

INSPECTION REPORT

LYPPARD GRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 131274

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Cope

Reporting inspector: John Carnaghan
1352

Dates of inspection: 15th – 19th January 2001

Inspection number: 230613

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ankerage Green Warndon Villages Worcester
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Hasell
Date of previous inspection:	Not previously inspected

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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1352	John Carnaghan	Registered inspector	Geography History Equality of opportunity	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19430	Trevor Hall	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?
23483	Gillian Allen	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Science Physical education Religious education	
22352	Frankie Gaywood	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Provision for pupils with special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lyppard Grange School is a primary school for pupils aged 4-11. The school opened in September 1998. It has 284 pupils on roll, who are predominantly of white ethnic background. 18 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, this is about the same as the national average. Of these 50 pupils, six have moderate learning problems and six have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' who enter the school at the age of 4 have overall levels of attainment that are above what is found nationally. The older pupils, who joined the school when it first opened and are currently in years 3 to 6, entered the school with levels of attainment well below what is found nationally. No pupils at the school have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low in comparison with the national average and does not accurately reflect the circumstances of the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Lyppard Grange School is a very good school with a number of excellent features. It constantly strives to improve. In just over two years it has enabled pupils to reach generally good standards of attainment in many areas and is well placed to raise them further. Pupils make very good progress throughout the school. The way that pupils achieve is also very good. Teaching is very good and in many cases, especially to children under five, excellent. This is promoted by the excellent leadership and management, which also does much to encourage the excellent attitudes and values shown by the pupils. The school is a close-knit family. Members of the governing body work hard to support and encourage the school. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is of a consistently very good standard. All adults at the school provide exemplary role models for pupils.
- The school powerfully promotes the personal development and the excellent attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- Excellent leadership and strong teamwork ensure a continuing process of improvement.
- The school provides an excellent education for pupils under five.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities is very good.
- The school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- The school maintains valuable links with parents and the local community.
- Pupils are very well cared for.

What could be improved

- The way in which the school assesses pupils' attainment and uses this information is inconsistent.
- Homework is not used sufficiently as an aid to pupils' learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was founded in 1998. It has not been inspected before.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	B	B	C
mathematics	N/A	A	B	C
science	N/A	C	B	C

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

Pupils' achievement is very good, they work to the best of their abilities with good commitment. The prior attainment of pupils in Key Stage 2, who all joined the school in 1998, is well below what is found nationally. Current pupils in Year 6 from this cohort are on target to attain levels in line or above the national standards in the National Curriculum tests in summer 2001, clearly indicating the very good progress that has been made. In the two years of National Curriculum tests that have been taken at the school, standards have improved in science, remained above average in English but declined slightly in mathematics. Variations in groups of pupils at the school partially account for these inconsistencies. In work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were in line with expectations in English and mathematics and above them in science. Standards in Key Stage 1 are above expectations in reading, writing and mathematics as they were in the national tests in the summer of 2000, with the exception of mathematics where the results were well below the national average. A number of factors about the particular group of pupils who took the tests helps to account for this anomaly. The standards that pupils under five reach are above what is expected for this age range.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils love school and enjoy every aspect of it. They have a strong natural commitment to the school. They join in activities with infectious enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent behaviour is normal. Pupils can be trusted at all times. There is no bullying and there have been no fixed-term exclusions in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are warmly supportive of one another from an early age. They respect one another's views and get on very well with teachers. Pupils are confident and relate very well to all the adults in the school; they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
Attendance	Above the national average and therefore good. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Consistently very good teaching is a feature of the school. All lessons seen were good or better. 64 per cent of lessons seen were very good or better; of these 14 per cent were excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In English and mathematics, as well as literacy and numeracy, teaching is very good. Teaching of pupils under five is excellent. Pupils are managed with great skill. This, added to the quality of teachers' planning, their excellent knowledge and understanding and the warm relationships ensures very good learning. Overall, pupils' learn quickly and effectively. They acquire skills, knowledge and understanding very well; their knowledge of their own learning is excellent. The adaptation of teaching to cater for the wide range of abilities in the school, ensures that pupils of all abilities learn effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. The strategies for literacy and numeracy are very good. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. It is well planned to cater for all pupils' needs and offers a very good range of opportunities, which includes the good provision of personal, social and health education. The school runs a very full programme of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. Careful planning for pupils with special educational needs provides them with opportunities which are the equal of those of the other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for moral and social development is excellent. It is very good for spiritual development and good for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The promotion of good behaviour in the school is excellent. Pupils receive very good personal support and guidance. The school has good procedures to assess pupils' progress; the results of these are used to bring about improvements but these practices are not consistent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The head teacher provides excellent leadership for the school. Management responsibilities are equitably divided between all the staff, who have a powerful shared commitment to improving the school. The breadth of leadership and management qualities amongst the staff and governors means that the school runs smoothly day-to-day and has a clear vision for the future. It has a very good capacity to succeed
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are knowledgeable and bring their valuable experience to running the school. They provide a strong and consistent commitment to the management and development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems for monitoring and other evaluations are in place. These feed effectively into planning for the future.
The strategic use of resources	The school is generously resourced; these resources are effectively used to promote pupil's education. With progress in raising standards and very high standards of teaching and leadership and management the school provides very good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They believe that teaching is good. • Their children like school. • They are of the opinion that the school has high expectations of the children. • Their children are making good progress. • They believe that behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority do not think that the right amount of homework is set. • A small minority do not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • A small minority think that the school does not work closely enough with parents.

Inspection findings support all the positive views of the parents. Of the areas that parents would like to see improved, inspection shows that the school runs a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Links with parents were found to be very good but the inspection team agrees that better use could be made of homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The very high quality of teaching in the school is doing a great deal to raise standards. Standards indicated by Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 were above national averages in English, mathematics and science. Compared with 1999 they fell a little in mathematics and rose a little in science. The nature of this particular year group had some influence on these fluctuations. However given that, when the school opened, these pupils entered the school with levels of attainment well below national averages, the progress that they have made has been very good. The basis for comparison with similar schools is unhelpful at Lyppard Grange, where a very low proportion of pupils have free school meals. This places the school in a very high social context, which is at present not appropriate to the nature of the school's setting or its pupils. Standards in Key Stage 1 national tests in 2000 were well above national averages in reading, they were above them in writing but well below in mathematics. Mathematics declined between 1999 and 2000, other subjects maintained their high levels. The particular nature of the group of pupils who sat the tests in 2000 help explain this otherwise puzzling decline. On entry to the school at the age of 4 pupils' attainment is slightly above national expectations. Overall, these figures indicate good progress across Key Stage 1.

2. Children enter the reception classes with above average levels of attainment. Due to very good teaching, particularly the high expectations of achievement and behaviour, the majority are on target to exceed the expected levels in their Early Learning Goals. In their personal and social development children are friendly and confident and develop good levels of independence. In communication, language and literacy, children's standards are above average. Children learn to speak clearly and confidently. Most children can identify a number of simple words using the initial letter to help them. Children with above average abilities can write simple sentences, those of average ability can write to convey meaning. In their mathematical development children attain above national averages, they can count to ten and add single digits accurately. They recognise the relationships between a figure and a number of items of fruit. In their knowledge and understanding of the world pupils attain well above national expectations. They can sort materials using their senses. In information and communication technology (ICT) they can click, drag and select, using a mouse. In creative development children explore colour and texture very well. They role play confidently and move and perform imaginatively. In their physical development, children are developing manipulative skills well. In physical education, children show increasing dexterity and control in their movements.

3. Standards in English national tests in Key Stage 1 were above national averages for writing and well above them in reading. In writing, pupils can write blurbs to go with the big book that the class is creating. They learn to write at increasing length, using more complex sentences, writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. Handwriting at the end of Key Stage 1 is usually neat, well presented, letters are correctly formed and joined. In reading, most pupils can self correct as they read and use context to work out unfamiliar words. They show confidence, accuracy and fluency in their reading. Those of average ability and above understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. They show good aptitudes in using the library. Attainment in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 was above national averages. Current Year 6 pupils are in line to reach the national average in 2001. This indicates good progress in relationship to their prior attainment. In writing, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 can write imaginatively to a particular brief. In writing in other subjects, such as science, they write with lucidity offering reasoned arguments. Presentation of work is

very good. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can use texts to predict and infer what may happen later in the story, they can discuss characters and make comparisons with other, similar books. Library skills are well developed, pupils are able to find information in books quickly and accurately. They make good use of dictionaries and thesaurus.

4. In mathematics, standards in Key Stage 1 national tests were well below the national average. Inspection findings show that very good teaching is having an impact on this particular group of pupils, now in Year 3, and their attainment is improving. The work of the present Year 2 is above national averages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 work with confidence, adding and subtracting numbers up to 20. They can measure using non-standard units of length, weight and capacity. They recognise two and three-dimensional shapes. Teachers' high expectations ensure that all pupils become confident in mathematics. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in national tests in 2000 were above national averages. By the time they leave school, pupils have a wide range of strategies to solve a variety of mathematical problems. They use the correct mathematical language. Most understand the value and use of digits in six and seven digit numbers. Most understand the concepts of time zones, angles, square numbers and factors. Many have a good grasp of decimals.

5. Science standards are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 in both national assessments and the work seen during the inspection. Pupils can use their senses to achieve a number of tasks, such as making a model without looking at the pieces as they build. They can name the properties of some common materials and categorise them into natural and man-made groups. Most understand how pulling and pushing moves objects. At the end of Key Stage 2, science standards are also above the national average in both national assessments and the work seen during the inspection. Pupils show good investigative skills, most know that gravity is a force that's pull can be indicated by measurement of weight. They know the basic properties of solids, liquids and gases and are able to plan experiments and investigations. Many can make accurate predictions of the outcomes to experiments and explain the reasoning behind these predictions.

6. ICT standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average. Most pupils are adept at using computers. Pupils can draw on screen. They can design items such as castles using the on screen tool bar to help to add features. They handle data well, making graphs to show their results. They can word process stories, can edit their text and make maps of local features. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are also above the national average. Pupils can create text work incorporating previously scanned images. They use technical language correctly. Using databases, they can write questionnaires for a visit to Worcester Cathedral. They are able to record their results using pie charts and other graphs.

7. Standards reached by pupils in religious education are in line with what is expected in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a growing understanding of the meaning, purpose and symbolism of Christian christenings, they know the purpose of godparents and some of their roles. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have an awareness of a number of faiths, for example they know the importance of prayer mats to Muslims and understand the significance of mosques. They know about special books used by different faiths and understand the significance of the Bible to Christians.

8. Standards in art and design are above expectations at the end of both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can use various media to produce works that evoke feelings through the use of colour and patterns. They know about similarities and differences in the work of a number of artists and can create works of art in particular styles to help their understanding. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can replicate artistic techniques, like pointillism and geometric shapes to produce convincing versions of works by artists such as Signac and Kupka. They can work with precision, designing patterns in the style of William Morris; they can evaluate their work, explaining the problems they experienced and suggesting how these could be overcome. In design and technology, standards are above average throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can plan work, carry it out and produce effective evaluation; for example, they have successfully applied these processes to the making of toy vehicles and marionettes. Many are able to follow instructions to build models from construction kits. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show sophisticated skills in designing and making models; they use design and success criteria well in this process. They evaluate their work very well, explaining the difficulties that they experienced with the process and how they would change it next time.

9. In geography, pupils' attainment is above national expectations throughout the school. Year 2 pupils are able to use their own observations in recognising and explaining human activities beyond the local environment. They have good proficiency with maps. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show very good understanding of the local area; they have a good grasp of the functions of Worcester, based on investigative fieldwork. They collect, record and analyse relevant evidence well. However, pupils lack sufficient knowledge of distant places. History attainment is also above national expectations throughout the school. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good grasp of many of the differences between the past and the present, they are able to use varied information sources to make intelligent deductions about life in past eras. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can use a range of artefacts to make deductions about Victorian social history; they show good awareness of the pace of change in this period and know some of the reasons for these changes.

10. In physical education, the standards that pupils reach are above what is expected at the end of Key Stage 1. They can move around the hall using different parts of the body with control and confidence. They show increasing skill and control in their movements and can practice and improve their movements to put together a simple sequence. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are in line with national averages. Pupils move with precision in demonstrating the waltz. They have good balance and control. Ninety per cent of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 can swim 25 metres.

11. The way in which pupils achieve in the school is very good. From the earliest age all pupils are kept at full stretch by the very good teaching. The constant challenge, which is subtly adjusted by the skilled planning of work for pupils' differing needs, means that pupils often achieve levels of work above expectations. The quality of pupil management and relationships in the school means that pupils want to give of their best. The nature of pupils' special educational needs is well known to teachers. They are thus able to plan and deploy staff and resources accordingly; as a result these pupils also achieve very well. Pupils' learning is enhanced because they react with energy and commitment to the challenges that the school provides.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Attitudes to learning are excellent. Parents confirm that their children like school and make good progress. Pupils consistently maintain concentration extremely well through lessons. They are extremely industrious and work very well independently. Pupils are very willing to talk to adults about what they are doing. They contribute positively to short dialogues in lessons, sometimes referring to other subjects. For example, in a science lesson, a pupil referred to words used and commented on their place in literacy. They work very well together in pairs or in groups, sharing ideas and equipment with enthusiasm. Even the youngest share resources good-naturedly and can express their ideas confidently.

13. Behaviour is excellent. Codes of conduct are shared with pupils. Older pupils are familiar with the home/school agreement and understand its implication for them and the whole family of the school. There are very few pupils whose behaviour causes any interruption to the flow of lessons or disturb other pupils. Sanctions are rarely used but, on the odd occasions when lapses in behaviour makes this necessary, all pupils know how seriously this is viewed. There have been no exclusions from school in the last year.

14. The personal development of pupils is excellent. Pupils are tidy and respectful of property. They are very courteous and move around the school in a very responsible manner. The majority soon develop mature attitudes to their work and play. They listen to one another and appreciate each other's comments in class. Play is good-natured, often exuberant. A very few, however, are boisterous and not always aware of those around them. Nursery and reception pupils soon learn to do simple tasks to help in the classroom. These roles are developed as they move up the school although there is no formal structure for widening and deepening their experience through the year groups. Older pupils develop more independent work skills in preparation for secondary education. The school council is well organised and representatives are remarkably knowledgeable about how the school is run. This is a valuable contribution to the ethos of the school, for example, the council was pro-active in the formation of school codes of conduct. Pupils sing songs and hymns with gusto in assemblies but there is a calm during moments of prayer and reflection. They share very well in the prayers led, for example, by their fellow pupils and applaud one another's achievements at 'Congratulations Assemblies'. They appreciate the visitors who come in to talk at assemblies about charity work and drug awareness. For example, a local clergyman who talked to the pupils about preparing for the future and the opportunities presented in change, even sometimes out of initial disappointment, when perhaps not moving to the school of their choice.

15. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils have implicit trust in staff and consequently an excellent rapport is evident between pupils and between pupils and all adults in school. All year groups enjoy trips and visits. These broaden their outlook of the world around them, enjoying the activities provided and working together in a community spirit.

16. Attendance is good. Authorised absence is below the national average and unauthorised well below. Lateness is minimal and largely confined to the same families. Pupils love coming to school. They enter class eagerly and look forward to their lessons. Registration is very prompt and effective. There is a purposeful start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The standard of teaching at the school is very good. It has great consistency; half of the lessons observed were very good, just over a third were good, the remaining 14 per cent were excellent. Thus, all lessons were at least good. The very best teaching is to pupils under five, where it is excellent. But, throughout the school, teaching shows many excellent qualities. It is a significant strength of the school.

18. Teachers have excellent knowledge and understanding. The teaching of literacy and numeracy are very good, for example teachers' confidence enables them to use pupils' incorrect responses in mathematics with great sensitivity to make effective teaching points. Teachers are knowledgeable in science; this enables them to tackle practical investigations with confidence. Teachers' growing skills in ICT enables them to use computers and other equipment easily and so they are able to teach specific skills and to incorporate their use as a valuable adjunct in studying other subjects. The confidence that teachers show transfers to pupils, who develop similar confidence in their own knowledge and skills. Teachers' understanding of their pupils enables them to successfully plan lessons, ensuring that each pupil has the correct degree of challenge. This ensures that pupils' understanding and thinking is effectively challenged and that those with previous high attainment are fully stretched.

19. Teaching of the range of phonics and other basic skills is very good. Teachers and classroom assistants show very good competencies; the way in which the school approaches the subject shows good consistency. The excellent teaching of pupils under five gives them a very good start in the development of these competencies. National Literacy teaching objectives have been adopted as part of the school's planning and lessons have a good balance between the various elements of the strategy. Reading and writing skills are developed effectively in most other subjects.

20. Planning of lessons is very good. As a result lessons proceed efficiently with no loss of time. For example, teaching of mathematics sets clear targets at the start of lessons and in thorough final plenary sessions draws teaching points together to consolidate learning. In one session the teacher set up a class game where one pupil quizzed the others; pupils were thus able to clearly show what they had learned. In science, planning is very effective at building skills progressively. In art and design, lessons are notable for the wide range of activities which are planned so pupils are able to work with paint, clay, fabric and other media. In physical education, lessons are well planned to include all elements of the subject, for example all lessons seen had an effective warm up and cool down phase. The planning of history and geography to link with other subjects such as art and design and physical education improves opportunities for pupils to learn. Learning assistants are part of the planning process, all support staff are involved in the development of lesson plans and this enables them to participate in all aspects of lessons with no impediment.

21. Teachers' expectations of pupils are excellent. Pupils frequently live up to these rigorous demands. Because teachers know their pupils so well and are very sensitive, the expectation set for each individual is appropriate. Teachers give warm praise for all pupils' efforts, never criticise pupils' errors and this encourages a positive, confident attitude from pupils. Thus, pupils display good independence in working in all areas. In ICT, for example, pupils reflect on any problems that arise and are often able to solve them in their working pairs without asking the teacher. In one ICT lesson, pupils worked for much of the lesson in two computer suites, a small group rather distant from the rest. Their work, which

appropriately involved e-mailing one another, was of a similar good standard to the rest of the class. Behaviour was exemplary at all times.

22. Methods that teachers use are very good. Lessons frequently encompass a variety of stimulating activities. Teachers question pupils skilfully, often using responses, whether right or wrong, to move learning forwards. In a Year 6 ICT lesson, pupils had difficulty in scanning work, the problems that they experienced with incorrect alignment allowed the teacher to make a number of good points to advance their learning. Teachers' exposition is often lively and inspires children. Teachers – and pupils – smile a great deal with the sheer pleasure of learning. Resources are used stimulatingly and lessons are often planned to incorporate the problem-solving activities that the pupils so enjoy.

23. The management of pupils is excellent. It is from this quality that many other strengths flow. Teachers and pupils have warm, trusting relationships; neither wants to let the other down. Thus, they collaborate very effectively in ensuring that very good learning opportunities exist. While there is never a question of who is in authority, teachers foster self-discipline and independence in pupils from the earliest years. Because there are excellent classroom routines there is no need to take time managing the periods of change in lessons. Pupils switch from task to task with alacrity. Their pace of learning is unfettered; they show very good productivity at all times. It was unnecessary to correct poor behaviour during the inspection; it is a testament to the management of pupils that there was no inappropriate behaviour seen in any of the lessons observed.

24. The very good use of time and resources by teachers is underpinned by their excellent planning and preparation. Lessons often start with a bang and carry on at this rate throughout. This would be very difficult if good resources were not readily to hand. The highly competent support staff do much to ensure the unruffled progress of learning in lessons; for example, they are observant and quietly intervene to help any pupils experiencing difficulties. Wider resources, such as the local environment, are effectively used to support learning. A Key Stage 2 trip to Worcester city centre was well utilised to improve both numeracy and geographical skills. Staff are competent and confident in the use of ICT and incorporate it into lessons at frequent intervals, this enthusiasm is also reflected in the pupils attitudes to the subject. For example a roamer robot spent inspection week dressed as a character in the story which was at the centre of the week's lessons. This encouraged pupils in the class to use it.

25. Pupils display excellent knowledge of their own learning. This is due to the way teachers structure lessons. They invariably start with an outline of the learning objectives and are concluded with an unrushed plenary session, which recapitulates and reflects on what has been gained. Pupils are closely involved in this process; peer assessment is commonplace. The positive ethos of the school encourages this; pupils spontaneously applaud one another's presentations at the end of lessons. In this way ongoing assessment is integrated in lessons; teachers take note of this and use the results to plan for future lessons, taking into account differences in individual learning. Marking of books is consistently very good; it engages pupils in friendly dialogue giving unambiguous advice how to improve.

26. The use of homework is merely good in the context of very good teaching. While the youngest pupils are encouraged to read at home and the home school reading records are effective documents, the homework given to pupils in Year 4 and above is less effective. There is no coherence in its setting and, in some areas it is insufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. Where all pupils in a class are told to undertake the same task, it proves too easy for some, too difficult for others. Too little homework integrates with the content of lessons; opportunities to further foster pupils' independence and research skills are often missed.

27. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is organised well to allow them to benefit fully from the work set. The work is planned well and focused on the pupils' needs, according to their individual plans. In most cases the school offers the same experiences at an appropriate level. However, there are a few occasions when the pupils miss out on the talented teaching taking place in the main lesson. Otherwise, tasks are challenging, at an appropriate level and there are high expectations for very good behaviour as well as work.

28. Pupils learning in the school is very good and excellent for children under five. This is largely because of the qualities of teaching. The good ethos that teachers have engendered in the school since it opened means that pupils naturally make good efforts in lessons, displaying very good concentration, working at a good pace and showing strong independence in their learning when appropriate. It is normal to see children enthused about what they are doing at school. A Year 1 lesson examining a suitcase full of Mozart's 'possessions' saw excellent learning because pupils were excited by this last-minute delivery. Very good behaviour saw them contain themselves, focussing their energies into understanding the artefacts, which the teacher (in role) produced. This all emanated from the teacher's excellent planning and preparation. In a Year 6 art and design lesson, learning was very good because of very good planning and organisation, very good strategies to develop evaluative skills and very good relationships, which valued pupils' work.

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

29. The school provides a broad, balanced programme of a very high quality throughout all age groups. All elements of the National Curriculum are met, as well as those for religious education. Since it opened, the school has continued to improve the range of its curriculum, for example, by changing the timing of the day in order to be more flexible. There are also clear, effective links across the various subjects. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson the teacher played and discussed music by Mozart, and everywhere, ICT is used extensively, to enhance curricular opportunities. This linkage has a positive impact on the development of skills in all areas of learning.

30. At present, there is no written policy concerning issues of equal opportunity in some subjects and this occasionally leads to imbalances in progress. For example, in a few instances where pupils were withdrawn from literacy lessons, for extra support, they missed the expert teaching in the main class. In contrast, the school does make every effort to rotate withdrawal times for music tuition. This highlights inconsistencies in planning, which could be addressed by a formal policy on the subject.

31. The extra-curricular activities provided are for Key Stage 2 pupils. The vast majority of them sign up to participate in the diverse range on offer, from working with clay to hockey, or being in the orchestra; silk painting or batik to mini-bridge or chess. In all, there were thirteen clubs on offer in the spring term.

32. Children in the reception classes are very well catered for and their curriculum is very closely matched to the six areas of learning for this age group. They are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop through independence, exploration and investigation and the activities chosen are very well linked, as when they made stories and used computers to make maps about Cinderella. Work in all departments of the school is interactive, exciting and well displayed, demonstrating the great value put on the inclusion of everyone's contribution. This also provides very good connections at each stage as pupils move through the school.

33. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and other opportunities. All arrangements for them comply with the Code of Practice. Their needs are recognised early, their individual education plans are well focused, with manageable academic or behavioural targets set, and systematically reviewed.

34. The school has very effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and these initiatives are having a very positive effect on the provision for English and mathematics. Good examples of this were seen in lessons such as design and technology, geography fieldwork and science, in data handling and graphical work. Co-ordinators work closely to ensure this happens, in order to relate learning in one subject with knowledge in others. The school has taken account of national and local guidance in order to provide a structured curriculum and planning is very effective for the mixed age classes organised throughout the school. There is keen awareness of the need to review, refine and evaluate the curriculum and the staff is strongly committed to raising standards. They do this by working at the curriculum as a team effort, with energy and purpose and by always considering the impact of what they do on the learning of the pupils.

35. The school plans for equal opportunities inconsistently. A number of subjects – mathematics, history and music – do not refer to equal opportunities in their subject policies. In daily practice, however, most teaching actively promotes equality of opportunity. No gender issues arise as a result of teaching, pupils work in mixed groups easily. There are no issues relating to ethnic minorities in the school.

36. There is good provision for personal, social and health education, which consistently provides pupils with the knowledge upon which to make informed decisions. That issues will be dealt with effectively is implicit throughout the school. However, there is no formal policy at present, which would help to create consistent planning. The school has already highlighted this need in their current development plan. Some lessons are being trialled in order to inform the writing, when it takes place. The governing body has approved an appropriate policy for sex education. Experts from outside agencies support matters relating to health education, such as drugs and healthy eating. The development of good relationships and consideration for others are embedded in the life and work of the school, and pupils are given ample opportunities to be independent and show initiative. They are well prepared for taking responsibility through opportunities such as their school council. Pupils go on various outings and the older ones have the chance to attend residential courses, which are designed to foster personal development, as well as to enhance learning in particular subjects.

37. The school has effective links with the community, inviting people in and going out to sing or carry out surveys, for example. Constructive links are being fostered with local schools and work is being done to develop links with secondary schools in the area, in order to promote good relationships and family awareness. A good example is the displaying of students' artwork in the school. Also a local secondary head teacher meets prospective parents at such events. There are effective contacts with other local primary schools and with the local private nursery. All adults in this school community observe the school's values in each aspect of the life of the school and this is clearly reflected in the strong sense of 'family', which pervades its work.

38. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is promoted extremely well through the ethos of the school community.

39. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Daily collective acts of worship contribute very well to pupils' spiritual development and encourage pupils to respect and to be sensitive to the feelings of others. The school aims to ensure that everyone is fully included, that everyone is valued and that there is an ethos of mutual respect. Throughout the whole curriculum teachers are continually seeking ways to capture the interest and imagination of pupils and providing them with plenty of opportunities to reflect. For example several pupils gasped when they observed a spiral moving above a lighted candle. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on the beliefs of people of other faiths in the programme of work in religious education lessons. There are very good links with local churches. Pupils visit them as part of their religious education lessons and the evangelical church minister is a regular visitor to the collective acts of worship. These opportunities all make a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual awareness.

40. The school makes excellent provision for both moral and social development. The school very actively promotes positive behaviour management, which is regularly reviewed with all staff in the school community and fosters moral values such as honesty, tolerance and respect for others. Pupils receive awards and certificates for good behaviour and this includes rewards for good behaviour given by the lunchtime supervisors. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible for their own behaviour and have a clear understanding of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. The weekly "Celebration Assembly" supports the schools' ethos very well. Teachers are very well trained in dealing with moral issues and sensitive situations, such as bereavement, separation and serious illnesses and the programme of themes for the acts of collective worship indicate that moral issues are often discussed at this time. All staff in the school are excellent role models for the pupils, relationships are excellent and staff encourage pupils to relate positively to each other. Pupils of all ages contribute to the school community, taking responsibility for a range of jobs within their classes and around the school. The school council plays a very important part in developing social skills and in the running of the school. Older pupils are particularly conscientious about looking after the younger ones at lunchtime. The school regularly supports charities, often initiated by the pupils themselves. For example they supported the people of Mozambique and 'Blue Peter' appeals. Produce offerings from the harvest festival regularly go to support the work at a women's refuge.

41. Provision for cultural development is good. A good range of educational visits, such as to the local country park, are arranged each year and the school welcomes many visitors to the school. These include the local ministers to share in collective worship, the fire brigade, the police, vets and representatives of local supermarkets to talk about their work. The school also promotes the involvement of parents and grandparents to share their expertise, for example a parent regularly visits to share her cultural and religious customs and practices with the pupils. Cultural awareness is also provided through art and design such as African batik work and in religious education, although opportunities to promote the cultural diversity of British society are sometimes missed. There are also good opportunities to experience performances by theatre groups, orchestras provided by the school's music service and from working with a local composer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. Procedures for ensuring child protection and pupils' welfare are very good. Pupils feel secure in a warm, very clean, and well presented environment. All adults are aware of the criteria for child protection, although lunchtime supervisors have not had formal training. There is good provision for medical, education psychology and educational welfare specialists, through the usual agencies. There are no health and safety concerns within the general framework of the school day. Minor matters of signs are having attention.

43. Adults in school provide exemplary role models for the pupils and have an excellent rapport with them. Parents realise this and believe the staff help their children to become mature and responsible. They are very pleased that teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. Teachers work together to ensure pupils are very well supported individually and consistently as they move through the year groups. Lunchtime supervisors stimulate good interactive play, especially with the younger groups. Pupils can confidently share their thoughts and concerns with more than one member of staff. The school welcomes parents. Parents can confidently speak to staff at the beginning or end of the day. The head teacher, staff and often parent governors are regularly about the playground to listen to parents and share any concerns. Appointments can readily be made for more formal matters.

44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good and thorough. There is a prompt daily check for any unexplained absences. The educational welfare officer supports the school well.

45. The policies and strategies for promoting self-discipline are excellent. This has been a primary target since the school opened and is transparently successful. Staff have very high expectations, which brush off onto pupils. Teachers almost imperceptibly build up pupils' self esteem. There are no raised voices in school. The systems of positive rewards for good work and endeavour, are extremely well structured to encourage good conduct from the day pupils enter the school. This is very apparent in the reception classes and lower school. Sanctions are very rare. The activities of the school council are strongly encouraged. Assemblies and the personal, social, health and educational programmes are skilfully used to promote responsible attitudes to work, behaviour, relationships and decision making. Pastoral care of these situations is constantly reviewed, generally with improving results. The rare inappropriate behaviour is viewed very seriously and with disappointment. All involved share mutually in sorting things out. Any tendencies towards bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Parents are fully involved.

46. The procedures for supporting and monitoring the progress of pupils needing special support are good. Individual educational plans are used well, to target behavioural and other problems, where appropriate. Teachers remind pupils of their targets, when necessary, and how they can work towards them, for example they need to move up the traffic lights system or work to get jigsaw pieces. They are also well supported in their personal development by their teachers and all the other adults who work with them.

47. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and the way in which this information is used to guide curricular planning is also good. However, within this area there are inconsistencies. Beyond the core subjects of English, mathematics and science there are variations in practice. Art and design, design and technology and ICT have assessments written into curricular planning so that regular assessment of pupils is integral to their teaching. In religious education, history and geography pupils' work is not assessed in any organised fashion. As a result curricular planning does not relate to what pupils do and do not know. The development of portfolios to show exemplar material in each

subject is also inconsistent. There are good portfolios kept in English and art and design; science and mathematics portfolios are developing and are likely provide a valuable resource to teachers. In other subjects there are either no portfolios or embryonic attempts to gather examples of work, which have not been assessed or levelled adequately.

48. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the personal development of pupils are very good. Teachers know their pupils very well; in the spirit of openness, which pervades the school, teachers set high expectations of pupils' personal development and discuss these matters regularly with individuals and the whole class. A weekly awards assembly is a joyous occasion where all can emphasise success. Class teachers talk eloquently and lovingly about the successes their pupils have had in the previous week; pupils applaud with spontaneous warmth.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents regard the school very highly. They are very pleased with what the school provides and achieves. They feel they are very well informed on all school matters. There are regular letters from the head teacher and class teachers, a comprehensive school prospectus and an excellent review of the past year in the governors' annual report.

50. The school has very effective links with parents. A few parents expressed concern about information regarding their children's progress and the extent to which the school works closely with them. The quality of information to parents about their children's progress is very good. There are ample opportunities to talk to teachers throughout the year. Samples of work are always available. Consultation evenings are extremely well attended. Older pupils attend these evenings with their parents and share target setting discussions. Younger pupils may attend if they wish. Annual written reports are detailed, individual to the pupil and have an element of evaluation. The 'back to school' evening in autumn is especially appreciated with workshops on a whole range of school activities, for example the standard assessment tests for years two and six, computers, and the school behaviour policy. Curricular related sessions are moderately attended but viewed as very successful by those present.

51. The impact of parental involvement on the work of the school is good. Help with their children's learning at home is encouraged and valued by the school. The home/school agreement has recently been negotiated by the governors with all parents and pupils, with positive response. Home/school reading records are used by many parents. This is strongly promoted by the school as a valuable dialogue between home and school. A good number of parents help regularly in school. Their service is planned for and appreciated. Many parents appreciate the opportunities for attending a variety of school events, especially assemblies for the major festivals. A few parents expressed concerns regarding levels of homework. The inspection team found there are some inconsistencies in this provision, which the school is taking in hand.

52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed, at every stage, and are aware of their child's inclusion on the register. Regular times are organised to review targets and set new ones where necessary. Parents of such pupils say they feel supported in this part of the school's work.

53. This school, from its inception, has set out to involve parents. All parents are automatically members of the Parent, Teacher and Friends Association, which promotes a very wide range of social and fund-raising events. For example, Christmas and summer fayres and a jolly mixture fashion show. There are discos, country dancing, and recent assistance for the Rumanian shoe box appeal. Parents come into school to tend indoor plants, and help with out of school activities. All the resulting interaction sustains a valuable contribution to a 'whole school' family atmosphere.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The outstanding leadership provided by the head teacher and governing body has enabled the school to achieve significant success since its opening two years ago. The head teacher has a clear vision of the type of school this should be. The mission statement for the school embodies the vision – 'building a centre of excellence'. The head teacher, deputy head teacher, all staff, pupils and the governing body share this vision and are committed to work as a team to fulfil it. Since its foundation, the school has evolved into a cohesive unit, with staff and pupils from different schools and different backgrounds combining to provide the very best learning environment for pupils to achieve well. The success of this is due to the excellent leadership of the head teacher who is ably assisted by the deputy head teacher. Improvement in standards of those pupils who entered the school for the first time as Year 4 pupils in 1999 is clear evidence of the schools' success.

55. Although there is no senior management team, as and when areas are identified for development, different members of staff undertake management responsibilities. The majority of subject coordinators provide good, and sometimes very good, curriculum leadership. Developing the role of subject leaders is identified in the school development plan. Numeracy and Literacy coordinators are subject lead teachers for the county.

56. The governors bring a considerable range of valuable outside experiences to their roles and are fully involved with the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have undertaken relevant training. The governing body uses an Ofsted framework questionnaire as a starting point in reviewing progress and identifying areas for development. Two governors have been on a monitoring course and a monitoring policy is now in place. The governing body has been involved with implementing the National Curriculum from the outset. Curriculum monitoring has been undertaken for some time. Subject leaders report to the governing body on a regular basis. Governors also make class visits. AS a result of their involvement governors are well informed about the school. They set relevant targets for the head teacher, which relate to school performance.

57. The school development plan is produced in close collaboration by the headteacher, staff, and governing body so that all feel 'ownership' of the plans for the future. It very clearly prioritises areas for development, identifies the members of staff responsible, sets time constraints, allocates budget costs and includes success criteria. Targets are set for school, year group and individual teachers. The head teacher holds regular termly meetings with teachers to identify targets, review these and identify new areas for development. An effective performance management policy is in place.

58. The head teacher monitors teaching, and has observed numeracy and literacy teaching throughout the school. Subject leaders monitor plans and some monitoring of teaching has been undertaken. This has all helped to raise the overall standard of teaching. The school and governing body know their strengths and correctly identify priorities for improvement. Test results are analysed and used to identify areas for improvement. Effective use is made of technology, the school's computers are networked, the school has introduced computerised reports and ICT is used efficiently for administrative systems.

59. The governors and head teacher budget systematically for all school expenditure. In a new school, with few costs for replacement of worn-out equipment and stock and irregular utilities bills, this has proved a little difficult at times. However, the school is careful to relate its spending decisions to priorities for improvement and raising standards. It uses the school development plan very effectively in this context. In conjunction with the local authority, the school strives to attain best value for its goods and services. It applies best value principles in making comparisons with other schools and its consultations with the local community over all developments in the school. The school administrative staff provide effective but inconspicuous day-to-day financial administration. A recent audit of the school's financial processes found no areas of major concern. It raised a few very minor matters, which the school has attended to.

60. The school supports pupils with special educational needs well. The two co-ordinators share responsibility very ably for this area of the school's work and they have effective links with each other, as well as all other members of the staff. Their procedures are efficient. This ensures that time is well organised and funding is spent judiciously, for maximum benefit. Work is well planned and discussed with the learning and special support assistants. The governors have appointed one of their own number to be link governor and she is committed and concerned as well as very supportive to the co-ordinators. The areas outside the classrooms and the quiet areas provide a good environment for pupils to learn, in most cases, whilst not being too far removed from their peers.

61. Staff are well deployed within the school to support the curriculum. A supernumerary teacher supports Key Stage 1, and a sufficient number of learning support and special needs support staff are allocated to classes throughout the school to support pupils and teachers. Staff are experienced and well qualified to fulfil their class and subject leader responsibilities. Both teaching staff and support staff receive substantial training for their roles. A mentor effectively supports newly qualified staff. No staff handbook is yet available. Job descriptions clearly identify roles and responsibilities. The school regularly receives students from the local teacher-training establishment.

62. All support staff, including lunchtime supervisors, have a staff member with whom they can raise specific issues, discuss problems and identify training needs. The school secretary and clerical staff carry out administrative duties very efficiently and ensure the school office runs smoothly.

63. There is a wide range of learning resources within the school; they support the very good teaching and learning which takes place. The school is particularly well resourced for ICT. All classrooms have televisions, videos, use of a camcorder and listening centres. Key Stage 2 classrooms each have three modern computers and all pupils have access to the well-equipped computer suite in the school. Computers are networked and pupils have access to the internet as appropriate. Resources for other curriculum areas are very good. They are clearly labelled and easily accessible to staff and pupils. The well-stocked library provides opportunities for pupils to browse, locate information and use their research skills.

64. The school buildings are just over two years old; they provide clean, spacious and pleasant accommodation. All classroom areas have suitable smaller areas for small group work, if required. Pupils and teachers are unconcerned that there are few corridors and that pupils have to cross one another's classrooms when, for example, they are going to the hall for a physical education lesson. There are good display areas, which are effectively used. Apart from the hall there is no suitable space to hold music lessons. Pupils under five have a suite of rooms at one end of the building, which allow the right degree of separation from the rest of the school. They have a large and secure play area, but lack play space which is

covered against the elements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. This is a school with few areas of concern; it has a strong ethos of self-improvement, which is having a positive impact on standards. In order to continue and build on these improvements the school should:

- (1) Develop a clear school policy towards assessment so that all subjects include regular assessment activities as part of their curriculum planning. The processes of teacher assessment of pupils' work should be encouraged, The development of a portfolio of pupils' work in each National Curriculum subject should continue. The exemplar work included in these portfolios should be thoroughly marked to National Curriculum levels to further develop teachers' subject assessment skills. The outcomes of assessment activities should be used in the school's planning for the future.
(Paragraphs: 47)
- (2) Incorporate homework as appropriate extension activity to work done in school. Homework should have increasing challenge as pupils move up the school; it should be used more frequently both to consolidate learning and for pupils to prepare for the next stages. For older pupils, homework should encourage research skills and independent learning.
(Paragraphs: 26)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
14	51	35	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	284
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	50
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	25	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	29	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (91)	88 (91)	85 (95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (86)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	32	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (91)	85 (94)	91 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Where the number of boys or girls are 10 or fewer the individual results are not reported.

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	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	11	10	10
	Total	24	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (72)	79 (81)	89 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	15
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	24	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (73)	86 (82)	93 (100)
	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	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	280
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.1
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	408 644
Total expenditure	387 547
Expenditure per pupil	1 425
Balance brought forward from previous year	29 590
Balance carried forward to next year	50 687

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	161

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	60	36	1	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	36	16	2	2
The teaching is good.	61	36	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	47	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	28	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	50	38	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	59	31	6	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	33	6	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	44	12	0	11

Other issues raised by parents

Parents think highly of the school. They have very few concerns. They are particularly satisfied with the quality of teaching, the way children like school, the school's high level of expectations and behaviour. A very few are concerned about the right amount of homework, activities outside lessons and the closeness of links with parents.

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

66. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. There are currently fifty-nine children in two reception classes. The quality of learning opportunities provided for the children is very good and the teaching in the early years is excellent. Therefore the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is excellent and this has a very positive impact on the children's learning. They achieve very well and attain standards above the national average.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. By the end of the Foundation Stage the children have made excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development and are achieving above the expected levels of the early learning goals. This shows very good achievement and reflects the excellent teaching in both classes. Children are friendly and confident in talking to adults and each other. They are very enthusiastic about their learning and boys and girls work very well together as was evident when they were taking part in a role-play activity preparing for Cinderella's ball. The high expectations of the teachers to foster independence also impacts extremely well on learning. Children have opportunities to choose to do certain activities independently each day and this also helps them to share equipment and learn to consider others. They are carefully taught to organise themselves and their clothing for physical education lessons. In one personal and social education lesson the children were given the opportunity to discuss Cinderella's feelings. They discussed what made her happy or sad and then considered their own feelings. Each child told his or her partner about something in their own lives that made them happy and something that made them sad.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children achieve very well in communication, language and literacy and their overall attainment is above that expected in the Early Learning Goals. Most children speak clearly and confidently in a range of situations. For example, they discuss in detail their preparations for Cinderella's ball in the role-play area. They listen intently to adults and to each other and confidently share and enjoy a wide range of books. The above average and average children recognise some of the key words and repeated phrases in the text and can tell the story confidently using the pictures. Some relate the story to their own experiences, for example one child talked about having a swimming lesson after school. The below average children enjoy looking at text and can turn the pages in the correct order. They talk briefly in short phrases about the story. Most children can identify a number of words beginning with "m", draw, colour and cut out the objects. They make very good progress in writing. Children of previously higher attainment can write simple sentences to convey meaning, using letters of an even size and shape. The average children use emergent writing well to convey their meaning and the lower ability children trace over the teacher's writing and sometimes uses familiar letters from their name in their writing. Children write letters from the wolf to Little Red Riding Hood and invitations to Cinderella's ball. The quality of teaching is excellent and both teachers use strategies very effectively to teach early literacy skills. For example, in one lesson the teacher extremely effectively took on the role of Cinderella to demonstrate the format for writing invitations and for developing an interest and enthusiasm for fairy stories. The excellent planning and effectiveness of teaching methods by both teachers have a very positive impact on the children's learning.

Mathematical development

69. Attainment is above that expected for children of this age in all areas of mathematics and they make excellent progress. They accurately match numbers with the fruit on a plate and can add together the number of fruit on two plates by counting on. Pupils of previously higher attainment work with numbers beyond ten and other children can add to make ten. They recognise the relationships between a figure and the number of objects referred to. They have a good understanding of making repeated patterns using shapes, numbers and letters. Most understand specific mathematical vocabulary to describe position for example "under", "behind". They have tried to make the patterns on their kites symmetrical. The teachers provide the children with very good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills very well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Attainment in this area of knowledge and understanding of the world is excellent and children achieve well above the expected levels. They can sort materials using their senses appropriately by touching and feeling different articles of clothing. They decide whether the materials are shiny or dull and whether the clothes would be suitable to wear to Cinderella's ball. The teacher uses excellent strategies to introduce a new type of material to the children. They try on the net skirts and decide that they would be just right for wearing to the ball. Linked to this activity, a group of children plan a map of Cinderella's journey to the ball on computer. They know how to click, drag and select using a mouse. They talk competently about their maps, the buildings they have chosen and why they have put arrows in one direction to illustrate her journey. They investigate what materials they would use to make an umbrella and how to make the umbrellas waterproof. Most also know some of the weather symbols used on weather maps for the sun, clouds, rain and wind. The teachers' excellent subject knowledge of the needs of these young children, their high expectations and the very rich environment created by them supports learning extremely well.

Physical development

71. In physical development, children are provided with many opportunities to handle small tools, such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors and their manipulative skills are developing well. They have very good opportunities to practice required skills for riding bikes, and other wheeled vehicles. The children receive very well planned physical education sessions in the hall and they show good awareness of space and of each other. Most can stretch, curl and move around the room using different parts of their body. These skills are very well taught in carefully planned lessons. Behaviour management is very good and children respond well. This impacts well on their learning. In dance, children learn to add imaginative touches to their movements and demonstrate increasing dexterity and enjoyment. The classroom assistants, who take a full and active part in the lessons, support the teachers very well. This has a positive impact on children's learning.

Creative development

72. No direct teaching of creative development was observed during the inspection. Evidence from looking at children's work demonstrates that the standards they achieve exceeds that expected for their age. The children explore colour, texture very well. For example they use primary colour to paint pictures of "Elmer" and make clay models of the brightly coloured elephant. They make bubble blowing patterns for "Spot". They experience different texture when making pictures of raindrops using a range of blue materials such as shiny paper, buttons, tissue and net and when making kites. Inspired by the story of "Little Red Riding Hood" children made cloaks for some finger puppets using batik technique.

Water painting created the backgrounds for silhouette pictures of kites flying in the sky. In the role-play area, children confidently take on the roles of Cinderella and her friends getting ready to attend the ball. They learn to move spontaneously and very imaginatively to music. The quality of teaching of dance by both teachers is excellent and impacts extremely well on the children's ability to move and perform imaginatively. The learning opportunities provided by the teachers and the excellent support from the classroom assistants enable the children to develop skills in all creative areas of learning very well.

73. All adults in the Foundation Stage work as an excellent team led very effectively by the early years' co-ordinator. Teachers plan very thoroughly together to ensure all children have the same access to the very well organised and stimulating curriculum. Good records are kept of observations and on-going assessments to track individual children's progress and to enable them to achieve very well. Very good use is made of local resources such as a visit to the Garden Centre to support children's learning. There are very good links with local playgroup and other nurseries and regular visits are made from the playgroup to prepare the children for starting school. There is a very good induction programme for new parents and their children, to ensure that their Foundation Stage of learning is happy and successful. There are very good links with parents who support their children very well in their learning, particularly by sharing books and helping to make costumes for the role-play areas. All this provision has an extremely positive impact on the children's learning.

ENGLISH

74. Year 2000 test results indicate reading is well above national standards and writing above national expectations in Key Stage 1. When compared to similar schools, reading is above and writing close to national standards. In Key Stage 2 standards in English are above national expectations and close to those of similar schools. The school opened only two years ago so it is difficult, as yet, to perceive trends in standards. Lesson observation and an analysis of pupils' work indicate that attainment in Key Stage 1 reading is in line with national expectations, but pupils are exceeding national standards in writing. In Key Stage 2 attainment in English is in line with national expectations.

75. When the school opened, pupils arrived at the school from a large number of different schools in the area. Attainment of pupils entering the school for the first time in Year 4 was well below the national average. Predictions on entry for the percentage of these pupils reaching level 4 or above based on Key Stage 1 data was reading 55 per cent and writing 36 per cent, respectively. Current predictions, based on assessment done at the end of Year 5, are that 84 per cent will reach these standards in both reading and writing. This is an indication of the very good progress pupils make in the school – this is largely due to the very good and sometimes excellent teaching of this subject.

76. Lessons across the school are planned to address specific aspects of literacy. The success of this is particularly evident in the significant progress made in Year 1 pieces of work. In all years, there is evidence of planning, drafting, redrafting and editing work. In Key Stage 1 particularly, teachers use some guided group time in the literacy hour for pupils to re-read their own work and check for meaning, spelling and punctuation. Work on the knowledge and extension of vocabulary is particularly effective, with pupils in different classes enjoying an appropriate computer programme.

77. Pupils in a Key Stage 1 lesson were creating their own big book on the body and were writing interesting blurbs to go with it. They were able to explain what a blurb is and why they were writing it. The majority of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 are able to write increasingly longer pieces, using more complex sentences and writing for a variety of purposes and for different audiences. In a letter to a giant, a Year 2 pupil stated 'I am planting another beanstalk so I might come again to see you'.

78. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson pupils were working on developing character traits when writing about different people. Younger pupils created some particularly unpleasant traits for their ugly giant and went on to plan some very unexpected events on a visit to him. Pupils in Year 4 are able to plan their work and write imaginative descriptions, but most pupils find it difficult to write in length or use a paragraph structure for their writing. Low attaining pupils are able to write sentences, not always with full stops. Key words are usually spelt accurately and many words spelt phonetically. Pupils in Year 6 were identifying traits of heroes and villains. They began to create an imaginative and interesting story related to their theme of myths and legends. Year 5 and 6 pupils can use their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, writing up science experiments, which conclude with reasoned arguments as to whether air is a real material and explaining graphs for a shop survey. Year 6 pupils are developing an understanding of the key differences between written and spoken language. Able and average Year 6 pupils are able to use conventions for pauses when writing their own transcript of a cereal advertisement and one pupil added musical notes to indicate her piece should be sung.

79. Handwriting in handwriting books is mainly neatly presented, with correctly formed letters and from Year 2 upward correctly joined. High standards of presentation are set for all pupils with guidelines pasted into the front of books. Teachers mark consistently, make constructive comments on work, and use praise to reward and encourage.

80. Home school links are good in reading, especially with the younger pupils. Teachers keep good records. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to talk about pictures, are starting to use initial sounds and blends to sound out unknown words and acquiring a basic sight vocabulary. Year 2 pupils are mainly enthusiastic about books and apart from low attaining pupils are able to self-correct and use context when reading unfamiliar words. They read confidently, accurately and fluently the texts appropriate for their reading ability. One pupil could talk about non-fiction texts and his interest in clouds and cloud formations; he was able to name the various cloud types.

81. Able and the majority of average pupils in Key Stage 2 use texts effectively to predict and infer. They are able to discuss characters and their traits and compare books to others, which are similar. There is an effective intervention programme for under achieving pupils who do not have special educational needs. The school library provides a very good resource. Library skills throughout the school are very good. Pupils are able from Key Stage 1, to locate information books, use contents, index and blurb. Pupils make good use of dictionaries and thesaurus and have good research skills.

82. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are carefully planned into the curriculum. Pupils are given many opportunities for speaking and listening during the school day, particularly during plenary sessions when pupils listen very carefully to each other and are encouraged to think about and respond to each other's work. Classes have play sets and pupils enjoy reading parts in a play to each other. Role-play activities allow young pupils to improvise in a particular situation such as a doctor's surgery.

83. Pupils learn very well because teachers have very good subject knowledge and carefully plan work adapted to all pupils' needs. They have the ability to enthuse pupils.

Teachers set very high expectations. They have very good and sometimes excellent classroom organisation and behaviour management skills. Pupils therefore behave very well in class, listen carefully and are able to work independently but purposefully on tasks. Teachers make very good use of the wide range of resources available in the school and use ICT very effectively. Assessment is identified in planning. Homework is not used consistently.

84. The subject is very well led by two key stage co-ordinators. Comprehensive plans and policies are in place although the school does not have a writing policy. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the literacy hour is very well planned. Improvement in pupils' writing is a whole school target. Teachers are given good quality support and guidance. Coordinators and all staff members have undertaken extensive training, much of which has been delivered to staff by the coordinators. Monitoring of planning and teaching has been undertaken and test results analysed to identify areas for improvement. There is a portfolio of moderated written work but monitoring of standards is insufficiently developed.

MATHEMATICS

85. In the National Curriculum tests, in 2000, pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average and about the same as the results of similar schools. Whilst this is a slight drop from the first year's results, this was the first full year group of 28 pupils, compared with a small group of 11 pupils. Of the 28, three came into Year 6 very late in the year and one of them had special educational needs, specifically in mathematical areas. An analysis of this year groups' predicted scores when aged 7, shows many of them unlikely to reach the national average, when in fact they did so. Inspection findings indicate that the majority of the present pupils are reaching the required standards; indications are that many will exceed the national average in tests, later in the year. Overall, pupils are making very good progress, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able than the peer group. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below both the national average and averages for similar schools. This is a significant change from the previous year, when the results were well above the national average. There are several possible explanations. Firstly, this group was moved from many different schools, immediately after the reception year and two of them had never been to school before. Secondly, this group took the longest time to settle into the new school and continuing to be unsettled for several weeks. Thirdly, there is a large imbalance of boys and girls and this year group has the highest proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school. All of this, added to the fact that their year group had little or no influence of the National Numeracy Strategy and were taught in a mixed age class with no streaming or setting, may account for the drop in standards. Inspection findings show that this group is now beginning to catch up due to the expert teaching they receive. Inspection findings also show that the present Year 2 pupils' work is above average and early indications are that they will reverse the downward trend. This is because the teaching is very focused and of a high quality, practical and well planned.

86. The oldest pupils in the school have sufficient understanding of mathematical language and terminology to explain their reasoning and methods. Consequently, they apply their knowledge well in practical situations. The teaching is based upon this practical application and pupils say that they feel they understand better when they learn this way. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 class working on fractions. Lessons earlier in the week had indicated to the teacher that the pupils were having some problems so she used several games to practise lowest common denominator and show the relationships between decimals and fractions. This approach is well established throughout the school and all teachers emphasise practical activities rather than overemphasising formal recording. Younger pupils work on the place value of numbers and they play games to consolidate this,

putting money into purses. They have fun and work co-operatively together, taking turns whilst strengthening their knowledge and understanding of the ideas they are investigating. They know they must look at the 100's digit first, for example and explain well why 43 is larger than 34.

87. By the age of seven, most pupils are generally working confidently with numbers up to 20 and beyond. Many know and work with numbers up to 100. They add and subtract confidently and are able to discuss their ideas with their teachers and each other. They are developing very good ways of working things out, because the teaching offers so many opportunities and they demonstrate competent, confident mental agility. For example when they have to guess the teacher's "secret" number, listening to each others' questions, then deciding which digit will help them get closest. They work at a brisk pace but with time to reflect and consider answers, where appropriate. A very good example was where the pupils had ordered a long line of numbers to their satisfaction when one pupil decided it was incorrect. The teacher led, very skilfully, around the perceived problem until the pupil understood fully. In all classes, teachers make a teaching point from the pupils' answers. This is a great strength of the teaching. They do this very sensitively so that there are no mistakes, only ways to see differently. This means that all pupils will 'have a go' because they are not worried about making mistakes. They can recognise and name two and three dimensional shapes, choosing their own criteria to classify, as appropriate. They also measure time on clocks, many to quarter to and quarter past the hour, using digital and analogue faces. Because teachers make demands on all pupils, they are becoming confident and enjoy mathematics lessons, whatever their ability. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are more able than the peer group are well catered for, because the work set for them is challenging at an appropriate level.

88. By the age of eleven, pupils have a wide range of strategies for solving problems and use mathematical language accurately to explain their reasoning. Teachers have very high expectations for good work and presentation and all pupils strive to uphold this. Most pupils understand and demonstrate the value of various digits in a six or seven-figure number and many have a good understanding of multiples, percentages and decimals or how to interpret co-ordinates in the first quadrant. More able pupils are able to understand and work successfully with co-ordinates in all four quadrants. Generally pupils understand time zones, angles and square numbers, and factors. Because teachers plan very well, manage their classes so expertly and make very good use of day-to-day assessment, pupils are confident to try new strategies and evaluate their learning, in an open and enjoyable atmosphere. Relationships are very good, including pupils with other pupils, they have a very positive impact on learning. All adults have excellent relationships with the pupils and use humour well to boost confidence, to defuse potentially difficult situations and simply for fun and enjoyment. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 5 class, where the pupils were striving to beat their previous best time for a multiplication loop. They were unsuccessful, scoring an identical time at both attempts. However the teacher laughed and remarked that at least they had 'got no worse!' They rose to the challenge, vowing to be better next time.

89. Teaching was never less than good during the inspection and was often very good. Teachers also plan very good conclusions to lessons, which draw teaching points together successfully, consolidating learning. This was very well done in a Year 1 class where the teacher played a class game and asked one pupil to interrogate the others. The pupil did this with great skill and the others were able to demonstrate their new learning well. All teachers offer ample opportunities for independent thought and evaluation of the pupils' own learning. This is particularly effective in the sharing of what will be learned in the lesson at the beginning and how the pupils think they have done, by the end. Teachers make effective use of computers to aid their teaching of mathematics. Teachers ask open questions and skilfully use answers to move pupils' thinking on. A very important facet of the process is the positive attitudes, excitement and love of the subject generated by the teachers and passed on to their groups. Management of behaviour is excellent. Teachers foster self-discipline and confidence through their practical approach. However, the use and marking of homework is inconsistent and so folders and books do not always reflect the high standards taking place in practical work.

90. The subject is ably led by two knowledgeable co-ordinators, who work very well together. Their grasp of the subject is very helpful to the staff, which, in turn, has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and numeracy is well utilised across other subjects such as geography and science. However, some aspects of the monitoring process are less well thought out. Whilst teaching and planning are consistently of a high standard, there are limitations in some aspects of management, such as the consideration of gender issues and the setting and marking of appropriate homework. Overall, the inspection highlighted a willingness and capacity to succeed which is likely to lead to rising standards.

SCIENCE

91. Standards in science are above the national average at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 were above the national average and in line with average when compared with similar schools. In Key Stage 1, teacher assessments in 2000 pupils achieved standards close to the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards have been maintained for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and improved for pupils by the end of Key Stage 1.

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of using their senses to find out about the world around them. They can use their sense of smell and taste effectively to identify the different flavours of crisps and their sense of smell to identify the contents of the lunchboxes. They are able to use their sense of touch well to achieve a challenge set by the teacher to build a model without looking at any of the pieces in the bag. Another group of pupils were able to decide that the best way to find out which of their eyes is the strongest is by covering one eye and reading the letters on the chart. In Year 1, pupils can name different parts of their body and use their senses to look, listen and touch different facets of the school. Many comment constructively on what they can hear, see and touch. In Year 1, pupils find out whether a material is fluffy, furry or hard. In Year 2, pupils can name some properties of a range of common materials and sort them into sets of natural and man-made materials. Above average and average pupils know that some materials change when heated, for example water and wax. Most pupils understand that things can be moved by pulling and pushing and above average pupils can describe how the movements of a bicycle pedal make the wheels move round.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2 a high proportion of pupils of this age can investigate the effect that water has upon the weight of an object well. At least three quarters of the class know that gravity is a force. Many know that forces are measured in units called Newtons. They can select their own equipment and make decisions on how to record their results. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 know some of the properties of solids, liquids and gasses and in Year 5 were able to plan an investigation to show younger pupils that air is real and all around them. Many decide to make a simple game to explain this phenomena, for example one group placed some plastic cups on their side and blew through a straw to blow a Ping-Pong ball in to the cups. Another group explained that air is real by making a simple helicopter that would blow in the wind. They successfully predicted what would happen when the teacher held a spiral pattern over a lighted candle and what happen when a glass is put over a lighted flame. Several pupils were able to give accurate reasons for their predictions. Younger pupils in Year 3 planned an investigation to find the strongest paper. Although they are provided with a range of resources they soon realise that they have to adapt their ideas in order to have a fair test and to look for different resources to get results.

94. The quality of science teaching is very good in both key stages and this has a strongly positive impact on the standards which the pupils achieve. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan well to meet the needs of the pupils and to ensure progression of skills. They place a high emphasis on practical investigations and give pupils plenty of opportunities to plan their work. This has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Resources are always very well organised while still allowing freedom to select other materials if necessary. Teachers share objectives with pupils and return to them at the end of the lesson to assess understanding and to reinforce the key points. Behaviour management is of a very high standard but is always kept positive and low key.

95. Assessment procedures are good overall and are beginning to be used effectively to ensure individual progress and to support planning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher explained to the pupils that they were particularly focussing on the effect of water on the weight of an object because this was an area that caused pupils problems in last year's standardised tests. The co-ordinator supports her staff well in planning and teaching some of the pupils, particularly 'booster' classes. Although she has kept samples of pupils' work in science these do not indicate the attainment against national curriculum levels nor have teachers had the opportunity to discuss what is expected in each national curriculum level. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines effectively to plan activities and there is a very high emphasis on developing scientific enquiry. This impacts well on pupils' learning. Resources are good and are effectively used in lessons to support learning.

ART AND DESIGN

96. The standard of art and design in the school is above national averages in both key stages.

97. Key Stage 1 pupils know about the similarities and differences in the work of artists, they are able to use a range of materials and investigate different processes. Pupils experiment with chalk, pastels and paint and can produce colours and patterns that evoke feelings. One pupil explained that her coloured pattern made her feel peaceful. Others using red and black illustrate angry feelings. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging work. Pupils respond by achieving very well.

98. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to produce designs in the style of William Morris patterns, which link with work done on a Victorian topic. They can produce some very complex and carefully drawn designs, which they are able to paint onto fabric. This involved mixing a range of different colours and using a very fine brush to achieve the desired effect. The teacher very effectively encouraged pupils' evaluative skills. They are able to explain very clearly the difficulties they experienced in this process and how they would modify their design as a result of these. Pupils are able to recognise the different styles of artists and replicate with considerable success the, pointillism of Signac, geometric shapes of Kupka, horizontal and vertical lines of Lowry and thickly painted work of Kossof. Pupils are proud of their achievements. Some interesting work has been produced by different year groups using the 'Dazzle' programme on the computer. Pupils are encouraged to use sketchbooks to develop their drawing skills, to experiment with designs and different media. These are sound working documents. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 have a good knowledge of different artists and craftsmen from their own time and from other times and cultures. They are know about the work of Clarice Cliff and can compare her work with Greek pots. They can design their own pot using the wide range of containers on display to generate ideas. Pupils are developing a good understanding of texture and colour. Year 4 pupils are able to explain the use of their container and why it needs to be a certain shape.

99. Teaching of art and design is very good. Teachers deliver interesting lessons with enthusiasm, therefore pupils' attitudes to art and design are very positive. They listen well and sustain concentration. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, supported by the expertise of the subject coordinator for art and design, who has good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are very well planned and pupils are given a range of experiences and opportunities to work with paint, clay, fabric and other media. The way in which teachers manage pupils is excellent.

100. Art and design is very well led. An art and design policy is in place and the coordinator works with staff members to produce comprehensive plans. Coverage is ensured with topic-based grids and good support and guidance is given. While some worthwhile assessment is undertaken it is insufficiently used as a way of guiding curriculum planning. Displays throughout the school are stimulating, challenging and of a high quality. They celebrate pupils' work, cover many areas of the curriculum and are also a useful source of information.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards in design and technology across the school are above national expectations. Lesson observations, talking with pupils about their work and examining displays indicate that pupils are achieving well in this subject. Evidence of progress can be seen by comparing the work of Key Stage 1 pupils, who have designed and made vehicles using wheels, and axles, with that of Key Stage 2 pupils, who have designed and made toy models. The older pupils work shows increased sophistication, a cam mechanism was used and design criteria and success criteria were utilized to help them to evaluate their models.

102. In studying puppets and in particular marionettes, Key Stage 1 pupils were able to investigate how to make a teddy bear's arm/hand move without touching it. Teachers set challenging tasks with very good differentiation for the differing abilities in the class. Pupils achieved well. Except for lower attaining pupils they were able to plan their work, carry out the task and explain what they had done and what they would change in the future. Able pupils were able to use wood dowel strips to extend the task to attach string to a control. They were also able to increase the control element to movement of feet. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to use construction kits to build models and some can follow instructions. They are able to talk about the hinge joints and their purpose. Two pupils were seen carefully discussing a problem, then adapting their model appropriately.

103. Pupils in Key Stage 2 were able to investigate and evaluate bread samples. Pupils are developing their understanding of sensory analysis. They are able to explore the sensory qualities of bread, are aware of the need for hygiene when handling food, use the results of tests to decide what sort of bread they wish to make and use research skills to find information on bread. They collected data about various bread samples, including taste, ingredients and cooking methods. Older pupils can explain clearly how they constructed models, what difficulties they experienced and what they would change. They used a practice model to try out their ideas.

104. Teaching of design and technology is very good. Teachers use effective questioning strategies to develop pupils' thinking and understanding. They have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and well structured. Good classroom organisation and excellent pupil management help pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy design and technology, are able to work collaboratively and sustain concentration.

105. Design and technology is well led. The coordinator is well qualified and experienced in the subject. There is a comprehensive policy in place and medium term plans include schemes of work. The coordinator, in consultation with staff, plans for design and technology across the key stages. Plans are checked carefully and assessment areas identified. Some observation of teaching has been done but this is limited. A portfolio of design and technology objects is being collected but these are not yet annotated or levelled.

GEOGRAPHY

106. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above what is found nationally. Pupils enter the school at the age of 4 with good aptitudes and make good progress. They can use their own observations in recognising and explaining human activities in places beyond the immediate locality. They use local maps with ease born of practice so that many can, for example, recognise simple patterns in land use in local urban areas. Books are neat; pupils take pride in presenting their work well, and encouraging marking from teachers helps this. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are also above national averages. These pupils entered school at levels of attainment below national expectations. Pupils are able to gather data about the functions of the centre of Worcester and can present this information in a variety of ways, showing good numeracy skills. Pupils can ask relevant geographical questions and are starting to collect and record evidence. They show good literacy skills in the extended writing done, for example, to sum up the results of field trips. The maps that they draw are clear and display information effectively; most know the differences in map scales and about a third of Year 6 pupils can select the best scale to use when presenting information in this way. Presentation of work is very good. Pupils are familiar with a range of map types and use atlases effectively.

107. Fieldwork has a positive impact on the way in which pupils develop geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. The local environment has rich examples to illustrate work done on rivers, settlement and the local facilities and the school carefully uses this resource. Trips are carefully planned by teachers so that pupils know what is expected of them and get the most from the experience. This is shown by the quality of work, which is produced after the visits. The very good geography teaching in Key Stage 1 ensures that all lessons are purposeful occasions; work is carefully planned so that all pupils have the correct degree of challenge. Teachers have a very good rapport with pupils, who are gently but effectively managed. The pupils display a very positive work ethic from the youngest age. There is virtually no calling out; pupils of all ages move quickly and in near silence into groups when told and get down to their tasks straight away. This ensures that lessons have a brisk pace. Pupils' interest, concentration and independence are high, so that they learn quickly.

Due to the school timetable, no teaching of geography was seen in Key Stage 2. However, analysis of work reveals similar qualities; throughout the school, work is well marked to school guidelines and encourages the good standards of work seen in pupils' books.

108. Because work is so well planned to cater for all pupils' needs, all groups of pupils can achieve their full potential. For example, Year 6 pupils work on the city of Worcester shows that all abilities had stimulating and challenging tasks and so took considerable pride in their 'write-ups'. They were able to produce good standards of work commensurate with their abilities. All pupils lack sufficient knowledge of distant places. There are too few world maps and globes on display and teaching does not emphasise this aspect sufficiently.

109. The school has good resources for the teaching of geography; it was well equipped on opening and these resources have a positive impact on learning. There is a very good range of interesting, modern books in the school library, which stimulates pupils' interest. However, there are too few opportunities to use these resources for research; homework is not regularly set. Teachers show good subject knowledge, they use this to plan in the most effective way. Support staff are carefully deployed to ensure that the flow of the lesson for all pupils is uninterrupted. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson on people who help us, the learning assistant was referred to as a helper and later was able to put this role into action. She used her joint planning with the class teacher in assisting one group of pupils to develop their understanding of this topic.

110. Policy outlines for the subject lack detail, but medium term plans are done to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines, are monitored by the head teacher and effectively ensure that the subject conforms to Curriculum 2000. There is too little effective, systematic assessment of the subject; no portfolios of pupils' work are held. The school acknowledges that this is a priority for the coming year. The head teacher monitors teaching in this, as in all subjects.

HISTORY

111. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reach standards above what is expected at this age. They enter the school with above average levels of knowledge and understanding. They have a good sense of historical time; Year 2 pupils know that 1756 is 'a long time ago' and are aware of a number of significant differences between the past and the present. They could use a variety of information sources to answer questions about the past. They show a growing awareness of features of the lives of significant men and women from the past, such as Mozart. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attain above average standards; when they entered school their attainment was below national averages. In their work on the Victorian era most could define and use artefacts in their studies. They showed good knowledge of elements of Victorian social history when being taught how to waltz in a physical education lesson. Because they read well they can use various source materials and about half were able to evaluate elements of historical change in this era. Pupils write fluently. At both key stages presentation of work is good; it shows that pupils take considerable pride in their work.

112. Throughout the school the study of history is linked with other subjects, to the benefit of pupils' learning across the curriculum. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils undertook an investigation of the life of Mozart using 'artefacts' from his life. These were 'delivered', at the last minute to the classroom. Pupils were agog. This excellent lesson saw the teacher in role, developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical evidence and of a significant figure in the development of music. The very good quality teaching of history at both key stages excites strong pupil interest across all ages in the school. The wide variety of excellently planned lesson activities keeps concentration and enthusiasm up. In an excellent lesson to Years 2 and 3 researching Ancient Greece, pupils started the lesson doing a jigsaw

puzzle before moving onto a range of investigative activities using pictures, artefacts and ICT. They were fascinated, absorbed in their work and learnt a great deal. Skilled teaching, including excellent pupil management, fosters very positive attitudes amongst pupils. They show great enjoyment in their work, concentrate well showing strong independence. This is clearly beneficial to their learning.

113. Such is the quality of teacher's planning, including planning the deployment of support staff, that all pupils have the correct degree of challenge in lessons and achieve very well. Teachers hold and know pupils' individual education plans and use these skilfully in setting group work of the correct standard and in questioning different groups of pupils. Thus all groups of pupils have appropriate access to lessons.

114. The high expectations of teachers and their pupil management skills form the basis for the very good quality of learning in history. Pupils regularly undertake trips to sites of historical significance. As a direct result of these strengths, pupils are stimulated by the subject. So they work with unflagging productivity and pace throughout lessons. Good consolidation of work in lessons means that they have very good knowledge of their own learning. Good resources, especially in the school library also make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, homework is not sufficiently recognised and used as a useful adjunct to pupils' learning.

115. Outline policies are in place, but the subject is insufficiently monitored. As a result medium term planning, while conforming broadly to the guidelines of the Curriculum and Qualifications Authority, has inconsistencies. Curriculum 2000 is being put into place as a rolling programme across two years. Assessment of the subject has some inconsistencies and is not recorded systematically; improvements in these areas are outlined in the next years' school development plan. History uses ICT well, for example pupils used an internet site to investigate the background to a number of Victorian artefacts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Provision for ICT is very good and standards are above expectations at the end of both key stages. This is largely due to the high standard of teaching. Staff are skilful in the use of technology and are able to communicate this to their pupils. It is planned and integrated into all areas of the curriculum. Skills are taught discretely to increase understanding and proficiency in handling the programmes and devices, and work is assessed on a regular basis.

117. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are adept at using the machines and the programmes well. They can design things like castles, using tools to create additional features. They are able to handle data and make graphs from their results. They can draw scenes such as seascapes and use the spray gun to good effect. They write labels and stories, editing their text and use control and modelling software to design and make maps of a park area. In a Year 2 lesson there was evident delight and good concentration as younger pupils logged on to the networked system and confidently moved through files. The excitement and wonder generated as pupils brought up the word-bank was infectious in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils were delighted when the lists they had been working on in science came up to help them write in a word processing exercise. This was well introduced to the pupils by the teacher, who demonstrated the main points competently, showing them how they could use the headphones to play back what they had written. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those more able than the peer group, are able to work through the tasks set because all pupils are challenged at an appropriate level by the activities chosen for them.

118. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can use technical language correctly, because their teachers explain, demonstrate and instruct them well, using correct terminology themselves. Pupils make very effective use of different fonts in a range of sizes and colours, as well as Word Art and this enhances their work in several subjects. They use computers to write poetry and also accounts of a visit to Worcester Cathedral. They are able to use databases to help them write questionnaires and record results as pie charts as well as graphs. They make a collective list of useful websites they have found and write up work on fruits and seeds from information on the Internet and they use programs to enhance a geography project, for example to convert the currencies of European countries. Pupils can use desktop publishing suites to import previously scanned images and to create text using Word Art to make a document such as a wanted poster, resume or a "guess who" quiz. They are able to manipulate their images and texts well, learning that the imported pictures could be scaled up or down. They also discovered the pitfalls of using a picture that had been scanned incorrectly aligned on the scanner bed. Teaching is very good, using all the points of difficulty in a positive way so that pupils learned from them and became more confident to try again. Teachers provide very good prompt sheets and expect pupils to follow them, for basic guidance. If they get stuck, pupils usually try to solve the problems, philosophically and this adds greatly to their independence. In a Year 3 and 4 pupils were using the school email system to send and receive messages. They were self-controlled and confident with the technique, sharing the computers equitably. The teaching was effective and well organised, ensuring that excited pupils, some working at a distance, stayed focused on the activity.

119. The school opened with high quality equipment, but has worked hard to ensure that all members of the school "family" have the very best use from it. Teachers use the technology easily and seamlessly to support lessons and to teach specific skills. They are also honing their own competence, consistently to improve. Staff have confidence to integrate the technology into their teaching and this enthusiasm is reflected in the learning of the pupils. They tackle all the programmes of study equally well and have fun at the same time. The 'Roamer' robot programmable vehicle was to be found dressed up as a story character all week.

120. Staff are very ably supported by the co-ordinator, who is extremely well organised and knowledgeable. He has worked out the scheme of work, which matches all the topics to be taught, as well as devising tasks to teach skills and assess technical capability in ICT itself. Because this is so well structured, everyone understands and work builds systematically for the pupils. Assessment material is also shared with parents, so they can see the types of activities being completed by their children. The enthusiasm and commitment of the co-ordinator are effective in enabling the school to carry out planned developments successfully and the subject to advance rapidly, to keep pace with government initiatives and curricular demands.

MUSIC

121. Standards of work in music are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is mainly due to the specialist teacher, which the school utilises on a part-time basis. She sees all the groups for an hour's lesson during the week and all aspects of the National Curriculum for music are covered during that session. The work is usually based around a theme where pupils sing, compose and perform music related to that topic. Two examples were seen during the inspection, both with older pupils.

122. No teaching was seen with younger pupils but they were interviewed and were most enthusiastic about their work. Pupils in Year 2 like to play and sing as well as listen to music. They often listen then make patterns and pictures of the noises on paper. They were able to describe making sounds with instruments of their own choice and how the effects would be made appropriately for their notation. They then expressed delight and excitement as the teacher told a story, for example of a haunted house and they had to make the sound effects to add to the telling. Pupils are enthusiastic and know that they are learning to play and think about music 'properly', by which they mean they must consider their performance and compose well, in order to make it sound good. This is mature analysis of their work. The love of music and pride in performance is carried through the year because they already know that they want to learn an instrument and to join music club when they are old enough. Pupils play with good rhythm and an eye on the conductor, keep to a steady beat, when appropriate and use imagination well.

123. A Year 6 lesson had the theme of the Victorians. After a lively, humorous introductory warm-up of music hall songs with actions, the pupils organised themselves into an orchestra, choosing tuned or untuned percussion, keyboards, recorders and two played their strings. The whole group read the music and played their parts very well. After sectional practice that was very well disciplined and self-controlled, a performance was done, with rhythmic ostinato, good intonation and good rhythmic awareness, as well as a sense of listening to the whole group and 'fitting in'. Because the teacher has the group so well trained, they organised themselves with a minimum of effort and could discuss how the music should stop. The support from the teacher is sensitive but critical, with a very good balance of suggestion and problem solving. The pupils rise to the challenge very well. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson pupils worked on a theme of the river through Worcester with sounds such as the ducks, the racetrack, swans, the Cathedral and the river itself. Having chosen instruments suitable to their group, they worked on their pieces, composing, practising and refining effectively. Pupils were always well self-controlled. As they performed separately, they all had the opportunity to discuss what they liked or what could be altered, and some of the advice was taken. The story of the river's day was then 'told' in music, as the teacher accompanied the groups and called out the conducting instructions. After this, all percussion was removed and all the pupils played the recorder, first in practice and then to musical accompaniment. They played to various rhythms with good intonation and sense of the beat, occasionally with appropriate dynamics. The lesson ended on an even livelier note as they sang and used body parts to play. The experience was very positive and very well planned by the teacher, whose drive, enthusiasm and love of subject was clearly communicated to the pupils.

124. The school has a good set of instruments, which are still very new. The range is very broad and pupils have a wide choice of tuned and untuned percussion from which to select for their composition and performance. The specialist teaching ensures that skills are taught and built up in good order and the teacher supports the rest of the staff with ideas for their own development. At present, no other teachers are teaching their own sessions and the building is not conducive to lessons taking place in the classrooms, shared and open as these areas are. This puts pressure on the use of the hall, which is also a large space and not best in acoustics for music teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Standards in physical education are above national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with them at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are making good progress in developing their physical education skills, particularly in gymnastics. The present Year 6 have had less time in the school to benefit from the good teaching and provision of the school.

126. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are confident to move around the room using different parts of their body. They can perform rocking and rolling movements with increasing skill and control. They practise to improve and by the end of the lesson are able to put two movements together to make a simple sequence. They show good awareness of space and of each other. All pupils make very good progress in their learning because of the very good subject knowledge of the teacher, who gives very good demonstrations to the pupils. Through careful questioning and prompting the teachers help pupils to explain what they particularly liked about each other's performances and what is needed to improve further. This supports learning well.

127. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to use their skills effectively to move in basic waltz rhythm. Most demonstrate good levels of precision in their performance. By the end of the key stage 90 percent of pupils can swim a minimum of twenty-five metres and are satisfactorily developing appropriate personal survival skills. In Years 3 and 4, pupils move confidently and over half the class can perform a forward roll with increasing control. They jump from one foot to two feet with good balance and use their skills effectively on the apparatus. Pupils take the apparatus out and put it away safely with very little fuss. Pupils are well supported by good teaching, which impacts well on their learning. Lessons are well planned and teachers ensure that pupils fully understand the purpose of warming-up and cooling down at the start and end of each session. Praise is used very well to raise self-esteem and ensure appropriate behaviour during lessons. All instructions are clear and in turn pupils respond very well by listening carefully and following instructions. Attitudes in lessons are often very good. This has a positive impact on their learning.

128. The two co-ordinators are very enthusiastic and support colleagues well in developing a scheme of work to ensure good progression of skills. They have organised very good in-service training for staff to develop their own expertise in dance skills. Other training is planned for developing gymnastic and athletic skills. Although parents expressed concerns about the quality of attainment and provision in physical education, the inspection team was unable to find evidence to substantiate their concerns. The school often involves local professionals to support them with developing pupils' skills such as Worcester County Cricket Club. There is a very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities provided for the pupils but at present there are no matches arranged with other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. Standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning.

130. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to understand the meaning, purpose and symbolism of a Christening ceremony. They know that after pouring special water on the baby's head the vicar puts a sign of a cross on the baby's forehead. They are aware that this shows that the baby has become a member of God's family. Approximately half the pupils recall that the significance of the candle being given to the baby is to show that God is the light of the world. Most pupils have a good understanding of the role of "Godparents". Teachers use an invitation for one of the teachers to be a godparent very well to explain the

importance of the role to the pupils. This has a positive impact on their learning. Good use is made of a short video of a baptism to explain the ceremony to the pupils and this is reinforced well by the teachers through a role-play activity. The teachers' good subject knowledge and sensitive approach enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Good links were made with a recent visit to the local church when pupils were able to see a font where babies are baptised. Resources are well organised and used well. There is an attractive display of "Rites of Passage", including photographs of a christening and a gown worn at a christening by a baby, in the corridor, which supports learning well.

131. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know and understand some of the practices and customs of people of other faiths as well as Christianity and identify some similarities and differences between religions. In Years 5 and 6, pupils can name several special books used by people of different faiths and know that the Bible is an important book used by Christians. Good strategies are used effectively by the teacher to demonstrate the order and groupings of the books in the Bible. There is also a display of Bibles and pictures of other special books, which the teacher referred to during the lesson. This had a positive impact on pupils' learning. In Years 3 and 4, pupils know the importance of using a "prayer mat" to Muslims when they are away from a Mosque. They understand that there are certain traditional designs for prayer mats. They know that they must not draw people or animals on the mats. However they are less secure in understanding that there are people in Britain who practice the Muslim faith and regularly attend a mosque to worship.

132. The quality of teaching religious education is good and teachers plan effectively with a two-year cycle of topics to ensure continuity and progression of skills, knowledge and understanding. The newly appointed coordinator has good subject knowledge and is very enthusiastic. She has reviewed topics to ensure that they meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and produced a set of assessment statements to support the teachers in ensuring that pupils are making sufficient progress in their learning. However these statements have yet to be discussed with all staff before implementation. Resources are good and are used effectively by teachers. The school uses the facilities of the local church well to support learning but has yet to include visits to places of worship for other religions in their programme. Learning is enhanced by good displays around the school of topics such as Divali and significant figures like Moses.