

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BROOKSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Great Sutton

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 131956

Headteacher: Mrs V J Roberts

Reporting inspector: Mrs Sonja Öyen  
7167

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 February 2001

Inspection number: 230494

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior	
School category:	Community	
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11	
Gender of pupils:	Mixed	
School address:	Rostherne Avenue Great Sutton Ellesmere Port Cheshire	
Postcode:	CH66 2EE	
Telephone number:	0151 339 2052	
Fax number:	0151 348 1726	
Appropriate authority:	Governing body	
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jean Wilson	
Date of previous inspection:	Infant School	October 1996
	Junior School	September 1997

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7167	Mrs Sonja Öyen	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Religious education	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9649	Mrs Jean Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17685	Ms Linda Spooner	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	
31963	Mr Malcolm Padmore	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services  
Strathblane House  
Ashfield Road  
Cheadle  
Cheshire  
SK8 1BB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>32</b>



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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Brookside Primary School is in Great Sutton, to the south west of Ellesmere Port and six miles north of Chester. The school was formed in 1999 by the amalgamation of Brookside Infant and Sutton Way Junior schools, and moved into a new school building in January 2001, four weeks before the inspection. With 226 pupils on roll, the school is of a similar size to most primaries, and has more boys than girls especially in Years 5 and 6. Twenty-six children attend the nursery in the morning only and the school also has a pre-school class for 11 children from two and a half to three years. The nursery children transfer to the reception class in September. The school serves an area of predominantly terraced local authority housing. Sixty nine pupils (35 per cent) are entitled to free school meals which is above average. Children's attainment on entry to nursery varies but is generally below that expected for their age. There are 40 pupils (18 per cent) on the school's register of special educational need, which is just below average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need and 14 others receive support from outside agencies mostly for specific learning difficulties. No pupil has English as an additional language. The school benefits from funding and initiatives arising from its location in an Education Action Zone.

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

Brookside Primary has many strengths. The headteacher's very good leadership, with the support of all staff and parents, has been very effective in minimising the effects of change on the pupils' education during a long period of substantial upheaval. After only four weeks in the new school, pupils and staff are "at home". Standards are high at the end of Key Stage 1, compared with similar schools, due to the good quality of teaching and the rich curriculum. While standards are rising slowly at Key Stage 2, the quality of provision is not strong enough to boost progress and to raise standards substantially. The pupils learn facts well but are not helped enough to apply their knowledge and skills to new situations. The school promotes well equal opportunities for all. The good provision for pupils' moral and social development is central to the school's ethos and mission statement, which are met in large part. The school is very effective in managing pupils with emotional and behavioural problems and also in meeting the needs of pupils who take longer to learn. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Good teaching in the reception and infant classes gets the pupils off to a good start on reading, writing and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well above those of similar schools.
- The art and design of the infant pupils is of a good standard.
- The high expectations and very good leadership of the headteacher ensure a clear sense of purpose and direction. Pupils and staff want to do their best.
- The good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress in lessons.
- The strong emphasis on praise and encouragement is raising pupils' self esteem. The pupils feel safe, secure and generally behave well.
- It draws on the high level of support from parents to develop good home/school partnerships.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching, especially in the junior classes, to bring it to that of the best in the school.
- Pupils' skills in finding and using information; and deciding for themselves how to tackle problems and how to record what they do.
- The critical use of available information to ensure that governors and all staff know what the school does well and why, and what needs to be done to improve.
- Standards of attendance.
- The involvement of parents in deciding how to help those pupils with special educational needs to meet their targets.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement has been very good in dealing with the key issues identified in the inspection reports of the Infant school in 1996 and the Junior school in 1997. The appointment of the Infant school headteacher to the headship of the amalgamated school has been a key factor in the progress made in successfully extending the caring ethos and high expectations of pupils from the Infant school to the whole school. The headteacher's good organisation and vision for the school have raised staff morale, provided a structured and progressive curriculum from the nursery to Year 6 and raised standards at the end of Year 6 to the average of similar schools. Brookside still has some way to go to ensure consistency of good teaching throughout the school and good standards in all subjects, but the positive attitude towards change of all staff, governors, parents and pupils indicates good potential for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	N/a	N/a	E	C	well above average A
Mathematics	N/a	N/a	E	C	above average B
Science	N/a	N/a	E	D	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The school has only had one year as a Primary school and the results of the tests in 2000 for the Year 6 pupils, though well below the national average, were in line with similar schools in English and mathematics but below average in science. Standards improved compared with those of the Junior school in 1999 and the school exceeded its targets. The most significant rise was in science but few pupils did well for their age. Inspection evidence confirms this and shows that the attainment of the majority of the current Year 6 pupils is lower than expected for their age in these three subjects but most especially in English. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age. Most Year 2 pupils reach the expected Level 2 in English, mathematics and science. The art and design work is good. Higher attaining pupils do well in reading and mathematics but do not achieve well enough in writing and science. The school's overall results in reading and writing in the end of Year 2 national tests in 2000 were similar to the average of all schools and well above the average of similar schools. In mathematics, all pupils reached the level expected for their age and placed the school well above the average of all schools and in the top five per cent of similar schools. This sustained the good standards of previous years and reflects pupils' good progress since starting school, when their attainment is generally below that expected of five year olds. The nursery children get off to a sound start and progress accelerates in the reception class particularly in reading and number. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs often make good progress in lessons due to the good quality of support. In religious education, Year 6 pupils' attainment is below the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; most pupils show interest particularly in practical activities. Many older Key Stage 2 pupils are slow to finish their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils generally behave well in and out of the classroom.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils get on well with each other. The older pupils take care of the younger ones.
Attendance	Below average; pupils go on holiday in school time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons. The two per cent unsatisfactory teaching is not typical of any one class or subject. In 51 per cent of lessons the teaching is good; it is very good in eight per cent. In the reception class where all lessons are at least good, and one lesson in three is very good, the children are making good progress across the curriculum and are also showing a heightened attitude to learning. Infant pupils also learn well because of much good teaching, especially in English, mathematics and science. In the nursery and the junior classes, the teaching is sound with strengths in some lessons in all year groups but most notably at Year 5. The lively teaching that typifies the reception and infant classes is less evident in the junior classes where the quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science, although satisfactory, is not strong enough to accelerate pupils' progress in all year groups. This partly accounts for the slow rise in standards, especially those of the higher attaining pupils. Not enough is expected of them and the pace of lessons is often too sedate. Too often all pupils, irrespective of their ability, are expected to do the same work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; good use is made of drama by some teachers to help pupils understand other subjects, such as science.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; pupils are given much support in class. Working in small groups helps many to grow in self-confidence.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall with strengths in the provision for moral and social development; all the staff expect pupils to show good manners and respect for others. In turn they praise and acknowledge their achievements. The high emphasis on doing one's best seen in the Infant classes is spreading throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the staff know the pupils well and show care and concern for their well-being and safety.

The school has a good partnership with parents who are very supportive of the school. Many parents help in school and willingly work with the school to help their children. The pre-school group fosters good links with the nursery.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good leadership of the headteacher provides clear purpose and direction; other key staff manage their responsibilities well but are not all fully involved in strategic planning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; the governors are supportive and committees deal efficiently with school matters. Governors are beginning to take a more critical stance in holding the school to account.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; governors regularly review progress. Although the headteacher is highly critical of how well the school does and is clear about what needs to be done, not all coordinators are as thorough in evaluating subject strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good; extra funds through the Education Action Zone are being used to provide a good level of classroom support staff.

The school is adequately staffed and makes good use of the skills and talents of visitors to strengthen the provision. The new building provides sufficient space but Key Stage 2 classrooms are small. The school has to resolve several problems such as the poor playground layout and the high level of noise in the Key Stage 2 shared work area. Resources are satisfactory. The headteacher sets high standards and is effective in obtaining the best value from staff, resources and finances.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The warm welcome when they come to school; they find it easy talking with the headteacher and other staff.</li> <li>The good leadership of the headteacher.</li> <li>The good teaching which ensures their children like school and make progress.</li> <li>The school expects their children to work hard and to behave well.</li> <li>The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<p>Very few parents raised concerns, but the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homework varies in amount and regularity.</li> <li>More out-of-lesson activities could be provided.</li> <li>Communication could be even better with the parents of children in the nursery.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees fully with parents' views. The headteacher promptly took action to ensure that nursery parents were updated about their child's progress and school practice. Plans to reintroduce ball games and activities at lunchtime have been postponed due to the necessary resurfacing of the playground.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When the children start in the nursery, most show knowledge, skills and understanding lower than expected for their age. They make sound progress due to satisfactory teaching, and when they join the reception class the following September, their attainment is closer to but still lower than that expected of four year olds. The children's progress accelerates in the reception class because of the good quality of teaching and provision. This is most marked in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics, where pupils make good progress. The children get off to a fair start in the nursery where there is a similar daily emphasis on sharing books, writing and number. When they leave the nursery, many recognise their name, letters of the alphabet and numbers. In the reception class, the children quickly move into reading independently and recording their own stories and number sums because of the explicit teaching and the parents' good support. By the end of the foundation stage, most children have reached the standard expected for their age and the higher attaining ones are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum, especially in reading and mathematics.
2. In the nursery, the children make sound progress in personal, social and emotional development. They follow the routines and take care of their own needs. In the reception class, they become even more independent as the staff have high expectations that they will get what they need and will organise their own learning. In knowledge and understanding of the world, the children make sound progress. Higher attaining children do not always achieve well enough as the teachers do not extend their experience. This is also evident in the area of creative development, where the nursery and reception children have relatively few opportunities to practise their skills or to develop play ideas with the support of an adult. The children make steady progress in the area of physical development. Good teaching in the reception class lifts the children's achievement, and by the end of the reception year, many children are doing at least as well as expected for their age.
3. The pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the good teaching across the curriculum. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are satisfactory in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Most pupils have reached Level 2, as expected for their age, and a significant number reach the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics. In writing and science, higher attaining pupils do not always fulfil their potential as they are not challenged enough to ensure that they achieve well.
4. In the 2000 national end of Key Stage 1 tests, the school's overall results were in line with the national average in reading and writing, well above in mathematics but well below in science. The school did particularly well in mathematics. Here all the pupils reached Level 2, which placed the school in the top five per cent of all and similar schools, and one in three pupils reached the higher Level 3. This showed marked improvement on the previous year's results. In reading, improvements in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level for their age and also in reaching a

higher level, brought the school to well above the average of similar schools. In writing, nearly all pupils reached the expected level and although none did better, the school's overall results were still well above the average for similar schools. Boys and girls did equally well in writing, as well as in reading and mathematics.

5. Given their close to average attainment on entry to Key Stage 1, the pupils make good progress in the two years and most enter Key Stage 2 fluent readers and competent in handling number. Most write independently, use correct punctuation to demarcate sentences and spell simple words accurately. They present their work neatly, although few have moved into using joined handwriting. There is however, a considerable gap between the higher and the lower attaining pupils. The latter are still in the very early stages of reading and writing. The most able readers are confident in tackling stories and read with lively expression. They are often the better writers and use what they know from their reading in their own story writing.
6. Pupils build on this good start and continue to make sound progress in Year 3. The progress of other year groups is less consistent. Pupils in Year 4 have had a disturbed year due to the absence of their teacher and several changes in temporary teacher. The school is aware that many of the pupils are immature for their age and have not made the progress they should, as they have often shown a lack of interest in learning. During the inspection, when they were building a relationship with two teachers – one to replace another leaving at half term - pupils made at least satisfactory progress in all lessons and good progress in those where the teachers encouraged and chivvied them. Their attainment however, is lower than expected for their age and indicates the lack of previous progress.
7. Year 5 pupils are making good progress as a result of good teaching. The pupils remember well what they are told, and in some lessons, such as science, the pupils are already working at the level expected of Year 6 pupils. Their attainment indicates higher end of Key Stage 2 standards for Year 2002.
8. Standards in Year 6 are unsatisfactory in English, mathematics and science. The higher attaining pupils are working at the level expected for eleven year olds, and a few are doing better than this especially in reading, but many pupils' work in writing, mathematics and science is more typical of pupils a year or two younger. Although much is due to the pupils' inconsistent attitudes to learning, the quality of teaching is not strong enough to accelerate progress across the curriculum and make up for lost ground in previous years. In English, few pupils write at length and the quality of their writing varies. They read fluently but do not always understand what they read or select information carefully enough. Too many merely copy what they read. In mathematics and science, although pupils remember key facts, their knowledge of processes and their skills in problem solving are less secure.
9. The Year 6 class has a high number of boys, but inspection evidence shows that there was little difference in the attainment of the boys and girls, despite national trends that indicate boys do not do as well as girls in English. Current attainment indicates the school's targets for Level 4 in English and mathematics are too high but the school intends to run booster classes which raised attainment last year.
10. In literacy and numeracy, standards are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. All pupils use and develop their reading, writing and number skills in other subjects but at Key Stage 2, a significant number of pupils, especially in Year 6, find it hard to apply their skills without prompting from adults.

11. In the 2000 national tests for eleven year olds, the school's results were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics and standards rose compared with 1999. The highest rise was seen in science where there was a 20 per cent increase in Level 4 attainment, bringing the school close to, but still below, the national average. When compared with similar schools, Brookside did as well as the average in English and mathematics but was below the average in science, where the low percentage of pupils doing well for their age minimised the overall result.
12. Three pupils who attended the unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties took the Year 6 tests in 2000. The school's analysis shows that when their results are omitted, the school's percentage of Level 4 attainment was above the average in English, and well above in mathematics and science, when compared with similar schools. The percentage of Level 5 attainment remains below the average in English and mathematics, and in science well below the average.
13. Key Stage 2 standards have risen year on year since 1997. The headteacher has again set higher targets to bring the school increasingly closer to the national average. Coordinators are aware of the need to raise Level 3 attainment at Key Stage 1 and Level 5 attainment at Key Stage 2, particularly in writing and science, and the positive impact this would have on raising overall standards. The work of the English coordinator with the more able Year 6 writers, and the reception teacher and headteacher to accelerate the reception children's progress in writing, are useful initiatives, but their effect on standards has yet to be evaluated.
14. The satisfactory standards attained at the end of Key Stage 1 in design and technology, history, music and religious education have generally been sustained since the 1996 inspection. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in geography. Standards have risen in art and design and are now good. Standards are satisfactory overall in physical education and information and communication technology (ICT), and strengths have been sustained in dance and the use of ICT in other subjects. The pupils do as well as others of the same age in using computers and other equipment but the use of the new ICT suite and different programs is heightening pupils' interest and application. This is also the case at Key Stage 2, where standards have risen since the 1997 inspection and are now generally in line with other schools. By the end of the year, Year 6 pupils will have covered all of the requirements of the National Curriculum for ICT and have met the standard expected.
15. Standards in art and design and in religious education have fallen at Key Stage 2 since the 1997 inspection and are now unsatisfactory. Year 6 pupils' work is often more typical of younger pupils and indicates a lack of systematic teaching of knowledge, skills and processes in previous years. The previous report judged standards to be unsatisfactory in design and technology and music. In this inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in both subjects, but discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils indicated poor knowledge of the design-make-evaluate process and suggests little change in standards in design and technology.
16. Pupils with special educational needs at both key stages achieve well. They make good progress towards their targets because of the good level of support in lessons. For

pupils who find it hard to maintain self discipline, the presence of an assistant often helps to de-fuse problems before they escalate and affect others. Higher attaining pupils do not always achieve their full potential as the challenge is not high enough or because they are left to work on their own. They do better in reading and number, where they benefit from working with others of a similar ability.

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

17. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to their new school and feel thoroughly at home in it. Nearly all of the parents who returned the questionnaire agreed that their children like school. As one parent put it: "They run through the gates to the new school".
18. Pupils respond positively to school. Within the caring, secure and family atmosphere of the nursery and school, they gain confidence quickly. Given the short time in the new building, the children in the nursery and reception class have quickly become used to their new classrooms and the school layout. They were happy and at ease moving around the school, as well as choosing activities and working in small groups with an adult. They generally take care of their own needs and show an eagerness to learn. Many sit still and concentrate for long periods of time, especially when listening to stories.
19. Most pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are interested in learning. Many show very good attitudes, and this is most apparent in the Key Stage 1 and Year 5 classes. Here the pupils are eager to learn, quick to respond and willing to get on with their tasks. Such good attitudes were exemplified well in a writing lesson for Year 2 pupils. The pupils hung on the teacher's every word as she thought out loud when drafting the first part of a story. The pupils were very keen to show her how she could correct and improve her work and were also very enthusiastic about then writing their own stories. The school is aware that the oldest Key Stage 2 pupils show less positive attitudes to work and that relatively few are self-motivated to do well. The apathy of a significant number is best seen in the lack of take-up of allocated places in the booster classes after school, despite encouragement from teachers. In lessons, many pupils often work at a slow pace and need much chivvying from the teacher and support assistant to maintain their concentration.
20. Throughout the school, most pupils respond positively to the encouragement from the headteacher and their teachers. They want to please them and want to know how well they have done. Most concentrate attentively on what is being said, listen to instructions and stay on task. They respond and learn best when the lessons present a new challenge and when they are actively involved. Year 4 pupils were wholly absorbed in sketching and tried hard to get things right. Pupils greatly enjoy and are stimulated by other school activities, for example clubs, visiting speakers, special art days and the numerous and varied school trips.
21. Pupils' behaviour is generally good. This sustains the findings in the report of the Infant School and indicates a significant improvement in the behaviour of Key Stage 2 pupils. Most pupils play together in a good-natured way in the playground but there are still regular incidents of horseplay and rough behaviour which occasionally lead to

pupils being hurt. This unacceptable behaviour is partly due to the low level of self-discipline of a few pupils which the school is working hard to improve. An aggravating feature is the current lack of things for pupils to do when outside.

22. Most pupils respond immediately to instructions and requests, organise what they need without fuss and move around school in a controlled way. In lessons, more especially at Key Stage 2, there are often limited opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and to organise their own work. All the pupils know that the headteacher and staff have high expectations of how they ought to behave. However, a small number of older pupils show a less conscientious approach and take advantage of situations to misbehave. These pupils, more usually boys, are easily distracted, quickly become restless and show minimal self-discipline. Their antics disturb the whole class and often the work rate drops. This is most apparent in the Year 6 and Year 4 classes. Many Year 4 pupils need constant adult reminders of what to do and how to do it. During the inspection, these pupils were responding positively to having two teachers working in class and often commented that they were trying hard to do the right thing. The pupils generally accept the school rules and respond to the rewards and sanctions. One pupil has been permanently excluded because of continued poor behaviour and lack of response to all other sanctions.
23. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. There is a high level of mutual respect. All adults in the community provide good role models for children. Several examples of pupils acting kindly and helpfully were seen during the inspection. Bullying is a rare occurrence and is always dealt with firmly and promptly by the school. Pupils responsibly carry out tasks as part of the daily routines of the school. Many older pupils are showing that they can be trusted. For example the mentoring of a Year 4 pupil by two Year 6 pupils is working very well. Year 6 pupils also act as mediators in the Key Stage 1 playground.
24. Attendance levels are unsatisfactory. The attendance rate for the last school year was well below the national average and so far this year there has only been a very slight improvement. Several families take holidays in term time and there is also a relatively high incidence of illness and minor ailments. The irregular attendance of so many pupils inevitably has a negative impact on their progress and attainment. Most pupils are punctual, allowing the day to get off to a prompt start.

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

25. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In 98 per cent of lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory. This is an improvement on the quality seen in both the Infant and Junior schools in the previous inspections. The teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson seen at upper Key Stage 2.
26. In 51 per cent of lessons, the teaching was at least good and in eight per cent it was very good. These overall percentages mask considerable differences between and within key stages.
27. In the foundation stage, the overall quality is good but the quality is far higher in the reception class than in the nursery. The teaching in the nursery is sound and the children get off to fair start. In the reception class, the consistently good teaching accelerates the children's learning. In half of lessons seen, the teaching was very good, particularly in mathematics, art and physical education sessions. The positive effects of this good teaching are seen in the children's zest for learning. The teacher's warmth,

her good subject knowledge, her skills in organising activities and encouraging the children, all motivate and inspire the children. Sessions move at a brisk pace and the children achieve well.

28. At Key Stage 1, the teaching is good and pupils make good progress. The good teaching in two lessons in three has been sustained since the last inspection but the percentage of very good teaching has fallen slightly to one lesson in 20. Common strengths are the enthusiasm of the teachers, their high expectations that pupils will do well and their lively approach. They are well organised and manage the pupils' behaviour effectively. The good quality of teaching and consistency in teaching in Years 1 and 2 has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and their learning, especially in English, mathematics and science. The good teaching in art and design ensures that pupils' attainment is higher than in most schools. There are also strengths in teaching in ICT and religious education. In other subjects the teaching is sound. No teaching was seen in design and technology and in geography.
29. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. It is good in one lesson in three. No very good teaching was seen. The quality of the teaching of temporary teachers was comparable to that of the permanent staff. Although there is good teaching across the key stage in mathematics and information and communication technology, the teaching is not consistently good enough to raise standards in each year group, and in the key stage as a whole, particularly in English and science.
30. During the inspection, the teaching was good in most lessons for Year 5 pupils and they made good progress across the curriculum. In some subjects, such as science, their knowledge was already more typical of eleven year olds. However, there was a heavy emphasis on formal class teaching using the interactive whiteboard as the key teaching tool. This was still a novelty for the pupils and over time might not have the same positive effect on learning seen during the inspection. In other classes, the teaching is satisfactory overall. Although there are common and individual strengths, there were weaknesses in some of the satisfactory lessons, such as lack of pace and challenge for the higher attaining pupils, which over time lessen all pupils' progress.
31. At both key stages the teaching is good in mathematics. In nearly all lessons seen, the good quality of teaching ensured pupils learnt well. The teachers are putting to good use their training in the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy, particularly in using practical examples to sharpen the pupils' awareness of numbers. Many teachers used number cards, fans, dice or items to involve the pupils and keep them focussed on number sequences and relationships. This was seen at its best in a lesson for the reception class held in the hall. Here the teacher kept the children fully engaged for 45 minutes in counting, checking one to one, estimating and recording their findings, through a lively and well structured series of games and problems using bean bags, hoops and small whiteboards. Every opportunity, for example giving out bean bags, was used to count and talk about numbers. Questions and requests such as "How many more do we need? Show me" kept the children involved in checking the teacher's actions and as a result many grew in confidence and quickness in offering the right number.
32. The good quality of the initial class sessions with the focus on mental mathematics, is not always continued into the main part of the lesson. However, in one good lesson for Year 3 pupils, this was really well done. The initial sessions in rounding up or down numbers set the scene for the group activities which were well matched to the pupils' attainment. The pupils worked independently and the periodic comments to the class from the teacher about difficulties some were having and how they might solve them, kept all focussed and ensured they made good progress. In the final part of the lesson,

the teacher's handing over of the pen to individuals to pose problems for the others not only renewed their attention but also proved a good way to assess pupils' skills in explaining how they were arriving at their answers.

33. Although many teachers ask the pupils about their learning, this is not a strong feature in all classes and all subjects. In many lessons, especially at Key Stage 2, there is a higher focus on teaching than on learning. As a result, the pupils acquire facts but are not always secure in their understanding of processes, concepts and principles. This is most evident in science, but is also seen in reading and writing, and partly explains why attainment is not higher at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. In only a few lessons did the teachers ask “Why?”, “How do you know?” or “Tell us how you know that” to encourage the pupils to explain their strategies and thinking.
34. Good examples of teaching to promote thinking and talking about reading and writing strategies were seen at Key Stage 1. In one lesson, the teacher’s comments about what she was doing as she located “adventure” in the dictionary helped pupils to realise the steps involved. In another lesson, pupils in Year 2 were encouraged to provide reasons for their comments in correcting the teacher’s first draft of a story. Her own thinking out loud as she wrote demonstrated very effectively what pupils should do such as substituting “also” for “and”, and “Now is it going to be *ou* or *ow* in *down*?”. Such effective teaching engaged pupils of all abilities and all were keen to go and start their own stories with several similarly thinking out loud. This style of teaching was less evident in reading sessions.
35. The teachers have given thought to how their classrooms should be organised to support the pupils’ learning. Many have key words and information on the walls for pupils to refer to alongside samples of work. Not enough reference is made to these to remind pupils of what they know and need to know. A common strength is the good quality of marking of pupils’ work. In most lessons, the teachers check what the pupils do and give supportive feedback as they work, which often ensures that pupils improve its quality. This was seen particularly well in art and design, ICT and physical education lessons. When prompted, Year 6 pupils gave more attention to details and modified their use of pencils to indicate depth of shading when drawing flowers. Some of the marking of pupils’ work in books is cursory, especially in mathematics, but there are good examples of detailed comments telling pupils how they can improve. These are at their best in English.
36. The teachers are generally well organised and are confident as they have prepared well. In the reception class and at Key Stage 1, this allows the teachers leeway to follow up the pupils’ ideas and to change the planned structure of the session. In one religious education lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher agreed to the pupils’ request to dramatise a parable. Although unplanned, this provided a valuable opportunity for the pupils to take on the roles of narrator and characters. The success of such sessions throughout the school is also due to the teachers’ good relationships with the pupils, the good team work with assistants and to the teachers’ effective skills in managing the pupils’ behaviour. The teachers are very clear in telling the pupils what they expect of them and are also quick to pre-empt and deal quickly with problems. They praise the pupils for doing as they are asked and as a result, there is a good, positive learning atmosphere. Such effective strategies are helping to calm Year 4 pupils and improve their attitudes to learning.
37. Where the teaching showed weaknesses, these were usually in the slow pace of the lesson and in the teacher’s expectations of what the pupils could achieve, particularly in

Year 6. A lack of vitality also characterised many lessons throughout Key Stage 2. Too many teachers rely on board work, drawing and colouring or worksheets as tasks for all the pupils, irrespective of their previous attainment. These are also often copied unnecessarily into pupils' books rather than used to record pupils' answers. Not enough use is made of practical activities or available resources such as classroom computers and tape recorders to support and enhance learning. A common weakness is that teachers merely supervise pupils as they work rather than working with a specific group to improve their performance.

38. Most teaching support is given to the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. When adults work with these pupils they generally make good progress as they concentrate and try hard to please the adult. Classroom assistants provide valuable help to pupils with particular needs, and often to others who work close by. In one religious education lesson, the assistant's explanation of the task, and how to tackle it, was clearer than that of the teacher. Too often, the higher attaining pupils are left to work independently. This does not ensure that they make the best progress possible.
39. The teachers made little reference to homework in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to take their reading books home and to learn spellings. A scrutiny of pupils' homework books showed older pupils had researched science topics and completed work begun in school.

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

40. The planning of the curriculum after the amalgamation of the Infant and Junior schools has resulted in an improved curriculum for Key Stage 2 pupils compared with the previous inspection report. The school meets statutory requirements and provides a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum overall which is relevant to the pupils and soundly fosters the development of their academic knowledge and skills as well as personal and social skills.
41. The reception class and Key Stage 1 curriculum is good, as much of the provision is interlinked in a meaningful way and echoes closely the school aim of providing "*a stimulating, caring environment where the children's holistic development can be nurtured and self-esteem can thrive.*" In the nursery and at Key Stage 2, although the overall curriculum is satisfactory, it is not as rich and lacks the vibrancy seen in the other classes. The Key Stage 2 curriculum does not promote well enough the development of pupils' skills in organising their own learning and in applying their skills to new situations.
42. As in many schools in Education Action Zones, the prime curriculum focus is to raise attainment in English and mathematics. The school rightly gives more than half its teaching time to English and mathematics lessons and there are additional out-of-school booster classes for Year 6 pupils. The school has benefited from advice in how to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this is having a positive impact on standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. The teaching of reading is given a high focus through the allocation of a daily period in all classes when adults hear groups and individuals read and assess their progress. The school takes

opportunities to extend the teaching of literacy and numeracy in other subjects such as ICT through effective use of software to develop reading and number skills, and in history where themes such as the Great Fire of London provide motivation to encourage pupils to write accounts as if they were an eye witness. A developing strength is the use of drama to enhance learning in other subjects, especially science, where it was used to good effect to help pupils understand the concepts of an electrical circuit and blood circulation.

43. The previous Infant school inspection highlighted the effective use of topics and themes to link subjects and this has been sustained and taken through into the Key Stage 2 curriculum. It is best seen in the links between art and design, history, religious education and ICT. A good initiative, in line with national guidance, is the teaching of ICT skills through subject content. During the inspection there was good use of the Internet by Key Stage 2 pupils to research transport over the ages and to find out more about topics such as Islam.
44. Although the quality of the Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory overall, it is richer for children in the reception class than for those in the nursery. Learning through play and experience underlies the curriculum and all six areas of learning are covered. The strong focus on developing the children's reading, writing and number skills is reflected in the children's good progress in these areas, particularly in their interest in books. Curriculum planning does not indicate clearly enough how the provision takes full account of the stepping stones outlined in national guidance, especially in personal, social and emotional development. Topics are used well to link experiences such as hearing different stories about bears and creating a bear's cave in the nursery, but the potential to develop this further is missed.
45. The teachers' planning of the curriculum is satisfactory and has some strengths. This is an area of much improvement since the inspection of the Junior school, when the development of the curriculum was identified as a key issue. All subjects have policies and schemes of work that take into account recent statutory changes in the curriculum and there is a clear framework of subject topics for each year group that meets National Curriculum requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. While science and physical education receive more teaching time, the school gives equal weighting to the other foundation National Curriculum subjects and to religious education, but the alternating of subjects such as geography and history means there are long periods when one is not taught. The subject planning for a key stage by each coordinator provides a good level of progression and is at its best when intended learning and ways of learning are clearly indicated for higher and lower attaining pupils. The headteacher scrupulously and effectively monitors curriculum planning and the way plans are put into action.
46. A developing aspect of the curriculum is in personal and social education. The school nurse provides valuable support in teaching sex education and alerting pupils to drugs and substance abuse. The school welcomes visitors to enrich the curriculum, such as talking about their experiences during the war, and pupils also make visits to places of interest as part of curriculum topics.
47. All pupils have good access to the full curriculum. The school places high priority on supporting pupils within the classroom or in small withdrawal groups for those who find it hard to concentrate in class. The school has good links with external agencies to support pupils with particular needs. Pupils with special educational needs have clear individual learning programmes with realistic targets which are reviewed each term. They are helped to achieve these targets more through adult support than specially

prepared curriculum tasks. Similarly, the curriculum does not always challenge higher attaining pupils enough, especially in English and science.

48. There are numerous opportunities for pupils' personal development through extra-curricular activities especially in sport and music. At the time of the inspection, few of these were running as the school had yet to organise a programme following the move to the new building.
49. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. The strengths in the provision for moral and social development outweigh areas of weakness in the provision for spiritual and cultural development. The headteacher has sustained the positive judgement made in the last report of the provision in the Infant School and has extended this to the amalgamated school.
50. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactorily supported through assemblies and aspects of the curriculum. Daily acts of collective worship provide a range of themes planned to help pupils explore life both within and beyond their own immediate experiences. Brief time is given for pupils to reflect on what they have heard in the assembly or what they believe in. The playing of music as pupils enter and leave the hall helps to create a feeling of calmness and quiet reverence. The planned provision for spiritual development in the wider curriculum is more limited. Some elements of the wonder of life were observed in lessons. For example, in the reception class, the children were amazed and delighted to see the effects of air on windmills and the little sailing boats they had made. During a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils responded with quiet respect as the teacher talked about aspects of friendship. Pupils' art work and writing about what they would do if they were a guardian angel gives a positive, spiritual dimension which has been brought from the old school to the new.
51. The backbone of the school is the very good provision for the pupils' moral development that reflects strongly the school's mission statement. The school prizes highly honesty and consideration for others and the headteacher takes the lead in expecting pupils to demonstrate high levels of integrity and to make the right choice between right and wrong. There is a sense of moral purpose in much that the school does. Carefully chosen stories are an integral part of assemblies to provide pupils with examples of moral behaviour and beliefs. Discussions occur both in assemblies and between staff and pupils in lessons and at other times of the day about, for example, the rights of others within the school and wider community. Themes such as being aware of others are built into the school's rules and prominently displayed around the school.
52. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The importance of social development encompasses much that the school works towards in all aspects of its day-to-day life. Pupils are expected to get on well with each other and to show due respect to adults and their peers. Important aspects of personal development are undertaken, for example, in sex and health education. Residential trips for pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 foster independence as well as social skills in getting on with others. The very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults underpin much that is provided within personal and social development. Older pupils are encouraged to help the younger ones and boys and girls are expected to mix in the dining hall. The teachers choose monitors to perform regular tasks in the classroom and around school, and weekly assemblies celebrate individuals' successes. The school plans to re-establish the school council in the near future and to increase the involvement of pupils in deciding how best to develop the school environment.

53. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are helped to understand that they live in a multicultural society. This was supported by a visit to the Millennium Dome by Year 6 pupils and visits within the local area help to reinforce the cultural and local heritage of all the pupils. The study of famous artists provides for an understanding of local culture in, for example the work of Lowry, and in European culture through the work of Klimt, Klee and Wasser. Pupils learn about other faiths and have experienced Ghanaian dance culture.

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

54. The parents agree that Brookside School is a place where “children come first”. A strength of the school is the way in which all staff care for pupils and work together to provide a secure, calm and happy learning environment. Much had been achieved in the first week of school, before the lead inspector’s initial visit, to organise classrooms and public areas to ensure that pupils felt comfortable in the new building. Parents are confident that under the caring leadership of the headteacher their children’s needs are always considered. Relationships between staff and children and also between staff and parents are based on honesty and mutual respect and the school works hard to make all children feel special. The work of the support staff is a significant element in the school’s good provision of care.
55. Parents confirm that the school helps their children to settle happily in the nursery class. The presence of the pre-school unit adjoining the nursery makes the transition to nursery easy for many children. During the inspection, several pre-school children joined the nursery children for an assembly. The quality of the midday supervision of pupils is good. The lunch-time organisers provide good care for pupils in the playground and there are good procedures for recording and dealing with playground incidents and accidents.
56. The school has good procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils. These were finely tuned as part of the headteacher’s daily work when all pupils were housed in the Infant School building. The headteacher and staff have been conscientious in noting hazards, such as the heavy internal doors that the pupils find hard to open, as they become used to working in the new building. In lessons, the teachers highlight the importance of safety. For example in a science lesson for Year 2 pupils, the teacher ensured that the pupils knew about the importance of not poking things into electric sockets. Lessons in personal, social and health education help pupils to learn more about their personal safety and how to look after themselves. The school has good, effective child protection procedures and members of staff are fully aware of child protection issues.
57. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. All the staff follow the good behaviour policy. The reception and Key Stage 1 teachers are particularly skilled in managing the pupils, and all members of staff have consistently high expectations of the pupils’ good behaviour. Their generous use of praise, and rewards such as stickers, motivates pupils to behave well. The headteacher shows particular concern for those pupils who find it hard to control their emotions and who have difficulty in behaving as well as the others. With the staff, she has devised an imaginative range of strategies to meet their particular needs. These include the close involvement of parents, the effective deployment of classroom assistants to supervise

and work with them in lessons, pupils advising individuals, mentoring and the use of behaviour plans and report cards. She has also sought outside expertise, and monitoring evidence shows that sessions led by a behaviour support worker have helped to calm the behaviour and raise the self-esteem of the Year 4 pupils. The very good practice of keeping detailed records of incidents, and the action taken, provides valued information on trends in pupils' behaviour and assists in the planning of appropriate strategies.

58. The school monitors pupils' absence daily and parents are contacted when there is no explanation. Individual record sheets enable the school to track the absence patterns of each pupil and the school receives good support from the education welfare officer in cases where there is persistent absence. Not enough is done, however, to raise the level of attendance and to ensure that parents are fully aware of the importance of regular attendance in their children's progress.
59. Procedures are good for monitoring pupils' personal development. The headteacher leads the way in encouraging pupils to raise their achievement by expecting "nothing but the best" (parental comment). The teachers know the pupils well and regularly assess pupils' personal development. This gets off to a good start in the pre-school group and the nursery, where support assistants keep informal records and observations of how well pupils are doing. The headteacher appreciates the need for pupils to gain self-esteem through their work, and efforts are made by everyone to boost each pupil through praise and encouragement. "Excellent" stickers and the weekly celebration assembly promote effectively good work, behaviour and personal values.
60. Procedures are also good for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. This represents very good improvement since the previous inspections, when the quality of assessment in both the Infant and Junior schools was identified as a key issue for improvement.
61. The good systems begin in the pre-school class with ongoing records of the children's progress, and continue in the nursery. Statutory requirements are met in the compilation of an initial attainment profile during the first few weeks following admission to the reception class. Statutory end-of-key-stage assessments in English, mathematics and science are fully in place. The school also uses standardised testing materials to assess pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Regular assessments monitor pupils' attainment and progress when units of work and topics have been completed. Teachers keep records of pupils' progress in all subjects of the curriculum but there are no collections of samples of pupils' work matched to National Curriculum attainment levels to provide teachers with an additional framework for assessment. From all the information, the teachers prepare annual statements for each pupil and these are passed on to the next teacher at the end of the summer term. The teachers regularly evaluate their lessons and complete a 'next steps in learning' section but opportunities are missed to involve pupils in compiling their own records of achievement or setting their own targets for success.
62. Good assessment procedures are also in place to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs and to set new, achievable targets through termly reviews of individual learning plans. Although parents of pupils with special educational needs are provided with information on how their children are progressing, they are not invited to

read or comment on these plans. This limits opportunities for them to be more involved in their children's learning.

63. Test results and other assessment information are analysed carefully and any identified gaps in knowledge are used to amend curriculum planning. Targets for attainment are set for each year group and their progress is tracked throughout the year followed by an annual review. The same information is also used to identify pupils who are not achieving at the expected level or those who would benefit from specific extra help. This has resulted in the setting up of 'booster' classes and the provision of extra learning support staff.

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

64. Parents and carers are loyal to, and strongly support, the school. They like the new school building and what it offers their children. The parents' questionnaire reveals an exceptionally high level of confidence in all aspects of the school's work. Parents show particularly high respect for and confidence in the headteacher and the way that the school is led and managed. They also value the good teaching their children receive and the approachability of staff. They strongly appreciate the way the school is helping their children to make progress not just in their work but also in their personal development. The only concern, raised at the parents' meeting before the inspection, was the view that the communication between parents and the nursery had not been as good as in previous years. The school acted promptly to rectify this with meetings for parents to discuss their child's progress and also the reissuing of home learning packs. Key to the parents' support for the school is their view that the headteacher "is like a friend. You can talk to her about anything". Many openly expressed the view that they felt welcome in school and that anything they did was much appreciated. The inspection team endorses these views.
65. The good partnership between school and parents and carers helps the pupils' learning. Communication between home and school is very good. The informative prospectus, regular newsletters and termly information about the curriculum keep parents up to date with events in school. The Autumn term group meetings between the headteacher, reception classteacher, teaching assistant and parents of reception children is an effective practice as it fosters good relationships with parents and enables them to find out how their children are settling in.
66. The school listens to parents' views and has consulted with parents about how they would like the new family room to be used. The popular pre-school unit is a valuable service for parents and the school has a waiting list for the places offered. However, the quality of the annual written reports for parents on their children's progress is inconsistent. Although the targets, or "next steps", which are given for mathematics and literacy are generally specific and helpful, some are vague or phrased in language which is too technical to be helpful to parents.
67. Most parents regularly listen to their children read and the school encourages this through the provision of helpful booklets and by meetings for parents about how to support reading. Earlier in the year the school held a well-attended mathematics workshop so that parents could learn about the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has successfully applied for grant funding for family education courses to develop its commitment to assisting parents to support their children's learning. While it keeps

parents of pupils with special educational needs informed about their progress, the school does not sufficiently involve them in ways to help their children meet their individual targets. Several parents, including parent governors, regularly help in school by dealing with practical tasks, hearing readers and helping with visits and curriculum days. The school also values the help provided by the Parent-Teacher Association in raising funds and organising social events.

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

68. The overall quality of leadership and management is good, with especial strength in the very good leadership of the headteacher whose appointment to the headship of the amalgamated school sustained the leadership and management strengths identified in the Infant school inspection of 1996 and brought needed clear educational direction for Key Stage 2 staff, following a period of much instability and low morale. This is well recognised in the strong agreement by 81 per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire.
69. The headteacher has extended her vision of providing the best for every Infant pupil to all pupils in the school. She has high expectations of staff and pupils and is effective in working with others to achieve them. She rises to a challenge and is forward thinking. All of the issues raised in the inspection were aspects that she had personally identified as areas for improvement, and in most cases were included in the school development plan. A key strength is the headteacher's high level of interest in, and her concern and care for others. She knows her staff, pupils and parents very well and is sensitive to personal situations. She is firm in what she wants but fair and consistent in her dealings with others. As a result, she is held in the highest regard by all, is much loved by the pupils, and gains the willing support of staff, parents and governors in working to ensure the school's aims are met.
70. The deputy headteacher provides good support in the day to day management of the school, particularly in dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour and liaising with staff and parents. He is less effective in strategic planning and evaluating critically school data and procedures to identify where the school needs to improve and how this may be done. The quality of subject coordination is generally satisfactory, and the good subject leadership in art and design and in English serves as an effective model of what can be achieved by analysing pupils' achievement, identifying areas for improvement and drawing up action plans. The school is beginning to make better use of teachers' subject expertise and enthusiasms, as in the English coordinator providing sessions to boost higher attaining Year 6 pupils' performance in writing.
71. The school has an adequate number of qualified teachers to meet the needs of the pupils and to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Appointments to the school since the previous inspection have given a good blend of experience and expertise. Temporary teachers are well supported and all staff benefit from training and professional development courses. Arrangements for performance management appraisals have been agreed.
72. There has been good improvement since the 1996 and 1997 inspections. Good standards have been sustained at Key Stage 1 and standards have risen at Key Stage 2.

The school now has a nursery class, and a pre-school group has been set up which has a waiting list. Assessment procedures have been amended and are continuous throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. As a consequence, the teachers have a better awareness of pupils' progress and are able to predict attainment more consistently. This is helping to raise standards as Key Stage 2 teachers' expectations are higher and pupils are in turn lifting their performance.

73. Central to this process has been the influence of the headteacher. Following the amalgamation of the Infant and Junior schools, both continued in their original buildings. This necessitated the headteacher splitting her time between sites half a mile apart while dealing with the key issues from the 1996 and 1997 inspections, initiating curriculum and management changes and also trying to establish a unified teaching team and whole school policies. This was exacerbated when the building of the new school necessitated the lodging of the Key Stage 2 classes in the Infant school buildings. It is clear from meeting minutes and anecdotal evidence that this caused much upheaval with the rescheduling of daily routines, such as lunchtimes, to ensure that the school continued to run smoothly while bursting at the seams. A good measure of the headteacher's determination and effectiveness in maintaining a good quality of education, and also in initiating change, is seen in the rise in Key Stage 2 standards in the 2000 national tests.
74. The headteacher's plans to be involved in teaching and in monitoring the quality of provision in the autumn term of 2000 were curtailed by having to deal with issues arising from the late completion and handover of the new school building. It is much to the headteacher's credit that the school was well settled into its new buildings when the inspection took place. Staff had worked successfully to ensure that pupils' good work was displayed and that classrooms supported learning. However, even after such a short time, members of staff and pupils were falling into routines which work against what the headteacher wants for the pupils. A good example is the use of the shared areas as overspill zones rather than as well-organised curriculum work areas. This is partially understandable as the school has no areas or small rooms for group work.
75. The new building is attractive and adequate to deliver the curriculum but is far from ideal. The classrooms are only just big enough for the Key Stage 2 classes and the hall is barely adequate for whole school gatherings with parents present or for physical education sessions for the older pupils. The constant whine from heating equipment and poor acoustics in the hall affected the pupils' concentration in assemblies and lessons. The site has yet to be landscaped and the playground is badly waterlogged after rain. Such problems have led to postponement of improvements, such as playground markings for games. A good aspect of the layout is the room used as an ICT suite and the parents' room. A constraint is the fact that the reception class and the nursery are separate, each with its own secure outdoor area, but not linked to allow joint sharing of resources or activities.
76. The school is building up its learning resources. Many old books and materials were discarded when the school moved to the new building. There is an adequate range and quantity to teach all subjects but the number of books to support learning, especially in geography, is limited.
77. The governing body is well aware of the problems facing the school. Governors are highly supportive of the school and highly appreciative of the commitment of the headteacher. Like several governors, the chair is a regular visitor in school and has a good awareness of school affairs. Through the committees, governors fulfil their legal responsibilities and share information about the curriculum, standards and the curriculum.

78. The quality of financial and strategic planning is good. The school development plan for this year covers not only action to raise standards but also to ensure the smooth transition to the new school. The headteacher has drafted a plan to take the school forward in the next few years and this builds on current priorities as well as new initiatives such as increased links with parents and the local community.
79. Governors were rightly prudent in allocating funds as the budget and spending trends have been much altered by the loss of the Special Needs unit as from September 2000, but the high carryover of funds is an area for review. A useful strategy has been the continued funding, supported by Education Action Zone monies, of a higher than average number of classroom assistants to provide teaching support and closer attention for lower attaining pupils. These assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' academic and personal progress. The management of special educational needs is sound. The school's approach is well organised and designated funds are used appropriately. Support staff are well deployed to meet pupils' special educational needs, although higher attaining pupils, also included in the special needs policy, do not always receive a similar level of support.
80. Although governors make good use of information from the headteacher to evaluate the school's work, they lack procedures to evaluate critically the effectiveness of their decisions and to hold the headteacher and other key members of staff to full account. The headteacher seeks the best value from funding and initiatives. She helps staff and governors to compare the school with similar schools, but not enough is done to ensure that governors and staff use all available information to best advantage in deciding the school's priorities. This is particularly important as the school's free school meal percentage places it on the cusp of two benchmark groups and the loss of one or two pupils could significantly affect the standards the school needs to attain.
81. Given the level of funding, the pupils' good progress over time, the good standards at Key Stage 1 and rising standards at Key Stage 2, where they are in line with most similar schools, the strengths in teaching, especially in the reception class and at Key Stage 1, and the overall good level of care and welfare, the school gives good value for money.

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

82. In order to continue the programme of school improvement, the governors, headteacher and staff should :
  - Raise standards at Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics, science and religious education by :
    - a. ensuring that pupils build on their Key Stage 1 attainment and continue to make good progress in each year group;
    - b. improving the quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 2, to that of the best in the school by ensuring a continuing challenge for all pupils but most especially the higher attaining ones, by sharing good practice and by identifying more clearly the elements of effective teaching in each subject.

(paragraphs 3-5, 8-10, 27, 32-34, 37, 102-109, 116, 120, 124, 128, 165)

- Ensure that all pupils have frequent and regular opportunities across the curriculum to develop their skills in finding and using information; and through solving problems, particularly in mathematics and science, are encouraged and helped to make decisions about what to do, how to do it, how to record it and how to evaluate it.  
(paragraphs 8, 83, 93, 120, 125)
- Strengthen the critical use of available information so that governors, senior managers and subject coordinators are clear about not only what they have to do to achieve the school's priorities but also how they can play an effective role in evaluating the success of the action taken.  
(paragraphs 70, 80, 123)
- Raise standards of attendance by monitoring even more closely pupils' absence and by continuing to raise parents' awareness of the importance of attendance in their child's progress and attainment.  
(paragraphs 24, 58)
- Ensure that parents of pupils with special educational needs are given more opportunities to discuss the content of their child's individual education plan and are shown how they may help.  
(paragraph 62)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	43	48	2	0	0

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons  
The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding up. .*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	226
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	69

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	40

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### **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.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	19
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	31	32	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (n/a)	94(n/a)	100(n/a)
	National	84(82)	85(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	19	15
	Girls	15	15	13
	Total	31	34	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91(n/a)	100(n/a)	82(n/a)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	10
	Girls	8	7	11
	Total	16	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62(n/a)	65(n/a)	81(n/a)
	National	75 (70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	10	10
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	14	18	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54(n/a)	69(n/a)	73(n/a)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	80(75)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	226
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	28.7

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	157.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
--------------------------------	---

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	600172
Total expenditure	590049
Expenditure per pupil	2193
Balance brought forward from previous year	63506
Balance carried forward to next year	73629

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	213
Number of questionnaires returned	53

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	21	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	32	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	34	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	81	17	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	32	2	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	17	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	21	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	68	30	0	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	81	17	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	25	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	38	6	0	4

### **Other issues raised by parents**

The way the school had kept parents fully informed about removal dates and arrangements.

## **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**

83. Twenty six children currently attend the morning nursery session. When they start, assessment evidence indicates that most show knowledge, skills and understanding lower than expected for their age. They make sound progress and by the time they join the reception class in September, their attainment is closer but still lower than that expected in all areas of learning. In the reception class, the pupils make good progress because of the good teaching and the good quality of provision in all six areas of learning. Although the nursery and reception teachers plan together and follow similar themes, such as “Toys” and “Bears”, the provision in the nursery is not as exciting or as rich as that for the reception children. The nursery activities change day to day but there is little to catch and foster the children’s interest or to encourage them to observe, investigate and explore. There are strengths in the teaching in the nursery sessions, but the overall quality of the teaching and support is not as high as in the reception class. This limits the pace of the children’s progress and the quality of their experience, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and also in creative development. In the reception class, the good quality support of the classroom assistants helps pupils with special needs to play a full part in class life and to make at least satisfactory progress.

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

84. By the end of the reception year, most of the children will have achieved the early learning goals in this area of learning.
85. In the nursery, the children make sound progress but not enough is done to plan and organise the nursery to foster particular skills, such as cooperating with others. Although routines are established, such as having snacks together, their potential is not exploited fully to promote social skills and increase individual independence and maturity. The teacher and nursery nurse most often give out items the children are to use in adult led and free choice sessions. The children know where things are kept and tidy up as asked but little has been done, such as using open shelving and labelled containers, to enable the children to organise things themselves. They sit quietly, wait for the teacher and usually behave well even when the pace is slow. Occasionally, the adults expect too much of the children in sitting still for long periods and tend to chastise them unjustifiably for being inattentive. Most children take care of their own personal needs, but the fixing of coat hooks well above the children’s reach in the nursery cloakroom thwarts their efforts to get their own outdoor clothes.
86. In the reception class, the children make good progress as the teacher and classroom assistant have high expectations that the children will be as independent as possible. The good teamwork between teacher and other adults ensures that individuals who find it hard to control themselves, especially in large group situations, are well supported. Occasions such as music and story times are used very effectively to reward small steps in personal development. The reception classroom is well organised to allow the children to get what they need and the children confidently and independently make use

of the available resources and items on display. The teacher is skilled in managing the children and giving them opportunities to talk about how they feel. Her smiling, warm and accepting approach draws out the children and as a result, they are willing to try new things. The children show a mature, positive attitude to learning, get on well with each other, help one another and politely ask for what they need.

### **Communications, language and literacy**

87. The children make good progress over time due to strengths in the teaching and provision. By the end of the reception year most have attained all the early learning goals and a significant number are working towards Level 1 in reading and writing.
88. While some children are fluent, ready talkers, others in the nursery speak indistinctly and say little, especially when the whole class is together. In both the reception and nursery classes, the adults work hard to widen the children's vocabulary by introducing new words. The nursery teacher's use of "ambulance" encouraged one child to try the word after using "neenaw" on seeing a toy version. As part of activities, the adults discuss what is happening in a mature way. Because they question the children, discuss ideas and use relevant terms such as "author" as part of talking about books, the children in turn ask questions and use similar words.
89. The children get off to a good start in reading and writing because of the good emphasis in the nursery on looking at books and using the writing table. Parents willingly take home storybook packs and those parents who help in school play an important role in talking with the children and in reading to them. As a result, the children listen attentively to stories, join in rhymes and have a go at writing. They recognise their names and are beginning to identify some letters. The teacher's use of a "magic bag" caught the children's interest in labelling objects all beginning with the sound "a" and in writing letter "a" in the air.
90. In the reception class, the children make good progress in developing early reading and writing skills due to good, explicit teaching. Many have made good progress and are already writing sentences and reading independently. Some children, more boys than girls, are slower to read and write but enjoy books and willingly chat about the pictures. All know letters of the alphabet and recognise words. One girl excitedly pointed out "we" in "web" and "me" in "home". The children respond positively to suggestions like writing a letter to "Little Bear" as part of the displayed collection of Jane Hissey stories.

### **Mathematical development**

91. By the end of the reception year, the children's attainment will be at least in line with that expected for their age due to the emphasis on counting, sorting and classifying in both the nursery and the reception class. Good use is made of "The toy shop" in the reception class, and everyday routines, such as registration, to count and talk about numbers. Sound teaching and daily sessions of chanting number rhymes and counting are ensuring that the nursery children make satisfactory progress. They count to five independently, and higher with adult help, differentiate between sizes of teddy bear

such as “big”, “little” and “bigger than”, recognise different shapes and make their own simple repeating patterns.

92. Very good teaching is boosting the progress of the reception children who are beginning to record their work and to see readily the relationship between numbers such as five and five making ten. The children find mathematics fun as so much is done through games and exciting problems. The class was totally absorbed throughout a 45 minute period in the hall in activities which involved counting, checking, deciding how many more were needed, and recording their scores in hitting/missing the target ring when throwing bean bags. “Oh a miss... another miss...now I’ve got one in” from one boy was followed by him checking how his partner was recording the results. The teacher’s sharing of how she used tally marks, her encouragement through comments like “You decide – do it your own way”, and the setting of more challenging targets for the higher attaining children, meant all the children made very good progress in using and talking about numbers.

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

93. The children are interested in the world around them and curious about new things. They are gaining a developing understanding of their own culture and things that happen. The nursery children were very keen to plant apple pips and got much pleasure from spooning compost into pots. The reception children made good progress in recognising that the air moves windmills and causes balloons to inflate, but the activities were largely supervised and controlled by adults and the children had no opportunity to repeat their investigations or to try different conditions. While the children make sound progress overall and most are on line to reach the expected standard by the end of the reception year, the “one-off” nature of these experiences weakens the quality and some children do not achieve as much as they could. Higher attaining children are not always challenged enough to apply what they already know, whereas there are other children who need even more time to grasp the basic ideas. This was evident in the responses of the children when talking about toys and how they move, as well as what might happen.
94. The children develop a sound understanding of time and place through daily routines such as looking at the weather. Nursery children know that different things make people feel sad, and reception children know how to use simple symbols such as a tree to represent features of the landscape. They make best progress when adults discuss things with them and direct their attention to new features. This was seen to good effect when a parent helped a small group of nursery children to label the stalk, pips and skin when looking at and then drawing the inside of an apple.
95. Daily activities ensure the children make sound progress in using tools and different techniques. The nursery children use scissors, pens, glue spreaders and the computer mouse with developing competency. The reception children know to click on different icons to move onto a new page in their “talking stories” as well as to produce their own simple pictures. In making bags to carry toys, they showed an awareness of how to fold and fix paper using different techniques such as staples and tape.

### **Physical development**

96. By the end of the reception year, the children have met and in many cases exceeded the standard expected. Most are well coordinated and confident in handling items and

moving around. Daily sessions outdoors as well as lessons in the hall promote the steady development of the children's physical skills, although the school has some way to go to ensure that the children experience variety and increasing challenge. At the time of the inspection, the daily period outdoors for the nursery children was more of an opportunity to run around and have a go on the wheeled toys rather than a well-planned session to promote particular skill development. The staff have yet to develop the potential of the area and to their roles in working with the children.

97. The nursery children pedal, steer and manoeuvre the tricycles and trailers with ease. They roll balls to one another and show a developing eye for aim. The children are quick to lose concentration when the session lacks focus. In one hall-based lesson, the pace was too slow and the task too easy for the children to acquire new skills. The reception teacher's lively style and high expectations of their performance ensured that all the children made good progress in linking and controlling different ways of moving over and around a mat.

### **Creative development**

98. Although there are strengths in the provision, the children have limited opportunities to develop their creative skills. The children make satisfactory progress overall and most are on line to reach the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Chances are missed to build on and fire the children's enthusiasm and to use this area of learning as a means of developing other areas, especially personal, social and emotional development.
99. Neither the nursery nor the reception class has an established, well-resourced art/craft area to allow the children to choose their own focus or to repeat and practice techniques and skills. In sessions when adults lead particular activities, such as rolling an apple in paint, the children do well in exploring textures and combining colours. Children in the reception class benefit from their teacher being the art coordinator. Her very good teaching ensures they get off to a good start in acquiring skills and working with different media. The children's observational drawings of toys and their work in the style of Paul Klee was of a high standard because of the explicit teaching and the encouragement to try things out.
100. Imaginative play areas are well resourced. The children like "The toy shop" and "The Bears' cave" but too often, the children play on their own and the quality of their imaginative play stays at a basic level. Similarly, when playing with the train and construction sets, the children tend to repeat the same themes unless an adult extends their ideas.
101. In music, the children make steady progress in playing instruments and singing. Nursery children recognised castanets and maracas from their sounds but made insufficient progress in keeping a steady beat as neither the teacher nor the nursery nurse took the lead in showing the children what was expected of them. In contrast, the reception class staff showed the children how to listen carefully and how to clap and play percussion instruments.

## ENGLISH

102. As reported in the previous inspections, standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. In the national tests in 2000, the school's Key Stage 1 results were in line with the national average in reading and writing, but well below in the end of Key Stage 2 English tests.
103. Inspection evidence shows that Year 2 pupils are broadly attaining the level expected for their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Many do better than this in reading but few in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, not enough pupils reach the level expected for their age especially in writing. Although there are twice as many boys as girls in Year 6, and nationally boys do not do as well as girls in English, there was no evidence of a significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Year 6 pupils' attainment in listening, speaking and reading is broadly average. In writing, just over half the year group is in line to attain Level 4, the level expected of eleven year olds, but very little writing typifies the higher Level 5. Additional sessions led by the English coordinator are planned to help pupils raise their attainment.
104. As at Key Stage 1, the lack of high attainment is because higher attaining pupils are not provided with enough challenge or taught explicitly how to raise the quality of their work. An analysis of work since September and work in lessons shows that pupils are given good opportunities to write for a range of purposes but pupils, especially at Key Stage 2, have few chances to produce consistently good quality, longer pieces of work in which ideas and vocabulary are used with increasing levels of complexity year on year. Although some teachers have high expectations of presentation and handwriting, this is not consistent across the school and results in standards that are below expectations. This is especially so in Years 3 and 4 where the majority of pupils do not yet use joined up writing. Older pupils' handwriting is inconsistent in style and a significant number lack fluency. Standards in spelling are good. Pupils' spellings show a good level of accuracy and the majority use well-established spelling strategies.
105. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. Pupils are often encouraged to contribute to class discussions and to explain what they know and understand. Most listen attentively, are keen to respond and give sensible and thoughtful answers to teachers' questions. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are confident speakers, well able to express their ideas and opinions, and who are beginning to use the correct technical vocabulary when talking about writing. By Year 6, most pupils listen attentively to their teacher and other adults. They do not always however, listen as attentively to each other and few show well-established skills in questioning others' ideas or justifying their opinions and views. This is partly because the teachers rarely include opportunities for debate in their lesson planning across the curriculum. When Year 4 pupils talked to the teacher about places special to them, many pupils' immaturity showed in their inattention.
106. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in reading. They get off to a good start in the reception class and parents support their progress by hearing them read regularly at home. By the age of seven, most have developed an interest in books and reading, and use their reading skills effectively when tackling a range of texts across the curriculum. Pupils enjoy the humour in their reading books and the majority read accurately and

with developing fluency and expression. Higher attaining readers demonstrate a good understanding of events in the story and are learning that writing sometimes contains hidden ideas. They know that the contents and index pages in non-fiction books help them to find information but they are not as confident or competent in reading non-fiction text.

107. Pupils continue to make at least satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. By Year 6, the majority of pupils are in line to reach the expected Level 4 for their age and a few have already attained Level 5. Many are self-motivated readers with favourite authors and books such as the Harry Potter series. Pupils read a range of fiction and non-fiction books and are confident, accurate and fluent readers. Their use of expression shows developing skills in working out why characters behave in a certain way and what might happen in a story. A small number of pupils respond to opinions in the text and explain their reasoning by referring to events or phrases. They know how and where to find information in books, and higher attaining pupils read and understand information quickly and efficiently. All pupils are less skilled in selecting key information, collating information from different sources and summarising it in their own words.
108. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about different types and forms of writing as part of work on different themes and topics. They write stories, reports, labels, instructions and poetry and learn how to punctuate sentences and spell simple words correctly. A key skill is the way the teachers reminds pupils of what they know. The teacher's retort of "Come on, that's one of our sl- blends" led to two Year 1 pupils spelling "slip" independently. Year 2 pupils make good progress in planning and drafting their work because of very effective teaching. In one lesson, pupils assisted the teacher as she thought out loud while drafting the opening to a story. Comments such as "I need describing words for this cellar" prompted a list of suitable adjectives from the pupils with an intuitive awareness of the effect of alliteration in wanting the teacher to use "deep" and "dark". By Year 2, pupils are willing writers who write in correctly punctuated sentences. Higher attaining pupils also use question and exclamation marks accurately and are beginning to include speech.
109. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their understanding of the features of different writing types but achievements vary. Although they are below those expected for pupils' ages in Years 4 and 6, they are broadly in line with national expectations for Years 3 and 5. This reflects the different attainment profiles of year groups but also the differing rate of progress made in current and previous years. Pupils in all year groups are provided with opportunities to write for a range of reasons. Year 5 pupils wrote convincing explanations of why the red dragon became the emblem of Wales. A common weakness in all year groups is the brevity of pupils' writing. Too often the teachers indicate that pupils can finish work later and as a result, pupils take their time and occasionally, especially at Year 6, pupils have merely done a few lines of their own work by the end of the allocated time.
110. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. This broadly reflects the judgements made in the last inspections. The Year 2 pupils benefit from the good teaching of the coordinator who provides a good model for others. In all classes, the support of classroom assistants and their work with small groups ensures

that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils' progress often slows when they work independently.

111. The Key Stage 1 teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use relevant terms with pupils. They share the purpose of lessons with the pupils and make good use of class time at the end of the lesson to check what pupils have learned and to give them opportunities to talk about what they have achieved. A good feature is the clarity of the teachers' explanations and the way in which they show pupils how to apply what they know. The teacher's commentary about the letters down the side of the page, letter "A" being at the start of the alphabet and "D" coming close to the start, helped Year 1 pupils to realise how they could find "adventure" in the dictionary. The teachers' good monitoring of what each group is doing and their encouragement to pupils to have a try, encourages pupils to be attentive. The good use of dramatic expression and phrasing by the teachers when they read aloud to the class is reflected in the pupils' good oral reading style.
112. Teaching at Key Stage 2 has several but fewer consistent strengths. The teachers manage the pupils well and this promotes good relationships in all classes. The marking of pupils' work often includes good points on how pupils might improve. The teachers plan lessons conscientiously and choose texts that interest the boys and the girls. By blanking out rhyming words, the teacher kept the Year 6 pupils' attention and their involvement in suggesting what the missing words might be. In all classes, the teachers make effective use of the skills of the learning support staff to give pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils closer attention. Too often however, this is work that the pupils can only complete with adult support. In contrast, the higher attaining pupils usually work unaided but the work does not always challenge them enough. The prevalent use of the interactive whiteboard in the Year 5 class is dictating a formal style of class teaching and limits opportunities for a more flexible approach to lesson organisation.
113. In all classes, the teachers follow the principles of the National Literacy Strategy in daily literacy hours and make effective use of additional periods to hear pupils read. Good links are sometimes made with other subjects to develop and apply writing and reading skills learnt in literacy hours. A good example is the play scripts written by Year 3 pupils in religious education. Pupils are also developing their reading and word processing skills when using the computers as part of work in other subjects.
114. Good assessment procedures are in place. The school uses a range of reading tests and assessments throughout the year to track pupils' attainment and progress. The teachers use such information and lesson evaluations well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and to identify groups for additional support.
115. The co-ordinator provides very good, effective leadership. From her monitoring of planning and analysis of pupils' work, she has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve provision and to raise standards at Key Stage 2. Recent changes in practice are bringing greater consistency between Key Stages 1 and 2 but there are insufficient opportunities for the coordinator to regularly evaluate the quality and consistency of teaching and standards throughout the school. The good collection of quality literature adds much not only to pupils' progress in reading but also to their personal development. The two library areas have yet to be organised as a resource for research and personal reading. The development of these facilities is rightly part of the action plan.



## MATHEMATICS

116. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2, as reported in the previous inspections. In the 2000 national tests, the school's Key Stage 1 results were well above the national average but the Key Stage 2 results were well below.
117. Good teaching at Key Stage 1 ensures that pupils make good progress particularly in number, as the teachers make good use of opportunities day to day across the curriculum to reinforce the pupils' awareness of number. A good example is the simple database recording the different ways Year 2 pupils travel to school. Good progress continues at lower Key Stage 2 where much good teaching is extending pupils' secure understanding of number. The attainment of Year 5 and 6 pupils is below that expected for their age. Booster classes are helping some Year 6 pupils to raise their attainment and strengths in teaching, especially in Year 5, are helping to close the gaps in pupils' learning from previous years.
118. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at Key Stage 1 as the teachers give well structured lessons which keep the pupils' interest high through changes in pace and focus. The teachers convey enthusiasm for number and use resources well, such as number cards and a big abacus, to show pupils the relationship between numbers. As a result, the pupils are interested and most make connections easily. Many Year 1 pupils are recording formally simple calculations in adding and subtracting. Lower attaining Year 1 pupils still need a lot of support from the teacher or classroom assistant to recognise and write numbers. They benefit from the close attention of an adult when working in a small group and the repetition of procedures such as counting and adding on. Many Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of place value and sequence correctly numbers to a hundred. In one lesson, the teacher's dialogue with a monkey on a string motivated the pupils to set a good pace in counting in tens and then to add or subtract ten accurately from a given number on a 100 number square.
119. Pupils' learning at Key Stage 2 builds on this good foundation and many make good progress in lessons because of good teaching with an emphasis on practical experiences. In Year 3, most pupils are rounding up and down three digit numbers to the nearest 100 and know that numbers ending in five are rounded up to the nearest ten. By Year 4, pupils know their multiplication tables to eight and are familiar with a range of mathematical terms. They are beginning to have confidence in using their own strategies to solve problems because of the teachers' encouragement and evident expectation that pupils will work things out for themselves. Year 5 pupils made good progress in classifying shapes by their properties and explaining their reasoning in session where pupils questioned one pupil about a hidden shape.
120. Year 6 pupils are making satisfactory progress in lessons but many are attaining levels more typical of pupils a year or two younger. A weakness is the pupils' lack of strategies to solve problems and their high reliance on adults to help them out. Most are secure in using the four operations on number to 100 but few deal accurately with higher numbers. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use decimal notation. While they calculate fractions and percentages of quantities with a good degree of accuracy, other pupils are less secure in procedures and knowledge. In shape, space and measures, most pupils recognise and name common two- and three-dimensional shapes

but only the higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of angles. Similarly, most pupils communicate effectively the findings of simple surveys of, for example, characteristics of the class, in pie graphs and bar charts.

121. Overall standards in numeracy are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is consistency in the teaching approach at Key Stages 1 and 2 and teaching is generally good. A common and effective facet is the way the teachers make mathematics fun through using practical apparatus and by changing the activity. The pupils are interested and enjoy the sessions. Lessons begin with clear explanations of what is to be done; the teachers review and remind pupils of previous learning. The short session of quick-fire questions and use of small whiteboards to record pupils' answers got a Year 6 lesson on angles off to a brisk start. Similarly, Year 3 pupils got much enjoyment out of rolling two giant number dice, while Year 4 pupils were quick to show their answers to mental number problems by using number fans.
122. The teachers use effective techniques to assess each pupil's attainment and to set work at an appropriate level of difficulty in the group sessions. The teachers work well with classroom assistants to plan for and support those pupils with special educational needs, and use their knowledge of the class, such as rewarding a pupil by giving time on the class computer to reinforce basic number skills. These approaches mean that most pupils develop a broad and secure understanding of mathematical concepts. The teachers often make good use of questions and humour to enthuse, motivate and inform the pupils.
123. The coordination of mathematics is sound. The school has made good use of advice from the LEA advisory teacher to increase the teachers' confidence in teaching mathematics. The coordinator has a sound awareness of what is being taught through his monitoring of curriculum planning and teaching. The analysis of pupils' performance in tests and in class to pinpoint where there are gaps in learning and in teaching, is less rigorous

## **SCIENCE**

124. Standards are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Standards have been sustained since the previous inspection of the Infant School. In 2000, teacher assessment placed four out of five Year 2 pupils at the level expected for their age, well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards are slightly better. Standards have improved at Key Stage 2 since the 1997 inspection, but the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is not as high as that of the previous year group. Four out of five Year 6 pupils attained Level 4 in the 2000 national tests. Similarly.
125. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good consistent progress because of the good teaching and high emphasis on investigation. As a result, the pupils learn to predict, explore and record their findings in drawings, diagrams and simple reports. Progress at Key Stage 2 is less consistent, although there is a common emphasis on developing pupils' practical skills. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but varies as the teachers are more confident in teaching pupils facts than in showing them how to carry out scientific studies. Consequently, Year 6 pupils' scientific knowledge is generally close to that expected for their age but their skills in planning and carrying out their own investigations are less so.



126. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils attain at least the level expected for their age in all aspects of science. Many do particularly well in the “Life and living processes” aspect. They learn to observe and to compare and contrast. Year 1 pupils classified materials according to their texture and Year 2 pupils built on this by identifying properties such as rigidity. In recording the changes when a candle was lit, higher attaining pupils not only produced detailed diagrams but also wrote detailed descriptive accounts. Comments such as “the wax drips because the flame melts the wax” show developing awareness of cause and effect. In an effective lesson following a talk about electricity by a scientist from British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, pupils made good progress in making an electrical circuit and lighting bulbs. They were excited and enthralled by this challenge and worked cooperatively in pairs to affix terminals and test out their predictions. Their confidence was high following the initial part of the lesson, when their understanding of a closed circuit and what happens when there is a break was much enhanced by the teacher’s use of pupils to hold hands and pass on “the squeeze”.
127. In a series of lessons, the use of drama was similarly effective in helping Year 5 pupils to understand what happens to the heart and lungs when individuals take exercise. The teacher’s reference to the drama and her use of relevant terms such as “deoxygenated blood” and “air sacs” extended the pupils’ knowledge and awareness of the circulation of the blood. Good questioning and comments such as “Who thinks they can help him out?” ensured that pupils put into their own words what they understood and showed a better grasp of related concepts than might be expected for their age.
128. Year 6 pupils find it hard to recall key vocabulary and to explain scientific processes clearly. After two lessons, they remembered the names of parts of a flower but showed only rudimentary knowledge of the process of pollination unless prompted. This also typifies lessons for younger Key Stage 2 pupils. Year 3 and 4 pupils made satisfactory progress in learning the names of different food types but the lack of “Why?” and “How do you know?” type questions limited pupils’ use and application of what they had found out. This was a particular concern, as higher attaining Year 3 pupils had conscientiously looked in reference books for related information but had often merely copied sections that they did not always understand fully.
129. At both key stages, the teachers’ pairing of pupils to talk and carry out tasks ensures that pupils with special educational needs often make good progress and higher attaining pupils have the chance to try out their own ideas. However, the teachers do not always challenge the higher attaining pupils enough. This accounts in large part for why so few pupils achieve a higher level than expected for their age.
130. The management of science is satisfactory. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and learning has been curtailed by the absence of the coordinator. The deputy headteacher is keeping a “watching brief” on planning and ensuring that the school fulfils all National Curriculum requirements. The school has linked topics to national guidance and has increased resources to allow class investigations.

## ART AND DESIGN

131. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in art and design is above expectations for seven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were similar to those seen in other schools. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are in line with national expectations. The work of Key Stage 2 pupils who are members of the school art club is of a good standard.
132. Pupils' drawings, paintings and prints are attractively displayed throughout the school. This enhances the environment and demonstrates the value the school places on pupils' work. Much good work has been brought from the old school to set the standard in the new. High quality, Year 2 multi-media work depicting 'Guardian Angels' is displayed throughout the school, while recent well-executed two- and three-dimensional work, done by art club members in the style of Patrick Caulfield, catches the eye in the school entrance. Pupils enjoy art and design and are proud of their work. Art and design makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
133. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 results in the pupils making good progress in skills, techniques and use of different media, particularly in combining media. In one lesson, Year 1 pupils selected different materials to weave through netting to make butterfly wings, while others used pencils to shade and line when drawing peppers from observation, printed in the style of Jasper John, and used their finger-tips to produce work based on Pointillism. By Year 2, pupils confidently use different printing types to create a layered effect.
134. Progress slows at Key Stage 2 as the teaching, although satisfactory overall, is not as effective in helping the pupils to maintain good standards. By the end of the key stage, pupils demonstrate skills that are broadly similar to those seen in other schools but few show a well-developed eye for detail when drawing from observation, or knowledge about artists and their work. When Year 6 pupils moulded clay, their work was more typical of younger pupils. Year 3 pupils are building on the skills acquired at Key Stage 1, and during the inspection, the teacher was well supported by a visitor who taught pupils well how to produce relief prints using polystyrene. Other pupils learnt how to explore elements of shape and form by continuing the patterns in wallpaper samples in their sketch-books. They knew they were working in a similar way to William Morris, who derived his inspiration from nature. Pupils respond well to the adults' encouragement to experiment and try again if not satisfied with their first attempts. Pupils in Year 4 do not achieve as well as expected of pupils of their age. In the lesson observed on drawing Tudor houses, insufficient guidance on the importance of dimension resulted in some poorly proportioned drawings.
135. The best teaching incorporates good skills instruction, a range of interesting activities and opportunities for pupils to make decisions about which materials they are going to use. Where teaching is not as effective, pupils have insufficient choice to enable them to work independently. In some of the lessons observed, there was a lack of distinction between art and design and design and technology.

136. The co-ordinator for the subject provides very effective leadership. She has used her good knowledge to draw up the long- and medium-term planning for both key stages. This provides a good framework for continuity in learning. All teachers keep records of pupils' attainment and progress. The central work areas have good natural lighting for art and design work. Resources are satisfactory although there is limited software to support art and design work using ICT equipment.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

137. No lessons were seen in design and technology as the inspection did not coincide with a block of time when the school studies the subject. Based on work completed in the autumn term, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is similar to that found in most schools. This reflects the judgement made in the previous inspection of the Infant school. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. Discussions with pupils from Year 6 indicate they have very limited knowledge and understanding of the design process of planning, designing, making and evaluating. Observations of some art and design lessons indicate considerable overlap between art and design and design and technology. The distinctive nature of design and technology appears to have been blurred, especially for Key Stage 2 pupils. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching at either key stage.
138. The work done by Year 2 pupils to produce Joseph's coat of many colours shows pupils' sound ability to design and to plan using their knowledge of materials and tools. Pictures and labels explain their design details and choice of tools. Their work indicates that they are learning how to evaluate their work through suggesting ways to improve it. This also indicates good links with the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills as well as the use and application of literacy and numeracy skills.
139. A recently updated policy provides a satisfactory framework for curriculum planning. The most recent national guidelines have been adapted to the school's needs. This ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study are addressed and that learning is progressive as the pupils move from year to year. As the coordinator plans all the work for Key Stage 1 this gives her a good overview of the curriculum and also of pupils' progress. Opportunities are more limited to evaluate standards and the quality of teaching, and to ensure the planned programme of study is fully addressed at Key Stage 2.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

140. No lessons in geography were seen. As no previous work was available, it is not possible to make a judgement on standards, the quality of teaching or the quality of learning.
141. The geography curriculum follows national guidelines. Pupils' skills develop from drawing and interpreting simple plans of their way to school to compiling and using maps with symbols. They look at and find out about their own environment and compare it with other areas. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have also studied different geographical features such as the water cycle. The building of the new school has given pupils the chance to study changes in land use and to look at ways they can improve the environment.



142. The absence of the coordinator has curtailed the development of the subject, particularly the monitoring of the quality of provision. The headteacher is aware of the shortage of materials and resources, including reference books, to support teaching and learning and has plans to address it.

## **HISTORY**

143. Standards are satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils' attainment is as expected for their age at the end of both key stages. Pupils' knowledge about people and periods in history is more secure at Key Stage 2 than their skills in finding out about them. This reflects weaknesses in their skills in selecting and using information. An effective aspect of the provision is the use of visits to places of interest such as Erddig Hall which helps to bring history alive, especially for the younger pupils.
144. By Year 2, pupils have a basic knowledge of significant historical events such as the Great Fire of London. They learn about people prominent at the time and gain an understanding of the value of subjective eye-witness accounts through studying the diaries of Pepys and Evelyn. Through looking at artefacts, the pupils learn to make simple observations and to suggest how life has changed, as in comparing toys from earlier and present times. In a lesson for Year 1 pupils, the teacher used successfully the story of "Winnie-the-Pooh" and a tiny family teddy bear to intrigue the pupils and to help them understand the passing of time. The teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs take full part in recording what they have found out by providing support sheets.
145. Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about different historical periods and by Year 6, pupils have a basic knowledge of life styles and events in the past. They know some of the significant detail of the lives of figures such as Nelson Mandela, Einstein and The Beatles. They have visited local places of interest and studied the history of Great Sutton. They know how to make sound use of a range of sources, including the Internet, to carry out their own research. Pupils show a tendency however, merely to copy what they find in an indiscriminating way.
146. The teaching of history is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers' planning follows national guidelines and provides consistency in teaching. The teachers make good use of visits and visitors such as the Jewish man talking about life during World War II. Similarly, effective use is made of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills. Year 6 pupils wrote sympathetically on how life must have been for immigrants in the 1950s.
147. The deputy headteacher is leading the subject in the long-term absence of the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator and there is a co-ordinator in place at Key Stage 1. They have been instrumental in organising visits as part of the history curriculum as well as overseeing the introduction of the scheme of work.

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

148. Standards are satisfactory. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, most pupils attain the level expected for their age. This is a substantial improvement compared with the standards noted in the Junior School report when standards were judged to be below the national expectation. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. This is largely due to the frequent timetabled lessons when they use the computers in the ICT suite and also because of the good quality teaching of specific skills in using the keyboard and functions on screen.

149. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in realising the use of ICT equipment and its purposes. They discuss the uses of computers in the world about them, particularly the ways in which supermarkets use sensors at checkouts. All pupils have the chance to control the movement of a robotic vehicle around the floor. The majority attain sound standards in using simple commands to make the vehicle move in the direction they want. Year 1 pupils make good progress in becoming aware of the basic components of computer systems. They develop basic desktop publishing skills when they combine their names and drawings of their faces on screen.
150. Year 2 pupils have quickly learnt how to log on, find a program and use the mouse to click on icons, drag and drop information. They are steadily developing keyboard skills in simple word processing sessions. They demonstrate sound skills when they create graphics and add text to them, such as their wall charts to show the different ways they come to school. In one effective lesson, they successfully worked with a simulation model to choose icons from a bank of food and drink and compile a healthy meal. The teacher skilfully helped them to see the links with literacy and numeracy by encouraging them to discuss and justify their choices of food and to total up the cost of the meal.
151. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are making good progress and many are quickly making up for lost time in previous years. Those who have computers at home often tutor others in how to use different functions and how to solve problems. Year 5 pupils achieved satisfactory standards in constructing a class database. They were well motivated and their teacher's firm but clear insistence on all following the same steps ensured that everybody was familiar records and fields as part of their database. Several began to interrogate the information to produce charts of particular aspects, including the proportion of the class having blue eyes. The teacher's encouragement through questions and sensible interventions resulted in all making good progress at a pace suited to them.
152. Though the older pupils have not yet had the opportunity to work with new software to develop control technology skills, this is planned to take place later in the year and will ensure that Year 6 pupils have experienced all aspects of the ICT National Curriculum. Year 6 pupils are making good progress in using ICT to present work in other subjects. Their individual folders on transport since World War II show at least basic competence in combining text and graphics, and in using a range of word processing functions. Pupils also know how to search the Internet and CD Roms but they are less skilled in selecting and using downloaded material. Too much is merely "cut and paste".
153. The teaching observed in the ICT suite was good for Year 2 and 5 pupils. The teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using the networked programs. Their subject knowledge is generally good and they plan well for lessons in the ICT suite using themes and elements in other subjects as the basis, such as Year 6 pupils researching times past. Strengths in the teaching are clear instructions and good organisation of groups and pairs of pupils to support each other. As the pupils enjoy their time in the suite, they behave well and little time is wasted.
154. In classrooms, especially at Key Stage 2, the computers are not always used even when appropriate. Year 6 pupils benefit from support from their teacher in compiling work on screen. Few teachers have prepared texts on screen for pupils to use, even when they have compiled worksheets.

155. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator has done much in a short time to establish the use of the computer suite and to ensure that provision is monitored and pupils' progress is recorded. She is enthusiastic and provides a good model of teaching. In most lessons, the co-ordinator makes good use of the electronic whiteboard in her classroom to show pupils how the functions create different effects.

## MUSIC

156. Standards are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, but too few lessons were seen at Key Stage 2 to allow a judgement to be made on overall standards at the end of the key stage. In the 1997 inspection of the Junior School, standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then provision has been strengthened. The teachers have observed lessons given by the LEA adviser for music and benefited from the support of the co-ordinator who plans all lessons at Key Stage 2. In assemblies, Key Stage 2 pupils sang tunefully with more sweetness of tone than Key Stage 1 pupils, who often forced their singing.
157. Pupils learn to listen to music and to sing from memory a variety of songs and hymns in assemblies and lessons. Year 1 pupils remembered well the tune, words and actions for a Purim celebration song learnt in a previous lesson, and Year 2 pupils tried valiantly to keep up with the fast tempo of a new song. Pupils also develop an awareness of the links between music and what it might represent. Year 3 pupils picked out descriptive words and phrases from a Russian song about Baba Yaga and a few pupils related events and personal characteristics to musical runs and changes in tempo. Such insights develop well when the teachers allow the pupils to try things out for themselves. The use of chime bars and repeated playing by different groups of pupils while the others clapped not only meant that all Year 1 pupils got a turn to accompany the singing of "Why don't we" but also ensured that all made good progress in keeping a steady beat. The teacher and the classroom assistant worked in tandem to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were involved and as a result all had fun and the lesson moved at a brisk pace.
158. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. The teachers are trying different locations to hold music lessons and at present, classes are using the nursery although most resources are housed in other parts of the school. Time is lost as pupils move from their classrooms and in two of the lessons seen, pupils' use of musical instruments was too brief to allow them to make progress. The pupils enjoy music and their eagerness to perform often means they handle and play instruments when they have expressly been told not to. This lack of appropriate behaviour slows the pace of lessons.
159. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The coordinator is monitoring the development of the music scheme that has recently been extended to cover Key Stage 2 as well as Key Stage 1, but she has not yet monitored the quality of teaching. She is conscious of the need to re-establish music in the curriculum - many resources have still be unpacked and extra curricular activities such as the choir and recorder group have not been restarted after the move to the new building.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

160. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils make satisfactory progress due to sound teaching. This sustains the satisfactory standards reported in the inspections of the Infant and Junior schools. The good provision for swimming - all pupils from Year 3 onwards attend the local baths for lessons - ensures that most pupils learn to swim. Seventy per cent of Year 6 pupils already swim 25 metres and the others have the opportunity to achieve this length later in the year.
161. By Year 2, pupils have a sound awareness of space and run safely around the hall, varying pace and direction. From an early age, pupils learn the importance of warming up their muscles and that exercise is “getting your blood to run faster”. They recall movements from previous weeks' lessons and perform them with satisfactory control. In a good lesson, Year 1 pupils successfully used different movements to represent the characters in “The Three Billy Goats Gruff”. The teacher’s quick pace and firm control of the pupils’ exuberance ensured that all made good progress in following instructions to move in different ways.
162. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their skills in moving to music, playing team games and using gymnastics apparatus. By Year 5, pupils show sound co-ordination and skill when they use a hockey stick to navigate obstacles at speed. Year 5 and 6 pupils demonstrate a good level of competitive spirit. This stimulates them to try hard in acquiring the skills to play team games such as netball. Most pupils behave well in lessons and often offer their own ideas. The teachers keep up a brisk pace and in one lesson, the classroom assistant’s expertise in netball was used well to coach pupils and to take them through training exercises. In a gymnastics lesson, however, there was not enough time for Year 6 pupils to raise the standard of their sequences even though they were aware of what they could do. Although the pupils are learning how to control a football and know the basic rules of the game, the effective teaching of football is adversely affected this year by the lack of use of the school field due to building works. The small playground restricts the scope and nature of the activities that can be carried out.
163. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The teachers prepare well and use national guidelines to provide a progressive programme of activities in line with National Curriculum requirements. Not all lessons include a cool-down sequence or develop pupils’ skills in thinking about their own or others’ performance.
164. The subject is soundly led, but the coordinator has not yet had the opportunity to observe, monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The school grounds are of a good size but the new hall is small, especially for classes of older pupils. The storage space for resources, such as gymnastics equipment, is cramped.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

165. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils at Key Stage 1 but below at Key Stage 2. Year 6 pupils remember key facts about aspects of Christianity and other faiths but are not as secure in their understanding of the way these influence or relate to their own life. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge as a result of weaknesses in the provision in previous years.
166. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in learning about Judaism and Christianity because of good teaching and frequent opportunities for them to learn through drama, discussion and events such as a Purim party. Year 1 pupils remembered that the special book of Judaism is the Torah and that Jews worship in a synagogue. The teacher's good storytelling and use of artefacts helped them to make good progress in realising why the celebration of Purim is special. Year 2 pupils showed a sound understanding of the meaning behind the parable of "The Good Shepherd" in the content of the speech bubbles added to their drawings.
167. At Key Stage 2, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of different religions including Judaism and Islam due to satisfactory teaching and relevant coverage of the locally agreed syllabus. The rate of pupils' progress varies reflecting strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and in the teachers' subject knowledge. Year 6 pupils made minimal progress in refining their understanding of the Islamic five of pillars of wisdom because of a lack of clear teaching focus. Although several pupils knew that followers of Islam make a hajj to Mecca, others were unsure of what this refers to and why the pilgrimage is important. Opportunities are often missed to engage pupils in discussion and debate to ensure that pupils not only encounter religion but also respond to it. A scrutiny of pupils' books and displayed work showed little to reflect work done in the autumn term. Year 5 pupils' fact sheets on Islam and Year 3 pupils' letters to the Prodigal Son are good examples of effective links with work done in the literacy hour.
168. The quality of subject leadership is satisfactory. The two coordinators are aware of the need to strengthen the quality of provision at Key Stage 2 and have rightly increased the range of resources. As the coordinators compile the planning this has increased the teachers' confidence and ensured a higher degree of progression and challenge when themes are revisited. Lessons in personal, social and emotional education build on and develop aspects of the religious education curriculum, such as the concept of friendship and moral values.