

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST C OF E SCHOOL

Macclesfield

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111331

Headteacher: Mrs. M. A. McCombe

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Kath Wallace
1151

Dates of inspection: 11 – 14 September 2000

Inspection number: 225300
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Voluntary Aided

School category: Primary

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ivy Road
Macclesfield
Cheshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend David Taylor

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mrs. Kath Wallace	Registered inspector	Under Fives	What sort of school is it?
		Information and Communications Technology	How high are standards? The school's results
		Art	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve?
Mrs. Linda Buller	Lay inspector		How well does the school work with parents?
			How high are standards? Attendance
			How well does the school care for pupils? Health, safety and pupils' welfare
Mr. David Hardman	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
		Design and Technology	
Mr. Andrew Scott	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular opportunities?
		Geography	
		Equal Opportunities	
		English as and Additional Language	
Mr. Keith Oglesby	Team inspector	Science	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes.
		Physical Education	How well does the school care for pupils?
Mr. Geoff Cooper	Team inspector	History	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		Music	How high are standards?
		Special Educational Needs	Pupils' attitudes

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1. St. John the Evangelist CE Aided Primary School is a large primary school situated in spacious grounds on the outskirts of Macclesfield. There are currently 302 pupils, boys and girls, aged from four to eleven on the current school roll. Pupils are admitted into the school in the September after their fourth birthday. Most of the children joining the school have attended the neighbouring pre-school playgroup. The current annual admission number is 45, which means that classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 are usually a mix of two-year groups. Sixteen pupils are entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 29 pupils with special educational needs. One of these pupils has a statement of special educational need. Both of these figures are comparatively low when compared with other schools. The school population is primarily white but there are a few pupils from ethnic minority homes. Two children are learning English as an additional language. Local housing is a mix of local authority owned property and privately owned homes. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are above the levels expected for four-year olds in all areas of learning.

2. The governors of the school aim to provide the best possible education within a caring Christian community. They seek to provide pupils with a wide range of experiences and encourage them to become responsible and caring young people.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

3. St. John the Evangelist CE Primary School is a good school. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 tests in both English and mathematics the standards attained were above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. The school has since worked hard to raise standards in writing and the results in the 2000 tests were very much better. The national comparative data is not yet available to see whether the improvement is enough to change the trend over time. In science the test results show that pupils attain well above the national average. Standards of behaviour are good, and pupils' attitudes to school are very good. The leadership and management provided by governors, the head teacher and senior staff are good, in many ways are very good, and the quality of teaching is good. Financial controls are very good with budgets spent wisely to meet the priorities identified by the school. As a result the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good overall and in some classes it is consistently very good or excellent.
- The Christian ethos of the school ensures that the provision made for pupils' spiritual development is excellent, it is very good for moral and social development and good for cultural development
- All children regardless of their learning needs or cultural background are valued and encouraged to achieve well and form positive relationships with staff and one another.
- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher, senior staff and governors are good and in many ways are very good.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to work and personal development are very good.

What could be improved

- The progress made by higher attaining pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 2 is not as good as it should be.
- Better use could be made of curriculum time. The amount of taught time available in Key Stage 2 is below the nationally recommended minimum of 23.5 hours.
- The quality of information provided to parents does not sufficiently enable them to support their children more effectively at home and or chart their learning progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

4. The school was inspected in June 1996 and has dealt with all of the key issues raised very effectively:

- Governors are now very involved in the strategic management of the school.
- The school development plan is a very effective means of setting priorities.
- The staffing structure of the school is clearly defined and key responsibilities are delegated.
- Subject co-ordinators effectively monitor and evaluate the quality of the curriculum and the standards attained.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	B	B	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A	B	C	
science	A	A	A	B	

5. Standards in English look to have improved significantly in 2000 as a result of the targeted support provided for pupils in Key Stage 2. However the national comparative data is not yet available to see whether the improvement is enough to change the trend over time. In English and mathematics the standards attained by lower attaining pupils are good when previous levels of attainment are taken into account. However, pupils identified as high attainers in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 do not sustain these high levels of attainment into Key Stage 2. The school's targets for the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above are realistic but it is also striving for a greater proportion of pupils to attain above the levels expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils work hard and take pride in the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous to staff, visitors and one another. They respect people and property.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils throughout the school are keen to take some responsibility for daily routines and grow in confidence and initiative as they get older
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average, with unauthorised absence which is below average.

6. The relationships between pupils and staff are very good and reinforce the aims and values of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

7. English and mathematics are taught well in most classes. The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2 is less strong because insufficient account is taken of the older and/or more able pupils within each teaching group. Teaching is particularly strong in one reception class and there are classes in both key stages where teaching is very good. In the isolated lessons where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, this was due to unclear learning objectives and class discipline was not well established. Literacy and numeracy is taught well and the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are met. Personal and social skills are taught very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and there is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Timetables are not tightly structured enough to eliminate time slippage. The amount of taught time available in Key Stage 2 is below the nationally recommended minimum of 23.5 hours.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Effective management of support time and resources enable pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The designated support teacher works very well with class teachers to ensure that these pupils understand what is to be learned and also make good progress with learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision made for pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective about the joys and sorrows that they share. The provision made for moral and social development is very good and for cultural development it is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils.

8. A particular strength of the school is the way that it ensures that no pupils are intimidated or bullied. The balance of the curriculum is satisfactory but the lack of precision about the amount of time to be spent on each lesson means that time does not seem to be available for lessons, which governors, staff and parents consider important such as music, art and drama. The school has good relations with parents. However, not enough information is provided for parents to be active partners in supporting their children's learning at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and key staff are good. The aims and values of the school are promoted consistently throughout the daily life of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. They know the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school, set targets for improvement and monitor progress.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school carefully analyses its achievements in comparison to the national and local picture and then sets targets for further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Staff appointments, the purchase of equipment and use of staff time are all carefully evaluated in terms of best value.

9. There are sufficient teaching staff and they are well supported by a good number of well-qualified support staff. The internal accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils but extensions to the building, already planned, will improve it. Resources for learning are also good and of a high quality. The school is good at getting value for the money spent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High academic standards. • The good progress made by their children. • The school is easy to approach and deals effectively with any concerns. • The behaviour of children is good. • Their children are happy and well supported to become responsible young people. • The attitudes and values promoted by the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency in the quality of homework given. • More regular information on the progress made by their children. • More detail about how they could play a part in their children's learning and progress. • More time for subjects such as music, art, drama and physical education. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

10. The inspection team endorses all of the positive statements made about the school. The school has already recognised that homework should be given regularly and consistently in each year group. This was the case during the inspection week. Parents do not routinely receive sufficient information about the progress made by their children. In the reception classes parents are given good information about what is going on in school, the progress being made and instructions on how they can best support their children at home. This is not the case in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has reduced the time allocated to other subjects to give more emphasis to English and mathematics. However, with more focused allocation of curriculum time and an increase in the taught hours in Key Stage 2, it should be possible for the school to make more time for those aspects of school life that governors, staff and parents value. The inspection considered that the range of extra-curricular activities provided were satisfactory but the school is keen to increase them and already has plans to do so.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

11. Pupils regularly attain standards that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. In the 1999 tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils reading standards were very high when compared with national standards and above average when compared with similar schools. The standards attained in writing were well above the national average and above when compared with similar schools. The findings of the inspection are that this is an accurate picture. In mathematics the standards gained in 1999 were broadly in line with the national average but below the average for similar schools. The findings of the inspection are that standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average so the trend over time is a more accurate picture.

12. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 tests in both English and mathematics the standards attained were above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. The school has since worked hard to raise standards in writing and the results in the 2000 tests were very much better. The findings of the inspection are that standards are now very high in English at the end of Key Stage 2. In mathematics the inspection findings are that standards are above average but not as high as in English. In science the test results show that pupils attain well above the national average and the inspection findings are the same.

13. When pupils enter the school they attain levels that are above what would be expected for their age and by the end of Key Stage 1 they are well above that level. This represents good progress especially in English in reception and Key Stage 1. An analysis of the English test results of pupils at the end of Year 6 shows that average and higher attaining pupils have made satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 but lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have made good progress. A similar analysis of mathematics results shows the same good progress for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. Satisfactory progress is made by the middle ability group, in each year group but the promise shown by many high attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is not reflected in the levels gained in Year 6.

14. The good knowledge and understanding about the world seen in the reception classes translates into high standards at the end of both key stages in both science and history. Standards in geography are above what would be expected in Key Stage 1 and broadly in line with age related expectations in Key Stage 2. This represents a decline in standards due in part to the organisation of topics in the mixed age classes where older or higher attaining pupils are not provided with work that will challenge and extend their understanding. In the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum, pupils attain levels expected for their age and make satisfactory progress.

15. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make very good progress due to very good support teaching, full integration into the life of the school and their own positive attitudes to learning to speak the language and take a full part in the curriculum.

16. The school has maintained the high academic standards it sets for itself and constantly looks for ways to improve. It was already aware that the English results in Key Stage 2 had improved but that progress in mathematics was not so strong.

17. Although pupils with special education needs do not reach the standards typical of other pupils of their age, they make good progress in the acquisition of basic skills and in the targets set for them within individual education plans. They learn to present their work neatly. They develop skills that help them establish strategies for accurate spelling and punctuation. Teachers make a particular point of drawing special needs pupils into class discussions and question and answer sessions. This supports these pupils in keeping them in touch with the work currently being done in class. Although the progress made by special needs pupils is in small steps, it is regular, persistent and good in terms of prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Attitudes to learning and personal development are very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school life and the tasks they complete in class. They come to school eagerly and settle quickly to the work that they have to do. They listen carefully to the teacher and to each other and complete their tasks conscientiously. These qualities make a significant contribution to their learning. These standards are highest where teaching is of a high quality.

19. Behaviour is good. Almost all pupils respect the high expectations that the school sets for behaviour. They are sensible in the way they move around the school, listen and work in the class. In a minority of cases in some classes, there is an occasional bubble of sound that detracts from the working environment. In a very small number of cases, pupils call out. This slows the pace of working when teachers have to stop to control pupils. A few pupils take advantage of weaker teaching. Throughout the school, pupils respect each other and property. No incidents of intimidation or bullying were observed and both parents and pupils are confident that any problems would be dealt with promptly. There have been no exclusions from school.

20. Pupils' personal development is very good. All adults working within the school are excellent role models for pupils and constantly reinforce the aims and values of a caring and Christian society. Therefore pupils learn to care for one another and take great care of the school buildings and grounds. Older children are regularly seen helping younger children at breaks and lunchtimes and the maintenance officer has a rota of pupils to help empty litter bins or clean the hall floor after lunch. By the time they leave the school pupils have a clear vision of what it means to be a caring and responsible citizen.

21. Levels of attendance are very good; they are well above the national average and have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. Parents are fully aware of the systems for reporting absence, this ensures no unauthorised absence. Pupils enjoy coming to school, they and their parents recognise the importance of regular attendance placing the school in a good position to maintain high attendance levels.

22. Pupils with special needs set high standards for themselves in their attitude towards school and in their personal development. They usually work hard in class and want to answer questions. Their work is neatly presented. They get jobs finished. Occasionally, when they find new learning difficult, they need firm support from an adult to keep them on task and maintain their concentration.

23. The school sets great store by its high values and respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. In their relationships and attitude towards their work, pupils respond very well to the example they are set. The school has maintained and improved upon the good standards established at the time of its previous inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. The quality of teaching and learning within the school is good, particularly in the teaching of English and mathematics.

25. Teachers have a good understanding of what has to be taught and plan lessons carefully to make sure that pupils make good progress. In reception and Key Stage 1 the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Work is carefully matched to the differing needs of different age groups and levels of attainment. Support staff are effectively deployed and focused on enabling pupils to achieve well and therefore progress is good in lessons and over time. A similar picture is seen in the teaching of literacy skills in Key Stage 2. Teachers make good use of support staff in Key Stage 2 to create more carefully matched work to the different learning needs of pupils within each class group, to raise levels of achievement in English. This is reflected in the most recent end of Key Stage 2 tests (2000). In mathematics, although teaching in Key Stage 2 is always satisfactory or better there is not the same careful match to the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attaining or older pupils in a class group. As a result the progress made in mathematics is not so strong. Pupils learning English as an additional language benefit from levels of support from class teachers and regular focused teaching from a peripatetic specialist teacher.

26. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils in terms of academic achievement, standards of presentation, behaviour and attitudes to work. The management of pupils is generally good in Key Stage 2 and very good in reception and Key Stage 1. As a result pupils work hard to attain the standards set. In less successful lessons in Key Stage 2, the classroom discipline is not strong enough to maintain good work habits and the challenges set for pupils are not sufficiently challenging or relevant to what is being taught. This was apparent in one science lesson and one physical education where the learning outcomes were unclear and therefore pupils became disinterested in their work and made little progress.

27. Books, artefacts, visits and visitors are used well although there is insufficient planned use of computers to support other lessons in many instances. This is better in the reception classes. Homework is planned for in every class and the work set effectively supports the learning that takes place in school. However, neither parents nor pupils are fully aware of what the next steps in learning are. This reinforces the view expressed by parents that they do not have enough information about how to help their children at home. The reading records taken home by most pupils are simply a piece of card to be used as a bookmark with details of the pages read. There is no indication of the progress made in acquiring reading skills or what pupils need to do to improve. In reception classes very good use is made of the reading diaries, this helps the teacher and parents share in the processes of learning to read. In these classes parents are also very well informed about what is to be taught and how they can help. The benefits of this are evident in the good progress made by children and their very positive attitudes to school.

28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers are very aware of pupils' needs through the targets on their individual education plans. They plan tasks that are appropriate to the targets set. When pupils are working, adults give them good support. Where there is specific additional help, this is of good quality. The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Because they are well supported, they make good progress and show interest in their work. Good intervention by adults helps pupils maintain the impetus of their learning.

29. Teachers make good use of assessment data to plan lessons that are pitched at an appropriate level for the range of abilities and ages within each class, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils' work is marked carefully and teachers determine what needs to be revised with some pupils or extended with others.

30. Very good and excellent teaching was seen consistently in some classes from reception through both Key Stage 1 and 2. These teachers have an excellent relationship with the children and fire them with enthusiasm and determination to achieve all that they can. Each pupil is treated as an individual and is made to feel that they are valued and supported to learn and make progress. For example, in one mathematics lesson in a mixed Year 4 and 5 class the teacher very skilfully pitched questions in such a way those pupils with special educational needs could respond and give the right answer. Similarly by checking out the responses for a pupil learning English as an additional language she made sure he was following the strategies used for adding on 9. In all of these classes teachers make very good use of praise and rewarded efforts with smiles and encouragement. As a result the pupils recognise the worth of themselves but also applaud the progress and effort made by others.

31. The quality of learning is good. This is due to lessons that are well prepared and taught and pupils who enjoy learning and feel secure to try new and challenging tasks.

32. The quality of teaching and learning has been maintained and developed since the time of the previous inspection. Homework is now planned for consistently throughout the school and contributes to the high standards attained by pupils. Where it is most effective parents and pupils are clear about what the next steps in their learning are through shared target setting.

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

33. The school provides a relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all its pupils and the requirements of the National Curriculum. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is satisfactory but the school has not yet managed to combine the legal requirements with its own priorities. It has successfully adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies and is in the process of sensibly adapting new national schemes of work for all other subjects. These give a strong framework for the curriculum and ensure that all areas of learning are addressed. The curriculum for pupils who are in the reception classes is satisfactory and offers a sound preparation for Key Stage 1.

34. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils receive equal access to the curriculum. There is good provision, for example, for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers provide work in class suitable for their needs and make sure that well briefed adult support is on hand to clarify and reinforce learning. When appropriate, pupils are withdrawn from class to receive extra help with English or mathematics. Provision for more able pupils is sometimes good, through challenging opportunities such as historical research, but this is not always the case as in, for example, mathematics. Organising pupils in Key Stage 2 into *booster groups* to help them try to achieve their potential in the national tests, has proved to be successful in English. The school's provision for pupils learning English as their second language is very good; very efficient external support and sensitive teaching ensures that these pupils make swift progress.

35. The school gives due weighting to English and mathematics, but some subjects, like information and communication technology or art do not appear regularly on the timetable and are used only in support of other subjects. This applies particularly to Key Stage 2 and is due in part to the fact that the overall teaching time is more than one hour less than the nationally recommended minimum. Furthermore, during the week, the timing of lessons is not always crisp enough. This erodes valuable learning time and contributes to the concerns expressed by parents, staff and governors that some subjects are squeezed out of the curriculum. The situation is better in Key Stage 1 but, overall, the organisation of curriculum time is a weakness of the school. If this was improved there would be time for those aspects of school life that governors and parents would like to see preserved.

36. There is excellent provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Very thorough documentation clearly outlines the school's aim to acquaint the pupils with vital life skills in, for example, sex education and drugs awareness. They apply this very well through the science curriculum and specially designated lessons. However, one of the school's real strengths is the way in which teachers make provision for personal and social development an integral part of their school life. Teachers provide opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop life skills, discuss issues of social and moral importance and see how this impacts on their day-to-day lives. The impact of this work is very effectively transferred into the life of the school and results in good behaviour, pupils who take responsibility for their own learning and are caring of others.

37. The planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers have worked hard to establish suitable programmes of study in most subjects to ensure proper coverage of the curriculum in the mixed year classes. They break these down well into half-termly and weekly plans. Teachers use a common format of planning sheets to ensure consistency, and they include useful space for homework details and comments on pupils' progress. Learning objectives for each lesson are clearly identified and shared with the pupils. A strength in planning is that teachers of parallel year groups plan together. This guarantees that all pupils receive the same curriculum as they progress through the school.

38. Teachers' planning of mathematics in Key Stage 2 does not always take sufficient account of pupils' different levels of ability and the need for the appropriate development of skills. For example, in mathematics lessons, pupils of all abilities and across two-year groups are given the same learning objectives. Teachers do strive to overcome this by providing extension tasks but these are not always challenging enough for more able or some older pupils. Younger pupils in mixed year classes benefit from the challenging work initially, but their progress is not then built upon enough in the subsequent year.

39. Pupils with special educational needs are given access to the whole curriculum. Analysis of their work contains substantial evidence of tasks that parallel those of other pupils. There is thoroughness in the approach for the preparation of individual plans for learning. These are the result of a close partnership between class teachers, support staff, the special educational needs co-ordinator and parents. Targets are specific to individual need and can be used to support the acquisition of basic learning skills or for social and emotional skill development. Targets are appropriately reviewed and adjusted on a regular basis.

40. The school is aware of the need to enrich the curriculum, whilst striving for high academic standards. It provides additional time for pupils to develop creative writing and is extending this with a special scheme to benefit gifted writers in Years 5 and 6. There are timetabled opportunities for enrichment study, for example, several classes in English and geography. There is a very efficient and clear homework policy, which gives guidelines about the amount and timing of homework that most teachers adhere to but there are some inconsistencies. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including various sports, dancing, recorders and French but the recent loss of most musical activities has disappointed pupils and parents alike. Pupils benefit from a good number of educational visits to such places as an outdoor education centre, a farm, a Victorian schoolroom, and from expert visitors to the school including a Police Force Roadshow and a theatre group.

41. The school has good links with the community and they are used well to support learning. There is a very close bond with St John's church, with weekly visits in assembly by the vicar and other members of the church. Pupils benefit from this regular contact and from the opportunity to visit the church; they particularly enjoy the Christingle service in Advent. The link with the nearest secondary school is useful. Pupils have participated in a public speaking competition there and there will be a liaison over literacy for pupils in their first year at secondary school. There is an especially strong link

with the nearby pre-school provision; communication over pupils' abilities gives pupils an excellent start to their primary school life.

42. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is very good. It plays a very significant part in the direction the school takes, adding a great deal to the working environment of the school. This is an improvement in the provision established at the time of the previous inspection.

43. Provision for spiritual development is excellent. The school promotes a strong and caring Christian ethos, appropriately reflecting its Church of England foundation. Dynamic teaching in assembly provides pupils with ample opportunities for reflection through well-chosen themes for assembly, suitably matched stories and meaningful prayer. The teaching gives a clear lead on the moral and social stance taken by the school. It supports pupils' needs as they learn to question the world and their place in it. The school celebrates the successes of individuals and shares concerns. The cumulative effect of school provision is that pupils feel positive about themselves and are quietly confident in conducting themselves about the school. Examples on display around the school reveal that the strong teaching in assembly is reflected and continued in religious education and personal and social education.

44. Provision for moral development is very good. All adults working in the school consistently follow up the stance taken in assembly. From their earliest days in school, pupils are given a secure understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They know the boundaries set by the school and gradually come to an understanding as to why the boundaries exist. A good policy for behaviour supports and gives direction to the day-to-day work of adults in the school. In their writing, pupils are given ample opportunity to consider moral, social and environmental issues, providing a secure background of knowledge and understanding for future decision making.

45. Provision for social development is very good. The school has a well-documented programme of social and personal education and its scheme of work for citizenship is exemplary. Pupils know what it is to be responsible - in their behaviour and in their work. They follow the model established by adults in making secure relationships. Evidence that older pupils are very aware of their social responsibilities is found in their displayed work on environmental issues such as acid rain, the greenhouse effect and deforestation. The provision of the school gives pupils many opportunities to work and play together in security, opportunities which pupils take confidently.

46. Provision for cultural development is good. Cultural awareness is enhanced through experiences in art, music, religious education, history and geography in particular. The use of visitors to school and of visits out of school gives emphasis to what pupils learn in lessons. Knowledge of their own culture is stronger than knowledge of a range of cultures, although the school has moved on in this respect since the previous inspection. Awareness of other cultures is found in Aboriginal and North American art, for example, and in learning about a range of different religions. The school places no great emphasis in developing an awareness of and respect for present day society as multi-ethnic but rather seeks to emphasise respect and understanding on an individual-to-individual basis.

47. The inspection findings show improvements since the previous inspection. The school has worked hard to eliminate shortcomings in the planning for mixed year classes. This is seen in the consistently high achievement of pupils. Where the school has targeted English for improvement in Key Stage 2 this has proved successful. The school is aware that there is still some work to be done in mathematics.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. The procedures for promoting pupils' health, safety, welfare and child protection are very good and are strengths of the school. They reflect the importance the school places on this area of its work. Arrangements for child protection are very good and have been improved since the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be sound. The school meets the legal requirement to have a health and safety policy, however, risk assessment procedures are not yet fully in place. The head teacher and maintenance officer have an excellent working partnership that ensures effective implementation of the school policy. Fire safety, first aid and medical arrangements are good and pupils are confident that they will be well cared for. Health Education is very well planned and delivered within a very good personal, social and health education policy that extends pupils' knowledge as they move through the school and mature. Staff commitment to ensuring that pupils are happy and well cared for, together with their very good knowledge of this area of their work will enable further improvement.

49. The behaviour and discipline policy sets clear expectations of pupils and these are shared effectively with both pupils and parents. The approach is positive and emphasises rights and responsibilities as well as rules. Pupils were consulted regarding expectations of behaviour and a reminder is displayed in every classroom. Adults, including the Site Manager, provide good role models and are consistent in encouraging good behaviour and dealing with problems. Lunchtime supervisors follow the policy of the school and any incidents are followed up quickly. Pupils know the standards required and accept the steps that will be taken if they misbehave. They enjoy collecting the various stickers and certificates that are given for personal qualities as well as good work. The effectiveness of the school's policies can be seen in the way that pupils move around the school, their behaviour outside, in assemblies and in almost all lessons. In a small number of lessons there are minor lapses in the standard of behaviour. This happens when the pace of the lesson is too slow, pupils are not challenged and the classroom discipline is not well established.

50. The school very clearly articulates its views with regard to behaviour that may be intimidating or frightening. Pupils know that this is not acceptable and any such incidences would be dealt with sensitively and promptly. Because they are taught to be caring of one another and expect to be cared for, issues are not allowed to escalate into incidents.

51. The school has effective procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress. All teachers apply these consistently. The school maintains detailed pupil records in good order. Progress is monitored well in English, maths and science, it is less strong in information technology. A variety of tests and assessments are undertaken at appropriate intervals, the usefulness of these is kept under review and changes are made when necessary. There is a year chart for this testing, which ensures that the information collected in each year can be used to track pupil's progress through the school. External tests are well supported by informal assessment. Teachers work effectively together and know their pupils well. They share their knowledge of pupils' strengths and needs throughout the year, as well as at the handover day in July. There are thorough systems to ensure agreement about different levels of attainment in the National Curriculum. Teachers compare samples of work and examples are kept for reference. The Headteacher collects and monitors children's work from every class. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science monitor work produced, lessons taught and give teachers detailed advice.

52. The school uses assessment information in planning work, for example in grouping pupils and matching work to ability. This is best seen in English and mathematics, it is less well developed in other subjects. For example, in science the level of work set for higher achieving pupils is rarely different to that set for the rest of the class. The school uses assessment data well in nominating pupils requiring additional support, for example in literacy, or when identifying pupils who may have special educational needs. There is an effective whole-school tracking system that illustrates the progress of both cohorts of pupils and individuals and to monitor trends. The head teacher works well

with subject co-ordinators to see where changes need to be made in the curriculum. For example, an analysis of the data led to changes in the writing programme and new targets being set. Teachers regularly study the data in this way, for example looking at the test results of boys and girls in science. The school has recently introduced 'Assessment Manager' a software package that will save time and make more detailed analysis of data possible.

53. Record keeping for pupils with special educational needs is thorough, fully meeting national requirements. A file is maintained for each pupil, indicating the results of tests, what targets are set and the results of reviews and discussions between school and parents. In the interest of pupils, school works closely with a range of outside agencies that give specialist help. The process of identification of special needs is satisfactory: concern expressed by class teachers is followed up in discussion with parents and a range of tests identifies the extent of difficulties.

54. The school has good procedures for pupils' support and guidance. All pupils feel valued, as teachers use praise well, but not indiscriminately, for all types of achievement. Advice for improvement is given in a positive and encouraging way, always trying to raise self-esteem. Targets are set for pupils for both academic and personal improvement. Reward systems, culminating in the Chair of Governor's handshake and pen, are very effective. Marking is not yet consistent across the school, at best it is an enthusiastic dialogue between pupil and teacher, encouraging further effort. The school targets extra help well, for example in the use of classroom assistants, volunteer helpers and the provision of additional literacy support. Teachers liaise well with parents informally during the year and through an interview in October each year. Many parents would appreciate a second appointment of this kind later in the year and/or more ongoing information about the progress made. There are appropriate policies for teaching sex education and the dangers of drugs. The school has recently written and adopted an excellent personal, social and health education policy. This brings together all the strands of guidance for growing up in a way that teachers can easily fit into the existing curriculum.

55. This aspect of school life was considered strong in the previous inspection report. The school has improved on this by continually re-evaluating its work and taking the views of pupils and parents into account when determining policy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. Parents generally have a positive view of the school, they are happy with the standards attained and the attitudes and values that the school promotes. 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. However, they are dissatisfied with the formal opportunities provided for them to discuss their children's progress. Inspection findings support this view as only one formal open evening is held during each academic year.

57. Reports to parents provide satisfactory information regarding what it is that pupils can do in English, mathematics, and science, however they only occasionally set targets for future learning. Reports are not always so detailed for foundation subjects. This together with the lack of information as to what is currently being taught in each subject supports parents views that the information provided to them does not enable them to support their children at home as well as they could. There are some very good examples of parents being enabled to support at home, particularly in the reception classes. Parents were encouraged to work with their children to create a timeline of their child's life. This was then discussed in class. This enabled good progress in pupils' personal development and their speaking and listening skills. This good practice now needs to be shared throughout the school. The governors' annual report to parents is satisfactory.

58. The school seeks to work closely with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. As soon as any potential difficulty is identified, this is discussed informally with parents. Parents are consulted at every stage about targets set for pupils and how they can help in achieving those targets. The school believes that 100 per cent of parents of pupils with special needs are involved in the support the pupils receive.

59. Parents are welcome in school and several provide valued and useful 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 1 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 Parents Teachers Association, which provides resources that are greatly valued by the school. Thirty-three per cent of parents responding to the parents' questionnaire expressed their dissatisfaction with homework. The inspection finds that homework is very well used to contribute to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those in the reception classes. Having become aware of parents concerns regarding the consistency of the implementation of their homework policy, the school have now taken steps to address this issue. Staff and governors are committed to working in partnership with parents, placing the school in a good position to ensure future improvement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The leadership and management provided by governors, the head teacher and senior staff are good and in many ways are very good. The governors, head teacher and all staff share a common vision of a school that attains high standards within a caring Christian society. They are clear of their respective roles in pursuit of excellence and are always looking for ways to improve. The governors very effectively manage the business of the school and are very good at setting priorities for improving the quality of education provided.

61. Responsibilities for the management of the curriculum are appropriately delegated and teachers who have been given responsibilities undertake them with enthusiasm and commitment. The recent introduction of the Foundation Stage for children up to the end of the reception year has not yet been accommodated within the management structure. The deputy head teacher left to take up another post at the end of the year and governors wisely decided not to appoint a new deputy until they had time to determine what they required. This has led to some ambiguity about responsibilities that they know needs to be tightened up.

62. The head teacher and senior staff regularly monitor teaching and give feedback to teachers on strengths and areas to be developed. In the main this has been very successful and can be seen in the amount of good, very good or excellent teaching. However, there was some unsatisfactory teaching seen in Key Stage 2 that needs to be addressed.

63. The governors are a well-informed group of people who are in full accord with the aims and values of the school. They have established a very effective committee system to deal with the strategic management of the school in line with the priorities established through the development planning process. They are supportive of the school but always ready to raise issues and concerns that may impede the smooth running of the school. The school development plan is seen as a critical means to achieving their goals and monitoring the impact of actions taken. The smooth operation of the committees does mean that all governors do not always know how specific parts of the plan are progressing.

64. Governors and staff are very aware of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school and had made a positive decision to raise standards in writing in Key Stage 2 by increasing the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or Level 5. They carefully analyse the results of national assessments and tests to determine what needs to be attended to next. They will not be surprised that they now need to look at increasing the number of pupils who attain above the expected level in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. Staff and governors are less good at monitoring the use of curriculum time to create opportunities for the teaching of those aspects of school life that they and parents wish to maintain. The taught time in Key Stage 2 is less than the recommended 23.5 hours and there is some slippage of time around lessons that could be usefully amalgamated to this end. This would come someway towards meeting the concerns expressed by parents, governors and staff about the emphasis on literacy and numeracy squeezing out subjects like music and art.

65. Financial planning is very good. The finance committee keeps a careful track on funds to ensure that they are spent on the designated priorities of the school and to ensure that the school gets best value for the money spent. The funds allocated to the school to support pupils with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language are well deployed to ensure that these pupils make good progress. Very good use is made of new technology to maintain the smooth running of the school. Staff and pupils are familiar with the Internet and Email to communicate and access information.

66. The management of special educational needs procedures and practices are efficient and effective. The special educational needs co-ordinator has set up good systems for the identification and support of pupils with special educational needs. Documentation is in place, which supports all members of staff in the work they must do with pupils who have identified special educational needs. A member of the governing body works closely with the school to ensure that the governing body's responsibilities are being discharged. Funding delegated to the school for special educational needs is carefully used and monitored by governors. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection and resources are still well managed.

67. The school employs sufficient teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum. Teachers are suitably qualified and there is a good balance of experience and expertise that is enhanced by training that is focused upon identified school and national priorities. The school has a well-established system for the performance management of all staff including the head teacher. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their performance and identify any training needs or opportunities. Any identified targets are incorporated into the development planning process. As a result staff grow in expertise and confidence and often go on to take up more senior posts either within the school or elsewhere.

68. Support staff are good and used effectively to enable pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language to achieve well. New teachers to the school are carefully inducted into the ways of the school and as a result changes in staff does not impede learning. Job descriptions now clearly identify what is expected of each member of staff. Newer members of staff still need to have their responsibilities more sharply defined to be effective. Specific targets identified in job descriptions are identified through the school's appraisal procedures and the development planning process. All staff are valued for their contribution to the smooth running of the school and therefore kitchen staff, mid-day supervisory assistants, secretarial staff, the maintenance officer and cleaning staff promote the values and aims of the school. This is reflected in the service they provide and the positive relationships they have with pupils, teachers and parents.

69. The quality of the internal accommodation is satisfactory and is always being improved and extended. An extra classroom has been built and, in response to the previous inspection, the removal of a wall in the library gives better access for pupils' independent research. Some of the classrooms in

the main building are small for the number of pupils, however staff work hard and effectively to ensure that pupils' education is not limited by the accommodation. There are three mobile classrooms but only one is used as a class teaching area, and plans are well advanced to extend the building to provide classrooms for all classes in the main school building. The hall is used for assemblies, gymnastics and meals and, although of sufficient size for most activities, it is not large enough to accommodate all pupils at lunch times. This is effectively solved by staggering the start of the lunchtime break for different year groups.

70. The maintenance manager keeps the school in immaculate condition, often with the help of the pupils. For example, at the end of every lunchtime he involves some of the older pupils as willing helpers as the *Crumb Patrol* so that the hall is ready and clean for afternoon lessons. The external accommodation is excellent. The hard play areas both at the front and rear of the school are enhanced by adventure playgrounds that are used very well to improve pupils' physical development. There are seats and benches where pupils can rest and relax and a number of games are painted on the surface to further enhance the surroundings. There is a large field for sporting activities and an extensive wildlife area that pupils use well to enrich their science studies. The accommodation continues to be well used to enhance the curriculum and displays of work contribute to pupils' self esteem.

71. Learning resources in almost all areas of the curriculum are good. Subject co-ordinators have a responsibility for monitoring both the use and sufficiency of resources and ensure that they are kept up to date and in good condition. For example, the very good English resources and the variety and quality of reading books in the school make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and progress in English. The library is very small. However, it is well stocked and used well by teachers and pupils to develop research skills. The school has a good selection of books and equipment to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Resources for information and communication technology are good and used effectively to support many areas of the curriculum. For example, the school has a digital camera, ready access to the Internet and a good range of software for use in subjects such as music, art, history and geography. Resources for all curriculum areas are stored as appropriately as possible and are easily accessible to teachers and pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. In order to raise standards and improve the range of learning opportunities provided, governors and staff should:

- (1) Provide more focused learning opportunities within mathematics for higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2. Paras: 13, 25, 34, 38, 47, 101, 104, 108.
- (2) Make better use of curriculum time by:
 - Increasing the taught time in Key Stage 2. Para: 35.
 - Identify the school's own priorities for the content of the curriculum. Paras: 35, 40.
 - Determining the amount of time that should be allocated to each aspect of the curriculum over the course of each year. Para: 35
 - Draw up weekly timetables for each class so that no time is wasted. Para: 35.
- (3) Involve parents more actively in the education of their own children by:
 - Providing more regular information on what is being taught in each class. Para: 57.
 - Setting targets for future learning that are shared with pupils and their parents so that they can chart the progress made. Paras: 27, 32, 56.

Other minor issues to be addressed by the school.

- The progress of the school development plan is monitored but some charting of ongoing progress would make it more accessible to governors and staff. Para: 63
- Where teaching is less strong, these teachers should be supported to improve. Paras: 26, 49, 105, 113, 144.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

73.

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

74.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	22	38	28	4	0	0

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

75.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	NA	302
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	NA	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	29

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

76.

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

77.

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
	1999	18	25	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	15
	Girls	25	25	24
	Total	41	42	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (94)	98 (94)	91 (87)
	National	82 (87)	83 (81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	15
	Girls	25	24	24
	Total	40	40	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (94)	93 (94)	91 (93)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	24	16	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	19	23
	Girls	14	12	14
	Total	36	31	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (81)	78 (81)	93 (95)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	24	24
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	37	38	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (84)	96 (84)	98 (95)
	National	68 (63)	69 (64)	75 (69)

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

78.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	253
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

79.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	476536
Total expenditure	469413
Expenditure per pupil	1550
Balance brought forward from previous year	20000
Balance carried forward to next year	27123

Results of the survey of parents and carers

80.

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	302
Number of questionnaires returned	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	45	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	49	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	57	5	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	45	25	8	1
The teaching is good.	53	38	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	15	42	34	7	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	47	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	43	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	18	53	22	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	39	46	8	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	46	8	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	28	30	20	13

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were very concerned about a recent cut in music provision as the school eliminated a part-time teaching post designated to the teaching of music

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

81. When children are assessed on entry to the reception classes they are already attaining above the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. They are already making good progress in their reception year to provide a good basis for their future learning.

82. Excellent relationships with parents and the on-site pre-school provision ensure that children readily settle into school. The information gleaned from each of these sources means that staff are already very aware of the individual characteristics of each child. Parents are well informed about the way in which the reception classes are organised, the curriculum provided and how they can best support their children at home. As a result they are both confident that their children are well cared for and play a full part in their early education. This was clearly seen in the way that parents had responded to photographs and information about the children as babies. The classroom walls were covered with information about early childhood days and this gave the children a good sense of their place in their family and the wider community and gave them a good focus for language development.

83. The children in the reception classes were being phased into the school during the inspection as it was very close to the beginning of the new school year. Activities were carefully structured to enable them to socialise with one another, take responsibility for looking after themselves and the classroom and share their experiences and feelings. Most of the children can dress themselves with a little help now and again and work in small groups or in a whole class group. In a physical education lesson where both classes worked together, all of them were able to follow the instructions and contain their excitement when they manipulated a large parachute in the school hall. The teachers had already identified those children who would need encouragement and support to take part and this was very sensitively handled so that they could join in when they were ready.

84. Communication, language and literacy skills are generally well developed. Children confidently talk about aspects of their own lives and about the tasks arranged for them. They experiment with language through role-play and so develop the concept of different types of speech for different occasions. For example a group of children working in an optician's shop, made appointments, answered the telephone and asked the patient to sit down and read the letters from the poster on the wall. Children are already familiar with books and stories before they come to school and respond to the stories told by the teacher and the Big Books shared in a class group. They know how books are organised, engage with the character in the book and predict what will happen next. For example, one child knew that after a balloon had been chased, it would eventually burst. More able 'readers' discuss the characteristics of *Elmer the Elephant*, talk about 'liking dolphins' when he sees a picture and see that dolphin and dragon begin with the same letter. Most children recognise their own names and many recognise some of the initial letters of words and the sound they make. For example, from a group of objects they could pick out those that began with the letter 'C'.

85. Children's mathematical development is also good. They understand concepts such as heavier or lighter and use words such as under, on top or behind to describe the position of objects. They can order items according to their size and understand that they themselves grow and become bigger. They sort beads into different colours and sizes and arrange them into a repeating pattern. They count objects up to ten, know the order of numbers to ten and have experience of numbers beyond this from their experience of daily life. Excellent teaching of mathematics in one class meant that the teacher had quickly identified that the children had a good understanding of number and set the children challenges that extended their understanding further. This is not so strong when the teacher routinely

takes the children through the early processes, for example, counting to five, even though it is clear that many are beyond that level. For example, one boy was able to accurately estimate the length of a piece of chain as about 3 metres after he had been shown what one metre looked like.

86. Children show that they know a lot about the world around them. They know the nature of the shops that they visit, understand where they live in relation to the school and know their way around the school building and the grounds. They appreciate where it is safe to play and where it is not. The topic on *Ourselves* that both classes were following with the active support of parents, gave children a strong sense of chronology and their place within a timescale. They know how to use telephones, the cassette recorders and computers to communicate and learn. In their drawings of themselves and their families they represent what they observe.

87. The development of physical control is good. Pupils are able to dress themselves with very little help and move around the classroom, hall and school well. Even when they are excited about the activities, they have already learned to take account of the limitations of space and the needs of other. They climb, jump, run and dance with enthusiasm and good co-ordination. The adventure play area outside of their classrooms is undoubtedly one of the reasons for their agility and enjoyment of physical activities. Even those children who are less willing to take part do so and make good progress with the support of the teacher or classroom assistants. Most children have good control of a pencil or a paintbrush. Some excellent reinforcement of the correct way to hold and manoeuvre a pencil was observed in one class. As a result those children who found it more difficult to do so noticeably improved.

88. Children's creative development is also well developed. Through stories, songs and role-play they have learned to express how they feel in words or by drawing and painting. They enjoy using the doll's house to explore ideas and share them with others. Through music and dance lessons they demonstrate an ability to respond to moods created by music and interpret that into their own singing or movements. When listening to the sounds made by different instruments they are very forthcoming with ideas to describe the sounds. For example in one lesson they said that the sounds made reminded them of a clock, Father Christmas or the sound of a drill.

89. The quality of teaching is good in the reception classes with some outstanding teaching in one class. When teaching is of such a high standard, the teacher understands the needs of young children and uses the knowledge gained from parents, the playgroup and her own assessments to plan activities that are interesting, challenging and focused on what the children need to know next. The teacher has excellent classroom discipline through the sensitive way she deal with pupils, good use of her voice to create the right atmosphere for the lesson and a lovely gentle sense of humour. As a result children respond well, work hard and make very good progress. In both classes the teaching of the topic on *Ourselves* was always good or better. This is as a result of careful planning, good relationships with pupils and the good use made of the information provided by parents. The children are highly motivated by the topic and therefore are keen to discuss things from their own experiences. The teachers work very well together on activities that involve both class groups. This was evident in one lesson where the children were exploring the different way a large parachute moved when they all shook it. One teacher very skilfully built up the need to listen carefully to instructions and then the second used those skills to control the waves of the parachute. Even though the children were very young and it was their first experience of the parachute they responded carefully to the instructions given and were able to see how their movements changed the pattern of the waves made in the light material. In the best lessons the teacher is clear about what she expects individuals or groups of children to learn but this is not always evident in plans.

90. The reception classrooms are attractive and well ordered and good use is made of the shared practical area between the two rooms. Outdoor facilities provide a good safe environment for children

to become increasingly agile. The classroom assistant is a key member of the reception team and therefore makes a good contribution to the learning of the children. During the week of the inspection, one of the staff from the playgroup was working very effectively with a child with special educational needs and therefore he was settling into school with little difficulty.

91. In the past the provision for pupils under five was co-ordinated within Key Stage 1 and all planning was based upon the National Curriculum programmes of study rather than the Early Learning Goals. With the introduction of the Foundation Stage that encompasses children from the age of three to the end of the reception year this clearly needs to change. The two teachers in the reception classes are clear about what has to be taught. The management responsibility for this stage of development is incorporated into the job description of the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. New legislation, introduced this term, requires that the Foundation Stage should be treated as a separate key stage. The way this will be done is not yet clear.

ENGLISH

92. Pupils throughout the school attain high standards in all aspects of English in both key stages. When pupils are assessed on entry to reception they already attain standards in literacy that are above average. They make good progress in reception and in Key Stage 1 and therefore by the end of Year 2 they attain very highly in reading and well above the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools reading standards are very high and writing is considered above average. These high levels of attainment are sustained over time and reflect consistently good teaching in the lower part of the school. Progress throughout Key Stage 2 has not been so strong but pupils still attained levels in English that were above the national average and were comparable to similar schools. The school recognised this from its own analysis of data and has focused their attention on raising standards in English in Key Stage 2. The end of Key Stage 2 English test results for 2000 are considerably higher than in previous years. The national comparative data is not yet available to see whether the improvement is enough to change the trend over time.

93. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language is good. As a result, they make good progress. Literacy skills are well developed and this is seen in the work done in all subjects of the curriculum.

94. Pupils use language well whether it is in speaking and listening, reading or writing. For example, pupils in Year 2 confidently discussed the heroic story of *Grace Darling's* lifeboat rescue after acting out the story through drama. They appreciate that punctuation helps to make sense of what is being said or written or to give more emphasis when needed. This was clearly seen in Year 6 when pupils described the excitement and trepidation that the three astronauts selected for the first moon landing might have felt when they knew that they had been selected for the trip. Good oral skills mean that pupils are able to debate issues of right and wrong, rights and responsibility and caring for one another. Pupils also make good use of the library and information and communication technology to research topics

95. Pupils enjoy reading in class and at home. Parents are very supportive of reading homework and encourage children to become fluent readers at an early age and sustain their interest as they get older. They very quickly learn to identify with the character in the books they read. For example, pupils in Year 2 recognised themselves when they had shared a poem about sulking. They respond well to humorous situations such as the *talking leaf that was blown away every time it was about to answer a question*. Older pupils have learned to skim through books to find what they need and have good levels of comprehension. By Year 6, most pupils read accurately and fluently so they know what they have enjoyed and identify their favourite authors or series of books. For example, these pupils have enjoyed the Harry Potter stories.

96. Pupils become independent writers from an early age and the school's emphasis on good handwriting skills and neat presentation is evident in pupil's work. Spelling is good in both key stages and pupils use their own wordbooks and become adept at using dictionaries or computers to check spellings. Word processing is regularly used as a means of drafting and presenting work. This could be the use of tables and charts, writing a poem or even writing a book! For example, pupils in Year 4 rewrote the story of *Lord Lambton and the Worm* in three separate chapters. Pupils' pleasure in using words imaginatively is seen in Year 5, as one pupil described a kite as: *swooping in the wind, swirly string taking it flying*.

97. The quality of teaching and learning in English in both key stages is good and sometimes very good. Teachers know their pupils well and use assessment effectively to probe and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In very good lessons, pupils are inspired to make very good progress by the enthusiasm and knowledge of their teachers. Relationships are excellent and activities are well planned to maintain high levels of concentration and challenge. Good use of humour and praise combined with high expectations ensure that the rate of learning for all pupils in the class is good. In one lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher made very good use of a humorous poem to capture pupils' interest as they clearly identified with the line: *For wriggling in assembly, I'd always win first prize*. She then used their interest in the poem to develop skills in using the dictionary. English lessons are planned effectively taking account of the different learning needs of pupils and the need for variety during the course of each lesson. As a result pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and concentrate for sustained periods of time and behave very well. Teachers' questions encourage pupils to think clearly and learn from one another. The work of support assistants is very good and contributes to the good progress made by individual pupils.

98. The National Literacy Strategy is well implemented although there is some slippage of time around some lessons. The school has also set aside time for extended writing lessons in order to improve standards in writing. Literacy is encouraged across the curriculum and very few opportunities are missed to develop pupils' knowledge of words, language and reading skills, particularly in subjects such as mathematics, science, history and geography.

99. The English curriculum is well managed by a well informed and enthusiastic curriculum co-ordinator. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' work are thorough. Regular reading at home is encouraged by teachers, however the use of reading records is inconsistent across the school. The best records include a diary for teachers and parents to record the reading progress of pupils but many pupils simply have a piece of card on which they record the pages read. Resources for the teaching of English are very good, reflecting the importance the school places upon providing a wide range of interesting and attractive texts for pupils. Although the library is very small, it is used effectively to improve pupils' research skills.

100. The school has set challenging but achievable targets for raising standards in English in the next two years and is making good progress towards them. Standards in English have improved since the last inspection, particularly for the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2. The school makes good use of the data generated by tests to measure progress and improve standards as can be seen in the higher proportion of pupils attaining levels above that prescribed for their age.

MATHEMATICS

101. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. This shows a deterioration of standards when compared to the last inspection, even though more pupils now achieve the prescribed level at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because the national standard has risen more quickly than that of the school. An insufficient number of pupils maintain the higher levels evident in this group of pupils at the end of Year 2. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory for the middle band of pupils but for higher attaining pupils it is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Most pupils are competent in all areas of the subject but are slightly less secure in mathematical reasoning and problem-solving.

102. When children enter the reception classes they generally attain levels above the average for their age. In some years this is lower due to variances in the different groups of pupils. Pupils make good progress in the reception classes and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 so usually by the end of Key Stage 1 they attain well above the national average. In 1999 results in tests dropped, this was due to the make-up of that particular group of pupils. The work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils attain levels that are well above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Most pupils have a grasp of mathematics but are strongest in the use of number.

103. The quality of teaching is good but it is stronger in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well, and this gives a clear structure to lessons. As a result, pupils understand what is required to develop their mental agility, discuss new concepts and reinforce their understanding through written practice and a plenary session.

104. Lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs of different groups within mixed year classes. This ensures some continuity as pupils move through the school, but teachers do not always cater for the systematic development of skills, especially in Key Stage 2. They provide work at slightly different levels of challenge but it is not sufficiently tailored to suit older or more able pupils. Teachers are careful to ensure that pupils with special needs are given time in whole class sessions to reflect and participate, and are given extra support both in and out of class; this is especially good in Key Stage 1. As a result pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Many pupils of average ability benefit from revisiting aspects of mathematics in subsequent years, but working with pupils from a younger year group does, at times, restrict their progress. Teachers do not always give more able pupils enough opportunity to develop their potential through independent learning. This is reflected in the levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.

105. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils. They establish effective classroom routines that encourage pupils to listen constructively and participate eagerly. They enthuse about the subject and openly value pupils' contributions. This generates good learning where pupils are at ease and happy to apply themselves. Teachers have high expectations in terms of behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. When teaching is very effective, pupils of all ages are very aware of what has to be learned and levels of concentration and perseverance are impressive. When teaching is less strong teachers neglect the need to inspire pupils or do not sufficiently monitor progress.

106. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. They explain new concepts clearly so that pupils can readily understand them. In particular, they share problem-solving strategies with the pupils. For example, in one class, pupils learned how to add three digits quickly through their knowledge of number bonds to 20. Teachers know how to vary their questions in whole class sessions to allow for different ability levels. They use support staff and parents shrewdly to work with small groups of pupils and always ensure that they are well briefed as to their role. Teachers also make full use of the good

range of resources that support numeracy. For example, they use number fans regularly to enable all pupils to show their ability in mental mathematics and play a full part in the lesson activities.

107. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers make good use of national and standardised tests to monitor annual progress of pupils in all classes except Year 1. They are introducing half-termly tests to check progress in course work, but it is too soon to judge their overall effectiveness. Teacher's efficiently record pupils' achievements in National Curriculum areas of study and this is a useful tracking method as pupils move through the school. However, teachers' planning does not always take account of this information to make sure that work is sharply focused upon what pupils need to learn next.

108. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy since the previous inspection and maintained standards that are above the national average. It is aware that it needs to look at standards in relation to its improvement in relation to other schools in order to raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 2.

SCIENCE

109. Standards of attainment in science are high throughout the school. On entry pupils are above the levels expected for their age. When they reach the end of Key Stage 1 the teacher assessments indicate that pupils have made good progress and are well above average expected levels. In Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress. Year 6 pupils achieve levels well above national averages and above those expected for similar schools. Preliminary results for the most recent tests suggest that these levels have been at least maintained and perhaps improved. Inspection findings are based on lessons seen and a scrutiny of the work done during the previous year. This evidence generally confirms the very good test results. However there are areas where more progress could be made.

110. Pupils cover the full range of the science curriculum and there is a good quantity of work done in each year. The balance between the various strands of the National Curriculum is very good. Work is presented well so clear records of tests carried out are a feature of all classes. Pupils in most, but not all, classes are encouraged to show what happened in their own way. For example, in Year 1, pupils complete a chart on the properties of plastics or the strength of materials without copying from worksheets. By Year 6 pupils show that they can give a lively personal account of an experiment. These accounts include their predictions and reactions to the results, as in the work on growing mung beans or testing fabric.

111. In all classes pupils experiment and handle materials and equipment. However there are insufficient opportunities given for pupils to devise their own experiments. In most of the work seen the whole class set out to answer the same question by doing the same experiment. This sometimes comes from the teachers' commendable wish to be fully prepared, as in a Year 4/5 lesson on absorbency. Despite a discussion with some good questioning, the equipment for the experiment was so carefully laid out that only one test seemed possible. Pupils show that they are capable of original ideas in some very good class discussions, for example in work on *touch* in Year 1/2 and in the quality of their writing, for example, in work on pulse rate in Year 6.

112. Pupils behave very well in science lessons, they are keen to ask questions and listen carefully to suggestions from others. Equipment is used carefully. Groups and pairs collaborate well and take turns. Only one lesson was seen where behaviour was less than good. In this lesson the learning objectives were not obvious to the pupils and explanation of the task was not clear.

113. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers work hard to prepare lessons and they start promptly. Introductions are usually very clear, teachers

question and challenge pupils and very patiently draw out responses from pupils of all abilities. They carefully follow the science scheme of work. Adult help provided by classroom assistants, parents and students is used well, they are well briefed and make a valuable contribution to learning. Marking is sometimes excellent, as in comments like *'It's great to watch you doing practical work, I have been most impressed by your organisation!'* In other classes comments are fewer and there is little to inspire pupils to new achievements. Teachers keep their own notes on progress and the voluntary national test has been introduced for Year 5. There is insufficient use of this assessment to match work to ability. For example in all classes the work done by the higher attaining pupils is generally the same as the rest of the class. However pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. Information Technology is used to support learning, for example, Year 4 used a light sensor well, however these opportunities are not often planned for. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in Key Stage 2. In this instance the teacher had not clearly identified how scientific knowledge was learned. As a result children were confused. The lesson was meant to encourage debate about the properties of different materials and their uses, but for many pupils it deteriorated into one of drawing and colouring objects.

114. The science programme has been well prepared by the enthusiastic co-ordinator, in line with the national voluntary guidelines, which were adopted last year. The recent changes to the National Curriculum have also been introduced. There is a two-year rolling programme of work to see that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat or miss work. This works well, although the system will require regular monitoring. Because of all these changes the school has been wise to concentrate on ensuring that all the strands of the curriculum are covered. It may be that when teachers are familiar and confident with all the units of work then some priority can be given to offering pupils more responsibility in experimental work. This was an issue from the previous inspection and remains so. However some concerns from parents about the science curriculum during the previous inspection have been dealt with.

115. The co-ordinator and the head teacher regularly monitor Science work from all classes, with good records kept of the strengths and weaknesses. For example, weaker teaching in Key Stage 2 had already been identified. All teachers compare work to ensure a consensus view when interpreting national curriculum levels. Equipment is adequate and easily available.

ART

116. Only one art lesson was seen during the inspection but a scrutiny of work on display in the school shows that the standards attained are broadly what are expected for primary school pupils. The range of activities provided allows pupils to experiment with a range of different media and in two and three dimensions.

117. Much of the work done is in support of other curriculum areas as seen in the Islamic patterns, illustrations of life in Tudor times, drawings of gravestones and their epitaphs and fabric printing showing the different stages in the growth of a sunflower. In class in Key Stage 2, pupils are rightly proud of the masks made by the previous class.

118. In the lesson seen in Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching was satisfactory as pupils learned to sketch using graphite sticks and charcoals and then enhance their drawings with acrylic paints. The range of equipment used was well chosen and the teacher gave a clear demonstration of the technique to be used. Pupils made satisfactory progress but they were hindered by the organisation of the classroom furniture. Tables were so close together that the pace of the lesson was impaired as it was difficult for the teacher or the pupils to move around and access resources.

119. The subject is co-ordinated by a classroom assistant who is very interested in the subject and ensures that teachers use a range of techniques, usually through the topics covered in each key stage. She very ably co-ordinates the work on display in classrooms and public areas of the school to celebrate and value the work of pupils. Pupils are taken out on visits to art galleries and are taught to appreciate art of different cultures such as Aborigines or Egyptians.

120. The school is currently looking at introducing the nationally recommended guidance on the art curriculum and making links with other subjects. The progress made in art since the previous inspection is satisfactory. New initiatives have been introduced and absorbed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. Only one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection. The inspection was very early in the school year and the school had little evidence of previous work in design and technology. However, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils, together with the examination of policy documents demonstrates that during the course of each year sufficient design and technology is taught. A good aspect of the work completed last year was the involvement of a local artist and the whole school project linked to the Aerospace Centre. The project resulted in the making of an excellent model aeroplane and pupils were involved in the preparation of flight menus, making the type of clothes the flight crew would wear and the preparation of a games pack for in flight entertainment.

122. Pupils in both key stages are taught the correct way to use tools and use variety of methods to join paper, card and wood together. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 made large masks and moving pictures using simple techniques to make the eyes of a lion move sideways and the head of a giraffe move further up a tree. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learned to sew to make wallets and purses. One pupil explained the practical nature of this challenge by noting that, *"I had difficulty keeping my Pokeman cards together so I made a special wallet"*. Older pupils learned about other cultures when they made musical instruments from around the world including maracas, drums and a variety of shakers. Design and technology was used in the history project on the Tudors in Year 6 to make a models of the Globe Theatre and houses of the time. Pupils obviously enjoy the subject, for example, pupils won two electric drills and stands in a competition and, under strict supervision, they made fifty spike abacuses for use by others in the school.

123. The work completed by pupils with the help of a local artist was displayed locally and the quality of the clay faces on the Totem poles shows a very good link with art in the school's curriculum. The co-ordinator for design and technology has revised the curriculum to comply with the recent national initiatives. The quality of teaching resources is good, they are easily accessible and stored in two mobile trolleys in classrooms with specialist equipment held centrally.

124. In the one lesson seen in Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching was very good and pupils made very good progress. During the lesson pupils were provided with a good range of boxes to take apart and then design their own net. Because the teacher had a good relationship with pupils and pupils were motivated to achieve a high quality product, they listened carefully to the instructions on the importance of accurate measuring and cutting. As a result they were pleased with their own achievements.

125. The co-ordinator for design and technology is the same as during the last inspection and has continued to be competent with a good understanding of the school's needs. As a result, the school is well placed to make further progress and ensure that the new National Curriculum 2000 is fully implemented.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Pupils' attain standards in geography that are what would be expected for their age in Key Stage 2. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the topics they cover but lack a broad experience of geography and do little independent research. In Key Stage 1 pupils achieve above what is expected for pupils of their age. This is because they have a deep understanding of the aspects and can express this when speaking, writing or drawing. This pattern of attainment very closely reflects the findings of the previous inspection. During this inspection, it was only possible to observe two lessons. Therefore, inspection findings have been based on an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils.

127. The teaching of geography is satisfactory, but good in Key Stage 1. Teachers know their subject and enable pupils to receive a sound grasp of various topics. For example, pupils who have just moved from Year 2 were able to talk informatively about the negative effects of such things as litter and car exhaust pollution on the environment. Teachers stimulate learning through practical experience as in local traffic studies and visits to an outdoor centre, yet this is not always so. Older pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, do not reinforce their study of rivers with a visit to a real river. As a result, pupils tend to have a superficial knowledge of the river process.

128. The school has successfully introduced a new national scheme of work. This is still being integrated but is already providing a useful framework for planning learning. Teachers have produced a realistic two-year rolling programme of topics to cater to the requirements of mixed year classes. However, the programme does not make sufficient allowance for the proper development of pupils' skills. All pupils from mixed year classes do exactly the same work, which may be challenging for younger pupils but is less exacting for older pupils.

129. Teachers do not always create enough challenging activities in geography. For example, pupils are not always encouraged to think for themselves and present their own findings in their own fashion. Too often, there is an over-reliance on worksheets, and pupils produce similar if not identical work. Many drawings simply require a photocopied map or picture to be coloured in, and there are few examples of in-depth writing, particularly in Key Stage 2. Too few opportunities are provided for older pupils to research their own information through reference books or computer data. This limits the scope and depth of their learning. A strength of the subject is the care pupils take with their presentation. Whatever the demands of the topic, they lay out their writing neatly, correctly spelt and colour their pictures with precision.

130. The range of resources available to staff and pupils is satisfactory and the school make good use of the locality and the school grounds to reinforce what is taught in lessons.

HISTORY

131. By the time they are seven and eleven, standards of attainment are above the level expected for pupils of that age. The strength in good standards is the result of knowledgeable teaching, effective use of resources and thoroughness in teaching the use of historical enquiry skills.

132. Analysis of the work of the previous year's seven-year-olds reveals completed tasks that are carefully and accurately completed. The work shows very clearly where pupils have used artefacts to learn about the past. There is an expectation that even very young pupils will use books to research historical facts. The tasks they are given are sometimes organised through worksheets but there is a sensible and demanding mixture of tasks that make good use of writing skills. The only lesson seen in this age range confirms the analysis of work. In the lesson seen, all pupils had an opportunity to handle

artefacts of the Victorian period and to research facts about the artefacts from books. All these pupils made good use of their reading and writing skills to investigate and to write about what they had found out. The skills learned by pupils in Key Stage 1 are built upon during Key Stage 2. Work seen in Key Stage 2 reveals good use of skills to study a period of history in depth. They use a range of resources such as books, videos, visits and artefacts to accumulate facts that they turn into reports in a variety of styles. For example, pupils wrote letters home from cabin boys on a Tudor ship. Others wrote a diary reflecting life and times during the plague. Pupils also wrote letters applying for a job in a Victorian mansion. Timelines are developed to show the history of lighting in homes and the development of communications. The completed tasks showed a good historical accuracy. Discussions with pupils in different age groups indicated a great deal of enthusiasm for history and the use of skills they had acquired.

133. Although little direct teaching of history was seen it was of a good quality. Teachers are very aware of the nature of history and how they want pupils to learn it. They make very good use of resources and role-play. For example, one lesson began as though in a Victorian schoolroom. The pupils were spellbound and deeply involved in real history through the insights provided by the teacher playing the role of the stern *Victorian school Ma'am*. Purposeful and meaningful tasks are created which excite the interest of pupils. The tasks make good use of the enquiry skills being developed but also very good use of literacy skills. Resulting from this skilled teaching, pupils are well motivated to learning. They complete their imaginative tasks carefully and thoughtfully. There is evidence, both in the work seen and in the lessons seen, of good quality of learning characterised by perseverance, concentration and interest.

134. The subject co-ordinator has provided useful documentation to give direction to the subject and support to members of staff. The school scheme of work has been carefully examined and adapted to ensure that it meets the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The school currently teaches its areas of history on a four-year programme to ensure that mixed age classes do not repeat any material. The curriculum in any one year is narrow; study of one period of history and a local study. However, there is great thoroughness in the depth to which studies are taken. Resources have been carefully audited and listed to ensure that all teachers can make efficient use of what is available. At present there is no system to record the progress of individual pupils. However, the subject co-ordinator collects samples of completed work as part of her strategy for checking up on standards and coverage of the curriculum. There is some evidence that computers are used as a research source. Samples of work downloaded from CD-ROM were included in the pupils' work seen.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135. No information and communications technology lessons were observed during the inspection although there were instances when pupils were using computers or operating equipment in relation to other lessons. However, the school provided a portfolio of the type of work completed during the recent past and from this it is clear that pupils have covered the full range of the National Curriculum programmes of study. This was also borne out by discussions with pupils.

136. Pupils are confident in their use of information and communications technology equipment and have a good understanding of the importance of it in their every day lives. They use a range of computer programs in support of other lessons such as English, mathematics and music. Older pupils use a CD-ROM or the Internet to research projects in geography or history and then write up their findings using word processing. Some older pupils also produced a school prospectus and scanned in photographs to illustrate the daily life of the school. Pupils have created their own school Website and are very interested in accessing others through the Internet. They know how to send and receive Emails. In mathematics they have learned how to programme a floor robot to perform a series of

movements. Art programs are used to create pictures using line and colour, and musical compositions have been created.

137. The school has built up its range of computers and has a rolling programme for replacing obsolete computers. The development plan for information and communications technology is very detailed and includes the setting up of a computer suite for class lessons. At present there are sufficient lap top machines to organise a temporary computer suite with some forward planning. The previous co-ordinator for the subject left to take up another post at the end of last term. He made sure that staff are well trained in the use of computers and, with help from within the local community, has kept the equipment in good order. The school is aware that the next step is to introduce a scheme of work for information and communications technology that sets out what pupils need to learn in each year group. At present there is no way of charting the development of skills from one year to another and the amount of time allocated to the subject is not clearly identified on timetables.

138. The school has come a long way since the previous inspection and has a clearly defined plan for further improvements. The newly appointed co-ordinator knows what has to be done to consolidate and develop the progress that has been made.

MUSIC

139. Standards of attainment in music are in line with the expected standards for their age and have been maintained since the previous inspection. The documentary support and guidance to members of staff is better than that found previously. However, the school has recently lost its specialist music teacher.

140. Only one lesson of music was seen during inspection. In that lesson pupils sang tunefully. They identified different features of the song they were learning. These are expected elements for attainment at their age. Some played a phrase on a tuned percussion instrument. Difficulty with playing skills indicated that pupils have insufficient opportunity to practice playing skills. Pupils sing tunefully and with clear diction in assembly. Pupils discuss their Key Stage 1 experiences with some enthusiasm. They know how to listen to music carefully to identify which instrument is playing. Pupils in Year 6 have a clear idea of what they like and dislike in music. They discuss the families of instruments although their knowledge of the lives of famous musicians is limited to recent popular music. They have some knowledge of the way in which music is written and describe how it can be used to define rhythm and melody. It is not clear how consistent the quality of learning is. It is clear that pupils make satisfactory gains over time but there are gaps in the skills pupils acquire.

141. As little direct teaching was seen it would be inappropriate to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. The implications of the lessons seen and discussions with pupils are that teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge of musical features indicates that teachers' knowledge is secure. Some lack of skill development in the practical aspects of making music suggests that teachers may not be confident in teaching this part of the music curriculum and that pupils have insufficient time to practice the skills they need to learn. The school has recently lost its specialist music teaching. The implications of this have yet to be fully assessed. Class teachers now take their own music lessons. Pupils no longer miss other lessons for instrumental lessons. Any instrumental tuition now takes place out of curriculum time.

142. Since the previous inspection, the subject co-ordinator has put in place a useful policy and subject guidance to support the work of the non-specialist. Such guidance was not available previously. An additional support to class teachers is the purchase of a commercial scheme of work for the whole school. Used constructively, this is sufficient to ensure coverage of the curriculum introduced for the Year 2000. It provides a suitable range of work and has helpful resources such as

recordings, sheet music and posters. An innovation is a system for recording the progress made by pupils. Applied consistently across the school, it will give valuable information about where there are gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills and what needs to be done next. It will also give to security to the way in which teachers report progress to parents.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. No gymnastics lessons were seen during the inspection. Lessons seen in dance and games indicate that, in those areas, standards of attainment are in line with expectations. There is a balanced and well-constructed scheme of work, which covers all aspects of the curriculum. Two games lessons were seen in Key Stage 2. In these, pupils' performance was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. They were able to improve their skills by listening to advice and analysing their own actions. For example in changing parts of the foot used or trying new throwing techniques. In Year 4/5 pupils can use their skills to devise and play small team games. Three dance lessons were seen. In foundation stage, the new arrivals in school listen well and are beginning to build up a very good range of responses to music and words. In Key Stage 2 pupils can devise a sequence of movements in response to poetry or music.

144. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes very good. One unsatisfactory dance lesson was seen in Key Stage 2. In this lesson pupils were not given enough opportunities to show what they could do, their enthusiasm declined and, as a result behaviour declined. Where teaching is very good, teachers use their knowledge and understanding of the subject to improve pupils' skills. They give clear, concise explanations and make good use of time and space. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own strengths and set new targets for themselves. Teachers use praise well and offer good demonstrations both by pupils and themselves. All teachers are vigilant on matters of health and safety and spend appropriate time on a warm-up.

145. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond well to good teaching where high expectations and challenging themes are provided. In the best lessons they work together very well, for example in giving advice or in agreeing on rules and targets.

146. The subject is ably led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has gradually introduced improvements to the scheme of work and teachers' planning is well supported by a bank of ideas for lessons. The school monitors planning in the subject and ensures that skills are built on from year to year. Swimming is provided throughout Key Stage 2 and standards in swimming are high. Pupils in Year 6 look forward to a residential visit each year that includes outdoor activities. Equipment is sufficient for the range of the curriculum. Facilities for outdoor activities are excellent. Large playing fields and adventure play equipment encourages physical activity. The hall is of a good size and has a clean and safe floor. It is used for many school events and productions; these can lead to interruptions to the physical education curriculum, particularly in winter. The school is aware of parental concerns about this and has taken steps to remedy this. A range of extra-curricular activities is available to pupils in Key Stage 2. These vary from one year to another and the school is keen to extend opportunities.