

ERRATUM

Page 21, **PARTC: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

The number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils should be **49**.

INSPECTION REPORT

St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Brighton

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique reference number 114545:

Headteacher: Sharon-Marie Coombes

Reporting inspector: David Tytler

Dates of inspection: 12th – 15th March 2001

Inspection number:
230876

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: | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Name of headteacher: | Ms Sharon-Marie Coombes |
| School address: | Manor Road Whitehawk Brighton East Sussex |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Fr. A. Manson-Brailsford |
| Date of previous inspection: | April 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 8990 | David Tytler | <i>Registered inspector</i> | | How high are standards? What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? |
| 9092 | Ron Elam | <i>Lay inspector</i> | | Pupils' attitudes and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and resources. |
| 20063 | Gerry Slamon | <i>Team inspector</i> | Special educational needs; English; Music; Physical education; English as an additional language. | Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. |
| 1723 | Michael Milton | <i>Team inspector</i> | Mathematics; Information and communication technology; History; Geography. | What does the school offer its pupils? The assessment aspect of care of pupils. |
| 7336 | Lindsay Howard | <i>Team inspector</i> | Under-fives; Equal opportunities; Science; Art; Design and technology. | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Mark's C of E Primary School is slightly smaller than most primary schools, with 204 pupils aged three to eleven, with more boys than girls. In the Foundation Stage, 24 children attend the Nursery in the morning and 23 in the afternoon. Eleven children are in the Reception class part-time with 19 attending full-time. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, The percentage having special educational needs, including statements, is significantly higher than average. Five pupils have English as an additional language. The school has been through a period of considerable instability, particularly in the management and the teaching staff. When pupils enter the nursery, many have significant weaknesses in their language skills and their attainment is below that expected nationally for children of their age by the time they start statutory schooling. Many still have significant weaknesses in their language skills. The school is part of an Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

An inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in October 1998 took the school out of special measures but found that serious weaknesses remained. This is no longer the case. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to address these weaknesses and has already overseen a number of much needed changes. Whilst academic standards are slowly beginning to rise, they remain too low, particularly in Key Stage 2 and in literacy across the school. This is, in part, due to the disruption caused to teaching and learning in previous years by the large number of staff changes. The quality of teaching during the inspection was found to be nearly always satisfactory and often good, with some very good examples. The school has made sound progress in addressing the key issues of the last inspection and no longer has serious weaknesses, but more needs to be done in significant areas of its work. When account is taken of all these factors, the school is now providing satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The recently appointed headteacher provides strong, clear and determined leadership.
- Pupils' social and moral development is good and their behaviour well managed.
- Children get a flying start to their education in the nursery and reception.
- A wide-range of high quality out-of-school activities is provided.
- All adults in the school give pupils a high standard of care.
- Particularly good use is made of the community to widen the experiences of pupils and support their personal development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards throughout the school, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology (ICT).
- Curriculum planning to ensure all aspects of information technology are covered.
- The effectiveness of senior and middle managers.
- The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning and the individual needs of pupils.
- The partnership with parents.
- Attendance.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1998. All the key issues have been addressed, although standards remain too low. The low standards in literacy adversely affect standards in other subjects. Instability in the senior management and teaching staff until very recently has resulted in pupils making slower progress than they should. The proportion of good or better teaching seen during the inspection was higher than at the time of the last report and teachers have a good understanding of the effect their teaching has on learning. The school has adopted national schemes for all subjects to enable pupils to make steady progress and the headteacher, with the support of the governing body, has drawn up an action plan focused on school improvement. Attendance remains well below the national average.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|--------------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | all schools | | | Similar schools | |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 | |
| English | E | E* | E* | E | <i>well above</i> A* |
| Mathematics | E* | E* | E* | E* | <i>average</i> A |
| Science | E | E | E* | E* | <i>above average</i> B |
| | | | | | <i>average</i> C |
| | | | | | <i>below average</i> D |
| | | | | | <i>well below average</i> E |

The results in last year's national tests for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science put the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. The school did not meet its targets for pupils to gain the expected levels in last year's national tests in English and mathematics. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards being achieved by the current Year 6 are an improvement

on last year's tests results in English and

mathematics, although they remain well below those expected nationally for children of their age. Standards in science have improved, although they remain below national expectations. Standards in ICT are also below. Strategies to raise standards are having an impact, but are too recent to have raised standards over time.

PUPILS ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Most pupils have positive attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to it and many take advantage of the opportunities it offers. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour in classes is mostly good, and pupils respond well to the behaviour management skills of teachers. On a few occasions behaviour falls below the high standards expected by the school. Behaviour at lunchtime, breaks and around the school is satisfactory. |
| Personal development and relationships | The personal development of pupils is sound, although there are too few opportunities for pupils to work independently or show initiative. Relationships between pupils and adults are good |
| Attendance | Well below the national average and adversely affecting standards. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen: 52 | Good | Good | Satisfactory |

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

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, with many good examples seen. Overall, teaching was satisfactory in 38 per cent of lessons, good in 48 per cent and very good in 8 per cent. Unsatisfactory teaching was found in three lessons (6 per cent). In the Foundation Stage, teaching was good in six of the nine lessons seen and satisfactory in three. In Key Stage 1, teaching was good or very good in 71 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 29 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In Key Stage 2, teaching was good or very good in 44 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 45 per cent. It was unsatisfactory in three lessons (10 per cent). In the lessons seen, the quality of learning matched the teaching, which is beginning to meet the needs of all pupils. Over recent years, however, the large number of staff changes and instability in the management of the school has meant that many pupils have not made the progress they should. The teaching of English and mathematics during the inspection was satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The curriculum is broad and balanced with an appropriate focus on the teaching of English and mathematics. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of high quality out-of-school activities. The curriculum is enhanced through good links with the community. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress towards the targets of their individual education plans. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The moral and social development of pupils is good; their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. More could be done to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Pastoral care is of high quality. Arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do are sound, but the findings are not yet used consistently to plan the curriculum or to provide for the individual needs of pupils. |

The instability in the school in recent years has shaken the confidence of parents. Rebuilding an effective partnership with them is a priority of the headteacher in order to support the learning of their children at home and in school. The school is not meeting the statutory requirements for the teaching of ICT largely due to ineffective subject management in the past.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The newly appointed, vigorous and committed headteacher is providing the impetus that has set the school on a clear path of improvement. Most of the appointments to posts of responsibility are too recent, however, to have had any significant impact over time. The school is currently without a deputy headteacher. |
| How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities | Except for its failure last year to provide an annual report for parents or to ensure all elements of information technology are taught, With the exception of an annual report to parents and the provision of all aspects of information technology, the governing body fulfils its statutory duties. Governors are continuing to develop a role in shaping the direction of the school. Their most important recent decision has been the appointment of the new headteacher. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The new headteacher has introduced very effective methods for monitoring and developing the quality of teaching. School performance is judged by senior staff against a clear, rapidly prepared, action plan. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good use is made of the grants and other resources available to school. Whilst there were many good examples seen of learning support assistants working constructively with teachers and giving good help to pupils, this was |

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | not always the case. |
|--|----------------------|

The school has faced considerable difficulties recently in establishing a stable management and teaching staff. The newly appointed headteacher has made considerable effort to ensure that the school is fully staffed with suitable teachers and she has currently been successful. However, five of the staff are on temporary contracts. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources for learning are adequate in most subjects. The recently refurbished library is an asset to the school. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value to all aspects of its work in order to improve its overall performance.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. • Their children enjoy coming to school. • Their children are expected to work hard and do their best. • The teaching is good. • They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The welcome the school gives to parents. • The partnership with parents. • Behaviour. • Extra-curricular activities. |

Inspectors agreed with the positive views of the majority of parents. Inspection evidence also showed that the behaviour of pupils is satisfactory and often good, particularly in lessons, and that the school provides a good range of high quality out-of-school activities. Homework, however, is inconsistent in both the amount given and in the way that it is set and the policy is to be reviewed. The headteacher is also seeking ways to improve the partnership with parents as a matter of urgency and is keen to welcome parents into school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards are slowly beginning to rise, particularly in Key Stage 2, but they still remain unacceptably low. The school did not meet its targets for pupils to gain the expected levels in last year's national tests in English and mathematics. The school has a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs and this has an adverse affect on standards.
2. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards being achieved by the current Year 6 are an improvement on last year's tests results in English and mathematics, although they remain well below that expected nationally for children of their age. Standards in science have improved, although they remain below national expectations. Standards in ICT are also below, but recent changes in the curriculum and management of the subject leave it well placed to raise standards.
3. The recently appointed headteacher is providing the impetus for much needed school improvement, focusing on the raising of standards. She has the support of senior staff, teachers and governors for the improvement strategies that have been introduced and for those that are planned. Changes that have already taken place, however, are too recent to have had a significant impact on standards. Due to some unsatisfactory teaching in the past, and to instability in the management and teaching staff over the last two years, many pupils have not made the progress they should.
4. Evidence gathered during the inspection showed that many children enter the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing, letter knowledge and mathematics. Formal assessments of children who show signs of language and communication problems indicate that a large number have significant language delay, poor articulation or poorly developed vocabularies. Children make good progress in the nursery, but still enter the reception class with baseline scores that are in the lowest 25 per cent of the local authority's schools. Children continue to make good progress in the reception class, so that, by the time they reach their fifth birthday, about half are well on course to achieve all the early learning goals before they leave the reception class. The remainder are unlikely to reach these goals in communication, language and literature and mathematics.
5. In English, standards are well below those expected nationally for children aged 7 and 11. The school's own analysis of data, the work seen and the lessons observed, indicate that whilst standards are rising, they remain too low. Standards of the pupils currently in Year 2 in speaking, reading and writing remain well below average as do the standards in the current Year 6 in speaking, comprehension and writing.
6. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards in mathematics for the pupils in the current Year 2 remain well below what is expected nationally for seven year olds, matching the results in last year's national tests. The results in last year's tests for 11 year olds were in the lowest 5 per cent of schools. A scrutiny of work and lesson observations show that standards for pupils

currently in Year 6 are higher but still well below national averages.

7. In science, last year's Year 2 teacher assessments indicate that standards achieved by seven-year-olds are well below the national average but close to that found in similar schools. Results in the national science tests for 11 year olds show that standards remain in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that standards have risen in both key stages but remain below what is expected nationally for children of their age. A few pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach the higher Level 5, a considerable improvement on previous years.

8. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected nationally for children aged 7 and 11, although the school has introduced changes which should leave it well placed to raise standards.

9. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are identified early, and when they receive specific support, they make good progress in relation to their individual education plans. In lessons where there is no support, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Disruptions to pupils' learning through frequent staff changes over the past four years has meant that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have not achieved the standards of which they were capable.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

10. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour continue to be at least satisfactory and very often good as pupils respond well to the management skills of teachers. Attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory in 21 per cent of lessons, good in 50 per cent, very good in 23 per cent, and fell below the high standards expected by the school in three lessons (6 per cent). The pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships with each other and adults are strengths of the school.

11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes to learning throughout the school. They often concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing, as was seen in a Year 6 science lesson investigating the effect of air resistance. Pupils confidently answer questions in front of their classmates when, for example, seeing the effect of adding 'e' to the end of word in a Year 2 literacy lesson. Reception pupils showed great enthusiasm, joining in with suggestions when listening to the story of *Rosie's Walk*. In a Year 1 lesson, taken by a visiting police officer, pupils were eager to answer questions and prepared to contribute their ideas. In most classes pupils generally settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest, even when not being directly supported by adults in the classroom. Nevertheless, in some lessons seen in Key Stage 2, a few pupils lost interest and did not pay full attention to the teacher.

12. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. Pupils generally get on well with each other when playing games at break and lunch times. In the classroom, the youngest do not disturb each other when sitting close together on the carpet and they know to put up their hands to answer questions. Year 2 pupils and visiting helpers from a local company interacted well with each other at lunchtime when playing mathematical games. Good

co-operation was seen when Year 5 pupils were working in groups evaluating the effectiveness of the wrappers on chocolate bars in a design and technology lesson. Boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work together very well when doing group work in the classroom and when playing at break and lunch times.

13. Pupils' personal development is good. Children in the nursery independently find their name cards for registration and choose an activity to start the day. They can also put on aprons, fetch the materials they need and put equipment away. Year 5 pupils showed respect for the beliefs of others during a discussion on the Muslim religion and Year 2 pupils are starting to understand the values of others, as was seen in a history lesson on Florence Nightingale. Year 6 pupils have various responsibilities around the school, such as helping during assembly and moving furniture in the hall, and they take them seriously. Pupils throughout the school are starting to use their initiative in, for example, moving around the classroom. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning.

14. Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory in the classroom, and at play and lunch times, with the great majority behaving well in lessons. They are open, polite to adults, courteous and welcoming to visitors, and move sensibly around the building, although they do sometimes run when unsupervised. Pupils show respect for property when, for example, using the computers, and Year 1 pupils were seen to get resources sensibly when comparing numbers in a numeracy lesson.

15. In a few of the lessons seen in the upper years of the school, however, teaching and learning were limited by the inappropriate behaviour of a few boys. Some call out or wander round the room and the teacher has to work hard to regain their interest. Others, when working by themselves or in groups, ignore those who are not behaving well. No bullying was seen during the inspection and the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any aggressive behaviour that may take place. Some play fighting was seen in the playground, due in part to the lack of games and other activities. In the last school year there was a high number of exclusions for extremely poor behaviour. This year, however, has seen a marked improvement, with the number reduced from 21 to 4.

16. Most parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire said that their children enjoy school. Nevertheless, attendance continues to be well below the national average for primary schools and absence impedes pupils' progress. Unauthorised absence is above the national average, although the school has good procedures for obtaining reasons from parents. Punctuality is generally good and has improved since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, with many good examples seen. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Across the school, teaching was satisfactory in 38 per cent of lessons, good in 48 per cent and very good in 8 per cent. Three lessons were unsatisfactory (6 per cent). In the Foundation Stage, teaching was good in six of the nine lessons seen and satisfactory in three. In Key

Stage 1, teaching was good or very good in 71 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 29 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In Key Stage 2, teaching was good or very good in 44 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 45 per cent. It was unsatisfactory in three lessons (10 per cent).

18. In the lessons seen, the quality of learning matched the teaching. Over recent years, however, the large number of changes in the teaching staff and instability in the management of the school has meant that many pupils have not made the progress they should.

19. The teaching of English and mathematics during the inspection was satisfactory. In English, the teachers' good pupil management skills throughout the school allow them to focus effectively on guided reading groups during literacy lessons. In a few lessons, teachers do not always make effective use of the National Literacy Strategy. In mathematics, there is some very clear and effective teaching. Teachers make good use of resources to ensure that all pupils are involved in learning. In the best lessons, teachers use different questions for particular pupils so that all are challenged during the mental starter and encouraged to think for themselves. During group work, the tasks set for pupils are always well matched to their differing needs.

20. The quality of teaching and learning for the under-fives is always satisfactory and mostly good, as it was at the time of the 1997 inspection. Day-to-day assessment is good and teachers use the information gathered to plan suitable activities for groups and individuals. All the adults work well together to provide a curriculum that is well matched to individual needs. Teachers make good use of time and resources, including support staff. The teaching of multi-cultural education is limited by a lack of suitable resources.

21. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are sound in Key Stage 1 but was less secure in some Key Stage 2 lessons. In a good Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher's good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy enabled pupils to make good progress as a result of a range of activities that engaged their interest. In an otherwise satisfactory Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, the progress of pupils was limited by the teacher's insecure knowledge of the numeracy strategy.

22. The teaching of basic skills, including ICT, is sound at both key stages. Year 1 pupils made good progress in a well-planned ICT lesson which ensured that pupils met the learning objectives of understanding how to give and follow instructions. Teachers plan very effectively in Key Stage 1, whilst planning is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In a good Year 6 science lesson, the clear and detailed planning enabled all pupils, including the less able, to make good gains in their understanding of what makes a fair test.

23. In both key stages, teachers' expectations behaviour are high, whilst their expectations of what pupils can achieve are satisfactory. In a very good Year 1 science lesson, the teacher made her high expectations of pupils' work rate explicit and they responded accordingly. In lessons which were otherwise judged to be satisfactory, teachers' expectations of what pupils could do were not high enough. As a result, their lessons lacked a sufficient level of challenge, particularly for the higher attainers. In an unsatisfactory Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, too little attention was given to lower attaining pupils, leaving them to their own devices rather than encouraging them to achieve well.

24. Teaching methods were always effective in Key Stage 1 in engaging pupils' interest and keeping them intrigued, but this was not always the case in Key Stage 2. In a very good Year 1 science lesson on pushing and pulling, a range of activities built on what pupils already knew and could do. They enjoyed their learning and were keen to explain what made individual toys move and stop. In a Key Stage 2 music lesson, however, pupils lost interest in the lesson as too much time was spent on one activity.
25. Pupils were well managed throughout the school and this makes an important contribution to the progress pupils make. In a very good Year 5 mathematics lesson, the extremely effective management of pupils ensured that they took responsibility for their own behaviour, and enable them to make good gains in their learning.
26. Teachers make good use of time, support staff and resources in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory use of them in Key Stage 2. Learning support assistants are used consistently well in Key Stage 1. In a good Year 1 literacy lesson, less able pupils were given good help throughout the lesson by the support assistants, who knew clearly what was required. In a few Key Stage 2 lessons, class assistants were not always pro-active, in seeking how best to aid teaching and learning and then giving help unasked.
27. Teachers in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory use of questions to check the quality of learning throughout lessons, adjusting their teaching and subsequent planning to meet the needs of individuals and of groups of pupils. In a good Year 2 history lesson, pupils responded well to the teacher's regular questioning to check their understanding. As a result, pupils extended their vocabulary and made good gains in their knowledge about the life and work of Florence Nightingale.
28. The learning support assistants completed assessment sheets on individual pupils which were accurate and used to inform planning. In Key Stage 2, however, teachers do not make enough use of assessment to give them good information on the progress of their pupils. In an otherwise satisfactory Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, the final review session was used only to review what had been taught, rather than what had been learnt.
29. Homework is used satisfactorily in Key Stage 1 to support and extend learning in the classroom. In Key Stage 2, however, the use of homework is inconsistent, both in the frequency with which it is set and the amount that is expected.
30. Unsatisfactory lessons were characterised by weak subject knowledge, teaching methods which did not engage the pupils' interest and work that was not matched to the pupils' prior attainment. As a result, pupils became bored and restless, and made few gains in their learning.
31. Planning is undertaken in partnership with class teachers to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Detailed planning ensures consistent links between mainstream staff and the support staff. Most class teachers are new to the school, as is the co-ordinator for special needs. The school has identified the need to train teachers in setting clear, precise targets in pupils' individual educational plans, and to make them more aware of

the specific needs of pupils whose first language is not English. In lessons, teachers give careful explanations to help these pupils understand what they are to do. Most teachers use support staff well in lessons. Communication between teachers and support staff is generally effective and this enhances learning.

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

32. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced, as the school is following the Foundation Stage curriculum, the national strategies for literacy and numeracy at Key Stages 1 and 2, and the national guidance for other subjects. The Education Action Zone has enabled the school to broaden its curriculum by, for example, providing outdoor pursuits for Year 5 and specialist dance teaching for Year 4. Some aspects of the curriculum require greater emphasis, such as using and applying mathematics, and planning systematically for the development of pupils' speaking skills. The school has recently begun to follow national guidance for the teaching of ICT, but it does not yet meet all statutory requirements.

33. Important improvements to the planning of the curriculum since last September have addressed the weaknesses identified by the previous inspection. For example, a good new format for weekly planning has been adopted and planning for literacy and special educational needs has been improved. The well-structured, detailed weekly plans include learning objectives, the matching of work to pupils' differing levels of attainment and the identification of assessment opportunities. There is a key stage overview of the curriculum for each subject. Although there have been weaknesses in the past, provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. The school provides equality of opportunity for all pupils, although in one year, some pupils miss a weekly science lesson when they are withdrawn for an art session.

34. A wide range of high quality extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum, several of them funded by the Education Action Zone. There is some study support through reading recovery and maths clubs in the school, and also in a summer school, a children's university and numeracy master classes held away from the school. An annual residential course for Year 6 pupils on the Isle of Wight provides good opportunities for social development, outdoor pursuits and ICT.

35. There was good learning in the two personal, social and health education lessons observed. In one lesson, there were good opportunities for pupils to develop respect for another culture and to function as a social group. In the other, a local police officer helped provide a good introduction to citizenship. A new policy has been written for sex education but a new scheme is needed. The school is investigating a commercial scheme for education about drug misuse.

36. There are some very good links with the local community which engage the interest of pupils and widen their experience. Staff from a finance company with local offices visit the school each week to support pupils with numeracy and reading. Links with the local

secondary school are improving, and there are some useful links with a neighbouring primary school. The Education Action Zone organises an annual showcase at Sussex University. Community theatre groups visit the school, and the pupils visit the parish church.

37. The satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress in the nursery and reception and satisfactory progress in both key stages. Sound arrangements are also made for the few pupils who have English as an additional language and they make progress in line with their peers. The quality of provision for all pupils gives them full and equal access to the curriculum and to all aspects of school life.

Personal Development

38. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. It provides well for their moral and social development and makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school gives its pupils a peaceful learning environment which forms a good basis for their spiritual development, which is promoted through assemblies and opportunities for reflection and prayer. Pupils are asked to reflect on the words of the hymns in assemblies and their singing adds a further valuable spiritual dimension.

39. Some opportunities for awe and wonder were seen around the school and in lessons. Pupils in Year 2, for example, reflect as they write their prayers for the class book and children in the nursery watched in wonder as the teacher cut open an avocado. Spiritual development, however, is not embedded in the curriculum and the potential in subjects such as music, science and art, has yet to be fully explored.

40. The Christian aims and ethos of the school, which stress respect for self and for others, provide a good and effective focus for pupils' moral development. Values are developed through the caring and supportive relationships, which exist between staff and pupils, and by the good example set by adults who work in the school. The importance of truth and justice is communicated by all those involved in the school. Stories, assemblies, religious education and the personal and social education programme, address moral issues and allow pupils to explore their feelings.

41. The newly appointed headteacher and her staff, most of whom are new to the school, have quickly and successfully adopted a consistent approach to the school's behaviour policy. These practices provide the basis of a strong, shared moral code which encourages pupils to be aware of what is acceptable.

42. The school actively encourages the development of good social skills. Pupils are taught to be considerate to each other and to appreciate each other's efforts. They have many opportunities to work and play together and are provided with an increasing range of responsibilities in classrooms and around the school. Older pupils are caring towards younger pupils when, for example, listening to them read. Suitable opportunities are given to pupils to appreciate, and contribute to, the community in which they live. Some good examples of this are: visits to the parish church, visits from the community development officer and the community police officers, inviting the elderly to the Christmas performance,

and providing food for the homeless at Harvest time. Pupils are also given opportunities to contribute to the wider community through, for example, making donations to a wide range of charities. An annual residential trip for older pupils further enhances their social development and sense of independence.

43. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and develop knowledge of British culture and traditions, through learning about Britain's past and visits to places of cultural interest. Year 4 pupils, for example, visit a local museum to support their work on the Victorians, and visits from music and theatre groups further enhance pupils' cultural development and enrich the curriculum. Pupils are taught to respect all people, and teachers engaged in the Education Action Zone have introduced pupils to music and dance from other cultures. There are however, too few opportunities for pupils to appreciate and understand the diversity of the range of cultures in modern Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The pastoral care of pupils is of high quality and staff provides good role models to encourage their development. Parents are pleased with the level of support the school provides, and see it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. The school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of pupils.

45. The headteacher and special needs co-ordinator have received training in child protection and the school follows local procedures. Staff have been given guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise. The provision for first aid is good with two trained members of staff, records kept of any treatment and letters home to parents as appropriate. Outside contractors are used regularly to check the fire extinguishers, electrical items and physical education equipment. Teachers also ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues that might arise during lessons. They also carry out weekly checks of the classrooms for any hazards, although they are not all confident that they understand the guidelines. The premises officer has carried out a risk assessment and is to attend a course to extend his understanding of procedures. The risk assessment will then be repeated to ensure it covers all areas of the school's work.

46. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good in the nursery and reception classes, where detailed records are kept of their social skills and attitudes to work. In other parts of the school it is less structured, although still satisfactory. Procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are good. The 'golden' and playground rules are displayed around the school, with the target for the fortnight highlighted. Parents receive a copy of the behaviour policy and are involved immediately if there is any exceptionally poor behaviour. As well as positive comments, teachers award team points for good behaviour and attitudes. Sanctions include the loss of 'golden time' when the pupils can choose what to do on a Friday afternoon.

47. Many examples were seen during the inspection of teachers adopting a consistent approach and ensuring that the pupils understood how to behave. Teachers discuss with pupils any disagreements in the playground to ensure they do not affect work in the classroom. In a few lessons, however, teachers did not, for example, stop pupils from being noisy, with the result that learning was affected. Teachers and support assistants take appropriate action if any aggressive

behaviour occurs. Two such instances during the inspection were dealt with quickly and sensitively. Pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored well and given suitable support.

48. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are good and show an improvement since the last inspection. Any unexplained absences are checked by telephone on the morning of the first day. The school produces statistics each week and the headteacher presents an award to the class with the best attendance. Where necessary, the home/school liaison officer works closely with individual families to improve their pattern of their attendance. The recent introduction of the breakfast club has also resulted in an improvement for several pupils. The school has not yet set any targets for improvement in attendance and does not maintain records during the year of the level of absence of individual pupils. The keenness of the pupils to come to school, and the recently introduced good procedures for the beginning of the day, ensure a prompt start to lessons.

49. There are good systems for assessing the progress of pupils in the nursery and reception classes, and these are well used to inform planning for individual needs. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there are sound assessment procedures in mathematics, science and some aspects of English. Teachers' assess the attainment of individual pupils against key learning objectives in these subjects. Some teachers apply this process to other subjects, but there is no whole-school approach to assessing pupils' reading, nor any recording of information which can be used to help pupils improve their skills. The school has just introduced plenary assessment sheets for literacy and numeracy, on which teachers record the attainment of individual pupils or groups against the learning objectives. Consequently, the school's assessment procedures are under review.

50. A new schedule of tests for pupils has been introduced, and the school started to collate this information systematically last summer to track the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. A good range of test data is now collected but its use is at an early stage. It is used to identify pupils who could make a significant improvement and they are given targeted support for English and mathematics. The information has not, however, yet been used to monitor the progress of particular groups, such as boys and girls, or to set National Curriculum targets for individual pupils.

51. The analysis of assessment data and the use of national guidance for each subject are both at an early stage of development. As a result, assessment is not yet used sufficiently to guide curriculum planning. Each class has general targets for literacy and numeracy. In some classes teachers have agreed specific targets for improvement with individual pupils and these help pupils focus on what they need to do to improve.

52. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. There are good assessment procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and their progress is well monitored and supported. The special needs co-ordinator maintains a register of special needs pupils. The school pays good attention to the support and guidance given to pupils who have English as an additional language. Visiting specialists give very good advice to the school, and keep thorough records of pupils' progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents are generally satisfied with the work of the school, but are concerned about the disruption caused to their children's education by the instability in the teaching and management over the past two years. Inspectors share these concerns and support the positive views of most parents. The headteacher recognises the concerns expressed by some parents over the effectiveness of the school's partnership with them. She is introducing various initiatives to involve more parents in the life of the school and in the learning of their children at home and in school as part of the general drive to raise standards. These include family literacy groups, training sessions for parent volunteers, inviting parents to class assemblies, a new parents' notice board in the playground, and more links with community projects.

54. Whilst the school encourages parents to help in school, only a few are prepared to come into the classroom and work with the pupils, hearing readers and supporting lessons, although more are willing to help on school trips. The school intends to send out information on what is being taught in the classroom, together with guidance on how parents can help at home, especially with literacy and numeracy.

55. The headteacher sends attractive newsletters home twice a term, outlining the various activities that the children are involved in as well providing general administrative information. Other letters refer to more specific matters. Governors did not provide an annual report to parents last year and a new school prospectus is in draft.

56. Parents are usually able to see teachers at the start and end of each school day and the headteacher is also available to discuss immediate concerns. Formal meetings with teachers are held in the autumn and spring terms when parents can discuss their children's progress. Parents receive an annual report in the summer term. These reports are usually of high quality for younger pupils, but are not satisfactory in Key Stage 2, where they are generally brief and do not tell parents what their children know and can do, nor do they contain targets for improvement. Parents support the school financially through an active parents' association, which organises fund-raising and social events.

57. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to the setting and review of the individual education plans, although not all parents attend these meetings. Others have expressed the need to be better informed about the progress of their children. The newly appointed headteacher and special needs co-ordinator have appropriate plans to solve this problem, which has arisen because the school has had three special needs co-ordinators in four years. This instability in staffing has also affected links with parents of pupils with English as an additional language.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The new and vigorous headteacher has a clear vision for the future for the school, which is shared by the governing body and teachers, most of whom have joined the school only recently. The head is determined that, with the support of the whole school community, including parents, the present unacceptably low standards, particularly in Key Stage 2, will be raised as a matter of urgency. She is providing the impetus that has set the school on a clear path of improvement.

59. The school is beginning to meet its overarching aim to help children achieve their potential in a Christian ethos of support and high expectations, but it still has a long way to go in enabling pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. All teachers, no matter how new they are to the school, have curriculum responsibilities, which they carry out diligently. These appointments are too recent, however, to have had significant impact over time. The school is currently without a deputy headteacher and the senior management team has also been depleted through sickness. As a result, there have been gaps in the management structure of the school. The headteacher has re-organised the senior team to ensure that each member has clear responsibilities and is focusing on the raising of standards.

60. Except for failing to provide an annual report to parents last year, the governing body fulfils its statutory duties. They have only recently been successful in tackling the difficult question of providing the school with a stable teaching staff and management. Governors are keen to give the new head and staff all possible support and many have undertaken training to equip them better for their roles. They have committees with specific responsibilities. These committees consider elements of the school improvement plan and will discuss the new school improvement plan with the headteacher. The governors are developing their role in shaping the direction of the school. Their most important recent decision has been the appointment of the new headteacher.

61. Lessons have been observed by the head, outside advisors and consultants from the local education authority and Education Action Zone. Where weaknesses have been identified, support has been given successfully. The priorities have been literacy and mathematics but monitoring of other subjects is planned. Key stage co-ordinators monitor planning and identify any concerns. This has led the headteacher to develop a revised key stage co-ordinator system, with more clearly defined roles for these staff. Subject co-ordinators do not yet monitor their subjects, but this is planned for this term.

62. Working with the staff and outside advisors, the headteacher has carried out an audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has formed the basis for a rapidly prepared action plan. Priorities, costings, responsibilities and success criteria are being refined and will be included in the school improvement plan, which is currently being finalised. There is a clear focus on raising standards and improving other areas of the school's work. The school improvement plan is designed to be a useful working document, but the school must ensure that its success criteria focus on raising standards and are achievable and measurable.

63. The headteacher has attended school self-evaluation training and the assistant headteacher is currently on a course. The school's governors, the new senior management team and the recently recruited teaching staff, with the active support of a strong team of well trained and experienced support assistants, are committed to improvement. With a range of new policies, initiatives and the active involvement of the local Education Action Zone and local authority, the school is well placed to improve provided that it can maintain a stable teaching staff of high quality.

64. The headteacher inherited a budget overspend for the current year of £20,000, which is being paid back to the local education authority over time. The governors set a very tight budget for the year in order to curb spending rather than to meet educational developments.

The budget for the next year will be closely linked to the school improvement plan which sets out clear priorities for the year, and also contains outline planning for four more years.

65. The headteacher and the finance committee are reviewing the day-to-day handling of the budget to ensure that figures are kept as up-to-date as possible, and to meet all the recommendations of the local authority audit, which took place in March of last year. The school makes good use of the monies provided for special educational need, the standards fund, the services of the local Education Action Zone and other grants made available to it. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value in all areas of its work in order to judge its effectiveness.

66. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because the more experienced, well-trained support assistants have given stability to this area during a period of disruption caused by many changes in the teaching staff. Most teachers make efficient use of support staff in lessons. The special needs co-ordinator has already identified the need to reorganise support across the school so that it will be used more effectively where it is most needed. There is good and appropriate liaison between the co-ordinator, classroom teachers, classroom support staff and outside agencies. Specific grants received by the school for additional support for pupils with statements are being used for the desired purpose. External support for pupils who learn English as an additional language is well managed and efficiently used within the school.

67. The headteacher has worked hard to ensure that the school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and to build them into an effective team. Staff are deployed appropriately and the match of staff to co-ordinating roles is starting to build upon their experience and expertise. Nonetheless, several staff have only temporary contracts. Whilst staff have job descriptions, these are not linked sufficiently to a specific post.

68. Recently appointed staff and newly qualified teachers receive appropriate support. The school, does not, however, have a formal induction programme and the staff handbook is still in draft form. Staff development is linked to the school development plan and also takes account of the individual needs. It is effective in improving both teaching and learning. The special needs co-ordinator and non-teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs, as do those working with pupils having English as an additional language. On a few occasions, learning support assistants are not always actively involved in the lesson or offer the teacher appropriate support.

69. The accommodation is satisfactory with spacious classrooms, rooms for withdrawal of groups and a large hall. The very good library is run by a well-trained learning support assistant. It has recently been refurbished, and provides an attractive and spacious environment for the teaching of large groups of pupils. Pupils and staff make efficient and effective use of the facilities available. There is no medical room and first aid treatment has to be carried out in the entrance area. The playground lacks any markings and presents a barren environment. The pupils in the reception class do not have free access to a dedicated, enclosed outside area, limiting the opportunities for their physical development. There are adequate resources to teach the National Curriculum. Those for physical education and the Foundation Stage are good. Those for design and technology, geography and history are unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to improve the school's performance, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT* by:
 - planning work in all subjects to support literacy targets, particularly to develop skills in writing and speaking;
 - teaching pupils to take more responsibility for the accuracy and presentation of their written work;
 - monitoring teaching and pupils' work to identify strengths and weaknesses, and taking concrete action to remedy those weaknesses;
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge in science, and planning activities that will enable pupils to achieve the objectives of the lessons;
 - planning the curriculum to ensure all aspects of information technology are covered.
- Appoint a permanent deputy headteacher as a matter of urgency and develop the roles of the curriculum managers to include the monitoring of teaching and learning in their subjects.*
- Develop the use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning, to identify precisely the individual needs of pupils and then plan to meet those needs. *
- Seek ways to restore parental confidence in the school and develop the partnership with parents to support pupils' learning at home and in school. *
- Improve attendance* by raising the profile of its importance, setting and monitoring whole-school targets for improvement and maintaining individual pupil records.

71. The governors should also consider ways of better preparing children for life in a multi-cultural society, ensuring continuity of LSA support of high quality, providing more opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility, and improving the quality of reports to parents on their children's progress.

**These have already been identified by the school as priorities for development.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 51 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 0 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 8 | 48 | 38 | 6 | 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

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll | 204 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 69 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | Y R– Y 6 |
|---|---------|----------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 1 | 35 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0 | 34 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 5 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 6 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 19 |

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 | 11 | 19 | 30 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above | Boys | 9 | 9 | |
| | Girls | 18 | 17 | 18 |
| | Total | 27 | 26 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School | 90 (87) | 87 (87) | 90 (87) |
| | National | 84 (82) | 85 (83) | 90 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above | Boys | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| | Girls | 18 | 16 | 15 |
| | Total | 26 | 24 | 22 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School | 87 (84) | 80 (90) | 73 (90) |
| | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86) | 88 (87) |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 11 | 15 | 26 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above | Boys | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Girls | 6 | 4 | 6 |
| | Total | 9 | 8 | 11 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | School | 35 (38) | 31 (40) | 42 (35) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above | Boys | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Girls | 8 | 5 | 8 |
| | Total | 11 | 9 | 13 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | School | 42 (35) | 35 (43) | 50 (45) |
| | 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 | 1 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 3 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 160 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 2 |

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 | 21 | 1 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

Y N– Y 6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 12 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25.5 |
| Average class size | 26.6 |

Education support staff:

Y N– Y 6

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 11.0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 235 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

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

| | £ |
|--|-----------|
| Total income | 24364.00 |
| Total expenditure | 491702.00 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2138.00 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | -3551.00 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | -21420.00 |

Results of the survey of parents and carer

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 244 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 46 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| My child likes school. | 68 | 23 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 37 | 45 | 8 | 2 | 8 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 37 | 45 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 25 | 41 | 18 | 7 | 7 |
| The teaching is good. | 57 | 32 | 5 | 0 | 7 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 50 | 37 | 9 | 0 | 5 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 39 | 43 | 10 | 5 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 43 | 48 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 36 | 41 | 9 | 5 | 7 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 39 | 43 | 9 | 0 | 7 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 59 | 36 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 23 | 46 | 23 | 4 | 4 |

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

72. Children are admitted to the nursery after their third birthday for either a morning or an afternoon session. They enter the reception class in the September after they are four. They then attend for half of each day until they are ready to stay for the whole day. At the time of the inspection, there were 24 children attending each of the part-time nursery sessions. In the reception class, 19 children are attending full-time and 11 part-time.

73. The school does not carry out broad assessments of the children on entry to the nursery class, but many begin with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing, letter knowledge and mathematics. Formal assessments are made of children who have language and communication problems. These assessments indicate that a large number of children have significant language delay, poor articulation or poorly developed vocabularies. These children are well supported by specialists.

74. As the children enter the reception class, baseline assessment is carried out. Results of this show that, despite the good progress children make in the nursery class, the scores are in the lowest 25 per cent of the local authority's schools. The good progress continues in the reception class and, by the time children reach their fifth birthday, about half of them are well on course to achieve all the early learning goals before they leave the reception class. The remainder are unlikely to reach these goals in communication, language and literature and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and having English as an additional language make good progress in the Foundation Stage.

75. A disadvantage to the otherwise good accommodation is the distance between the nursery and reception classes. The nursery's excellent provision for outdoor activities cannot easily be shared by the reception class. The outdoor provision close to the reception classroom is unsatisfactory, and reduces children's opportunity to play on wheeled toys and large and small apparatus.

76. The quality of teaching and learning is always satisfactory and mostly good, as it was at the time of the 1997 inspection. Day-to-day assessment is good and teachers use the information gathered to plan further appropriate activities for groups and individuals. All the adults work well together to provide an appropriate curriculum, well matched to individual needs. Indoor resources are good, well organised and accessible to the children. There are, however, too few multi-cultural resources.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. Children entering the nursery class have under-developed personal, social and emotional skills. By the time they leave the reception class, most are achieving the early learning goals in this area. The adults' relationships with and care of the children are very good. Children soon learn the structured routines and gain quickly in confidence. Good progress is made. Children rapidly learn

to work and respect each other by working in groups and independently. Children concentrate well and persevere in their learning, asking for help when required. Behaviour at all times is good; the children know what is right and what is wrong. They take care of their property and their environment. Children are encouraged to think of other people. For example, when a new assistant joined the nursery, they were able to say how they could help her feel at home.

Communication, language and literacy

78. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good in both the nursery and reception class. Teachers and nursery nurses plan the main activities well and this is having a good impact on learning. Children enter the nursery with significant language delay, poor articulation or poorly developed vocabularies. These children are well supported by specialists and before long most of them are able to talk freely with others and adults with whom they are familiar. Nevertheless, about half the children leave the reception class with lower than average language and literacy skills. Much of their learning takes place through listening to the questions posed by the teachers and through enjoying learning about the initial sounds and the characters in the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme. Elements of the literacy framework are used in reception and children are beginning to understand letter sounds and blends.

79. All the children in the Foundation Stage enjoy books and have the opportunity to choose their own. In the nursery, they learn how to handle books correctly, read from left to right and know that pictures carry meaning. In both classes children can take a book home. Children enjoy listening to and doing all the activities related to stories, for instance, 'We're Going On A Bear Hunt', 'Rosie's Walk' and 'Avocado Baby'. They are beginning to have a good understanding of books, and the meaning of a title and an author. Some notices, labels, and instructions, related to the themes, help children to recognise and appreciate the need for writing words and reading them. Children are given some opportunities to practise writing by writing their names and letters.

Mathematical development

80. The children's mathematical understanding is very low. By the end of the Foundation Stage, about half of the children will have reached all the early learning goals in mathematics. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers use many different strategies to explain and reinforce numbers to teach children how to count, match and order objects and count along a number line. Starting in nursery, the children become increasingly familiar with number rhymes, counting games and stories. Good teaching is ensuring that most children know and can recognise numbers to five in the nursery and to ten in reception.

81. Children find it difficult to answer questions related to comparison of numbers, for example, 'bigger than', 'smaller than', 'one more' and 'one less'. In the reception class a group of children jumped along the large number track, counting accurately as they did so. They then rolled a large dice and counted the number of steps along the line. In the role-play corner of the reception class, one boy counted the children. He said: 'That's five! Only four allowed.' He pointed to another child and said, 'You've got to go.' When asked if two children should go, he replied, 'No. One to go.'

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. Teaching and learning in this area are good. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of their time in the reception class. They enter school with little general knowledge and few historical or geographical concepts, such as the differences and similarities between now/long ago and here/faraway. The teachers build on their natural curiosity and help them to begin to understand the world in which they live. In the nursery, children are introduced to foods that they may not have seen before, such as an avocado pear. They handle the fruit and try to describe how it feels. They plant cress seeds and watch them grow before proudly taking their pot home. When children play in the water tray, adults talk to them about how full the containers are, how much more they will contain and what happens when they empty the water out. Children respond well to these activities and as a result make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

83. In the reception class children love using the objects in the exploring tray. During the inspection all the objects were connected with sight. Children played endlessly with the binoculars, periscope, kaleidoscope and prisms, sharing their excitement at what they could see with adults and other children. The children enjoy using the computer. Children soon are confident enough to use the mouse. On display are very good examples of work done in both classes using the 'Dazzle' program. Good progress is made from drawing simple pictures, to patterns and pictures with more meaningful shapes and representations.

Physical development

84. Children make good progress in their physical development when they have free access to an outdoor area. In more formal lessons in the school, they have fewer opportunities to explore apparatus on their own terms. They spend too much time waiting for their turn. When they use the outdoor area, they pedal vigorously on tricycles, balance on the wooden beams and walk confidently along the 'wobbly' bridge. In the reception class, a group demonstrated that they knew how to jump well when they swung their arms and bent their knees to jump far along the number track. Most are well on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. They learn to work things out for themselves as they piece together the jigsaws. Children make good progress in developing the skills needed to play and work with construction kits. They build towers and make vehicles and decide which colour to use to draw an avocado. Children handle scissors well and have good cutting skills. There are many opportunities for the children to continue to develop their cutting and pasting skills.

Creative development

85. Children enter school with poor-brush control and the pictures on display show underdeveloped painting skills. Adults provide children with a satisfactory environment for creative development and the displays reflect the broader range of their work and show how far the children have progressed in this area since starting school. Teaching is good. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals in this area by the end of the reception class. In the nursery, they

colour and stick, roll and mould playdough and enjoy finger painting. In the reception class, a group showed that they could spread butter, jam or cheese spread onto a slice of bread to make a sandwich. They then ate it enthusiastically. They become dextrous at cutting and sticking and use decorative hole punches to make elaborate cards and decorations. They choose and use different textures, threads and fabrics to make a collage for a wall hanging.

ENGLISH

86. Standards in English are well below those expected of pupils aged 7 and 11. Standards in the current Year 2 in speaking, reading and writing are well below average. Standards in the current Year 6 in speaking, comprehension and writing are also well below. Of the 27 pupils in Year 2, 12 are on the register of special education needs, four of whom have statements. Of the 30 pupils in Year 6, 11 have special educational needs. This well above average number of pupils with special educational needs is one of the reasons why standards are well below average and lower in Year 2 than they were at the last inspection. Another significant factor is that frequent changes in the school management and teaching staff over the past four years have resulted in severe disruption to pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are well supported by the recent emphasis on a consistent approach to the school's behaviour policy. Teaching and learning during the inspection indicate that the school is well placed to meet its targets for 2002, which are appropriately challenging.

87. In the Year 2000 national test results for pupils aged 11, standards achieved were very low compared to the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Thirty-five per cent of pupils reached the expected standard compared to 75 per cent nationally. The percentage reaching the higher levels was also far below the national average. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the performance of pupils in English fell far below the national average. Results in the Year 2000 national tests for seven year olds show that standards in reading and writing were below the national average. Standards in reading were well above the average for similar schools, while standards in writing were above those for similar schools. No pupils reached the higher level in writing. The percentage reaching the higher levels in reading was well below the national average.

88. Boys in both key stages did not achieve as well as girls and the school is seeking ways to redress the balance. Although some boys do not readily offer to answer questions, there was no evidence during the inspection of boys underachieving. In most lessons, teachers are careful to encourage all pupils to answer questions and groups are mixed, with girls and boys working together at all levels of attainment.

89. Pupils enter the school with low levels of attainment in language and literacy. They are well supported in the nursery and reception classes, both by the visiting therapist, supplied by the Education Action Zone, and by class teachers and support assistants. As a result they make good progress. Across the school, pupils learn to listen carefully to their teachers and to follow instructions.

90. Teachers are generally successful in engaging the interest of pupils of all abilities during whole-class sessions. In a small number of lessons, however, teachers do not consider the needs of all pupils when asking questions. In these lessons, in which only those who

volunteer to answer are chosen to do so, a significant number lose interest and contribute little. In a good Year 1 lesson all pupils were well involved through carefully targeted questions which challenged them to think for themselves.

91. Teachers throughout the school speak clearly so that pupils who have special educational or language needs are fully included and involved. Teachers generally give good encouragement by listening carefully and appreciating pupils' answers. As a result, most pupils try hard to think about the question and to answer clearly. Their growing confidence in speaking is a direct result of the good relationships established by teachers in their classrooms. Most pupils have a narrow vocabulary and find it difficult to give extended reasons for their answers. They do not retain the meaning of words easily and teachers have not developed strategies to help them. Pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, are not provided with enough planned opportunities to speak with confidence in a variety of situations. Many pupils do not speak audibly and with clarity or make use of Standard English in formal situations.

92. Many pupils enjoy reading and this helps their learning. Reading development in Key Stage 1 is supported by graded reading materials and by careful monitoring of pupils' progress. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are systematically taught the relationship between letters and sounds to develop their reading skills. As a result, most pupils by the end of Year 2 use this knowledge to enhance meaning and to read unfamiliar words. About 50 per cent of pupils in Year 2 read simple passages with accuracy and understanding. They express opinions of poems and stories. For the most part, pupils understand what they have read, although many are restricted not only by below average vocabulary but also by limited life experiences. As a result, their ability to explain the meaning is weak, and only those with the highest attainment in reading and speaking are able to describe and explain events and characters. Teachers are aware of these weaknesses and provide effective support to explain information books and written instructions in all subjects.

93. Throughout the school, teachers' good pupil management skills allow them to focus effectively on guided reading groups during literacy lessons. Pupils' reading is better supported in lessons where teachers make effective use of the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. This lends pace to teaching and learning and pupils' interest is maintained. In lessons where this structure is not used, the whole-class reading session at the beginning of lessons is too long and pupils, particularly those with poor concentration and special educational needs, lose interest. Strong emphasis is placed on reading. Pupils are heard reading regularly in school, by teachers, learning support assistants and volunteers who visit the school each week.

94. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils read with concentration and understanding. They show good understanding of a variety of texts, identifying crucial features, themes and characters. Most other pupils, however, are prevented from reaching higher standards by weak comprehension skills. There is not the same structured approach to reading as is seen in Key Stage 1, and the inconsistent approach to monitoring pupils' reading fails to ensure systematic progress year-on-year. The quality and range of reading materials in classes are unsatisfactory. The range is too narrow to allow all pupils, particularly those of

higher attainment, to make good enough progress. The newly appointed headteacher, subject co-ordinator and teachers are aware of these deficiencies and are committed to improvement in provision so as to support the teaching and learning of reading. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported in most lessons by well-trained and dedicated learning-support assistants.

95. Whilst writing tasks are matched closely to different levels of attainment, pupils need greater teacher guidance so that they are involved in active learning at all times. In some loosely structured literacy lessons, whole-class reading and discussion sessions are too long, leaving little time for writing tasks. The approach to teaching handwriting is inconsistent across the school, and teachers often expect too little from pupils in respect of careful presentation of work. Standards in spelling are weak in both key stages, but are improving through regular practice. Over time, pupils have not been taught about spelling patterns and this is still having a negative effect on the work of the average and below average pupils. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use capital letters and full stops correctly, but others often forget these when writing simple sentences.

96. Evidence from the analysis of pupils' work shows that greater emphasis is now being placed on giving pupils in Key Stage 2 an increasingly wide range of purposes and audiences for writing. Some good examples of stories, plays, character studies, poetry and persuasive writing were seen in pupils' work. In a Year 5 lesson, the class teacher challenged pupils to use their imagination when completing a fable she had begun. Pupils were well motivated to choose words adventurously and to extend their ideas logically in sequences of sentences. However, this practice is not yet consistent in all classes, and pupils need to be challenged to use words more adventurously and for effect.

97. Too little use is made information technology (IT) to help pupils plan, draft and amend their work. The potential contribution to writing development of other subjects, such as religious education, history, and geography, has yet to be realised. Plans are in hand to extend the opportunities for writing across the curriculum. In some classes, an over-dependence on worksheets results in gap-filling tasks. This limits opportunities for writing and for pupils to assess the progress they are making.

98. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall and has improved since the last inspection. There was no significant difference between teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. It was good in 44 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 44 per cent. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen. In good lessons, teaching is well structured to include good opportunities for pupils' to listen, speak, read and write. Teachers engage with pupils to advise and encourage. As a result, pupils try hard and are involved in active learning throughout the lesson. Some teachers have relatively low expectations of what pupils can achieve, lead to some pupils losing interest and the will to learn.

99. Learning support assistants are generally well used and are confident in their work. In some lessons, teachers need to consider how to use this support more efficiently during the whole-class session. A good example of very effective support during the shared text session was seen in a Year 2 lesson. The learning support assistants sat on the carpet with the pupils and ensured the total involvement of the large number of pupils with special educational needs.

100. The co-ordinator, who also manages the Foundation Stage and special educational needs, has good knowledge of the subject. She took on the literacy role just one week before the inspection and has clear plans for development, such as the monitoring of teaching, structuring reading in Key Stage 2 and developing a consistent approach to writing, including handwriting. The school librarian is very well trained and has developed an impressive and well-stocked library. This is helping to improve pupils' independent reading skills and to support learning across the curriculum. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is not increased systematically as pupils get older.

MATHEMATICS

101. The results in last year's national tests for seven year olds were well below national averages for all schools, but matched the average for similar schools. Very few pupils achieved the higher Level 3. The standards of current seven year olds are similar. Higher-attaining pupils count accurately in twos, fives and tens and accurately add and subtract numbers to 20. Relatively few pupils, however, are working towards the higher Level 3. Average-attaining pupils work confidently with numbers to 20, but are not secure in working with numbers above 20. They name common two-dimensional shapes but cannot describe their properties. They are working towards the expected Level 2, although a significant number of pupils are below this level.

102. The results in last year's national tests for 11 year olds were in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools and of similar schools. The standards of pupils in the current Year 6 are a little higher but still well below national averages. The school's own assessment data show that a significant number of pupils were working at a standard that was well below average at the end of Year 5, but are now showing signs of improvement. Higher-attaining pupils are working at the expected Level 4 with some at Level 5. They work accurately with decimals to two places and know how to calculate the area of a rectangle. They work accurately with large numbers. A weaker aspect of their work is that they have few opportunities to develop their own strategies for solving problems. Average-attaining pupils are close to achieving Level 4.

103. The overall quality of teaching was satisfactory, with lessons ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. Teaching in one of out of the ten lessons seen was very good, good in five, satisfactory in three and unsatisfactory in one. Teachers make good use of number fans and white boards so all pupils are involved in learning and the teacher can monitor their progress. Teachers sometimes use different questions for particular pupils so that they are challenged during the mental starter and encouraged to think for themselves. During group work, the tasks set for pupils are always well matched to their differing needs. There is some very clear and effective teaching. In one lesson, for example, the teacher used a sequence of activities to explain how to subtract numbers such as $79 - 38$ by using a number line, and then by mental methods with jottings in their books. In another, the teacher explained how to calculate the area of a shape made from rectangles. Whilst a few plenary sessions were effective by reinforcing what had been taught and by the teacher assessing pupils' learning, not all teachers made good use of the final review session. In most classes, pupils' work is marked frequently with explanations on how they can improve their work.

104. The work of learning support assistants contributes effectively to pupils' learning. During a mental starter session on the carpet, for example, the assistant sat with a pupil and involved him fully in the work. Assistants work well to support particular groups of pupils during the group work section of numeracy lessons. In a few cases, however, assistants did not take enough initiative to work with pupils during the mental starter and final review sessions.

105. There were weaknesses in a number of satisfactory lessons, and these limited pupils' progress. In one lesson, for example, the teacher did not ensure that all pupils faced her during whole-class teaching, and the mental starter included an activity that did not involve the whole class for all of the time. Teachers' explanations to pupils are not always practical enough with, for example, the use of coins to explain calculations with money. Because of weaknesses in assessment and the use of assessment data, there were instances when the work set for lower-attaining pupils was not matched to their needs and, as a result, they did not understand what they were being asked to do. A more common weakness was that final review sessions at the end of lessons were often used to show pupils what they had done, rather than to review ways in which their work could be improved or to give teachers' an opportunity to assess their progress.

106. The quality of learning in lessons matched the teaching, but progress over time has been slowed because of staff changes which have disrupted teaching and learning in the past. Pupils have satisfactory, and often good, attitudes to mathematics.

107. There are some good uses of measurement in science at both key stages. For example, older pupils measure temperatures and forces, and sometimes use IT to present the data as line graphs and bar charts. The use of numeracy, however, is not planned across the curriculum, and as a result opportunities are missed for pupils to practice and improve their skills.

108. The school follows the national numeracy strategy although the work is not always adapted to meet the needs of lower-attaining pupils. Teachers' well structured weekly planning for numeracy includes evaluation that some teachers use effectively. Each week, six staff from a local company play mathematical games with small groups of Year 2 pupils. The first session of this programme was observed, and it gave pupils very good opportunities for speaking and listening. The management of mathematics has improved, and the co-ordinator is aware of some weaknesses in standards. Three teachers have attended five-day training courses. However, there has been no formal monitoring of mathematics' teaching and pupils' standards since the start of the academic year.

SCIENCE

109. The Year 2 teacher assessments for 2000 indicate that standards achieved by seven year olds were well below the national average but close to that found in similar schools. The statutory test results for 11 year olds show that standards remain in the lowest 5 per cent both of all schools nationally, and also of similar schools nationally. Inspection evidence shows that the overall attainments for 7 and 11 year olds now in the school are higher than in

last year's tests but are below those expected nationally for children of their age. About 60 per cent of the pupils currently in Year 6, however, are reaching the expected levels and a few pupils are on course to reach the higher Level 5, a considerable improvement on previous years.

110. Pupils in Year 1 had a good introduction to forces through investigating how toys move. The pupils worked in pairs with a toy. They had to decide whether it would move by pushing or pulling or both. At first they were concerned about how the toy worked. They were entranced by the mechanical dogs that walked and barked, intrigued by the puppets and puzzled by the cogs. Then they moved on to considering whether the toy was pushed or pulled. They were given well-matched worksheets to record their findings. They enjoyed the lesson and felt pleased with what they had done. Year 2 pupils designed a paper plane and then went on to test it. They then considered how to modify the design to improve its flight. They had little idea, however, of how to conduct a fair test.

111. Pupils in Year 3 are learning about which plants are grown for food. Their lack of general knowledge and the absence of reference materials made it impossible for them to classify vegetables into the three set categories. In Year 4, pupils are working on heating and cooling, but they too cannot conduct a fair test to find out which material makes the best insulator. Year 5 pupils are successfully investigating the water cycle, researching facts about water and presenting their findings in poster form. Year 6 pupils are able to list accurately the requirements for a fair test when investigating air resistance. These pupils are well on their way to working in a scientific manner and are using scientific vocabulary.

112. An analysis of pupils' work shows that the pupils are making satisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6. Teachers are working hard to improve investigative skills, but the pupils cannot always explain clearly what they did and why. Pupils now need to review their work and the work of others so that they can compare their results and justify their decisions. There are weaknesses in the way many pupils present their work and they do not use computers often enough to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results.

113. Teaching is good overall in both key stages. Of the six lessons seen, two were very good, one was good, two were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. Strengths lie in the interesting and relevant range of activities teachers provide for their classes and the way in which they probe pupils' understanding. Some teachers do not have adequate subject understanding and as a result the activities set do not help pupils meet the learning objectives. The learning of pupils in lessons matched the teaching, but standards remain too low because of disruptions to teaching and learning in the past due to staff changes.

114. As there has been no analysis of the pupils' performance in the statutory tests, the school has not been able to identify the aspects that pupils find difficult and plan for improvement. Few records are kept and there is little monitoring of the effectiveness of the science curriculum across the year groups. Samples of work to develop the teachers' awareness of national expectations have yet to be collected. The experienced co-ordinator is new to the school and is planning how to improve teachers' subject knowledge and understanding and raise pupils' attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

115. Pupils' standards are below average at the end of each key stage. Some of the work completed in Key Stage 1 matches national expectations as pupils give instructions to a programmable toy, and combine text and graphics to make book covers. Pupils' standards overall, however, are below expectations as pupils cannot use IT to organise and classify information, or to record their work in different ways.

116. The work of 11 year olds matches the expected standards for some uses of ICT. For example, pupils word process letters to specific people and use a spreadsheet to record data collected in a science experiment. In addition, they use a spreadsheet to analyse Victorian census data with some sorts and searches of the expected complexity. Standards overall, however, are below expectations because pupils do not exchange information by, for example, using e-mail, and they do no work on control or sensing physical data. Older pupils have relatively weak research skills when working with a CD-ROM.

117. Two ICT lessons were observed. Teaching was good in one and satisfactory in the other. In a very well managed Year 1 lesson, a programmable toy and computer program were used effectively to enable pupils to learn about giving instructions with directional language and some measurement. As a result, the learning of pupils in learning was nearly always sound and sometimes good.

118. As a result of clear teaching, Year 4 pupils learnt how to load images and make repeating patterns in some work linked to art. There was little evidence of IT being seen in other subjects. There have been significant weaknesses in the management of the subject in the past. A co-ordinator has been appointed recently and has devised an appropriate development plan for the short- and longer-term. The school is starting to follow national guidance for the teaching of ICT. Older pupils, however, have not until now, followed a course based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. At both key stages, pupils use ICT effectively to practise their mathematics skills. The school has received some effective advice and support from the Education Action Zone adviser for ICT. The EAZ has also provided ten lap top computers.

ART AND DESIGN

119. During the inspection two lessons were seen in Key Stage 2. Judgements about attainment were made from an analysis of school documents, teachers' planning and pupils' work in lessons, sketchbooks and displays. Attainment of pupils aged 7 and 11 remains in line with that expected nationally for pupils of their age. Some work on display is of a higher standard than that seen in lessons.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils contribute to large collage work using paint and a variety of other materials. They learn about the work of such artists as Andy Warhol and try to paint in their styles. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills with colour mixing. They use pastels, pencils and paint skilfully and mix tints of one colour to paint a landscape. By the end of the key stage, they have developed an understanding of the range of styles and techniques used by famous

artists. Pupils keep a sketchbook to record experiences, objects and textures, and to draft work and indicates steady progress.

121. In the lessons seen, teaching was good in one and satisfactory in the other. Teachers explain clearly what they want pupils to do, using the work of well-known artists and the pupils' prior knowledge to help them understand the task. While the pupils are working, teachers support individual work through discussion and suggestion. When appropriate, teachers call the class together and explain a point, using the work in progress as an illustration. They make good use of praise and encouragement so that pupils enjoy art and design lessons. Pupils listen to the teacher and are then keen to get on with the practical part of the lesson. They use the resources carefully and share well with others. They apply themselves to the task in hand, concentrate on producing their best work and are pleased with the result. When pupils are taught by a specialist teacher, they attain well and develop very good attitudes to art.

122. The school uses national guidance but has yet to adapt it to the needs of its pupils. The scheme supports teachers in their planning and ensures that the pupils make progress. The co-ordinator is new to the post. The classroom accommodation is adequate for the teaching of the subject. Resources are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Time-tabling arrangements during the inspection meant that only one lesson was seen. Other evidence, including discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of work and a review of planning, indicates that standards are below what is expected nationally for children aged 7 and 11. Too little time is given to the subject to develop pupils' skills and techniques in planning and refining their designs. Standards are also adversely affected by inadequate resources to teach the subject.

124. Teaching in the one lesson seen was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4 designed a toy that moved using a cotton reel, a stick and rubber band. Whilst pupils labelled the parts of the toy and wrote down the materials to be used, no models of these designs had been made. Pupils in Year 1 made a shoe box for a pair of their own shoes. No design work for this was seen and all the boxes were the same.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

125. Pupils have little previously recorded work for these subjects. Based on the few lessons seen, discussions with pupils, a review of planning and scrutiny of work, the overall standards in geography and history are below what is expected nationally for children aged 7 and 11. Poor literacy skills limited the achievement of Year 2 pupils, for example, in both history and geography when it came to writing down their conclusions about the life of Florence Nightingale or of some of the main geographical features of Mexico.

126. Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of Queen Victoria and the lives of rich and poor people. Standards overall, however, are below expectations because pupils do not

give reasons for, and results of, the main changes and events in Victorian Britain. Pupils do not select and combine information from different sources. In geography, older pupils identify the global locations of places in the news and briefly research a country. They use a local Ordnance Survey map to identify different types of beaches. Standards are below those expected, as pupils have little understanding of human and physical processes and how these can change the environment.

127. Teaching in geography is at least satisfactory. Of the three lessons seen, two were good and one was satisfactory. Timetabling arrangements meant that only one history lesson was seen. Teaching in this lesson was good, but it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching in history

128. The management of these subjects is now effective. A new co-ordinator has been appointed and has realistic priorities for improving teaching and learning. One of these is to adopt the national guidance for teaching these subjects. There are some shortages of learning resources.

MUSIC

129. There are differences in standards within aspects of music. Standards in singing are similar to those expected for pupils aged 7 and 11. Standards in composing and musical appreciation, however, are below average, as the required skills have not been progressively developed over the years.

130. Pupils throughout the school sing with enthusiasm, enjoyment, and sustained effort to maintain a satisfactory level of control. Diction is generally clear and pupils respond appropriately to signals to vary the dynamics of the singing. There is, however, little evidence of pupils' past work in composing and listening. It is clear that such opportunities have been irregular.

131. The quality of teaching and learning was good in two of the lessons seen and satisfactory in the third. Good management of pupils ensures an environment in which all are encouraged to make a contribution which they know will be valued. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson, for example, worked together co-operatively to create a class performance. This lesson made a good contribution to pupils' reading skills as they were challenged to read the word on a card before selecting an instrument to represent the sound made, for example by a car. In the otherwise satisfactory Key Stage 2 lesson, the pupils' progress was hampered by the limited range of activities.

132. Pupils are given good opportunities in lessons to improve their work and to listen to that of others. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils, working in pairs, selected two musical patterns to compose an instrumental rhythm which they performed to each other. They were able to make improvements to their own and other's work in relation to the intended effect. Pupils throughout the school have a very patchy knowledge of musical terms and cannot describe a piece of music in terms of pitch, duration, dynamics or structure. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson were provided with good opportunities to explore their feelings in response to music, and were gaining an understanding of tempo.

133. It is evident, however, that pupils have not been systematically taught to describe, compare

and judge a range of music, including that from other cultures, using a suitable musical vocabulary. In this respect, the subject does not yet make the contribution it should to pupils' speaking skills or to their spiritual and cultural development. Although no music lessons were seen in Year 3 or Year 6, timetables indicate that pupils in these classes have just half an hour of music each week. The school needs to review this so that pupils have access to the full range of opportunities required by the National Curriculum.

134. Satisfactory provision for extra-curricular music includes recorder tuition and choir. The local authority offers instrumental tuition which some pupils attend out of school hours. A visiting teacher provides keyboard tuition. Dance workshops with teachers from the Education Action Zone give pupils opportunities to explore and express feelings and ideas about music through dance. These occasions enhance pupils' learning, enrich their experiences and extend their interest in the subject.

135. The recently appointed and knowledgeable co-ordinator has plans to improve provision in all aspects of the subject. This has implications for teacher training and the monitoring of lessons to ensure consistency of practice. The school plans to introduce the local authority's recently up-dated scheme of work which covers all elements of the subject and gives good advice to teachers. This, together with manageable assessment procedures to ensure the systematic development of skills will ensure a greater rate of progress for all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. Most pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment. They make good progress in Key Stage 1 but standards of attainment for seven year olds remain below what is expected nationally for children of their age. By the age of 11, pupils are meeting the national expectations. Pupils are provided with a broad curriculum, which is designed to promote their physical development and social interaction.

137. Lessons in games, dance and swimming were observed during the inspection. Year 3 pupils attend swimming lessons at the local pool and make good progress as a result of the good quality teaching by the instructor and the accompanying teacher. Those pupils who have not met national expectations when they reach Year 6 are provided with extra tuition before they leave the school. As a result, most pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2, are able to swim 25 metres using recognised strokes.

138. By the end of Year 2, guided by knowledgeable and supportive teaching, pupils have increased their confidence in physical control and mobility. They perform a range of movements involving running and balancing, and are gaining an appropriate awareness of space. They plan and perform simple skills safely, and show control in linking actions together. In games' lessons, teachers help pupils develop elements of play which include running, throwing, catching and control using hands and feet. Planning shows that in dance, pupils explore moods and feelings and develop their response to music and other stimuli. Most pupils, by the end of Year 2, remember, reproduce and explore simple actions with control and co-ordination.

139. Pupils enter Key Stage 2 with a sound basis for further development. They are developing

satisfactory ball skills, as was observed in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were being taught skills of attack and defence and how to apply them accurately in games. Teachers from the Education Action Zone provide dance workshops, which enhance pupils' learning and increase class teachers' knowledge and confidence. Pupils in Year 5 are provided with regular opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils in Year 6 take part in a wide range of activities during their annual residential trip. Pupils enjoy these activities, are good ambassadors for their school, and are well taught to develop skills of a problem-solving nature.

140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the four lessons observed, teaching was good in two and satisfactory in two. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and plan their lessons with clear learning intentions. Lessons begin with good warm-up sessions but are not structured well enough to keep pupils warm or to allow enough time for exploring, practising and improving skills at the level of which they are capable. Teachers tend to call the whole class together too often rather than using rest periods to allow pupils to demonstrate their techniques as a stimulus for improvement. There is, however, a good emphasis on teaching the correct skills. Most teachers have developed positive relationships within their classes. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons, behave well and work together safely and co-operatively. A high number of pupils come to school without their PE kits. The school also needs to define safety procedures in relation to jewellery.

141. A good range of extra-curricular sport, such as rugby, football and dance, enriches the curriculum and pupils' experiences. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop teachers' expertise in teaching gymnastics. She has a good understanding of what needs to be done to achieve consistency of practice as there are so many teachers new to the school. There is a good supply of resources for games lessons and these are efficiently used. The accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively and is well used for lessons and extra-curricular activities. The curriculum and inter-school competitions support pupils' social development.