pupils on entry who have special needs, especially in academic and behavioural areas.

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

Picknalls First School is going through a very difficult period because of the number of staff changes and absences during the last three years. The pupils in Year 4 have had considerable disruption to their education and this is still having an adverse effect on their attainment. Although the leadership and management of the school by the head teacher, key staff and governors have improved since the previous inspection, there is still a need to monitor teaching and learning more rigorously, particularly for pupils in Year 4. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Year 3 is good, often very good and pupils' attainment is improving. For example, in Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age in English and mathematics. The quality of education provided in most classes means that the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Year 3 is good, often very good and is improving pupils' learning and attainment in these year groups.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes are good, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Parents' support for pupils' learning both at school and at home is good and having a positive impact on their attainment.

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

- The deployment, management and monitoring of staff to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to reach their full potential by the end of Year 4, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage to have regular access to a safe, secure outdoor play area that enables them to use large apparatus and wheeled toys.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been satisfactory and sometimes good progress in dealing with the issues identified in the previous inspection in 1996. There is now an established framework of leadership and management and governors are working closely with the school and have established agreed policies for all aspects of school life. These are beginning to be effective but the disruption caused by a high turnover of teaching staff, staff absences and the subsequent use of temporary supply teachers has slowed the rate of change. For example, subject co-ordinator roles are now clearly defined but, apart from the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, there are no opportunities for them to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects. The school appointed a special educational needs co-ordinator following the previous inspection to oversee and support these pupils. The provision for these pupils is good, they make good progress and reach levels of attainment that are appropriate for their abilities. There are good schemes of work in place for all subjects of the National Curriculum, which are currently being evaluated in the light of recent national changes. There are clear learning intentions for each class, which are frequently shared with pupils. Teachers' planning now includes the identification of assessment opportunities that help to establish the effectiveness of the planned curriculum. However, the school has not yet established a system to set challenging targets for individuals and small groups of pupils and so raise standards further. Although there are elements of good practice in school, assessments are not used consistently to guide teachers' planning and match the work to pupils' prior attainment, particularly for the more able pupils in Key Stage 2. There has been good progress in raising pupils' attainment and improving teaching in information and communication technology and the use of the new technology suite, improved staff understanding and effective teaching mean that the school is in a good position to continue this improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

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

  

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that in the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds the school's results were well above average in reading and average for writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools pupils' performance was average in reading but below the average in writing and mathematics. These results are an improvement on the previous year when inconsistent staffing and the use of temporary teaching staff led to a drop in the standards achieved in the National Curriculum tests. Inspection evidence shows that standards have improved and reflect the good teaching and learning for pupils in Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, history, geography, music and design and technology is above the level expected for pupils' ages. In all other subjects it is in line with the level expected.

In Year 4, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, religious education, information and communication technology and all other subjects except music and design and technology is in line with the level expected for their age. In writing, pupils' attainment is below what is expected and it is above expectations in music and design and technology. The school is aware that pupils' writing is a cause for concern and the co-ordinator has completed an analysis of results and prepared a comprehensive plan to improve the quality of pupils' writing. This is the same cohort of pupils who took the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds in 1999, which indicated that their attainment was average in reading and writing and below the average in mathematics. Since then, pupils have made satisfactory progress although compared with their level of attainment on entry to the school, a significant number of pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The school strategy to raise standards by setting pupils according to their ability is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment but this has not yet raised standards in Year 4 sufficiently.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to the school and their work. They enjoy coming to school and their enthusiasm for school life improves their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, pupils know what is expected of them and they are polite and courteous towards one another and adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. They respond well to school rules. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good which leads to most pupils trying hard and doing their best.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Most pupils arrive at school promptly, settle into class quickly and lessons start on time. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.

Pupils' good attitudes result from the school's positive ethos and their response to the school's behaviour policy. They understand the need for school rules and demonstrate this in their behaviour towards others. Pupils are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good, occasionally very good.	Good, often very good	Satisfactory, very good in Year 3.

*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.*

Fifty lessons or part lessons were seen. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons. It was good in 40 per cent of lessons, very good in a further 28 per cent and excellent in 4 per cent. Teaching is good, often very good in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Year 3. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is inconsistent in Year 4 due to staff absences and the use of temporary supply staff. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and pupils' standards are improving, particularly by the end of Key Stage 1. The quality of some teaching and learning has been monitored by the head teacher and district inspectors from the local education authority in September this year. The information from this monitoring has been used to modify the school's development plan to accommodate the findings. However, action to implement these positive recommendations has not yet taken place.



The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good in most classes following the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the subsequent training received by staff. However, the positive effects of this have not yet had time to sufficiently raise pupils' attainment in Year 4. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and where tasks are organised to challenge different ability groups in classes, pupils make good progress. However, teachers do not always use the results of their assessments of pupils' attainment to set targets for individuals and groups. Consequently work is not always sufficiently challenging for pupils of all abilities, especially the higher attainers. Some teachers overcome this because they use their daily observations of pupils' work to set challenging tasks but this is not consistent throughout the school. Classroom assistants give effective support to both individuals and groups of pupils when they are working with them. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by good teaching that provides challenging activities. As a result, these pupils make good progress in both key stages.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Many opportunities are provided to stimulate pupils' curiosity, interest and understanding. A good range of activities, both in and out of lessons, enhances the quality of pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. External support agencies and adult helpers are used well. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There is effective use of support staff who know pupils well, provide good teaching and ensure pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' personal development is promoted strongly through lessons and assemblies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. However, the results of assessments are not always used effectively to set specific targets for individuals and small groups of pupils.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and goes beyond this to include several features that enrich it considerably. For example, there is considerable effort put in to extra curricular activities, visits and visitors that give pupils a wide experience and help them learn. The school has formed an effective partnership with most parents, which makes a good contribution to pupils' learning both at home and in school. The school has good procedures in place to monitor and promote pupils' behaviour. These are effective and have maintained the very good standards of behaviour since the last inspection. The school does not have adequate procedures to monitor and improve attendance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher and key staff provide satisfactory leadership and there is a clear educational direction for the school. The role of the senior management team has improved since the previous inspection, however this has been disrupted by the absence of key staff. Co-ordinators in English and mathematics are beginning to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. Other subject co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in the management of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body takes its responsibilities seriously and is committed to helping the school move forward. Governors have improved their role since the previous inspection and make a satisfactory contribution to the effective running of the school. However, they have not been sufficiently rigorous in their efforts to solve the instability of staffing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of new initiatives. It has made use of some of the information generated by national tests to identify strengths and weaknesses and target areas for development, for example, the identification of writing as a weakness and the preparation of an action plan to improve pupils' attainment and progress.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. However, frequent teacher absence has created problems and pupils' education has been disrupted. The provision of support staff is good, they play an important role and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is well used and very well maintained. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory. However, there is insufficient provision for children in the Foundation Stage to have regular access to a safe, secure outdoor play area that enables them to use large apparatus and wheeled toys. The school's finances and administration procedures are good.

The head teacher and key staff provide a clear direction for future improvement. For example, they are aware that the setting for pupils in English and mathematics has begun to raise standards in these subjects. The school development plan has challenging targets for future improvement and the monitoring of teaching and learning is the next important step in its efforts to raise attainment further. Governors are regular visitors to the school, monitor financial planning and have formed a curriculum committee that is becoming more involved in the school's delivery of the curriculum. They make a good contribution to the preparation of the school development plan.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• They feel they can go to the school with any questions or problems</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard</li> <li>• The school helps children to become more mature and responsible</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stability of the teaching staff</li> <li>• The amount of homework given to pupils</li> <li>• The information on pupils' progress</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive comments and views of the parents. A significant minority of parents expressed concern in the questionnaire, in letters and at the parents' meeting about the leadership and management of the school because of the disruption to their children's education due to the number of staff changes and absences during the last three years. The inspection team agree with these concerns, particularly for Year 4, whose education has been disrupted because of the absence of permanent members of staff. Although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not consistently used to reinforce pupils' learning. Regular, weekly informative newsletters, an "open door" policy and discussion evenings, where teachers and parents discuss pupils' achievements, make a significant contribution to the partnership with parents. Although the school offers parents the opportunity to discuss pupils' end of year reports they do not organise a formal open evening in the summer term, which represents a missed opportunity to extend the partnership with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 In Year 4, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, religious education, information and communication technology and all other subjects except music and design and technology is in line with the level expected for their age. In writing, pupils' attainment is below what is expected and it is above expectations in music and design and technology. The school is aware that pupils' writing is a cause for concern and the co-ordinator has completed an analysis of results and prepared a comprehensive plan to improve the quality of pupils' writing. This is the same cohort of pupils who took the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds in 1999, which indicated that their attainment was average in reading and writing and below the average in mathematics. These pupils have had considerable disruption to their learning, due largely to the use of temporary teaching staff because of the high level of staff absence. Since then, pupils have made satisfactory progress although compared with their level of attainment on entry to the school, a significant number of pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The school strategy to raise standards by setting pupils according to their ability is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment but this has not yet raised standards in Year 4 sufficiently.

2 In the National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds in 2000, the school's results were well above national averages in reading and in line with the average for writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, the results in 2000 were average in reading and below the average in writing and mathematics. The proportion of 7 year olds reaching the higher levels in reading was above the national average and in line with the average in writing and mathematics. In teacher assessments of science, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average and the number of pupils reaching the higher levels was also in line with the national average.

3 Pupils make good progress, especially in Years 1, 2 and 3. This has stemmed from the stabilisation of staffing, improving planning procedures and teachers setting realistic objectives for each lesson. However, teachers do not yet use the results of assessments to set achievable targets for pupils of all abilities. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a positive effect on the standards achieved by the pupils. In the present Year 4, standards are not as high as they could be. However, pupils are now being taught more effectively in most classes and are starting to build on their previous learning and achieve well, especially in Key Stage 1 and Year 3.

4 Children in the Foundation Stage in the reception classes follow an appropriate and interesting curriculum. Many children enter the reception class with standards of attainment that are broadly average. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in all the areas of learning and this good progress means that children achieve standards that are above those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development. Children learn to take responsibility and to work together and this underpins the good relationships and behaviour in these classes. The focus for the new Foundation Stage and improved teaching has made a significant impact on the learning of children of this age.

5 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, music, history, geography and design and technology is above the level expected for their age. It is broadly in line with expectations for all other subjects. The better teaching in Year 3, the setting for English and mathematics and the improved focus of lessons, when clear learning objectives are set, is improving pupils' attainment but has

not yet had time to raise pupils' attainment by the end of Year 4. Monitoring by the head teacher and district inspectors recognised these weaknesses and the school has prepared a good action plan to improve the situation and so raise standards further.

6 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above that expected for their age. Pupils concentrate for longer periods and they listen to others while waiting for their turn to speak. Some retell stories and describe the characters. Pupils express their opinions about stories and they use a wide range of strategies when reading, such as phonics and context cues. Pupils' standards in writing are above those expected nationally. They write complete sentences with the most common words spelt correctly and with basic punctuation used accurately. The strategies now being used by teachers are placing greater emphasis on writing skills and this is paying dividends. This means that pupils get more sustained practice. Pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age in mathematics, pupils now make good progress in lessons. This is because teaching is now consistently good and the National Numeracy Strategy is being well implemented. In science, pupils' attainment is in line with what is expected for their age and they make steady progress overall because the curriculum is well planned around science led topics.

7 By the end of Year 4 pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with the level expected and higher achieving pupils are above the level expected. Many pupils are competent, fluent readers but lower attaining pupils in Year 4 still have difficulty with simple texts. The school has identified pupils' writing as an important area to develop and standards in Year 4 are often below the level expected for their age. Only a minority of pupils write fluently, accurately and at length. A large proportion of pupils still have limited skills. Standards of presentation are not always satisfactory. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is in line with the level expected but they make satisfactory progress overall. In the majority of lessons the impact of the Numeracy Strategy is clearly having a positive impact. In science, pupils' attainment is in line with the expected level.

8 By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with the level expected for their age. Pupils save their work and older pupils in Year 2 are beginning to use the computer to organise and correct text, for example, when correcting spelling and punctuation using a word processor. In Year 2, pupils produced a good range of pictures when using a graphics program as part of a lesson that linked well with their art topic. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build on their skills and knowledge with more frequent use of the new computers and programs in school. In Key Stage 2, pupils use more advanced graphics programs to produce imaginative designs as part of their topic to design and produce Christmas cards. Some pupils in Year 4 are very confident and have a good understanding of how to set up and load computers. Standards of attainment for most pupils meet the expected requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils in both key stages know about Christian belief and other faiths. They make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding of other faiths. In Year 1, pupils enjoyed a discussion about advent and its importance to Christians waiting for the birth of Jesus. In Year 2, pupils study the Jewish religion and they know that the Torah is precious because it is a gift from God.

9 In both key stages, pupils' attainment is good in music and design and technology. Pupils in Year 2 designed and made hand puppets using simple templates, fabrics, paper and card. In Year 4, pupils produced fabric purses and containers as part of a design topic. Throughout the school pupils are taught to use a variety of mechanisms and assembly techniques using a range of materials and tools. In all other subjects pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age, it is above these expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 in history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Difficulties are identified quickly and teachers take pupils' needs into account appropriately when organising lessons. Suitable tasks give the pupils the confidence to attempt work and encourage them to try hard. Some pupils find it difficult to concentrate when working but are well supported in their work by

classroom assistants, for example when working in the group work part of the literacy and numeracy lessons.

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

10 Pupils' attitudes to school are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Their keenness to come to school results in good levels of attendance and positive approaches to work. In Year 4, attitudes to work are mainly satisfactory but they are occasionally unsatisfactory. This is directly linked to the quality of teaching and lessons which are not well matched to pupils' prior attainment, resulting in a lack of challenge for the majority of pupils. Attitudes of children in the Foundation Stage are good. They maintain concentration for increasingly longer periods of time and work hard to meet teachers' high expectations. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning as a result of the confidence they gain from extra support and the successes they achieve from activities which are planned well to match their needs.

11 Pupils' behaviour in and around school remains very good. This is the result of an effective behaviour and discipline policy that is operated consistently by all staff. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them and the rewards that are to be gained from good behaviour. As a result, the majority of pupils have reasonable levels of self-control and understand how their actions can affect the learning of themselves and others. There was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection. There have been no exclusions from school during the last academic year.

12 Pupils' personal development is good. Children in the Foundation Stage gain self-esteem and confidence; they share resources and begin to take turns in discussions. Older pupils take responsibility as classroom monitors and in a range of other roles, for example as elected members of the schools eco-committee and the part they play in the Mini Enterprise scheme.

13 Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and are the source of pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Because of the very good relationships that exist, pupils work hard to meet the standards that are expected of them and are confident that their contributions will be valued. Pupils are considerate to one another and friendly and courteous to adults. In lessons they reflect on the feelings, values and beliefs of others. For example, pupils in a Year 3 history lesson empathised with feelings of fear felt by those children who were evacuated during World War II.

14 Attendance is good. It is above the national average and remains similar to the level reported at the last inspection.

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

15 Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, it is very good in Years 2 and 3. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There were two excellent lessons seen during the inspection. These were in English and swimming where the pace of the lessons was brisk, teachers' knowledge of the subject and relationships with pupils were excellent and pupils made significant improvements in the development of their skills in both subjects. Teaching is inconsistent in Year 4 due to staff absences and the use of temporary supply staff. There were two unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection. These were in English and history where the pace of the lessons was slow, work set was not sufficiently challenging, pupils were easily distracted from the task and this adversely affected pupils' concentration and progress. The head teacher and co-ordinators for English and mathematics have monitored teaching and the delivery of the curriculum. However, the process has suffered disruption because of the absence of key members of staff and the use of temporary supply teachers. The quality of teaching is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially by the end of Key Stage 1, but has not yet had time to raise their attainment further by the end of Year 4. Although teachers

assess individual pupils' attainment and progress regularly, they do not consistently set challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils which means that work is not always sufficiently challenging for pupils of all abilities. Some teachers overcome this because they use their daily observations of pupils' work to set challenging tasks but this is not consistent throughout the school.

16 The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and tasks are often organised to challenge different ability groups in classes. However, these are often in three broad groups and are not always sufficiently challenging for all pupils. The pace of most lessons is good, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Year 3, and teachers use the techniques of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to best effect. Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom and this has helped to improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort are high and pupils are expected to do their best. This was seen in a Year 3 mathematics lesson when pupils improved their knowledge of number tables and their ability to recognise patterns. They were very attentive to an interesting, quick fire question and answer session and enthusiastically identified the numbers required to make up a hundred from different starting points. Teachers use the Literacy Strategy effectively and plan lessons that are challenging and interesting. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson pupils joined in enthusiastically with the shared reading and most responded well to the teacher's questions, such as "why is the dog happy?". Some pupils were making a catalogue of books in the classroom, while others accurately punctuated a piece of text. In this lesson the tasks were appropriately challenging and pupils produced good pieces of work in the time allowed.

17 Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum. They use subject based language to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the particular subject. This was particularly evident in a science lesson in Year 3 where specific technical language was used well. For example, pupils understood the different uses of teeth and experimented with mirrors and models to examine their own teeth. Teachers know and manage their pupils well and provide good support for different activities. The very good relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. Teachers make informal assessments during lessons on which to base their future planning. Although in some classes these are often very perceptive, there is a lack of consistency in how the results of the assessment are used to ensure that all pupils are fully challenged. Most teachers include positive comments when marking but do not consistently provide precise comments on what pupils need to do in order to improve. This makes it more difficult for some teachers to assess how well pupils are learning from their mistakes. Although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not consistently used to reinforce pupils' learning.

18 The teaching of pupils with identified special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. All staff have a very positive attitude towards these pupils and know their strengths and areas for development well. Teachers use daily observational assessment to provide work that matches the requirements of pupils with special educational needs. There are good communications between teachers and support staff and this enables support staff to help pupils towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. The teaching in withdrawal groups is particularly well structured and effective. As a result of good teaching, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress.

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

19 The curriculum meets statutory requirements in both key stages and at the Foundation Stage. Teaching time is in line with national recommendations. The activities provided in the reception classes are well matched to the Early Learning Goals and provide a secure foundation for pupils' learning. These

pupils gain a positive attitude to learning which they retain as they move up the school. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the school provides a good range of worthwhile activities which are well matched to pupils' needs and stages of development. However there are some weaknesses in Year 4. In these classes work is not always well matched to their prior attainment mainly because of staff absence and the use of temporary teachers.

20 All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and there are thorough schemes of work to ensure that everything is included in a logical sequence. This is an improvement since the last inspection. National strategies for literacy and numeracy are in place. All teachers have had training in these, as a result, planning and teaching are good. The school has also organised courses for classroom assistants and parent volunteers. The curriculum co-ordinators have worked hard to develop good teamwork and agreed programmes in all subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teachers did not plan or teach in a consistent way. The school has begun to monitor teaching and learning in English and mathematics. However, this needs to be more consistent and involve other subjects. The curriculum is constantly under review so that the school can respond effectively to the latest national initiatives. There are good procedures for analysing information from national tests to identify areas for development. For example, there is now a good strategy to improve the standard of pupils' writing.

21 Provision for information and communication technology was a weakness in the previous inspection. The school has worked hard for several years to create a large and well-equipped computer suite. This opened in September 2000. Teachers use it well and standards are already beginning to rise.

22 The school offers a good range of additional activities, both within the school day and after school. These enrich the curriculum and make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, pupils take a responsible part in community events such as "Britain in Bloom". The school makes good use of nearby farms, forests, museums and theatres to stimulate learning, for example in geography and science. History is brought to life by visiting groups such as a Greek Theatre or the Tudor Music Group. Pupils have their own opportunities to perform in Christmas plays and local music festivals. There is a large choir. A good number of pupils have instrumental tuition, they play in assemblies and at school events. Teachers try to provide as much first-hand experience as possible; for example the school grounds are used for growing sunflowers, investigating pond life, running a weather station and learning about ecology. In the classrooms, pupils handle artefacts borrowed from homes or museums, such as ration books and gas masks. A visit from a live owl was very successful in the reception classes. After school clubs include several sports. The skills and knowledge of parents and grandparents make a good contribution to pupils' learning, for example, in the research in Year 3 on World War II and the business enterprise in Year 4. Parents appreciate the good Out of School Club, which provides activities and snacks for all age groups before and after school.

23 The curriculum is planned to meet the needs of all pupils. This is generally successful, for example pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well taught and make good progress. Adult helpers and support agencies are used well. The school is less effective in meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils. Teachers work hard to provide extra tasks for these pupils. There are good examples of these tasks providing a new challenge. However, the information from assessments is not fully used to match work to ability. The school is aware of this. Some useful work has been done on writing more precise learning objectives matched to different groups. Teachers promote equality of opportunity for boys and girls, for example when organising rotas for monitors. Clubs and events are well attended by both girls and boys. There are no significant differences in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test scores of girls and boys.

24 Pupils' personal development is promoted well. Relationships are very good, pupils mix well and are polite and sociable to visitors. Adults are good role models. Teachers deal with minor incidents in classrooms effectively and courteously, voices are rarely raised. Good use is made of police and nurse



expertise when dealing with issues of health, safety and growing up. A visiting health education road show supports this learning. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on a range of issues, for example the thoughtful work on war evacuation in Year 3. Pupils are given time to talk about what is important to them. Teachers look for "special" moments and use them well, for example when pupils watch chicks hatch or help to bath a real baby. Assemblies are very good, stories and themes are well chosen. Teachers relate these well to the pupils' own lives. A good atmosphere for reflection is created, using music, quiet voices and stillness.

25 Provision for moral and social development is good. Pupils behave well in school and outside. Good moral values are illustrated well in assemblies, through stories and events. Successes are celebrated and shared. Rules are clear and interpretation is fair. Teachers use opportunities in subjects such as literature or geography to discuss moral questions. Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of what is acceptable behaviour. They follow the examples set by their teachers; pupils are considerate, tolerant and helpful. Pupils work together well in pairs and groups and they treat all the adults in the school with equal respect. This attitude is extended in the many visits and events, for example in the Year 3 village study when pupils prepare sensible questions for the people they meet.

26 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school has identified opportunities in all areas of the curriculum for learning about other cultures. Teachers make good use of books in the Literacy Hour, showing how the background of the characters affects the plot. Visits contribute to pupils' understanding of other cultures. For example, the younger pupils go to a historic farm and talk to the workers about their lives. Resources for younger pupils, for example dolls, puzzles and language games, reflect a multi-cultural society. There is some interesting work in religious education on other traditions. Teachers skilfully relate this work to the pupils' own lives. For example, in Year 2 they made Torah scrolls and wrote their own rules in them. The school has good links with a school in Burton on Trent, which has pupils from several other cultures. Exchange visits are made, pupils go together to visit a mosque, churches and a farm.

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

27 The procedures for promoting pupils' health, safety, welfare and child protection are satisfactory. The school documentation regarding health and safety is good. Risk assessment procedures are not yet fully in place, this is the current priority of the health and safety committee. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and the member of staff with designated responsibility has received the necessary training. Fire safety, first aid and medical arrangements are satisfactory. Health education is effectively delivered throughout the curriculum and is enhanced by the schools actions to achieve the "Healthy School Award". Monitoring of attendance is unsatisfactory. Registers of attendance are not fully completed with the reasons for absence and this prevents effective monitoring by class teachers.

28 There is a satisfactory range of procedures in place for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. The results of National Curriculum tests are analysed and targets set for the next year. Pupils in Year 4 take the optional national tests for English and mathematics and there are plans to include Year 3 pupils this year. These results are used to guide long and medium-term curricular planning and to identify areas of weakness in teaching and learning in the core subjects. Attainment targets are set each year by teachers and the assessment co-ordinator and these targets are used as the basis for monitoring the progress that each pupil makes. Good systems are in place to record and monitor progress through ongoing assessments that are linked to each subject and supported by national guidance. Short-term assessments are satisfactory and teachers use these to plan future lessons. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed and there are good plans in place to use assessment information more accurately to guide planning. The co-ordinator is fully aware of the weaknesses in the past and there are good plans in place to address these. The head teacher and staff must now formalise assessment procedures so that baseline assessments of the children who first enter

the school can be used as a starting point from which every pupil can be measured. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not consistent throughout the school. Where it is good, there is an enthusiastic dialogue between pupil and teacher, encouraging further effort. However, in some classes marking consists only of ticks and occasional comments and does not set challenging targets for pupils to improve.

29 Assessment for pupils with special educational needs is good and very clear targets are set for individual pupils matching the priorities indicated in their individual education plans. All planning for support is based on the assessment of each pupil in each session. This information is also used well by teachers when planning the curriculum for each session. All statutory requirements are met for the review of pupils' special needs.

30 Pupils' personal development is well supported. Most teachers know their pupils very well and are fully aware of their needs. They are good role models and successfully promote high standards of behaviour. School rules are well understood by pupils and ensure they act sensibly. Sanctions are fair and praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage effort. Significant achievements are celebrated. Clear guidance is available to deal with bullying. Any reported incidents are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Pupils enjoy coming to school and inspection findings support this.

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

31 A significant minority of parents are concerned that due to staff absence their children are not attaining the standards of which they are capable. The inspection findings agree with these concerns, particularly for pupils in Year 4, whose education has been disrupted because of the absence of permanent members of staff, resulting in under achievement by a significant proportion of these pupils. Despite this, good relationships between the school and parents have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. Through the questionnaire, parents' meeting and discussions with parents during the inspection, most parents expressed the view that they find the school approachable.

32 The information provided for parents is good. Weekly newsletters ensure that parents are kept well-informed regarding school events and routines. Reports to parents provide good information regarding what pupils understand and can do. The best examples provide pupils and parents with targets and guidance for future learning although this is not yet consistent across all year groups. However, the school does not meet the statutory requirement to either report the actual attendance of each pupil or to ensure that each pupil receives an annual report. Due to staff absence, pupils in Year 1 during the last academic year, did not receive their full annual report.

33 From pupils' first days in school parents are provided with good guidance on how they can best support their children's learning at home. This is particularly effective with regard to the teaching of reading and contributes to the high standards attained. Homework is also used well to involve parents in their children's learning. For example, the research carried out at home made a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of events at the time of World War II.

34 Parents are welcome in school and several provide valued support in classrooms. Parents are well briefed by teachers and have developed good relationships with pupils; this has a positive impact on the standards attained. For example, the involvement of a parent in a Year 3 mathematics lesson enabled a group of lower attaining pupils to develop their numeracy skills and make good progress. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by the involvement of the Parent Teacher Association, which provides resources that are greatly valued by the school. A significant minority of parents responding to the parents' questionnaire expressed their dissatisfaction with homework. The inspection finds that although the school has an established homework policy, teachers do not always consistently implement it and, as a result, the amount of homework varies from class to class and is therefore not consistently used to reinforce pupils' learning.

35 The school's links with parents are effective and have a positive impact on their children's learning. This will be further improved when the school has addressed parental concerns regarding the under achievement of some pupils.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36 Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is now an established framework of leadership and management and governors are working closely with the school and have established agreed policies for all aspects of school life. These are beginning to be effective but the disruption caused by a high turnover of teaching staff, staff absences and the subsequent use of temporary supply teachers has slowed the rate of change. For example, subject co-ordinator roles are now clearly defined but, apart from the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, there are no opportunities for staff to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects. In the past, the school has not made sufficient progress towards dealing with the issue of assessment identified in the previous inspection. However, the school has now appointed a co-ordinator for assessment and there are very good plans in place to utilise the information that comes from analysis of pupils' results and to use this more productively to set targets for individuals and groups and so raise pupils' standards further. The school has undertaken a review of the role of subject co-ordinators and the monitoring of teaching and evaluation of the curriculum have been undertaken by the English and mathematics co-ordinators which has led to the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Coupled with the review of policies and schemes of work, following the recent changes to the curriculum, this has helped the school improve pupils' attainment. Staff development is now more closely linked to the school development plan. For example, the training staff have received has improved the provision for information and communication technology and raised pupils' attainment in this subject.

37 The quality of teamwork is better and fosters a positive ethos in the school where all pupils are valued. The quality of teaching and learning has been monitored by the head teacher and inspectors from the local education authority in September this year. The information from this monitoring has been used to modify the school's development plan to accommodate the findings. These include the raising of standards through the setting of individual, challenging targets for all pupils and the more detailed monitoring of teaching and learning by the head teacher and subject co-ordinators with the intention of improving the quality of teaching throughout the school. However, this has not yet taken place. All staff have a shared commitment to raise standards. They have succeeded in creating a learning environment where relationships are very good and pupils feel secure and valued. A positive ethos reflects the school's commitment to improve educational standards and provide equal opportunity for all pupils.

38 Governors have improved their role since the previous inspection and make a satisfactory contribution to the effective running of the school. A number of governors work in the school regularly and they provide valuable help to pupils. There is a named governor for each class and their support, through regular visits, enables them to observe the implementation of the curriculum. Governors have a good committee structure to enable them to support the head teacher and meet their statutory responsibilities. Governors are involved in the preparation of the school development plan. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and they now clearly link this plan to the school's clear finance policy that defines the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its committees and the limits of delegation to the head teacher. The school's aims are clearly expressed, governors support these well and are particularly pleased with the improvements made in pupils' results in National Curriculum tests this year.

39 The school fulfils all legal requirements for special educational needs and the co-ordinator handles the work effectively. The change of circumstances where the co-ordinator attends school one day per week to ensure that the provision for pupils is being implemented and to liaise with outside agencies is effective in the short term until another co-ordinator is appointed next term. Good policies and procedures aimed at ensuring support are in place. For those pupils who are on the school register there are clear, well defined targets to help them overcome their difficulties. The register is well organised and up-to-date and any changes in the circumstances of pupils are noted and, if necessary, acted upon. Individual education plans are in place for those pupils who require them and parents are

involved in the review of their children's progress. The school liaises very well with outside agencies when necessary. The support for pupils with special educational needs is effective, as a result, they make good progress. There is a named governor to support the work in school and ensure that the governing body is kept up to date with the special educational needs provision.

40 The head teacher has a very good working relationship with the administrative staff. This is a crucial partnership in managing and monitoring the school's finances and in ensuring the principles of best value are followed. The use of information and communication technology is good and the day-to-day administration of the school is good. The secretary has a good knowledge and understanding of both the school and local authority systems, which makes a positive contribution to the smooth and efficient running of the school. The support for pupils with special educational needs is directed towards meeting their needs. Funding intended for professional training of staff is effectively used for that purpose. Although there has been inconsistent progress towards solving all the issues raised in the previous inspection, pupils' attainment is improving and the head teacher and co-ordinators have clearly identified the action needed to continue this trend. The recent improvements in pupils' attainment indicate that the school is now well placed to successfully implement future initiatives. As a result, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

41 The number, qualifications and experience of teachers are sufficient to ensure that the demands of the curriculum are met. There is a good blend of long-serving and more recently qualified staff. All teachers, apart from the temporary teachers, have curriculum responsibilities, which are manageable and clearly stated in job descriptions. The special needs co-ordinator and support staff are sufficiently well qualified and experienced to make a positive impact on the progress pupils make. The number of classroom assistants is high and they give good quality support to staff and pupils. They make the most significant contribution to pupils' progress when they understand the learning objectives of the lessons and are used to develop activities that are clearly focused on raising standards. Frequent staff absences and the use of temporary supply teachers has severely disrupted the monitoring and evaluation of teaching throughout the school. A policy for Performance Management is in draft form and governors are undertaking appropriate training before the planned visit of the external consultant. The staff development programme of the school for permanent members of staff is effective because it focuses mainly on the school's priorities of improving standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

42 The accommodation provided by the school is satisfactory and adequate for the present number of pupils. The site has good hard play and grassed areas, which are well maintained and used well to support the curriculum, for example, the school grounds are used for growing sunflowers, investigating pond life, running a weather station and learning about ecology. The buildings are clean and the classrooms and corridors are enhanced by displays of pupils' work which help to create a stimulating learning environment. There are sufficient resources for subjects to be taught effectively and major spending on resources is linked to the school development plan, which has focussed mainly on literacy, numeracy and the development of the information and communication technology suite. Resources for pupils with special education needs are satisfactory. There is easy access to all resources by staff and pupils and they are used well. However, there is insufficient provision for children in the Foundation Stage to have regular access to a safe, secure outdoor play area that enables them to use large apparatus and wheeled toys.

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

**In order to further improve the quality of education, standards and progress in the school, the head teacher, staff and governors should:**

A. Improve the deployment, management and monitoring of staff to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to reach their full potential by the end of Year 4, particularly in English, mathematics and science by:

- improving the impact of leadership and management by monitoring more carefully the quality of education for pupils, particularly in Year 4;
- developing the role of the key stage and core subject co-ordinators to evaluate and monitor teaching and learning;
- using the information gained from assessment in order to set challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils, in particular the higher attaining pupils;
- providing more opportunities for independent, investigative work in science and mathematics;
- raising teachers' expectations and pupils' attainment in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects, for example, religious education, history and geography, particularly in Year 4;
- consistently implementing the school's marking policy to provide guidance for pupils to improve their work.

(Paragraphs 1, 3, 5, 7, 15, 17, 19, 20, 23, 28, 31, 36, 41, 55, 60, 61, 62, 68, 70, 71, 73, 75, 76, 89, 90, 107.)

B. Provide for children in the Foundation Stage regular access to outdoor play which:

- is safe and secure with opportunities for children to develop their physical skills;
- improves their confidence and self esteem through regular use of wheeled toys and large apparatus;
- helps to develop control over their bodies and improves their physical skills further and so support their development in other areas of learning.

(Paragraphs 50, 54.)

**In addition to the key issues above, governors should consider for inclusion the following issue as part of the action plan:**

- improve the procedures to monitor and improve attendance.  
(Paragraphs 27, 32.)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	28	40	24	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		304
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		52

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
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	30	36	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	26	28
	Girls	35	35	35
	Total	60	61	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91(88)	92(86)	95(84)
	National	86(82)	88(83)	93(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	29
	Girls	35	35	31
	Total	62	63	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94(89)	95(91)	91(98)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	92(87)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – Afro heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	303
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 – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.5
Average class size	27.6

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

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196

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

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

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	496,445
Total expenditure	465,340
Expenditure per pupil	1,473
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,000
Balance carried forward to next year	35,105

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

304

Number of questionnaires returned

78

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	42	13	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	47	4	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	58	14	3	0
The teaching is good.	46	50	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	53	15	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	49	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	45	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	54	9	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	37	46	8	8	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	54	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	55	5	1	5

A significant minority of parents expressed concern in the questionnaire, in letters and at the parents' meeting about the disruption to their children's education because of the number of staff changes and absences during the last three years. The inspection team agree with these concerns, particularly for Year 4, whose education has been disrupted because of the absence of permanent members of staff.



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

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

44 Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in three separate reception classes. At the time of the inspection, one class was comprised of the older children with a full time class teacher. The younger children were in two smaller classes, taught by a full time teacher and two nursery nurses. In January these two smaller classes will mix with the other class to form two larger classes. Two part-time pre-school classes will be formed from children who will enter school full time in September 2001. The assessments undertaken when the children enter school indicate that attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly average for their age. All pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress in all areas of learning.

45 Children attain levels that are above those expected in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's attainment is in line with the expectations for their age in physical development and creative development.

46 Children have a positive attitude to school; they are eager to learn and respond well to their teachers. They work and play with enjoyment and enthusiasm. During carpet time sessions, children sit sensibly and listen attentively. During activities they are busy and concentrate well on the task. For example, when they were making owls using tissue paper for feathers, some children tried very hard to pick up the delicate tissue and stick it in the correct place. Children are confident and secure in their routines. During an induction morning when one class joined another in order for new children to visit, the children handled the change in the usual routine well; they listened and understood the teachers' instructions and very sensibly and independently collected their coats and bags and lined up quietly ready to move into the classroom next door. Children have good self help skills; with a minimum of help from staff, children dress and undress for physical education. They also quickly pack away their work and activities efficiently. Children work well with each other and play co-operatively. Children are absorbed in their play; one girl was making a phone call in the role play area and was so engrossed in her conversation that when the teacher asked children to tidy up she said "Bye mummy I've got to tidy up now". Children show an awareness of others' needs. During the induction visits, each new child was given a helper who led them by the hand to show them what activities were available in the unfamiliar classroom.

47 Skills in language and numeracy are developed through a range of activities. Children begin the day by sitting on the carpet whilst the register is taken and they are encouraged to answer appropriately and tell their news. Part of each day is spent teaching literacy skills directly by using "Big Books", both published commercially or written by the children. In one class, children shared a big book written about their recent visit to the park. Children are taught initial letter sounds and introduced to sight vocabulary. The more able recognise some familiar words and initial sounds and are reading at a level above expectations for their age. The majority of children recognise words from the reading scheme and some letter sounds and are on line to achieve what is expected at the end of their Foundation Stage. Children know that print carries meaning and that it is read from left to right. Higher attaining children begin to spell simple three letter words. Computer programs complement these activities. The majority of children write and recognise their own names, form letters correctly and copy teachers' writing. Speaking and listening skills are well taught.

48 Children are given many opportunities to develop their knowledge of number and mathematical skills. They count daily and learn the value of numbers through activities, such as clapping and finger rhymes. As a class they count to 20 and back, use number lines and have opportunities to notate and

record data. Children recognise both two and three-dimensional shapes, such as circle, triangle, square, rectangle, cube, cuboids, sphere and cylinder. They use correct vocabulary, “face”, “edge”, “corner”, to describe these shapes. Cross-curricular activities reinforce these taught skills by first hand experience. Children sort, match and count objects and shapes. Each classroom has a post office as role play, where children have the opportunity to “buy” stamps and letters. Creative activities linked to shapes enhance learning; children are required to draw, cut and stick shapes to make patterns and models.

49 Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world through a wide range of cross-curricular activities. They develop an understanding of living things and science by studying night and day. Children know that light comes from many sources such as the sun and electric light, that the absence of light is dark and that light can cast a shadow. One child observed, “You get a shadow because light doesn’t go through you because you’re full”, another child interjected, “You mean solid”. Children learn that some animals sleep all day and are active at night, children know that these are nocturnal creatures, they name badgers, owls and bats as being nocturnal. Children use computer programs to support this area of development.

50 In the reception classes children take part in and enjoy a wide range of activities and equipment, which allows them to develop their fine motor and manipulative skills. They cut, stick and glue and use a variety of materials such as paper, card, fabric, string and wool. They use farm boards, jigsaws and construction materials, which require both patience and good co-ordination. Children have opportunities to sew, punch holes and thread objects on to string. In the hall, children enjoy physical education and dance lessons. However, there is little large apparatus, large-scale construction kits or wheeled vehicles that sufficiently challenge children’s development, such as climbing, balancing, jumping and landing. There is no designated outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage or any fixed climbing apparatus.

51 Children have good opportunities to experience activities, which include art, music and many types of imaginative play. They use a variety of equipment, pens, pencils, chalk, crayons and brushes to draw, paint, mix colours and create pictures individually and collaboratively. Children make observational drawings and they make models and collages from a variety of materials. Children use shiny materials that reflect light to create stars and candles that link directly to their scientific knowledge.

52 The quality of teaching is mainly good and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a good awareness of the needs of young children. The most effective teaching occurs when stimulating strategies are used to engage the children’s interest. Good lessons are supported by detailed planning for each area of learning. The two teachers and two nursery nurses work well together to ensure that a planned and structured activity-based curriculum is delivered to all three reception classes that is firmly based on the principles for the new Foundation Stage. Although children are assessed against the six areas of learning, the results are not yet used to set targets for future learning.

53 The environment in the classroom is stimulating and exciting and displays are good. Some displays are informative and others encourage children to use them. For example, an autumn display has “feely” boxes that have a variety of textured materials inside, for example, leaves, cones and nuts. There is a good balance between direct teaching of the whole class, group and individual activities. Nursery nurses make a positive impact on the teaching and learning; they plan with staff and are responsible for direct teaching to large class groups as well as small groups. All staff know the value of structured play, good learning occurs when children play with bulbs and batteries and mathematical equipment. There are daily routines to consolidate and promote children’s learning. All staff know children well and have very good relationships with them. They have created a stimulating environment which promotes learning and results in children making good progress.

54 The Foundation Stage has been implemented successfully since September, teachers have reviewed the Early Years Policy and written effective long and medium term plans for reception classes.

The co-ordinator is very experienced and knowledgeable about children of this age. Resources are good and cover all areas of learning, although there is a lack of large play and outdoor equipment.

## ENGLISH

55 Pupils' attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1 is above the level expected for their age. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' achievement was well above average in reading and average in writing. When compared to similar schools pupils' attainment was the same as the average in reading but below average in writing. These results are an improvement on the previous year when, compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment was well below average in reading and writing. By the end of Year 4 pupils' attainment is at the level expected for their age, except in writing which is below expected levels. This particular group of pupils has had considerable disruption to their learning due to frequent use of temporary teaching staff caused by a high level of staff absence, which has had an adverse impact on their attainment. Pupils have made satisfactory progress, although compared to their level of attainment on entry, more pupils should have achieved higher levels of attainment. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards have improved as a result of the good and often very good teaching in Key Stage 1. Many pupils in Year 3 are already reaching levels of attainment that are in line with nationally expected levels for their age.

56 Throughout the school speaking and listening are good; pupils are articulate, they listen attentively to their teachers and other pupils. Pupils in Year 3 answer questions, offer their own opinions and give reasons for these opinions. They read aloud fluently. In Key Stage 1, pupils show good listening skills, are eager and confident when answering teachers' questions and they listen well to other pupils when sharing ideas. They have a good range of vocabulary. Progress is good in Key Stage 1 and Year 3, it is satisfactory in Year 4.

57 Reading throughout the school is good; most pupils enjoy reading and many read widely and fluently. By the end of Year 4, pupils' reading is in line with national expectations, although compared to their level of attainment on entry a significant number of pupils ought to be achieving a higher standard in reading. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils read at levels well above what is expected nationally in relation to their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in reading as a result of consistently good and very good teaching. Pupils in Year 2 read fluently and with expression; they talk about why they choose a book and about their favourite parts and they also predict what might happen next. They use library skills well; for example, they know how to use an index or a contents page. Most pupils have learnt reading strategies; they recognise a range of words on sight, use phonic cues and make sense of the text.

58 Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 4 is below that expected for their age. The school is aware of this and has made writing a priority for action and development, to improve pupils' standards. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 make good progress. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in Year 3, and attainment in Years 1 and 2 is good; pupils achieve high standards in relation to their age. In Year 1, pupils' writing shows an awareness of the use of full stops and capital letters and the most able pupils write sentences punctuated correctly. They spell simple words accurately, their handwriting is clear with letters well formed and spaced. In Year 2, pupils continue to build on the good foundations from Year 1. They write more complex sentences, with the use of "now", "next", "later", to join sentences and pupils use a wider range of punctuation, question marks and exclamation marks, accurately. Spelling is more accurate. Handwriting is clear and consistent with correctly formed letters.

59 Pupils in Year 3 benefit from good teaching and they become more confident in their use of words; they use verbs and descriptive words accurately in their writing. For example, one pupil described "a rampaging bull" in their story. Pupils write in a variety of forms, stories, letters and instructions, for

example, they wrote letters of complaint and instructions for making a sandwich. Pupils' stories become increasingly complex with well-defined structures. Their work is well presented, handwriting is legible, joined and pupils take pride in their work. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school.

60 Because the quality of teaching in Year 4 varies from satisfactory to unsatisfactory many pupils have had few opportunities to extend their writing skills. Pupils' work is poorly presented and there is little evidence of pupils writing for different purposes. Work in books for a significant number of pupils is often unfinished. The quality of marking fluctuates in Year 4; some work is unmarked and there are few comments in pupils' books that offer either praise or suggestions for improvement. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 3 in relation to their previous attainment, but progress in Year 4 is only satisfactory. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3 teaching is consistently good or very good and sometimes excellent. The most effective teaching takes place when lessons are well planned with clear learning aims and activities or questions that are well matched to pupils' abilities. The best teaching occurs when teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are delivered with enthusiasm that engages pupils' interest; questions challenge pupils' thinking and support staff are used effectively. The unsatisfactory teaching occurs when lessons are poorly planned, with unclear learning aims and the delivery of the lesson lacks enthusiasm. The pace is slow, which leads to pupils losing interest and enthusiasm. Poor explanation of what is required of pupils leads to unsatisfactory learning and pupils do not make satisfactory progress.

61 The management of the subject is satisfactory; the co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Resources are good and are sufficient to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and Literacy Hour. The co-ordinator monitors planning but the monitoring of classroom teaching is not sufficiently well developed. The library is not yet fully developed both in terms of the amount of books, both fiction and non-fiction, and this, together with its location in the information and communication technology room, offers few opportunities for pupils to develop independent research skills. Since the previous inspection, pupils' attainment has been maintained but there is still insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 4. Pupils' attainment in writing has not improved sufficiently and there are not enough opportunities for pupils, especially in Year 4, to use their writing skills in other subjects, for example, religious education, history and geography.

## **MATHEMATICS**

62 Standards in mathematics are in line with those expected for pupils' age by the end of Year 4. The same cohort of pupils in Year 4 took the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for 7 year-olds in 1999, which indicated that their attainment was below the national average. These pupils had considerable disruption to their learning, due largely to a high turnover of teaching staff, staff absences and the subsequent use of temporary supply staff. This had an adverse effect on their achievement, which led to the poor test results in 1999. These test results were also in stark contrast to previous years where attainment in mathematics was consistently high and well above the national average. Since then, most of the pupils have made satisfactory progress although compared with their level of attainment on entry to the school, more able pupils ought to have achieved higher standards and, in this respect, higher attaining pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in mathematics.

63 The National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds in 2000 show that the pupils' achievement in mathematics was in line with the national average, but compared with similar schools it was below average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards have improved further as a result of the good and very good teaching in Key Stage 1 and is mainly attributable to the recent stability in staffing and the improved and consistent teaching seen in Years 1 and 2. As a result, standards are above those expected for pupils' ages at the end of Key Stage 1 because more pupils are achieving higher levels, especially in numeracy. The school's targets also reflect this improvement in standards as a significant

number of pupils are predicted to score higher than average standards in this year's national tests. Their recorded work and progress confirm that the majority of Year 2 pupils are in line to reach the standards expected and a greater proportion than last year are in line to exceed these standards.

64 The pupils in Year 1 make good progress as a result of the consistently good and very good teaching. Pupils identify numbers up to 100 on a number square. They count in tens from zero to 100 and count back from 100. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of addition and subtraction facts using numbers up to 10 and more able pupils record subtraction sentences accurately with numbers up to 20. They identify plane and solid shapes, recognise their properties and describe which have more or less corners, sides or faces. A large proportion of pupils in Year 1 have already achieved the standard expected for their age and are well on the way to achieving higher standards in numeracy, shape, space and measures. Pupils recognise symbols and have a good understanding of calendar months, seasons and days of the week. For example, every day Year 1 pupils take turns and choose appropriate labels and symbols to mount on their class calendar.

65 Pupils in Year 2 continue to make good progress, building on the good foundations established in Year 1. Good teaching is a significant factor and positive gains in learning are made. The large majority of pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of halves and quarters. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use more complex two-dimensional shapes when dividing them into equal parts, for example, pentagons, hexagons and other regular polygons.

66 In Year 3, the teaching continues to be consistently good and very good, resulting in all pupils making good progress. Pupils identify number patterns when solving addition facts. They quickly recognise missing numbers in a problem by using their secure knowledge of subtraction and addition. Higher attaining pupils have a very good understanding of number facts to 1000 and beyond. They are confident because they use a variety of methods when solving number problems and explain these clearly. The level of attainment in Year 3 is above the level expected for their age.

67 In Year 4 most pupils are working at standards expected for their age. A small proportion of higher attaining pupils are working towards higher levels but their knowledge and understanding of number problems and shapes varies across the year group. Most of the pupils identify the properties of plane and solid shapes but hesitate when asked more complex questions related to internal angles, symmetry and whether a shape is regular or not. At the time of the inspection the teaching was satisfactory overall in Year 4 with some good features but the pupils' knowledge and understanding were variable, leading to a wide range of attainment across the year group. This is a symptom of the disruption the pupils have had as the teaching has mainly involved temporary supply staff for a number of years. As a result, the progress that pupils have made has varied and from the analysis of their work there is a wide variety of recorded work, which ranges from unsatisfactory to good, reflecting the varying expectations of the teachers. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of basic number facts but, unlike the pupils in Year 3, they are unable to apply a variety of methods when solving more complex number problems. For example, most pupils in Year 4 calculate problems involving money and have indirectly learned to use decimal fractions as a result. However, when asked to calculate simple decimals or to convert simple fractions, such as one half or a quarter, into their equivalent decimal fractions, very few pupils are able to do so.

68 The teaching is good in Years 1 to 3 and is satisfactory overall in Year 4. At the time of the inspection all Year 4 pupils were being taught by temporary supply staff. A significant proportion, just under half, of the teaching seen in Years 1 to 3 was very good and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning and rate of progress. As a result, a significant number of pupils in these year groups are likely to achieve standards that exceed those expected for their age. Some good teaching was also seen in Year 4 and at the time of the inspection the quality of mathematics teaching was satisfactory overall because the pupils are taught more strategies in line with the recommendations set out in the National Numeracy



Strategy. Where the teaching is very good, teachers set challenging and varied tasks, which are closely matched to the capabilities of all pupils. There is more attention to improving the pupils' understanding and a greater sense of urgency and purpose to the lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher reinforced pupils' understanding of subtraction using good visual prompts, in this case small connecting cubes. The learning objectives were made clear to all the pupils and the introduction was brisk and purposeful. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher set challenging problems which were matched to the abilities of the pupils. By folding squared paper and looking at a range of plane shapes the pupils investigated simple symmetry and recognised that some shapes only have limited lines of symmetry. In another very good lesson, Year 3 pupils were given challenging number problems, well matched to their capabilities. The teaching in all these lessons had a secure understanding of the basic skills being taught and the most significant strength in this standard of teaching is the way that teachers and support staff constantly questioned, probed and expected more of the pupils. Where the teaching is only satisfactory, introductions are sometimes too laboured and as a result, pupils become restless. In these lessons there is no clear objective in the planning, consequently the pupils work with no real sense of purpose or expectation to complete on time.

69 The pupils respond well to good and very good teaching. In these lessons they are more attentive and responsive, sharing ideas and are motivated to complete their work on time. Some lessons provide good extension activities for those pupils who complete their tasks early. However, in approximately one in five lessons the pupils are not being set challenging tasks and the extension activities are not always used because the pupils are not being pressed to complete their work on time. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school.

70 The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has a good understanding of the immediate needs of the school. There is no specific budget provided for mathematics because the school prepares individual action plans which are allocated a proportion of the school's budget according to the priorities set by the head teacher, senior management team and governors. Some monitoring has taken place in mathematics with a particular focus on the mental and oral sessions in numeracy lessons. A thorough audit has been carried out by the co-ordinator and this helps to identify priorities. Good assessments have been made to prepare attainment targets for all pupils. This is good practice, but given that the higher attaining pupils in Year 4 have not achieved as well as expected, the school has not adequately responded to their learning needs.

## **SCIENCE**

71 Attainment is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 3 are achieving standards at least in line with national expectations. In some aspects of science, attainment is higher than expected. However in Year 4, standards, although broadly in line with the national average, are not as good as they should be. This judgement is based on the pupils' attainment on entry to the school, the work seen in classes of younger pupils and the previous inspection report, which found that pupils were achieving standards above national expectations. There are gaps in Year 4 pupils' knowledge and understanding of science and in their ability to carry out investigations. These pupils have experienced some of the good teaching seen elsewhere in the school, but for some, their learning has been disrupted by staff absence and the use of temporary supply staff. Satisfactory progress has been made, but evidence suggests that a more coherent strategy will be needed if attainment is to rise further by the end of Year 4.

72 The National Curriculum teacher assessments for science in 2000, at the end of Key Stage 1, showed that attainment was in line with the national average with almost a quarter of the cohort reaching the higher level. This result is confirmed by the good work seen through Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. These pupils make good progress; this is due to good and very good teaching. There is a good scheme of work, which builds on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding from year to year. This begins in

reception and includes a useful breakdown of skills to help teachers plan for science and prepare pupils for later work. When they reach Year 3, they talk and write confidently about light and reflection. They use words such as “opaque” and “transparent” and construct their own thoughtful maps to show the differences between materials studied.

73 The balance between the various strands of the National Curriculum is good and all areas are taught. All classes from Year 1 to Year 3 give due emphasis to teaching investigation skills. For example, in Year 1 work on forces, pupils test the effect of wind power on objects and measure the results with rulers. They make good notes and draw conclusions such as “the paper moved most, I think it was because it was light”. In Year 2, pupils make good predictions, as in the work on mini beast habitats. They use diagrams well to explain their findings, for example, in their work on fruits and seeds. Pupils’ presentation of work in science in Years 1, 2 and 3 is good. Teachers encourage independence and take time to teach ways of recording results. Because of this, pupils take pride in the appearance of their work and write lively, personal accounts, for example, in the work on teeth and diet in Year 3. This independent recording is effective in consolidating pupils’ knowledge and in helping teachers to assess the level of understanding. However, this is not always continued in Year 4, where the practice of loosely fastening worksheets into books does not encourage high standards of presentation.

74 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 is good or very good. In Year 4 only one science lesson was seen, which was satisfactory. Where teaching is good or very good, lessons are carefully planned and start promptly. Explanations are clear and interesting and teachers’ subject knowledge is good. They prepare good visual material to help pupils’ understanding. Teachers use questions well, patiently drawing answers from all levels of ability. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Adult help from classroom assistants and parents is used effectively, they make a valuable contribution to learning. Marking is good overall; teachers use comments which reinforce learning, for example, “well done, you recognised that one habitat was wet and one was dry”. There are good links with English and mathematics, for example, in the confident use of graphs and charts to record measurements. Links with information and communication technology are insufficient but are planned to be developed now that the computer suite is open. In the one lesson seen where teaching was less than good, pupils’ learning was slowed because they were not clear at first about what they should do.

75 Teachers keep thorough records of the work done and how well pupils understand. There are regular assessments against National Curriculum levels. Teachers know their pupils very well; this is evident in the way that they support pupils who need help or extension work. They work hard to match work to ability. However, this can occasionally result in pupils of lower ability not getting the opportunity to try the exciting part of the science. Teachers plan for pupils who understand and work quickly. They provide different work and extra tasks, but these do not always provide additional challenge or responsibility. All pupils respond well to the good teaching and behave well in science lessons. They ask good questions and offer their own ideas. They listen politely to answers from other pupils, generally work together well and are careful with equipment. Where teaching is very good, for instance in Year 3, pupils’ behaviour is excellent. They work independently, become quietly involved in their work and try to do their best when writing their own accounts.

76 The subject is led by an enthusiastic and able co-ordinator who is keen to see standards maintained and improved. The curriculum has been adapted sensibly to take account of new national guidelines and the recent changes in the National Curriculum. A satisfactory assessment system is in place and records are passed on from year to year. However, it is time-consuming and some teachers are piloting a new system to see if colleagues will find it more useful. Pupils’ progress is tracked well as they move through the school. Equipment is adequate and stored well. Displays are attractive and help understanding. The science curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors. For example, pupils visit local parks, forests and farms. In school there are opportunities to watch chicks hatch, study a baby, go pond

dipping and grow sunflowers. Leadership in most aspects of science is strong. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and a limited sample of pupils' work, but no monitoring of teaching is presently done either by the co-ordinator or by senior staff.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

77 Pupils' attainment in art and design at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, is broadly in line with that expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand that art and design take different forms and they use a variety of techniques to produce drawings, paintings, collage and three-dimensional structures. They know the colours and most use colour imaginatively to express feelings and ideas. They give reasons for their colour selections and discuss details of their work. Pupils experience working in small and large scale and co-operate with others in making friezes and displays. Attainment is best when pupils paint and draw things they see directly, for example, the self portraits in Year 1 and the good work completed in the style of Mondrian in Year 2. They make simple comparisons between the works of established artists and are aware of differences in style, texture and use of colour. For example, in Year 2, pupils created a seascape in the style of Van Gogh with imaginative use of colour and carefully cut out boats.

78 In Years 3 and 4 pupils build effectively on their previous skills and their work is more complex. For example, the work completed earlier in the year with an artist in residence showed impressive mini beasts created for the display in the entrance lobby. Pupils study the work of established artists, whose techniques they discuss in some depth; they express personal preference in style and composition. For example, pupils in Year 3 produced good winter pictures in the style of Hendrik Avercamp using paint and chalk to very good effect. Pupils evaluate their own work and that of others and make suggestions for improvement. For example, pupils described their pictures completed on computers using an art program, these formed a very good display and showed the good link between art and information and communication technology. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language have access to the whole curriculum and, where necessary, are well supported by classroom assistants.

79 Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory and often good progress. Sketchbooks are used effectively in Years 2 and 3 and these show how pupils plan their work and practise skills. The books give pupils the opportunity to reflect upon their work and to modify plans in the light of their own and others' critical appraisal of it. The teaching of art and design is good. Lessons are well planned, interesting and identify clear learning objectives. Skills that are necessary for the production of good quality work are carefully taught, including the correct handling of tools and equipment. In response to the good teaching, pupils have good attitudes to art and design. There is evident enjoyment as they concentrate well and focus on tasks until they are completed. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils made collages using warm and cold colours, they appreciated how the colours made them feel and the teacher used the pictures of famous artists to emphasise how they use these colours to good effect. Behaviour is good and pupils are very patient when resources have to be shared. They show an interest in the work of other pupils, take a pride in their artistic achievements and enjoy pointing out their work when it is included in displays.

80 The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is compiling a portfolio of pupils' work with examples from all year groups. The perspective in some examples from Year 4 shows how carefully pupils use their observational skills when painting a local cinema and police station. There is a very good policy statement and scheme of work which staff follow to ensure National Curriculum coverage. Close monitoring of pupils' work is starting through the regular submission of art and design samples for a school portfolio. Basic art and design materials and posters demonstrating the work of established artists are good. Art work is well displayed throughout the school, celebrates pupils' achievements and adds to their self esteem. Considering the pressure on the curriculum by recent initiatives, the school has done well to maintain the standards in art and design since the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

81 It was only possible to see two design and technology lessons, both in Year 1. Evidence of standards and teaching is also drawn from an analysis of pupils' previous recorded work and displays around the school as well as teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff. Attainment in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils complete Year 4 is above the standards expected for their age. The pupils make good progress because the teaching is well planned and organised. Skills are well taught and resources are well used to guide the pupils through relevant and interesting design projects and topics.

82 Pupils develop a good understanding of designing, evaluating and making through a series of well-structured programmes. In Year 1 pupils are involved in a project that enables them to produce simple moving pictures using pivot and lever mechanisms. The pupils were observed designing moving Teddy bears, seascapes with moving fish and "pop-up" style Christmas cards. Year 2 pupils designed and made hand puppets using simple templates, fabrics, paper and card. They produced thoughtful evaluations as part of the design and disassembly process and asked questions such as, "How could I make it better?" In Year 4, the pupils produced fabric purses and containers as part of a design topic called, "What will be needed to keep my money safe?" Throughout the school the pupils are taught to use a variety of mechanisms and assembly techniques using a range of materials and tools.

83 The teaching is good because it has structure and development through the school. There are interesting topics that provide pupils with opportunities to appraise materials and products, to find solutions and to judge whether the end product can be improved and whether it meets the desired purpose. In the lessons observed the teaching enabled the pupils to use their knowledge and understanding of simple mechanisms and investigate a range of possibilities when making moving pictures. Teachers explain the process carefully, showing the pupils different techniques, for example, the pop-up Christmas cards produced by a learning assistant.

84 The co-ordinator has put in place the nationally recommended scheme of work and this has helped to provide good continuity and progression of skills through the school. Two year topic cycles enable the pupils to experience the broad range of design and technology as set out in the National Curriculum. There has not been time to monitor lessons more closely but there is a good oversight of the planning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

85 No direct teaching of geography was observed during the inspection. Evidence comes from teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their completed work and displays. Pupils' attainment in geography is good, especially in Years 2 and 3, which is due to good teaching. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Attainment at the end of Year 4 is in line with national expectations.

86 Pupils in the youngest classes use the local area well. They look at nearby streets and features such as the types of lighting. They make models of roads and buildings and accurately describe their route to school. They learn to compare places when they visit the park and spend a day on a farm. Teachers use good quality photographs to help pupils think and talk about the visits when they return to school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge of their own area. In Year 1, they use and understand local maps. They make their own maps, for example showing streets and buildings in Uttoxeter. Pupils talk about the purpose of buildings and how this changes. They begin to compare and contrast different areas. For example, pupils in Year 2 compare their own town to a Scottish island. They talk and write about differences in transport, land use and jobs. Teachers develop skills and understanding effectively by writing extra questions in the pupils' books.

87 In Year 3, pupils build on these skills when they study a nearby village. They use maps with increasing skill and interpret keys. They understand that field trips need preparation. They write interesting questionnaires for interviews. Pupils' careful written work and drawings after the visit show that they listen and observe well. They write informative and personal accounts without using worksheets. One pupil, clearly impressed, ended a very good piece of reporting with comments on the natural look of the village. In Year 4, there was less work available. The presentation was weaker. Pupils analyse why families move from area to area. They begin with their own families and then consider the life and feelings of someone from another culture. This is a useful introduction to the exchanges with pupils from another school. However, in one class a significant number of pupils misunderstood this activity.

88 The subject is co-ordinated by the head teacher because of staff absence. The scheme of work is up to date and helpful to teachers. All parts of the National Curriculum are taught. The programme is enriched by community events and outside experts, for example pupils design and grow successful entries in the "Uttoxeter in Bloom" festival. They learn from forest rangers on guided walks and work with an environmental expert in designing improvements to the school grounds. No monitoring of teaching and learning has been done recently. This is necessary to ensure that pupils in Year 4 maintain the good progress of previous years.

## **HISTORY**

89 Pupils' attainment in history is above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 3, pupils reach standards higher than normally expected. This is due to good teaching with high expectations. Evidence from pupils' work in Year 4 indicates that their attainment, although still satisfactory overall, is not building well enough on the good work done in previous years.

90 Pupils enjoy learning about the lives of people from the past. Teachers present stories and evidence well so that pupils imagine how characters would feel. This is seen in some very good writing on Elizabeth I, which included the sad "I have seen the queen in the Tower of London. I gave her some flowers. She smiled, but I can not see her again". Pupils use timelines and begin to put events in sequence. However, pupils did not accurately estimate the length of the Roman occupation because they gave the answer "about 3 years". By Year 4, they talk about types of evidence and consider different versions of events, for example, in the work on Boudicca and Samuel Pepys. Pupils' understanding of why events happened is not consistent. For example, very few could explain why the Romans came to Britain. When asked about Henry VIII and his wives, only a minority of Year 4 pupils could go beyond "perhaps he didn't like them". However, in a very good discussion on World War II in Year 3, pupils had good background knowledge and could link cause and effect well. The way that pupils present and organise their work is a strength of the school, although there is evidence that this training is not being continued in Year 4. For example, some impersonal writing on invasion and settlement is in stark contrast to the lively work in Year 1 on old toys or the heartfelt postcards from evacuees in Year 3.

91 The quality of teaching in history is inconsistent, although only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Where teaching is very good, as in Year 3, the teacher uses good subject knowledge to enthuse the class with stories, explanations and things to touch and read. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory there was a failure to bring the past to life. Tasks were undemanding and not matched to pupils' ability. In most lessons teachers explain and illustrate the past very well. Most pupils clearly enjoy their history lessons. Teachers collect good material and local museums provide useful artefacts. Teachers use useful devices to help pupils organise their work, for example, the detailed "things I know about the war" chart in Year 3, or the fictitious application form to be employed as Queen, which Elizabeth was made to complete in Year 2. Teachers use homework when appropriate and parents make a good contribution to

learning. Marking is generally good and underlines the main teaching points, for example, “Well done, you have thought about all the ways that Elizabeth would make a good queen”.

92 The head teacher is acting as co-ordinator because of staff absence. The scheme of work is well organised and all aspects of the National Curriculum are taught. Visiting groups support history well. Pupils have enjoyed meeting actors pretending to be Greeks, Roman soldiers, Viking warriors and Tudor musicians. Younger pupils visit a farm, where ways of life in the past are recreated. The school has an adequate collection of visual material. The use of source material on disk is set to increase now that the computer suite is open.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

93 Since the last inspection the school has improved information and communication technology resources. The school has just set up its new computer room and, together with other new technology, is being used in all year groups. The school is well placed to raise standards further. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 is in line with the standards expected for pupils’ ages. The pupils make good progress in their development of computer skills because basic skills are being taught well now that the resources are in place to allow more focused teaching and learning.

94 In Key Stage 1, pupils use basic graphics and word processing programs to produce words and pictures. They save their work and older pupils in Year 2 begin to use the computer to organise and correct text, for example, when correcting spelling and punctuation using a word processor. In Year 1, pupils were observed using a computer program as part of a lesson where they investigated “The information around them”. Pupils used a visually stimulating program, controlling a cursor and moving from one menu option to another. Pupils are motivated by the information presented and receive very good support from the school’s recently appointed technician who is based in the new computer room. In Year 2, pupils produced a good range of pictures when using a graphics program as part of a lesson that linked well with their art topic. Pupils used their knowledge of the work of a famous artist to produce colourful representations, patterns and pictures, in the style of Mondrian.

95 In Key Stage 2, pupils use a more advanced graphics program “Colour Magic” to produce imaginative designs as part of their topic to design and produce Christmas cards. The teaching is focused with particularly good support provided by the teacher and the technician. An analysis of previous work in Key Stage 2 shows that the pupils have undertaken surveys and used simple data handling programs and spreadsheets to represent information as graphs, charts and matrices.

96 The teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good because teachers and support staff are becoming more confident and knowledgeable now that the computer room is well equipped and well managed. Computer sessions are more focused for the pupils resulting in effective support, especially in helping the pupils to improve their basic keyboard skills. Pupils respond very positively to their information and communication technology lessons and are increasingly becoming more confident and skilful in managing the technology available. Electronic mailing is taking place and there are plans to expand this in order to provide greater access to the Internet facilities.

97 The school has given some thought to the future development of information and communication technology. The co-ordinator and head teacher have rightly focused on setting up the computer suite so that it is fully functional. There is still a lot to do in order to improve standards further because professional development is ongoing and the school is beginning to realise the potential of the high specification computers it has recently purchased. The appointment of the technician is helping to provide an organised and supportive learning environment for the pupils. The technician effectively supports pupils and staff on a part-time basis. The computer suite is spacious and well resourced. The

co-ordinator manages the subject well and has good plans in place to develop the potential of the subject further.

## **MUSIC**

98 There were limited opportunities to observe music lessons during the inspection and only one short lesson was observed. The lesson was well planned, with a clear aim and use of musical vocabulary; the teaching was satisfactory, and pupils had an opportunity to perform and responded well to what was required of them. Scrutiny of teachers' planning, discussion with the co-ordinator and observations of musical activities during the inspection indicate that standards in music are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

99 The school places great emphasis on music, three peripatetic teachers visit the school to give instrumental tuition in woodwind, brass and stringed instruments. During assembly some of these pupils with their peripatetic teacher had the opportunity to perform skilfully. During a peripatetic music session pupils responded eagerly and played a range of brass instruments with good skill. They read music and this adds to the pupils' ability to improve their skills of performing and musical knowledge. In other assemblies groups of pupils played the recorder to the hymn "I Will Bring to You" with skill and enthusiasm. Pupils also sing tunefully and with enjoyment. They respond positively to the chosen music theme that they hear in assembly, they enjoy the music and show a respectful attitude; their personal development is enhanced by their contact with musical experiences.

100 A musical strength of the school is the extra curricular time that is devoted to music by teachers, pupils and parents which extends pupils' musical learning beyond the curriculum. After school there are two recorder clubs, which perform in assembly. One recorder club was observed, during which pupils displayed confidence and enjoyment and very readily learnt to play a new Christmas Carol "O Come All Ye Faithful". The school has a choir, which visits a local old people's home to entertain the residents, they also attend the local church and join in a Christmas service of carols. Pupils have the opportunity to attend an annual Musical Soiree and the school is usually well represented at the local Music Festival. Each Christmas the school produces a performance involving music and drama.

101 The school has a very good scheme of work for music that fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum and supports teachers in their planning of lessons. Planning is good and clear; effective assessment opportunities are built into the short term plans. Music is well resourced in the school; there is a good range of instruments and resources to support the curriculum. The present music co-ordinator is managing the subject temporarily to cover staff absence. This is being done with enthusiasm and good support and advice are offered to those teachers who are not music specialists.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

102 The school provides a full programme of physical education, the pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. The school has maintained the standards found in the previous inspection report. One excellent swimming lesson was observed, led by the physical education co-ordinator, which showed that the pupils in Key Stage 2 make very good progress in swimming.

103 In Key Stage 1, only one gymnastics lesson was observed. This was satisfactory and enabled the pupils to explore space and travel in different ways. Clear instructions were given enabling the pupils to try different body shapes and movements and explore a variety of possibilities by changing direction. Pupils responded with thoughtful movements, going high, low, over and through imaginary spaces. They were attentive, well behaved and showed enjoyment and enthusiasm.



104 The teaching is satisfactory overall, balanced by some good and unsatisfactory features from the little teaching observed. The most effective aspects include the planning, which is clear and purposeful, providing progression and development of skills for the pupils. Good use is made of space and demonstration with opportunities for the pupils to observe others and to evaluate their performance, suggesting improvement. Unsatisfactory aspects of the teaching observed include a lack of time for the pupils to practise their movements and reinforce what they are learning. The warm-up activity was too brief and not very active. Too much time is sometimes spent explaining, resulting in a less active lesson.

105 The co-ordinator is very well qualified to manage the subject. Leadership is by very good example and knowledge of the subject. There are good plans in place to provide professional development for the staff to raise standards further. The co-ordinator has not had time to monitor teaching and learning closely as the school has rightly focused on improving literacy and numeracy. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits which include horse riding, sports and minor games. The parents' association has made a significant contribution towards purchasing sports equipment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

106 Standards of attainment for most pupils meet the expected requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in both key stages demonstrate knowledge of the Christian belief and of other faiths. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding of other faiths. In Year 1, pupils enjoyed a discussion about advent and its importance to Christians waiting for the birth of Jesus. They listened attentively to an explanation by the teacher about the way the advent ring is used in church, with the lighting of candles on the four Sundays preceding Christmas day. Pupils made their own rings and were proud to show their finished product. In Year 2, pupils study the Jewish religion and they know that the Torah is precious because it is a gift from God. In a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils made their own Torah scrolls with their own "special" rules carefully pored on to the scroll. It was made particularly special for the pupils because the teacher had prepared slips with the Hebrew sentence "Love other people as yourself", which they very carefully wrote out above their own rules. They improved their knowledge of the meaning of words that feature highly in another world faith such as "sacred" and "precious" when they were shown how the Torah is opened and a special "Yad" is used to point to the words so that the Torah is not handled.

107 In Year 3, pupils extend their knowledge of other world faiths in their studies of the Muslim religion. A good photographic record of the pupils visiting another school with a large Muslim population showed the obvious enjoyment of pupils who learned a great deal about the customs and practices of other people. By the end of Year 4, pupils have some knowledge of both testaments in the Bible. They recount stories from the Old Testament and explain parables from the New Testament including the teachings of Jesus. They understand some of the Christian traditions and the place of worship. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils discussed the meaning of advent and how Mary was prepared for the birth of the baby Jesus. The teacher encouraged pupils to imagine that they were Mary and to express their feelings when given the news. This development of empathy with people from the past helps them to understand the importance of special festivals and events to Christians. Although pupils in Year 4 explained the topics they have studied this term there was no written work in religious education which represents a missed opportunity to develop pupils' creative writing skills.

108 The quality of teaching seen was at least satisfactory, sometimes good and occasionally very good. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher made good use of pupils' previous learning on flags to remind the class of the importance of symbols in different religions. The lesson moved smoothly on to the

symbols that are used prior to Christmas such as the advent calendar and ring. The response of the pupils was very good as the topic was well understood and useful discussion took place. Teachers show appropriate subject knowledge and use the opportunities when they arise to teach moral values alongside religious belief. Where pupils have practical tasks to complete their independence grows. For example, when making their own Torah scroll they showed extreme care reflecting the care that the Jewish people show when handling their precious book. In the lessons seen, the pupils were involved and eager to ask questions about religion. The recently appointed religious education co-ordinator has good plans to monitor and evaluate the religious education curriculum during the year and has already monitored work completed in Key Stage 1. The resources for the teaching of religion are adequate and are stored by themes.

109 Whole school acts of worship take place daily and these are appropriately planned and presented. They are an important element in promoting the life of the school and developing a religious and moral awareness. For example, the head teacher used pupils to help retell the parable that Jesus told about “Talents” and made it fascinating by using a modern day setting. Pupils were entranced by the story and it made a significant contribution to their understanding and the pause for reflection helped them appreciate the importance of individuals and their uniqueness. These assemblies comply with the statutory requirements of a corporate act of worship.