

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NUNNERY WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116754

Headteacher: Mr. Keith Paterson

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Christine Field  
9479

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 224883

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Prestwich Avenue Worcester
Postcode:	WR5 1QE
Telephone number:	01905 354154
Fax number:	01905 354154
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Edgar Powell
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs. C. A. Field 9479	Registered inspector		The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
			The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Teaching and learning
			Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Key Issues for action
Mr. J. Baker 9770	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs. S. Brown 1189	Team inspector	English	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Geography	
		Music	
Mrs. L. Carriban 21070	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Art and design	
		Physical education	
		Equality of opportunity	
Mrs. J. Dickins 6752	Team inspector	Provision for children in the foundation stage	Leadership and management
		History	
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	
Mr. A. Hardwicke 14991	Team inspector	Science	
		Information and communication technology	
		Design and technology	
Mr. R. Hart 2024	Team inspector	The work of the specialist language unit	

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections

Grasshoppers  
1 Anglesey Close  
Chasetown  
Burntwood  
Staffordshire  
WS7 8XA

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated on the south-eastern outskirts of Worcester City. There are 307 pupils on roll: 156 boys and 151 girls aged between four and eleven years. Pupils' attainment on entry into the Foundation Stage is broadly average. Seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is low compared to the national average. Fifty-two pupils have special educational needs, a proportion below the national average. Three of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs, a proportion also below average. Eight pupils in school are given extra support to help them learn English as an additional language. The school makes provision in its Specialist Language Unit for eighteen pupils all of whom have assessed speech and language needs and all have a statement. Pupils in the Unit come from Worcester and the south of the county.

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

Nunnery Wood Primary has a very caring ethos in which all pupils are valued for themselves within the family of the school. Children start school with broadly average achievement and receive a good education until they are seven years due to the successful teamwork by staff. Pupils tend to make accelerated progress in the single-age Year 6 class but it is too late to make up lost ground by then. During the junior phase of schooling the quality of education suffers from inconsistencies in teaching and assessment practice. Although teaching is satisfactory in lessons, there is too little focus on how well pupils are learning over time and this leads to imprecise targeting of the next steps in learning. As a result pupils' progress is uneven. New setting arrangements in English and mathematics have not been well thought through and they work against pupils making the best rates of progress possible over the four years. These factors are the key reasons why standards achieved by eleven year-olds are too low. National test results overall showed a very slight rise last May but still greater improvement is required. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance lack rigour, and insufficient attention is given by management to checking what works best in school and why. The school's targets for this year and next take too little account of the value the school aims to add to pupils' education and need to be more challenging. Although the school turns out mature and responsible young people, because its academic standards are too low it is judged to provide unsatisfactory value for money.

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

- Enables pupils to get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Provides an overall good quality of education for pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Makes good provision for pupils in the specialist language unit.
- Ensures good learning overall in art and design, history, music and physical education.
- Makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development that encourages them to develop good understanding of the impact their actions have on others and supports them in becoming responsible future citizens.
- Successfully promotes a friendly, caring atmosphere based on extremely positive relationships that promote very good standards of behaviour, and make the school a happy place to be.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are too low by the end of Key Stage 2.
- School management does not evaluate the work of the school closely enough.

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

**I am of the opinion that this school is underachieving.**

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since 1996 the school has made limited progress overall in responding to the specific issues raised at the time of the previous inspection. Satisfactory progress has been made in implementing the literacy and numeracy hours, reviewing school aims and establishing a planning framework. There is still work to do by management in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, monitoring school performance, refining planning and tightening up assessment. All of these are crucial to the central aim of raising academic standards. A new senior management team is ready for the challenge; they have shared commitment to improvement, and good capacity to ensure that standards lift quickly.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	D	D	E
mathematics	D	C	D	E
science	E	D	E	E*

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

*Similar schools are those with up to 8% of pupils eligible for free school meals*

The above table shows that pupils' results in National Curriculum tests are below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Results fall well below that of similar schools. Inspection findings judge that standards are below average in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. Standards are at least at the level expected when pupils are seven. Pupils are not enabled to capitalise on the good start they make when they are younger and the progress they make over time is uneven. New setting arrangements are working against pupils being able to achieve their best. This means that the standards achieved when they are eleven are not as high as they could be. The school is therefore judged to be underachieving and needs to focus all of its energies on ensuring that pupils' learning is targeted with the key aim of raising academic standards.

The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken by 11 year olds show improvement, but not to the level seen nationally. The school's results have yet to compare well against similar schools. The school's forecasts of pupils' likely achievement by eleven years are undemanding, and need revision in the light of the findings of developing assessment practice.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are generally eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good on the whole, although a few pupils, mostly boys easily lose concentration in lessons and dip in and out of their studies. There were no exclusions last year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are a strength. Personal development is not well promoted in some lessons when teachers do most of the talking and take over practical activities.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are happy to come to school and most are punctual.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The strengths in teaching have been sustained since the time of the previous inspection and teaching is now satisfactory overall. In the 84 lessons observed during this inspection teaching quality was of satisfactory or better quality overall. In forty one per cent of lessons teaching was of good quality, in eleven per cent of very good quality and in two per cent excellent. Eight per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. These lessons were in English, mathematics and science, predominantly in Key Stage 2. The teaching of pupils aged five to seven years is good overall. Teaching of pupils in the specialist language unit is good overall and consistently very good in the Key Stage 1 class and this ensures that these pupils achieve well. Teachers enjoy teaching art and design, music, history and physical education and this is infectious. Pupils are consequently enthusiastic about learning and achieve at a good rate in all years as a result. Skills of literacy are appropriately taught. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. Teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall for pupils aged seven to eleven years but there is potential for it to be better focused on ensuring that all pupils make the maximum amount of progress over their time at school, especially in mixed-age classes and sets. The very best teaching observed during the inspection was in early years, Year 2 and Year 6 and here pupils' learning is good too. The very best teaching practice in the school has yet to be sufficiently shared.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. A good range of curricular experiences are provided, but some refinement of planning is required to target more precisely what pupils are expected to learn.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The work of the unit makes a positive contribution to the learning and personal development of pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The quality of pupils individual education plans are variable and do not set targets that show what the next steps in learning should be.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very Good. The school lives what it believes and pupils are nurtured towards becoming very responsible future citizens.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school supports well pupils' social development but has unsatisfactory systems in place to monitor their academic performance.
Partnership with parents and carers	Satisfactory overall but a significant number of parents want more information about how well their child is doing at school and at more regular intervals.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has built a happy and caring school that values everyone as important. He has steered the school a steady course through tragic times. There is now drive and determination by a new management team to lift standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. Governors are supportive and committed but not yet critical friends of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Present systems to collect evidence are not supported by rigorous analysis to identify what needs to be done to raise standards. Managers are not yet sufficiently familiar with the principles of Best Value.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources earmarked for giving additional support to individuals or groups are used to good effect and this means that these pupils improve their basic skills. Levels of staffing are adequate, the quality of accommodation is good and there are very good quality resources available to support both teaching and learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they do well as a result.</li><li>• The school is well managed and well led</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Insufficient information is given to parents about how well pupils are doing at school.</li><li>• School could work more closely with parents as partners in education.</li></ul>

The inspection team can see why pupils like school; it is a happy place to be. The team judge that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in their academic studies is not high enough in some classes and this impedes the progress that some pupils make by the end of juniors. Leadership is satisfactory, though there are weaknesses in management that require attention if standards are to lift. The team agrees that parents should be given more frequent and detailed information about their child's progress and more encouragement given to those who want greater involvement in the work of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. There has not been the boost to standards envisaged since the time of the previous inspection. The school is judged to be underachieving due to the failure to capitalise on the good start given to pupils in their early years; the uneven progress that too many pupils make in learning during the four years that they are in the junior-phase of school. Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science as a result.

2. Children receive a very effective education in the Foundation Stage. When the youngest children first enter the reception class, their achievements in all assessed areas are found to be average. By the time they are five years old their skills are at the level expected for their age, most have made at least good progress in all areas defined by the Early Learning Goals. A significant proportion of children currently in reception is likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they are five years old. Children who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good staff teamwork. There is no variation in the quality of education provided for children in the single age reception class and the one mixed with Year 1 pupils, it is good in both.

#### **Key Stage 1**

3. Results of the 1999 Standardised Assessment Tests (SATs) when pupils are aged seven years show pupils' performance to be well above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Results compare on a level with similar schools in reading but are below in writing and well below in mathematics. Over the last four years pupils' performance has consistently been above average in reading and writing but below the national average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science show that average standards are achieved.

4. The SATs taken by seven-year-olds in 2000 cannot be compared with national figures, as comparisons are not yet available. However, the early indication is that results in school have improved overall, and show English results up by seven per cent, a small increase in mathematics at two per cent and in science a significant increase by twelve per cent. Inspection findings judge attainment at Key Stage 1 to be average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Work saved from last year usefully helped inspectors evaluate progress over time and sound achievement could be seen in the three subjects. Good impact is beginning to be seen from the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy although in some lessons, pupils have yet to work with the necessary speed and accuracy when handling numbers. A teacher in this key stage chosen to be a leading mathematics teacher for the Local Education Authority is driving up standards at the end of the key stage due to her highly effective teaching. Nevertheless, results in mathematics are not yet at the same level as in English and science. The teachers' confidence to enable pupils to "learn by doing" in science is clearly paying off as the rising results demonstrate. The achievement of boys and girls shows no significant variation by the end of Key Stage 1.

## **Key Stage 2**

5. Pupils' attainment overall in the 1999 SATs was low compared to most eleven-year-olds. Results were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. When compared to similar schools the 1999 test results show low achievement. Only a very tiny percentage achieved the higher levels and when this is taken into account it placed the school's results in the bottom five percent of schools who have a comparably small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Trends over time show below average results in English and mathematics and well below average results in science.

6. The SATs taken by eleven-year olds in 2000 show sixty four per cent of pupils achieving the expected level in English which is the same percentage as in 1999, results are twelve per cent lower in mathematics and three per cent lower in science. This is against the national picture that shows an improvement in results of between three and seven per cent. It is clear that the school's results are not keeping pace with the increasing performance nationally. This means that test results are too low at the end of Key Stage 2 and this shows under-achievement.

7. From the work seen during inspection, findings show standards to be below average overall in English, mathematics and science. Despite accelerated progress in the single age Year 6 class, the progress in learning pupils make up to then, is uneven. Most pupils are unable to capitalise upon the secure start being given up to the age of seven years. There are several reasons why pupils do not progress at a satisfactory rate over the four years in juniors. The style of teaching in some classes in the lower key stage is undemanding; setting arrangements are geared to levelling down, rather than lifting up achievement and management has not yet given sufficient focus on collecting and analysing the right data to be able to track and target individual achievement. There was no significant variation observed between the achievement of boys and girls, though in the least successful lessons it was boys who became easily distracted when the work was too easy, and this interrupted their learning. There are more boys than girls in the lowest sets in English and mathematics. A significant number of Year 6 boys have been assessed as working well below the level expected. Until this year planning has followed individual rather than a whole-school format and assessment practice has been seriously lacking at the class, year and whole-school level.

8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in withdrawal groups because the work is well matched to their learning needs and because they are given good support by well briefed staff. Some pupils tend to make less progress in class lessons because targets in individual education plans do not give enough guidance to teachers when planning their work and it is left to the particular expertise of individual teachers to ensure that individual needs are met. This is an issue in some of the lower sets for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 where work set is not specific enough. In the best lessons the teacher ensures that targets are taken account of whatever the subject; these pupils make good progress in consequence.

9. A very small minority of infant and junior-age pupils learning English as an additional language is identified in paperwork by the school. None of the pupils identified receives additional support for English as all are assessed to be confident with working in English. There was no evidence gathered during the inspection that caused concern about how well pupils who learn English as an additional language achieve; the same judgements for all pupils are equally appropriate to these pupils.

10. Standards in speaking and listening are average at the end of both key stages and reading is above average. Writing skills though average at Key Stage 1 are below average at

Key Stage 2. Since 1998 the school has continued to implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully and to the general benefit of pupils' learning. There is an abundance of time given to English outside the literacy hours but too little attention is paid to ensuring that literacy skills are precisely targeted. Setting arrangements in English in Key Stage 2 are not working to best effect as the data used to organise the different levels of learning is imperfect. Too much attention is paid to what is taught rather than learnt. Teachers work in isolation in the sense that they have no real appreciation of what *top set* means and there is too little challenge in planned work across sets as a result. Too little attention is paid to providing different work for pupils within sets that not only matches their assessed capabilities but targets the next steps in learning. This is a refinement that would make progress more even year on year. Some good work is going on in the Better Reading Partnership supported by volunteers and in the additional literacy groups taught by the special needs co-ordinator and support staff that is helping these pupils make up lost ground. The standards in English show an upward trend in the first three years in school because of some good teaching but despite equally good teaching in Year 6, pupils do not recover from the dip in progress in the lower juniors. Pupils' progress in English, over time, is unsatisfactory.

11. Standards in mathematics are judged to be below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils learn effectively in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 but then progress slows down in Years 3 to 5 with higher attaining pupils especially, not achieving the levels of which they are capable. Mathematics is the weakest subject in the school. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented soundly and is providing a useful structure to lessons. A policy for mathematics has yet to be written. Useful assessment procedures have been established to help teachers gauge how well pupils are doing at the end of units of work but they are not tied into targeting the next step an individual needs to take to make gains in mathematical learning. Information gained from tests taken in Years 3-5 are not analysed with sufficient rigour to assist the organisation of the setting arrangements, the flaws of which have been identified in the previous paragraph. Pupils' progress in mathematics, over time, is unsatisfactory.

12. Target setting in school has had a very low profile. Statutory targets in English and mathematics are agreed annually with the Local Education Authority and these were met in 2000. The school has set relatively low targets in English and mathematics for 2001. They reflect the projected achievement of the current Year 6 but do not take account of any value the school may add to the pupils' education through making provision more effective.

13. Standards in science are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. In some classes in the middle of the school work is set too low for pupils' capabilities and their learning is inhibited by the teachers spending too long talking and showing them how to do things rather than letting them experiment for themselves. Thus progress is not as good as it could be for some pupils, and low test results are testament to this dip in achievement. Despite the best efforts of the co-ordinator, science has not improved to the level expected, and this reflects under-achievement.

14. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory at both key stages. Pupils throughout the school make steady progress in acquiring ICT skills and make sound gains in their understanding and knowledge about computer hardware and software. The school has recently built an extremely well resourced computer suite that is scheduled to be up and running very soon.

15. Standards in art and design, music and physical education are higher than the level expected throughout the school and above the level expected in history by the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers enjoy teaching these subjects and it shows in the good progress pupils make. Through worthwhile experiences pupils make steady progress in design and technology and geography. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at both key stages.

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

16. The school is happy, friendly and caring. Very good attention is paid to helping pupils grow into responsible young adults and all pupils, including those with special educational needs are valued for being themselves. Parents appreciate the ways in which the school fosters pupils' sense of social responsibility and maturity. Strengths regarding pupils' attitudes and behaviour, reported at the time of the previous inspection, have all been sustained. Levels of attendance in the school are good and are contributing positively to the quality of education provided.

17. Pupils are happy in school and are keen to attend. The quality of relationships at all levels is very good and everyone tries hard to do their best for one another. Playtime behaviour during breaks and lunchtime is harmonious and reflects the very good behaviour found in most lessons. Bullying instances are taken seriously and responded to effectively. There have been no exclusions in the last twelve months.

18. Children under five have made a very settled start to their education and show confident attitudes to work, one another and adults. They work with sustained effort for example during circle times when they consider what they are good at and not so good at. They listen respectfully to one another's views and show tolerant and caring attitudes when someone is a bit tough on themselves. By the time they are five most share well, co-operate successfully and behave very responsibly.

19. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good. Pupils with special educational needs show good levels of interest when working in small groups due to the good support given to them, and because their efforts are praised and recognised. Some pupils show an awareness of the progress they are making but in general this could be better developed. Pupils work with good levels of concentration; for example, in English in Year 1 when trying to cut out speech bubbles and sentences from a work sheet so that they can use them in their own writing about the Little Red Hen. In one or two lessons in Key Stage 2 the teachers spent too long giving instructions, and gave too little emphasis to developing pupils independent learning skills. On these occasions pupils simply turn off to learning and in consequence attain below their capabilities. In one class of older pupils, the boys were observed to have lacklustre attitudes and were very passive in learning about twentieth century Britain until the teacher introduced material about the *Blitzkrieg* that she had clearly chosen to simulate a more positive response. Pupils can work with perseverance and good self-expression; for example, when playing together as a brass ensemble to polish their performance of the *Camptown Races*.

20. Behaviour in the great majority of lessons is very good. In the one unsatisfactory lesson in the Foundation Stage the children, who had only been in school a few weeks, came back from break-time very high-spirited and the teacher gave too much leeway for chatter and unsettled behaviour that had an adverse effect on learning. In a small number of lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils were observed to fuss and depend too much on the teacher but this was in part due to the behaviour management strategies being used. Pupils respond well to the code of conduct and know well the effect their actions have on others. Most are well motivated by the award of house-points for good work and effort. Pupils know very clearly the

difference between right and wrong, and show respect for one another and their teachers. When given the opportunity, pupils take on roles of responsibility well, though this aspect of provision could be capitalised upon still more.

21. Levels of attendance are good, nearly all pupils arrive punctually and lessons begin on time. These factors contribute positively to standards achieved. Registration is carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

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

22. The strengths in teaching have been sustained since the time of the previous inspection, though the proportion of good quality teaching has fallen slightly. Relationships continue to be a key feature in making classrooms positive places for teaching and learning. Weaknesses identified then in planning and assessment have begun to be tackled. In some lessons still too long is spent on teaching rather than learning and in some lessons teachers expect too little from pupils which results in limited progress being made, especially in core subjects. Setting arrangements are showing early teething troubles as teachers have the tall order of trying to plan for two age groups and a wide range of abilities. Parents hold positive views about teaching and many say the reason they chose the school is because of the rich and rounded education pupils receive.

23. In the 84 lessons observed during this inspection teaching quality was of satisfactory or better quality overall. In forty one per cent of lessons teaching was of good quality, in eleven per cent of very good quality and in two per cent excellent. Eight per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. These lessons were in English, mathematics and science predominantly in Key Stage 2. In the unsatisfactory lessons in Key Stage 2, the teachers spent too long talking, gave too many instructions and did not allow pupils time to work things out for themselves, practice and refine new learning and so some switched off and made few gains. Teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall in the juniors but there is potential for it to be better focused on ensuring that all pupils make the maximum amount of progress over their time at school, especially in mixed-age classes and sets. The one unsatisfactory lesson in mathematics in the Foundation Stage was due to inexperience in managing behaviour that resulted in too little progress being made in the lesson by too many pupils.

24. Teaching is satisfactory overall in school. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teaching of pupils in the specialist language unit is good. Teaching in art and design, music, history and physical education is good because teachers enjoy teaching these subjects, have good subject knowledge and pupils make good progress in learning as a result. The very best teaching observed during the inspection was in early years, in the Key Stage 1 Unit class, in Year 2 and in Year 6. Here teachers give good attention to making sure that the work set for all pupils is matched to the level they are working at but also gives them extra challenge to push on in learning. In these classes methods are varied and effective, teachers are skilful at eliciting information and extending understanding through well-judged questioning. The very best practice in teaching and learning in the school has yet to be sufficiently shared. A timetable of monitoring and evaluation has not yet been established and the next step is to involve more people in observing work in classrooms.



25. Children under five benefit from very good teaching and get off to a flying start in their education as a result. The staff work together well as a team. They understand the needs of young children well and provide a varied range of learning experiences that help children develop a good all round education and get into productive work habits from an early age.

26. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and often is good in one to one, and in small group situations. This good quality reflects the teamwork of the well-trained support staff who know the pupils they work with well. Support staff keep notebooks of the work they cover with pupils but these do not yet record in detail how well pupils are achieving in class or when withdrawn. Individual education plans are not as helpful as they might be because the targets are neither sufficiently specific nor measurable. Their quality is in direct contrast to the individual education plans seen in the Key Stage 1 language unit class which have a more useful structure and format and are used much more successfully to chart progress. This enables the necessary action to be taken during the learning process rather than at the end of the cycle.

27. Skills of literacy are given appropriate attention, particularly in literacy hours, although more could be done to promote writing in some subjects such as history and geography. The school timetables additional English lessons to promote speaking and listening, reading and writing but some of these lack a tight focus on learning. For example in one lesson in Year 4, pupils were given the opportunity to share their news but there was no reference in the teachers' written plans to how well pupils were expected to do this nor what gains they were expected to make in speaking and listening skills. There was no attention given to what level of vocabulary was being targeted, nor how pupils' presentation and discursive skills might be improved for instance. There were missed opportunities to target learning more precisely to enable higher standards to be attained. Good support is provided in reading for some lower attaining pupils through the Better Reading Partnership. Volunteer helpers give generously of their time to help individual pupils improve their reading. This is an effective strategy that is helping to raise standards in reading. Other strategies, such as additional literacy support in Year 3 and Year 4 is also having an impact on basic literacy skills for some lower -attaining pupils.

28. Numeracy skills are well taught in Key Stage 1 and pupils are working more accurately and speedily as a result. The mental maths component of the numeracy hour is particularly well taught in a pacy, quick-fire way that secures pupils' interest and stretches their intellectual skills. Numeracy skills are taught soundly in Key Stage 2 but the style of some lessons is too directed and this limits pupils' opportunities to have a go. In a Year 5 maths set, good progress was made in the last quarter of an hour when the teacher skilfully gave pupils the chance to reflect on the lesson, and share with others, the best way they had found to calculate fractions of whole numbers up to four digits long. This practice is not consistent however in other sets. Professional development has been successful in supporting all staff as they successfully implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Some teachers have been chosen to lead on numeracy initiatives in the Local Authority because of their skills in teaching successfully, but managers are not making best use of this expertise to share with others in school. Appropriate use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.

29. A useful improvement introduced by the Deputy Head has been an agreed A3 planning format used by all teachers to set out what is to be taught and learned in English and mathematics. There is potential for lesson planning to be better focused however, in stating clearly what gains different pupils are expected to make, thus ensuring that all pupils make the maximum amount of progress over their time at school, especially higher attaining pupils. Assessment in the form of brief lesson evaluations are beginning to assist some teachers' planning in English, mathematics and science as they accelerate or reinforce

learning depending on pupils' response. As teachers become more adept at setting specific objectives for the range of pupils they teach in sets, it is envisaged that assessment will focus more on what the next steps in learning for all should be.

30. Marking is variable though satisfactory overall. Some teachers do not use marking to seek improvement, they accept slipshod work and comment more favourably than it's worth. This means that pupils' knowledge of their own learning is under-developed. Conversely, other teachers in the later stages of Key Stage 2 have returned work back to pupils when it does not meet their high expectation. A useful start has been made in recording individual performance in tests, and in forecasting expected achievements but insufficient use is made of this information to support teaching and learning. Homework is being used successfully to assist learning.

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

31. In the previous inspection, planning was identified as a key issue for action. Weaknesses in curriculum planning were leading to inconsistencies in curriculum coverage for pupils of similar ages and were inhibiting progression of learning for all pupils. Medium-term planning which identified learning objectives, matched work to differing levels of ability, identified resource requirements and assessment opportunities was not in place. Since the time of the previous inspection positive developments have taken place and planning has been refined, although there is still room for improvement in making sure that all pupils are given sufficiently challenging work to do. Positive comments were made in the previous inspection about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimension of education. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education today has been sustained and built-upon and is very good. The ethos promoted reflects a sense of community and the school lives what it believes.

32. A broad and generally balanced curriculum is now in place, providing a good range of learning opportunities in all curricular areas. The school has done well to ensure that the richness of the expressive arts is retained whilst giving appropriate attention to new initiatives such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and key focus on ICT. Consideration has been given to the balance of time devoted to each subject. However, the generous time devoted to English in addition to the daily literacy hour is not always used effectively to raise standards. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented but the effect of these strategies on raising standards is hampered by the organisation and setting of pupils in Key Stage 2. The present grouping does not enable higher attaining pupils to be sufficiently challenged, for example. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Appropriate procedures are in place to identify pupils at an early stage but individual educational plans do not contain sufficiently well focused targets to identify small and achievable steps needed for improvement. Too little support is provided for lower achieving pupils in the groups within literacy and numeracy lessons.

33. Whilst planning has improved, learning objectives are often too vague and work set is not always sufficiently demanding to challenge the most able pupils in particular. The evaluation undertaken by teachers focuses too much on their teaching and too little on the learning that has taken place. Although assessment opportunities are sometimes indicated on planning these are often superficial and do not serve to inform future planning for groups of pupils. The emphasis is rightly placed on the development of basic skills and the strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, many based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Others have yet to be updated. These include ICT,

music, art and design and physical education. Statutory requirements are met. Religious education is taught appropriately according to the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus.

34. The school rightly aims to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils. However, there are no arrangements in place to track pupils withdrawn from lessons such as music for additional support in English for example, to ensure they have access to missed experiences and learning. In some subjects such as science, history and geography, Year 2 pupils in the Year 2/3 class undertake different work to pupils in the single-age Year 2 class. For example in a science lesson, the oldest pupils learned about teeth whilst the youngest about drugs. The teacher had usefully planned in essence a lesson in two halves to meet curricular requirements and age-related expectations but in order for her to deliver both programmes of work, half the class had to wait for her attention at key points. Additionally, Year 2 pupils spent the first thirty minutes of the lesson learning about teeth that they would not re-visit for twelve months. It also meant that they had lost thirty minutes of learning about drugs and over time this will accumulate and work against the amount of progress they can make in science. Management has yet to monitor the impact of these arrangements and this is unsatisfactory.

35. The provision for pupils' personal and social education is good and is a strength of the school. There is good attention given to sex education and health education. The development of self-esteem, personal responsibility and care for others and the environment is integral to all areas of the curriculum, helping pupils towards becoming good future citizens.

36. Extracurricular provision is good with a wide range of opportunities including musical and sporting activities, enriching pupils' learning. These include football and netball teams, cricket coaching, choir, various recorder groups, brass band and tuition for flutes and clarinets. Teachers work with great commitment and enthusiasm in their own time to enable these to take place. A very good programme of visits, including a residential experience for older pupils to St. Audries Bay, Somerset, visits to Bishops Wood Environmental Study Centre and millennium celebrations in the cathedral, supports the curriculum well, contributing most effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has strong links with the community with local people contributing to pupils' experiences in history, mathematics through the mathematical trail, geography and physical education through a programme of orienteering set up by the chair of governors.

37. Pupils make good use of the College for the Blind for swimming and there are strong links with local churches including a visit to the Sikh temple. Worcester County promote coaching in rugby and cricket. The school choir and band contribute to the life of the community, by singing and performing, for example in local churches, a nearby hospice and residential homes for senior citizens. The school enjoys good links with the local cluster of schools and exchange visits have also taken place with a local first school as part of Year 4's geography studies. Good links have been established with a partner school in Amsterdam and Japanese school links are being encouraged by the headteacher following his visit to Japan. This is helping to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world and making a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

38. Good attention is paid to pupils' spiritual development. The school places great value on its strong Christian beliefs and this permeates assemblies and religious education. Collective worship has a good spiritual dimension. Pupils are very receptive and attentive during this time. Spiritual understanding is developed through quiet reflection and prayer, through the use of music in assemblies and through joyful singing. Worship is of a broadly Christian nature but opportunities are provided for pupils to explore the values and beliefs of other major faiths. Good spiritual development is fostered through an awareness and appreciation of beauty in art and design, music, poetry, nature and the local environment. There is time to think about and wonder at the mysteries of life. In a Key Stage 1 assembly, children sang with excellent pitch and a spiritual moment was shared by all as they came together to celebrate and praise. Through the Bible story of 'David and Goliath' intellectual thinking skills and personal and social education were promoted. Pupils knew that the Bible was a very special book and there was a sense of awe and wonder throughout this assembly. Pupils were given the opportunity to reflect on human characteristics and ideals as well as comparing different beliefs and practices.

39. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Within the caring environment teachers promote a strong moral code and are excellent role models, promoting clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and for caring attitudes. Children learn the difference between right and wrong from the earliest age, and teachers expect them to behave well and to respect others. Values such as honesty, kindness and fairness are fostered with a strong emphasis placed on self-esteem. Good use is made of circle time and personal and social education lessons to consider wider moral and ethical issues. By Year 6, their growing maturity enables pupils to discuss moral issues about the environment, conservation and care for the world, in a sensible and thoughtful manner.

40. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils' social development. Older pupils take on responsibility of prefects assigned to a class, for example in wet playtime and there are opportunities for year groups to work together, in teams, such as in the orienteering lesson and on occasions, such as sports days. Pupils in the language unit make and send calendars to other children in school enabling social links to be maintained. Throughout the school pupils hold various classroom responsibilities. The House system and Achievers' Assembly contribute very effectively to pupils' social development. In assemblies various groups perform musically, demonstrating very good skills in working together. Consideration for others, and particularly the wider community, is promoted through charitable work, and on occasions pupils initiate their own fund raising for those less fortunate, for example through the 'Blue Peter' Appeal.

41. Cultural provision through the arts continues to be a strength of the school. In subjects such as history, music, geography and religious education, teachers plan work about other cultures and civilisations from the past and present. Pupils learn about great composers and the styles of famous artists. They play instruments from their own and other cultures. Pupils visit the local churches and a Sikh temple and perform music in Worcester Cathedral. In the unit, pupils produce Aboriginal art while pupils in Year 5 and 6 explore the Caribbean as part of their geography studies. The experiences provided broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures as well as enriching the curriculum offered.

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

42. This is a very caring school which makes good provision overall to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety as well as providing very good support for pupils' personal development. This provision includes satisfactory child protection procedures, very good procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying and very good procedures for promoting healthy and safe living and ensuring a safe working environment.

43. The satisfactory child protection procedures include keeping the designated person up to date through regular training and ensuring that all staff are aware of the child protection procedures. Also, the school knows who to contact in the support agencies should the need arise.

44. Procedures for promoting positive behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good and include verbally praising pupils at every opportunity and awarding stickers and house points for good behaviour. House points contribute to the House Points Cup awarded weekly. Recognition for good behaviour is given in the Key Stage 2 "Praise Assembly" held monthly when certificates are awarded to those pupils whose teachers feel have tried hard.

45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are good. Computerised attendance recording ensures careful monitoring and unauthorised absence is followed up appropriately. Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality are part of the Home/School Agreement and parents are reminded about these aspects as relevant.

46. Procedures for ensuring a safe working environment are very good. Health and Safety audits are carried out twice a year, the Health and Safety Committee meets termly and a full risk assessment exercise has been carried out for all areas of the school. Also the caretaker, who is very diligent in her duties, plays a major role in ensuring the safety of the premises as well as maintaining the school to a very high standard.

47. Pupils' personal safety, personal hygiene and general well being are very well promoted in Personal, Health and Social Education lessons and through appropriate subjects in the curriculum. First aid provision is good overall with many staff trained in this field.

48. Pupils receive very good personal support and guidance that makes a significant contribution to their personal development. Pastoral care is the responsibility of class teachers who know their pupils very well, are sensitive to their needs and thus able to provide good personal support and guidance. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have and there are opportunities in Personal, Health and Social Education sessions to discuss problems. Plans are in hand to keep detailed records of pupils' personal development as part of the Citizenship Policy.

49. The special educational needs co-ordinator monitors the work of all pupils in the additional literacy and Better Reading Partnership groups regularly. Support staff keep notes on how pupils respond to teaching and discuss these with the special educational needs co-ordinator weekly. The special educational needs co-ordinator attends key stage meetings and is therefore able to contribute to planning and discussions about individual pupils. She also receives all results from national and school tests and has an overview of how pupils are achieving. However, she has no time to observe teaching and learning at first hand and this is a particular issue in relation to the lower sets in English and mathematics.

50. There has been insufficient improvement in procedures for assessing and analysing pupils' academic progress since the previous inspection. Much work has been done to establish systems for collecting formal assessment information in English and mathematics

in particular. Although the teachers know their pupils well, and keep systematic records of individual performance, no use is made of this information, either by the class teacher, or by curriculum managers. Whilst this data from standardised and National Curriculum tests is collected, there is no system at present for analysing this information rigorously so that it can be used to help teachers decide what has been successful with particular pupils, and where to go next in their planning.

51. Neither the Senior Management Team nor subject co-ordinators have yet carried out regular checks on standards, nor examined the implications, for example, of SATs results, for the teaching methods used in particular subjects or to inform the on-going review of setting arrangements in Key Stage 2. Without this kind of examination it has not been possible for the school to identify the causes of under-achievement, nor to propose remedies for it. The school plans to review the arrangements for learning sets each half-term.

52. A start has been made on individual target setting, but this is still in its very early stages. Not all teachers apply the Marking Policy consistently, and so pupils are sometimes unsure what is required, in order for them to improve. A start has been made on assembling portfolios of leveled work, but here again, this is still at an early stage, and does not yet cover all subjects.

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

53. Since the previous inspection there has been some improvement in the partnership with parents. Formal consultation evenings are now in place, there is a wider range of homework but there is still insufficient information on children's progress and the curriculum.

54. The partnership with parents is satisfactory overall and makes a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Parents are satisfied with all aspects of the school, except information on children's progress and how well the school works in partnership with them. They are particularly satisfied with the fact that their children like school, the progress their children are making, the expectation that their children should work hard to achieve their best, and management and leadership of the school.

55. The inspection team does not support all of these views. Progress is good for children in the Foundation Stage, is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and very variable across Key Stage 2 with the accelerated progress made in the single Year 6 class making up some of the ground lost earlier. There are high expectations in the most effective lessons but not all others which has an adverse effect on progress and attainment. Leadership and management are satisfactory but management has not yet given the required boost to standards. However the team supports the views of a significant number of parents who are not happy with information on children's progress. Information about the work of the school is given readily; however, reports on pupil progress do not target the next steps in learning and many parents find them rather vague about actual achievement. The school recognises that some parents would like more involvement as partners in their child's education and the team agrees that this would be a useful area for development.

56. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, frequent newsletters and other correspondence. However, information about the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is a brief outline in the prospectus of the curriculum in very general terms but limited details are given to parents of the curriculum to be covered each term or even each year. The exception to this is in Class E (Year 2/3) where parents are well informed termly about topics and projects. In other classes teachers share information about aspects of curriculum at the "Meet the Teacher" evening for example. Nevertheless, the lack of advance notice about work to be covered restricts parents in the help they can give their children out of school.

57. Parents' contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. A number of parents help in the school through the Better Reading Partnership and parents support their children at home through the shared reading scheme in the lower years and through the homework diaries in Year 6. Parents also raise valuable funds for the school through the Friends' Association that contributes positively to the quality of education provided.

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

58. Overall the leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff is satisfactory but the effectiveness of management in leading school improvement presents a very mixed picture. Raising standards has not been given sufficient high priority in recent years. The issues raised at the time of the previous inspection have not been tackled satisfactorily. School aims do not focus well enough on raising standards and the school's strategic plan has not prioritised the action needed to boost academic performance. However, the deep and sincere commitment to making sure pupils become responsible and well principled citizens has resulted in very good behaviour and relationships. The school's approach to providing a rounded education has resulted in good quality arts and music provision and worthwhile experiences being offered in all other foundation subjects and religious education. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and provision for the youngest pupils in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.

59. The head teacher, governors and senior staff have been very successful in steering a steady course through very tragic times when the previous Deputy died. The school is now ready to deal with the challenges of the future with confidence. An energetic new senior management team is in place and they know that raising standards is the number one task facing them. As yet they have no agreed mandate for how they will be expected to lead the school's improvement and what exactly their role is. They have made an effective start in improving teacher's planning and now aim to develop this to tie into assessment and a system of monitoring.

60. The school is in early days of using evidence to predict how well pupils ought to do year on year and targets agreed with the LEA for 2001 and 2002 are modest. The school has not set any ambitious targets to raise standards over time. The school knows most about how well pupils with special educational needs are achieving. For example, they know that the Better Reading Partnership and Additional Literacy Strategy are successfully raising standards. But these pupils could make more progress in class lessons if targets in their individual education plans were more precise because this would then help class teachers be more effective in planning what these pupils need to learn. Overall the information from test results needs much more analysis before it can be used as a secure basis for decision making.

61. Currently the school does not involve all staff in the drive to raise standards. The devolution of responsibilities for some subjects and aspects, such as assessment, would be more effective if it capitalised better on staff talent and expertise. As the school begins to consider performance management this term, reviewing roles, responsibilities and job descriptions represents an excellent opportunity to improve the effectiveness of staff across the whole school.

62. It is not surprising that governors are ineffective in supporting improvement in standards because they lack a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. One serious shortcoming, shared by governors and staff which must be improved are the methods used to check what works best in the school. There is no effective monitoring of teaching and learning and this means that governors and senior staff are making decisions on the basis of imperfect information. For example, the setting of pupils for English and mathematics in the juniors does not take enough account of the pace at which more able pupils need to learn, the many gaps in some pupils knowledge and understanding and the expertise and number of staff. Putting in place a system to check on what impact the very best teaching has on learning is an urgent priority. Governors are very keen to support school improvement and have overseen considerable improvement in the resources available to the school. However they lack a secure understanding of how additional resources such as the newly created ICT suite should be used if they are to raise standards particularly in English and mathematics.

63. The school office is very efficient and provides good support to ensure that the school day runs smoothly. The budget is in a healthy state and planned savings have been made for upgrading the provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage. Financial routines are good, new technology is used well and the school is keen to ensure they get good value for money when making purchases. However the principles of 'best value' are not well understood by governors and senior staff. There is some reluctance to address unfavourable comparisons with similar schools, many parents indicate they feel they are not sufficiently involved in the life of the school and targets to improve standards lack challenge. Nevertheless there is a growing awareness of the importance of these issues which is beginning to change the climate in which the school operates. Governors have received training recently which means they are better equipped to support management in pursuing the number one priority of raising academic standards.

64. Overall the school has emerged from a very difficult period in its history with morale and confidence intact. It has strength and commitment, and those in positions of influence understand the urgency with which standards need to raise and management effectiveness to improve. Because the school receives more income than most primary schools to provide education and has not yet lifted standards to the level they should be then the value for money the school provides is unsatisfactory.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science, especially in Key Stage 2 by:
  - Making the raising of academic standards the number one priority in the school's aims and development plan;
  - Ensuring that all lesson plans have clear, detailed and challenging objectives for the range of pupils in the class;
  - Ensuring that the best teaching practice that results in accelerated learning is shared and exchanged;
  - Setting clear targets for pupils and clear outcomes for lessons based on accurate assessment of prior learning;
  - Ensuring that marking not only recognises effort but shows clearly how work may be improved;
  - Reviewing the quality and impact of planning and assessment through regular and systematic monitoring;
  - Setting challenging targets that reflect the school's future ambition.  
(Paragraphs: 1, 5-7, 10-13, 22-24, 27-33, 50, 55, 58, 88, 91, 92, 97, 100, 102-105, 107, 110, 111, 113, 115, 119, 121)
  
- (2) Make management more effective by:
  - Defining roles and agreeing the tasks of those with management responsibilities;
  - Setting out a plan that clearly shows what monitoring is to take place and what it is expected to achieve.
  - Reviewing the organisation of learning sets in English and mathematics so that the focus is on all pupils maximising their achievement;
  - Giving staff the necessary skills, time and opportunity to undertake classroom observations to check on quality and standards in the aspects/subjects they co-ordinate so that they can play a full part in school improvement planning and action;
  - Agreeing that written policies are implemented consistently across the school;
  - Analysing assessment data so that managers know how well pupils in school are learning and use findings to inform the planning and provision of human and physical resources.  
(Paragraphs: 24, 28, 30-32, 34, 49-52, 55, 58, 60-63, 71, 88, 91, 95, 101, 111, 112, 122, 128, 134, 140, 146, 154, 161, 167, 173)

## HOW WELL DOES THE SPECIALIST LANGUAGE UNIT PROVIDE FOR ITS PUPILS?

65. The school has continued to build on, and improve, the quality of the work of the language unit. Since the last report there has been an increase in the percentage of language unit pupils who return to mainstream schools from 40% to 59%. There has been increased parental involvement in the unit through both formal and informal meetings. Inclusion of language unit pupils in the main school has become an integral part of the school life. Some main school pupils with special educational needs attend the language unit for help with literacy. The school shows a good awareness of educational inclusion.

66. It would be inappropriate to judge pupils' attainment against national expectations for pupils of a similar age. Language unit pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and overall the achievement of pupils in the unit is good when their prior learning is considered. By the end of Key Stage 1, a number of pupils have made sufficient progress in literacy and numeracy to be included in main school sets for these subjects, although this tends to be in the lower groups. Pupils make good progress in developing their language skills. For example when talking about mothers and their babies in a science lesson they knew that babies need milk to drink, a home to keep them safe and love to make them happy. Pupils gain in confidence and are able to demonstrate their increasing skill by answering questions confidently. They show an improvement in their ability to follow instructions quickly and with accuracy. For some pupils it is a milestone when they can sit quietly and still. The lovely bright cushions on the class floor are a great motivator in supporting this. In Key Stage 1, their written work continues to improve both in presentation and content. By the end of the key stage, many pupils are writing longer sentences that are appropriately structured, although the level of work is below that of their peers in main school. They make similar progress in their reading and are able to apply their increased knowledge of letter sounds to reading new words. By the beginning of Key Stage 2, some pupils are included in main school sets for literacy. In Key Stage 2 their language skills continue to develop steadily. Some pupils are reading at a level within the range expected of pupils of their age. Their writing progresses and pupils now use joined writing and write more sentences to complete a piece of work. Good use is made of opportunities across the curriculum to encourage language development. For example, during changing for a physical education lesson pupils were encouraged to use prepositions such as under or on. In a mathematics lesson pupils were encouraged to make the correct pronunciation as they were counting.

67. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They show an interest in their work and this is maintained by good creative teaching, especially in the Key Stage 1 class where teaching is never less than very good. Concentration during lessons is evident but the pupils are not self-directed learners and it is skilled adult intervention that keeps them on task. For example, in a geography lesson, which required them to work from a map of the school, the teacher carefully guided the task of turning left and right in order to ensure that all the pupils were successful. The pupils will accept additional help and value encouragement. Growth in self-esteem is evident as a result of progress in learning.

68. The quality of teaching is good overall with pupils being given a very good start in the early years. A characteristic of the teaching is the very good knowledge the unit staff has of the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils. The close working relationship between teachers, non-teaching assistants and speech and language therapists are strengths of the provision. This close working relationship has a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. In a literacy lesson, for example, following the introduction, the class was divided into three groups. Each group had adult support and work that matched their level of attainment. Teaching is delivered at a brisk pace and a variety of methods are used to maintain the pupils' interest. In a literacy lesson, for example, pupils wrote the shape of a letter in the air, they traced the letter in the sand, and they wrote the letter on paper. This

variety of activity held the pupils' attention and encouraged learning.

69. The management of sometimes potentially difficult pupils is a strength of the unit. On occasions when a pupil's behaviour is challenging, unit staff ensure that it does not disrupt the teaching. High expectations and creative use of resources are evident in good teaching. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher had made a board representing a lily pond. The pupils had to count plastic frogs in the pond. The use of this very visual resource maintained pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

70. The individual education plans are of very good quality with small, measurable targets, but they are not yet sufficiently linked to the long-term targets set out in the pupils' statements. Satisfactory pupil profiles are in place but need further development if they are to chart pupils' progress through the unit.

71. The unit is well staffed and provides a pleasant environment in which children can learn. Resources are of good quality and are used well. The management of the unit is satisfactory but relies on good relationships between staff rather than defined roles. The headteacher assumes the oversight of the work of the unit in the absence of a member of staff allocated responsibility. The unit gives good value for money.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	84
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	41	38	8	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	307
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	21
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	88

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	25	16	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	24	22
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	35	37	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (76)	90 (87)	88 (71)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	20
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	34	36	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (84)	88 (85)	78 (69)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	21	18	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	15
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	25	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (65)	72 (53)	77 (63)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	11	11
	Girls	8	9	10
	Total	15	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (53)	51 (53)	54 (63)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	256
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	30.7

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	556 792
Total expenditure	521 457
Expenditure per pupil	1 672
Balance brought forward from previous year	4 066
Balance carried forward to next year	39 401

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	241
Number of questionnaires returned	84

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	44	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	56	2	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	48	2	0	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	54	14	0	7
The teaching is good.	49	45	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	43	15	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	30	8	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	40	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	40	13	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	60	32	1	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	39	2	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	40	6	2	15

## **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. Provision for the youngest pupils is better than it was when the school was inspected in 1996. Through good quality provision children make a flying start to their school life. There are good reasons why children make such a positive start; teaching is good, activities are well planned and this makes learning fun. Consequently children are enthusiastic, highly motivated and make good progress.

73. Children start school in September during the school year in which they become five and are catered for in two classes one of which also contains eight of the youngest pupils from Year 1. What children know is assessed soon after they start school but this was not complete by the time the inspection took place at the start of October. However results from the previous year indicate that attainment was broadly similar to that seen in most primary schools. The results of entry assessment are well used by the staff to group children and to plan new work. There is good evidence to suggest that most children will achieve the expected levels in all areas by the end of their first year in school and a good proportion will exceed them. Staff are planning to work together to carry out baseline assessment this year because they know it is a good way in which to ensure common standards. A newly qualified member of staff receives very effective support from her colleagues that has enabled her to make a good start to her career. Highly effective teamwork is a key feature of the good provision in the foundation stage.

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

74. Children settle into school very well. Although they had only been in school for four weeks children are observed to be familiar with school and classroom routines. They are beginning to make friends and are confident to share and take turns. They respond positively to different adults and enjoy sharing a book with a visitor. Children are enthusiastic learners and will voice their opinions, for example, when they say 'whew' as they hear what activities are on offer. They work confidently at the computer, sing 'dem bones' with much gusto and are excited when they observe that the number line is once again in disarray. They know how to tidy up and respond quickly to requests to make a circle or get ready for physical development activities.

75. Staff provide a good range of opportunities to promote personal, social and emotional development and attainment is at the level expected for youngsters of this age. For example in the play house children are encouraged to work together to make the lunch and care for the baby. In the playground and at lunch times staff encourage children to socialise and work together. They foster independence and self-help with clothes and personal belongings. Behaviour is very well managed by staff and a calm and orderly atmosphere prevails. Teaching of this key skill is good.

#### ***Communication, language and literacy***

76. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are on track to meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. They talk to each other as they count the cars on the computer screen and enjoy their success when creating skeletons. One child explains very clearly what happened when she broke her arm and had an x-ray. Children like books and listen intently when their teacher tells a story. They try hard to anticipate 'what happens next' when sharing a book about moving to a new house. Some are beginning to know the names of letters and familiar words such as their name. By the end of the year most children know all the letters and about twenty words. They know that print is read from left to right and can talk about the books they read. Children are given good opportunities to write and soon



begin to copy their teacher's writing. Later they write their own news and retell favourite stories. They are encouraged to hold pencils correctly and shown how to form their letters well.

77. Teachers give high priority to the development of literacy skills. Every day children are encouraged to follow a story and look at the letters and words. They play games designed to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of words. There are lots of good opportunities for purposeful talk and what the children say is often recorded by the teacher so that the link with writing is made very clear. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely together and in this way they are able to provide individual attention for children. Good teaching is the prime reason why progress is steady overall and good for some. Planning for all work in the foundation stage is thorough and details clearly what children need to learn well. Teachers record how children respond to teaching and collect additional information in notebooks. This means that staff in the early years have better information on which to plan new work than in most other parts of the school.

### ***Mathematical development***

78. Even at this early stage in the term some children are already beginning to count and many can recite the numbers to 10 confidently. They are well on their way to meet the early learning goal. Some can recognise each number and arrange them in the correct order along a number line. Most can build a tower of ten bricks and a few are beginning to add numbers to five by counting the apples in a basket. Most can play, with great enthusiasm, a game designed to reinforce number recognition to ten. By the end of the year most pupils have mastered the skills and knowledge expected for their age and can count, add and take away to at least ten accurately. They recognise simple shapes such as square, circle and triangle and understand and use correctly terms such as behind, in front, heavier and lighter. They learn to write numbers correctly. Staff have correctly identified a few pupils with special educational needs who at the end of their first year in school have made very little progress. They carefully match work to these children's abilities.

79. It is evident that staff like teaching mathematics. They are lively and enthusiastic in their delivery and make good use of pace and different activities to maintain learning at a good rate. During the best mathematics lessons, teachers change activities about every ten minutes so that no one has time to be bored. Teaching styles ensure that children are active and that they have good opportunities to contribute to the lesson. Resources are well chosen and this is particularly beneficial in making sure boys are as keen to contribute as girls. In the only unsatisfactory lesson in the Foundation Stage the teacher needed to ensure that her lively class was properly settled when they came in from play before starting work and because she didn't the pace of learning was impeded by unacceptable behaviour.

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

80. A good example of how well children are investigating the world around them was seen when they looked carefully at 'Skeleton George' and then found the same bones in their own bodies. They felt their ribs and counted 'George's' and they noticed the many small bones in his hands and feet. They spent time making and painting skeletons and were very pleased with the results. They learned how to use split pins to join the arms and legs to the body. During the year children have the opportunity to compare the toys and decide which is old and which new. They can arrange them in order of age and point to features such as wear and material which support their decisions. Children are observed to be confident users of new technology and whether they are following a talking book, matching numbers or drawing skeletons they use the mouse appropriately. During assembly they sit enthralled as they listen to the story of David and Goliath and are learning to respect the feelings and beliefs of others. In the well-planted school grounds they have good opportunities to learn about the many birds who come to the bird feeding station.

81. The staff are concerned to provide children with good experiences which provide a secure foundation for the National Curriculum. The work with the skeleton was a good example of how teachers introduce important scientific ideas and use the correct language with the children. They make sure computers are used constantly to reinforce skills in mathematics and literacy and extend creative work. Good teaching in this area of learning is making sure that pupils make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

### ***Physical development***

82. At this early stage in the school year teachers made very effective use of a physical development lesson to gather some information for the baseline assessment but also provided good opportunities for physical exercise. The children are confident to use the full space of the hall and show an awareness of others as they run about. They work hard to roll and kick a ball to a partner. They are encouraged to be aware of the impact their activity has on their heart and enjoy working with a partner. Children follow instructions and take turns well. By the end of the year they are confident to play team games and use the full range of small and large apparatus both in the hall and the school playground.

83. Planning for physical development lessons is appropriate and follows the recognised sequence of warm-up, main activity and cool down. Tasks had been selected to allow staff to assess the physical development of new entrants. The classroom assistant was very purposefully employed on this task. Staff need to provide more opportunities and examples to help pupils refine their movements. Children are encouraged to work independently, they are all actively involved, behaviour is good and they respond well to praise. Staff pay good attention to health and safety issues and everyone is appropriately dressed for physical activity.

### ***Creative development***

84. Children work with crayons, paint, paper and cardboard. They draw and colour their designs on the computer. Some show a good facility as they produce well proportioned pictures of people and animals. They use scissors and glue confidently as they make models and skeletons. Children enjoy singing and do so with enthusiasm. They sing about 'Five currant buns' and know a different song for every letter of the alphabet. In the home corner they make the lunch, lay the table and look after the baby. They work with play dough, complete jigsaws and use construction toys to build increasingly complex models which they display with pride.

85. Staff provide a good range of creative activities for children and often link them with other areas of the curriculum. For example, children painted life-size pictures of themselves which were then displayed in a row so they could compare height.

86. Accommodation is good and the staff teams of teacher plus classroom assistant are very effective in promoting learning. Occasionally classroom assistants could be more purposefully employed during the introductions to lessons. The school has plans to improve the outside play area in the near future. Parents actively support the school's homework policy and children take books home every day.

## **ENGLISH**

87. At the time of the previous inspection standards in English were average and progress satisfactory. Speaking and listening was considered to be good with reading and writing satisfactory. There were weaknesses in literacy skills and inconsistencies in handwriting, particularly for the oldest pupils. Since then, the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively and high quality resources have been developed to support this

initiative. Literacy provision has been increased with a small fiction and separate non-fiction library and book resources, said to be unsatisfactory in the fiction library at the previous inspection, have been improved. These are now satisfactory. The non-fiction library is clearly classified and effectively resourced, providing additional working space for group withdrawal and personal research. All teachers have received training to teach the literacy strategy and the majority are confident and well equipped to do so. Planning has improved as a result of the literacy strategy with the school following the recommended planning format.

88. Weaknesses remain in some teachers' planning, because learning objectives are not always specific and assessment opportunities identified are superficial. Evaluation of planning focuses on teaching rather than the learning that has taken place. Assessment data is not used effectively to inform future planning. Although some monitoring of the literacy hour has been undertaken, there is no formal strategy in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Positive steps have been taken to introduce target setting, but this is at a very early stage of development and is not fully understood by all teachers. Other initiatives, such as booster classes and additional literacy support and volunteer reading support for the 'Better Reading' partnership have been successfully established and are contributing to improving standards in reading. The setting and grouping arrangements for literacy are not having a positive effect on pupils. The lack of challenge for higher attainers was identified in the previous inspection and has yet to be tackled by management.

89. Results of the 1999 National tests show improvements in Key Stage 1 where reading at level 2B and the higher level 3 is well above the national average. Attainment in writing is above the national average at level 2 but close to the national average at the higher level 3. When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading is average but is below average in writing.

90. In Key Stage 2 results of the 1999 National tests show English standards to be below the national average at level 4 and close to the national average at the higher level 5. When compared to similar schools, results are well below average. Results indicate a marked fall in the rate of progress in Key Stage 2. Results over the last three years show girls out performing boys at Key Stage 2, although inspectors found no evidence of this in lessons. However, a predominance of boys are included in the lower sets, where some Year 6 are working at Year 4 levels in their literacy studies.

91. Findings from the inspection show that standards in English currently are average at the end of Key Stage 1 with above average standards in reading. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are below average, although standards in reading are average. The school is giving good attention to reading through additional literacy work and the Better Reading Partnership scheme supported by friends of the school. Results show a steady improvement in reading in Key Stage 1 although writing is weaker. In both key stages there is below average attainment at the higher levels. The new setting and grouping arrangements in Key Stage 2 are considered to be inhibiting pupils' progress, particularly higher attainers because work set for some is undemanding.

92. Pupils in Key Stage 1, including those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. In Key Stage 2 they make unsatisfactory progress overall. However, the progress made is uneven, being accelerated in Year 6 as a result of the good teaching received by pupils in the Year 6 class. The best progress being made is by those children getting additional support. Higher attaining pupils are not as well supported and work set is often not demanding enough to challenge such pupils and ensure they achieve to their maximum potential.

93. The standards of speaking and listening are average at the end of both key stages. Pupils listen attentively and follow instructions without fuss. However, their role in lessons is too often passive, with few children contributing in oral discussion. Many pupils are articulate but these skills are not emphasised sufficiently through opportunities for extended conversations and group discussions within the literacy hour and in the plenary sessions to discuss and evaluate their work. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 2 where there is often reluctance to respond to questions by a significant majority. Not enough emphasis is given to extending these important skills in literacy and in other areas of the curriculum.

94. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in reading are above average. The majority of pupils have secure phonic skills and read with understanding. Many read with fluency and expression. They are confident in their approach to reading with a good range of strategies to support them. The majority are happy to discuss their reading, talking about characters, plot and predicting what might happen. Most pupils understand and explain terms such as 'author', 'illustrator' and 'index'.

95. Reading standards are sustained in Key Stage 2 and by the time they leave the school many pupils are above average readers. High attainers read fluently, with good expression and hold informed views about literacy. There is a good level of accuracy across the ability range with average and higher attainers expressing opinions and beginning to use, influence skills and read beyond the literal. Lower attainers work hard at phonic skills and are able to discuss their reading preferences. Parents are committed to supporting children at home with their reading. Pupils have a good understanding of the reference library and can locate information and demonstrate research skills using the reference system. Pupils enjoy reading and discuss their favourite authors and genres. Reading diaries are maintained but there is too little emphasis placed on the written content and presentation in some classes, where the link between reading and writing is not strongly forged.

96. Standards in writing are average at the end of Key Stage 1. The literacy hour is effective in developing the range and purpose for writing. Pupils write news, stories, poetry and accounts of visits such as to the Bishops Wood Environmental Centre. There is evidence of a reasonable range of writing across the curriculum in history and geography for example. They write descriptively about riding in a hot air balloon and use poetry to stimulate their own poetry writing, such as 'The Song of the Train'. There is a good focus on both fiction and non-fiction writing, with diaries, letters and formal accounts of visits. Pupils cover a good amount of work but handwriting and presentation is untidy for many pupils. Too often pupils write with blunt pencils because expectations of presentation are not high enough. There is a good focus on spelling patterns and basic grammar and punctuation is developed systemically.

97. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards in writing are below average although these standards improve in the Year 6 class, because better progress is made. Whilst the National Literacy Strategy has been effectively implemented its success is hampered by the complicated grouping and setting arrangements, and as a result the literacy hour is not yet having the desired effect on standards. Higher attaining pupils are not challenged with sufficiently demanding work. There is not enough focus on the needs of such pupils, both

through the work set and the support given. There are weaknesses in spellings for all pupils with many careless errors by higher attainers that are not checked through the marking process. Pupils write for a wide range of purpose and there is a good amount of work covered in most lessons. They write stories, simple biographies, newspaper report, play scripts and letters for example. They understand the difference between fact and opinion and between fiction and non-fiction writing. Pupils know how to redraft their work but these skills are not always used as a tool to help pupils improve their work. Pupils understand the different forms of writing such as persuasive writing, formal letters of complaint and descriptive writing, although they do not always use a wide enough range of vocabulary when producing descriptive writing. Although there is a generous amount of time devoted to English outside the literacy hour it is not reflected in the standards of writing for most pupils. There is limited evidence of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in English.

98. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by additional help but because of the 'grouping' arrangements do not get the stimulus from working with other pupils in the literacy hour. Individual education plans do not contain sufficiently specific targets to help pupils achieve. Given their prior levels of attainment and the good additional support provided, they make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets.

99. Pupils enjoy their work on the literacy hour when they are sufficiently challenged. They are eager to learn but do not always respond with enthusiasm in oral sessions. Behaviour in lessons is very good and attitudes to work are positive, many pupils working with sustain concentration, even when work is not particularly demanding. When given the opportunity to work in groups they respond well. When tasks are interesting and demanding this is reflected in the higher quality of their work.

100. In both key stages, the quality of teaching seen is satisfactory overall with a small proportion of good teaching. Pupils are inspired by the good teaching because work is more challenging and exciting and learning is fun. Lively and imaginative teaching styles motivate pupils well. Pupils were highly interested in the texts of World War II newspapers in a Year 6 lesson. The prompt start and rigorous use of time maximises learning for pupils. Good links were made to other curricular areas such as history with well-targeted questions. Many pupils identified 'opinions' in the text and used the text well to support their comments. Additional support in this lesson enabled the teacher to focus more on higher attainers. She reinforced teaching and learning points through effective use of the plenary session. Pupils responded positively to her high expectations of standards and behaviour. The weaker teaching provided little challenge for higher attaining pupils and time was wasted in the lesson for one group who discussed targets with the teacher individually while the rest of the group waited. Standards of work are unsatisfactory both in the amount of work and the quality and standard of presentation for the majority of pupils.

101. Weaknesses in subject co-ordination are not helping to raise standards. Although planning has improved learning objectives they are not always clear and assessment opportunities are superficial. Teachers are not sufficiently clear in their understanding of what pupils know and can do and the progress they are making, from the analysis of data provided. As a result, the newly introduced target setting lacks any context from previous targets to where pupils need to be. There is a lack of emphasis in evaluation of learning that has taken place. Instead it focuses on the teaching. There is little use of targets to support learning across the curriculum. Marking is inconsistent. Whilst comments are very positive, too often they overlook important points for attention and give too little guidance on where pupils might improve. There has been no rigorous or regular monitoring of teaching, the standards achieved in lessons or the progress being made in groups and year groups and this is unsatisfactory. There is a lack of insight about what is working best in school and why. The use of literacy across the curriculum varies between subjects but sometimes not

enough attention is given to more extended writing skills for example, in geography. Resources for literacy are good and the libraries whilst small, are satisfactory. During the week of the inspection, the fiction library remained unattended in an untidy state. This does not promote good library habits. Work on display celebrates pupils' achievements and enhances learning environments. English makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through the use of poetry and a good range of literacy texts.

## **MATHEMATICS**

102. The 1996 inspection report findings said that standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1 were in line with national average and in Key Stage 2 were below national average. In addition few pupils attained the higher levels and most were slow to calculate problems mentally. Lack of pace and insufficient challenge for the more able pupils were identified as weaknesses. There has been unsatisfactory progress in tackling these specific aspects since then as standards in mathematics are much the same as in 1996.

103. In National tests in 1999 pupils' results at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average. Shape, space and measurement skills are least developed and these pull down the mathematics results considerably. Girls do better than boys but not to a significant degree. National test results show a below average trend over time in mathematics at Key Stage 1. When compared to similar schools pupils' test results are well below average in mathematics.

104. In National tests in 1999 pupils' results at Key Stage 2 are below national average. The trend over time is below average and results are well below that of similar schools. Pupils who were about a term ahead when they were seven, are about a term behind when they leave school. Progress is therefore at a slower rate than at the time of the previous inspection.

105. In the 2000 National tests the picture is similar with fewer pupils reaching the national standard by eleven years. There are also fewer pupils reaching the higher level 5 despite them showing promise to do this at seven years. This is an issue that the school so far has not got to grips with.

106. Pupils start Key Stage 1 able to count and use numbers to ten. They can create simple patterns and are beginning to understand addition and subtraction. The pupils' mathematical vocabulary is developing well and they can describe the shape and size of solid and flat shapes accurately. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of mathematics at a steady pace through practical activity, exploration and discussion. Pupils develop their mental calculation skills very effectively through stimulating learning opportunities at the start of each numeracy hour. Pupils are developing problem-solving skills and are able to explain their working out using correct vocabulary. Progress over the key stage is satisfactory.

107. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not build systematically upon the progress made in Key Stage 1. Progress in mathematics is uneven throughout the key stage with better learning taking place in later years. Work scrutinised from the sample of books retained from last year charts the progress and clearly shows the dip in Years 3 and 4. Although pupils learn to calculate more confidently the quality of education suffers from too much inconsistent practise. The setting arrangement throughout Key Stage 2 although a positive step forward in focussing more on the needs of pupils, because they have been organised on imperfect data about pupils' previous performance to some extent they work against pupils making the best rates of progress possible over the four years. Much of the work is undemanding and does not make use of the skills they have learnt. In some sets the teachers are having to back-track over previous learning to ensure that pupils are secure in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. This has involved handing work back to be done again. In other sets pupils do not receive enough stimulating work to extend their thinking and the more able pupils are held back. Presentation of work is generally unsatisfactory and in some instances the teacher has marked the work more favourably than it deserves. At the end of the Key Stage in the single Year 6 class there is evidence of accelerated learning but it is too late to make up lost ground. This picture is one of under-achievement that the school now recognises needs to be improved.

108. The achievement of boys and girls is very similar at Key Stage 1 but there are differences in Key Stage 2. The school has yet to track and target individuals to ensure that they make the progress of which they are capable and attain the highest standard of work possible.

109. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and in Year 2 very good. Subject knowledge is good and teachers plan effectively for all age groups, often setting different work for five distinct learning groups within their class. The best teaching observed during the week of inspection had high expectation and good pace to the lessons. For example, in a Year 2 lesson about number, the pupils passed around a bear first counting in ones, then tens, from ten up to two hundred until they could see the pattern emerging. Once the teacher assessed they had a firm grip on this the pattern was changed to 19, 29, 39 with pupils writing down the numbers as well as saying them aloud. In the group activities pupils undertook different work to extend their number skills. The more able group worked with two hundreds whilst the less able mathematicians consolidated their understanding by counting on and back in tens. Throughout the lesson the teacher constantly challenged pupils' thinking by asking, "how do you know, how have you worked that out?". In this way the teacher was aware of who needed help and who was ready to fly. Throughout the lesson the learning was made good fun, with pupils' responding very positively to the approach and making very good progress. Several classes used a slap, clap, click, click game when counting on or back to keep the pace up. Good questioning and appropriate activities ensure that all pupils are involved. Plenary sessions are well used, not only to reinforce the teaching, but also as an introduction to the next day's lesson. Pupils enjoy the activities and work well to complete tasks.

110. The teaching seen during the inspection in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and in the year 6 class good. The best teaching presents interesting tasks clearly and effectively. There is a good focus on problem-solving encouraging pupils to develop their own strategies for working out practical problems. Expectations are high and the pace in lessons is brisk. Where teaching is less than satisfactory expectations of what pupils can achieve is lower and the tasks are less challenging. This can allow pupils to be distracted and their concentration lessens. Overall, pace in lessons is much slower and there is underachievement for pupils of all abilities. As a result many pupils lack confidence and are passive during lessons. More practical learning opportunities such as the development of a maths trail in Worcester Countryside Centre should make learning fun as well as motivating pupils.

111. The satisfactory implementation of the numeracy hour has brought a structure to the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Teachers plan learning objectives for each lesson but these are not consistently shared with all pupils so that they know what is expected of them. At present, teachers focus on what to teach rather than on what pupils should learn. Overall, there is insufficient challenge in the tasks set during group times to enable pupils of all abilities to be stretched. The pace of learning in lessons is often too slow which limits what pupils learn in that lesson as well as during the year. Assessment in mathematics takes place at the end of the year and there is little in place to help teachers track how well pupils are learning so that they can fast-track or back-track as appropriate. Teachers assess pupils' learning informally when a teaching module is completed. Teachers evaluate their teaching but now need to evaluate pupils' learning. Recent data from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority mathematics tests for Key Stage 2 pupils has been used to set pupil targets but these are, at present, forecasts and lack any context of progress by pupils. The school has yet to analyse its assessment data with sufficient rigour so that it knows how well the pupils in mathematics are learning. As a result it is under-used to inform planning and the deployment of human and physical resources.

112. Management of mathematics is currently ineffective because of the limited insights the school has to why standards have not been lifted in recent years. The role of co-ordinator has not been set down clearly and the post-holder does not have an up-to-date job description. This has led to areas of responsibility becoming unclear and a sense of frustration felt. The co-ordinator has undertaken the necessary training for the numeracy strategy and delivered numeracy training to the staff. However, the co-ordinator does not monitor the teachers' planning or the pupils' learning and has no overall view of mathematics throughout the school. The co-ordinator needs to review the organisation of mathematics sets so that the focus is on all pupils maximising their achievements.

## **SCIENCE**

113. In the school's previous inspection standards were judged to be average at the end of both key stages, and pupils made satisfactory progress. This is no longer the case; standards are average at Key Stage 1 but are now below average at Key Stage 2 because pupils make uneven progress during the junior classes. This is a key issue for the school to address.

114. Teacher-assessments show that standards in science at Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average and those seen in similar schools. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum tests show attainment to be well below the national average, and also very low in comparison with schools in similar contexts. The trend in National Curriculum tests between 1996 and 1999 is for results to fluctuate, whilst always remaining well below the national average.

115. Evidence from this inspection shows that standards are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1, but below by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2. There is no significant variation in the attainment of boys and girls. Within Key Stage 2 there is some variation in the standards attained. In the earlier and middle years of the key stage there is a drop in attainment, whilst there is a marked improvement in the Year 6 class which goes some way towards more acceptable levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, attain satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 1, but, in line with the other pupils, their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average.

116. As they move through Key Stage 1 pupils of all abilities are given a range of



interesting practical experiences, often as part of topics involving work from a number of subjects. In a Reception/ Year 1 class, for example, the Year 1 pupils learned about the human skeleton. They made their own paper skeletons, and talked about the different bones. They were well supported by both the class teacher and classroom assistant. There was a life-size model skeleton in the room, which they studied, and compared with their own work. They used correct scientific language to discuss what they were doing, and this made a positive contribution to their basic language development.

117. The recording of information discovered during investigations becomes more common as pupils move into Key Stage 2. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils recorded their observations of the effects of different types of insulation on keeping things cool. Pupils were learning how to compare different events they observed, and were beginning to see how some materials are suited to specific purposes. The range of experiences is further developed in Year 5 when pupils consider the rotation of the earth on its axis, and how this gives rise to night and day. Practical demonstration helped pupils of all abilities understand this complex phenomenon.

118. Overall the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, with all areas given appropriate attention. Teachers generally integrate work on experimental and investigating science into the other areas, but there is a need to continue to develop this so that the use of the investigative approach becomes fully established.

119. Pupils make satisfactory gains in learning as they move through Key Stage 1. They learn particularly well through investigations that enable them to develop their knowledge and understanding, and to express their ideas using correct scientific language. At Key Stage 2, however, learning is unsatisfactory overall, although there are some examples of good learning. Pupils of all abilities do not extend their learning, and are often found to be working below their capabilities. The use of worksheets, often involving low-level writing and drawing tasks, sometimes means that pupils are insufficiently challenged to extend their understanding and learning. All these factors contribute to an unsatisfactory pace of learning overall in Key Stage 2.

120. For the most part, pupils enjoy their work in science. Only in lessons where there is little practical involvement do pupils become restless and bored. Where activities are interesting, and well matched to the pupils' interests and abilities, there is an atmosphere of enjoyment, and, often, enthusiasm. Pupils share and co-operate well, and gain in confidence when given opportunities to express their ideas, and listen to those of others.

121. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. At both key stages there are some examples of good teaching, but, in the earlier years of Key Stage 2 these are outweighed by teaching which does not reach the required standard. Where teaching is unsatisfactory there is a tendency for teachers to spend too long talking to pupils, rather than allowing them to undertake practical investigations. The tasks given to pupils are also often insufficiently challenging for the pupils' levels of understanding, so that they do not find them interesting or worthwhile. The lack of procedures for using assessment information as the basis for planning next steps in learning often means that

teachers do not know what pupils know and understand, and so cannot pitch activities at the correct levels.

122. The subject is effectively co-ordinated, and the co-ordinator has worked hard to introduce a new Policy in line with the requirements of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and to organise and maintain resources for the subject. However, the limited view of the role of co-ordinator taken by school management so far means that other aspects of the task, such as the monitoring of teaching and standards, and the analysis of attainment from test results, have not been given priority. As a result, the overall management of the subject is unsatisfactory.

123. The school has adequate resources for the teaching of the subject, and they are effectively organised, with due regard for safety. Very good use has been made of the school grounds as a resource for learning in all aspects of the science curriculum. There is a good range of trees and shrubs, a well-established pond, a variety of habitats for birds and wildlife, from flower borders to a 'wild' area, all of which contribute to work in this area.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

124. In the previous inspection the standards in art and design were good at the end of both key stages and progress was satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 built on the good start experienced in Key Stage 1. The good standards in art and design have been sustained throughout both key stages and are above the standards that would be expected nationally. Pupils continue to make good progress as a result of good teaching. By the age of eleven pupils use colour, form, texture, pattern and different materials and processes to communicate what they see, feel and think through the worthwhile experiences offered to them. They explore ideas and meanings in the work of other artists. There is good evidence of two-dimensional and three-dimensional work throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit greatly from the opportunities given to develop their creative skills and the value that is placed upon art and design as a medium of communication.

125. In Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to different mediums and given many opportunities to design their ideas and then choose the right medium to make their creation. They draw, paint and model and art and design is used well across the curriculum. Pupils visited Bishop's Wood Environmental Centre for a teddy bears' picnic. This experience was used as a focus to display pupils' writing, drawings and paintings of themselves, the trees, as well as large models of three-dimensional mini-beasts. Pupils gain in self-confidence through the key stage and concentrate for longer periods of time to complete their work to their satisfaction.

126. In Key Stage 2, pupils benefit from working with a greater variety of resources. Pupils mix colours with increasing skill when painting self-portraits and use ink, charcoal and pastels when drawing to illustrate texture. Following a visit from an artist, pupils in Year 4 design and make their own weaving looms and then, using complementary colours, are able to make a woven piece of material from wool. Pupils gain an insight into the work of famous artists and designers by painting in the style of Andy Warhol, Picasso, Van Gogh and Clarisse Cliff. Pupils show good techniques when making model pots, sculptures, model cars and gardens from a variety of mediums. Pupils enjoy art and design and the work they produce reflects this.

127. Teaching is consistently good across both key stages. Where teaching is most effective there is secure subject knowledge and imaginative tasks set. Teachers lead discussions with open-ended questions that promote pupils' thinking. Lessons are well managed with good pace and learning support staff and volunteers are well deployed. Teachers effectively enhance pupils' work through very good quality displays of pupils' art and design work both in the classrooms and around the school. Art is closely linked to topic themes and cross-curricular links are evident in all classrooms. There is good links to other cultures as seen when pupils design and make Aboriginal patterns.

128. The art and design policy and scheme of work are due to be reviewed to take account of Curriculum 2000 and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work. Although all teachers plan weekly and evaluate their teaching termly, there are no monitoring and assessment procedures. The newly appointed art and design co-ordinator is enthusiastic and eager to take on these challenges. Resources are very good and enhance and enrich pupils' curricular experiences.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

129. Standards were found to be in line with expectations at the time of the previous inspection, and the evidence from the present inspection shows that this is still the case. At both key stages pupils undertake worthwhile design and technology activities, and develop their skills in planning, making and evaluating a variety of artefacts. In a Reception/Year 1 lesson, for example, two groups of pupils were working with construction toys. One group was making a model of a garage, using different vehicles, and another was making structures with 'Interstar' materials. Both activities emphasised practical skills, engaged pupils' interest completely and made useful contributions to pupils' understanding of the function of design and technology.

130. At Key Stage 2, there is continued development of concepts. In a Year 5/6 class, for example, pupils were building a framework for a shelter. This involved them in considering ways of joining materials, how the shape of a structure affects its strength, and how to use tools and materials safely. The pace of work was good and the teacher stopped regularly to discuss the work and explain key learning points.

131. Teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. In some lessons seen the pupils were not given enough information about why they were being asked to carry out particular tasks, so that it was difficult for them to see the purpose of what they were doing. Where interesting practical activities are chosen pupils are well motivated and involved, and the teaching stimulates pupils and promotes good learning.

132. Pupils generally enjoy the work, and are often good at sharing and using tools and materials co-operatively. There are occasions when they are not given enough opportunities to develop their personal skills and responsibility.

133. All aspects of the subject are given appropriate coverage. There is however, a need to track the development of skills so that opportunities can be provided for the practise and reinforcement of particular techniques and skills, so that they are not forgotten when the time between one activity and the next is long.

134. The subject is effectively co-ordinated, but more needs to be done to develop the role to include the monitoring of teaching and standards. Staffing and accommodation are both good, and resources are adequate for the subject. There is a need, however, for resources to be better organised, so that teachers know what is available, and where it can be found. Assessment procedures are only informal, and are not yet sufficiently refined so that

teachers can use the results of on-going assessments to help them plan where to go next.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

135. At the time of the previous inspection in 1996 standards in geography were at the level expected. Weaknesses were identified in planning, leading to a lack of progression and continuity. Since that time there have been some improvements to planning although learning objectives are sometimes too vague and planning lacks detail. It is not informed by useful assessment information. Weaknesses in assessment and monitoring of the subject have yet to be addressed. Improvements have been made to resources, particularly atlases and maps. Geography remains low profile in the school curriculum at present and standards remain at the same level as in 1996.

136. Due to time-tabling arrangements in geography, there were no lessons observed other than orienteering in Key Stage 2. However, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicate that standards in geography are broadly similar to those achieved by other seven year olds and by the age of eleven, and pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in developing concepts and skills in the subject. However, the over-reliance on worksheets results in little extended pieces of writing, particularly from older pupils. The quality of presentation in both key stages is unsatisfactory because teachers' expectations are not high enough and marking is not used effectively to identify how pupils might improve their work.

137. In Key Stage 1, pupils begin to learn about geographical features as they explore a map of the Isle of Struay, following a 'Katie Morag Story'. They label this to indicate key features and know that an island is surrounded by water. They are able to compare and contrast the physical and human features of Struay with their own locality. They begin to learn about the link between climate, habitat and lifestyle and they contrast the clothes worn by an Islander with a city person and examine the shops and houses in the areas. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to draw a simple map from a 'birds-eye' view, are familiar with signs and symbols used on maps. They are able to describe what places are like and are beginning to be aware of how places are linked to others world-wide. This is supported by activities such as plotting the travels of Barnaby Bear on a map as pupils take turns to take him on their travels. Too much reliance on worksheets limits opportunities for first hand fieldwork investigations.

138. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have studied a number of different areas and countries and are able to compare and contrast facilities, including contrasting a small first school with their own. They demonstrate sound knowledge of the environment in different parts of the world. They place St. Lucia, for example, correctly in a map of the Caribbean area and can identify several islands between London and Kingston. They are developing appropriate geographical terminology, for example when studying 'source' 'tributary' and 'meander' with understanding. As in Key Stage 1 there is a heavy reliance on worksheets and not enough opportunity for the development of fieldwork skills through practical investigations. In both key stages, there is little evidence of the use of ICT. Good links are made to physical education and literacy through the orienteering programme. Pupils used mapping skills well in this lesson to follow clues, locate points on the map and solve anagrams. They demonstrated very good skills in working as a team of mixed Year 4 and Year 6 pupils and used skills of teamwork effectively to solve problems. The amount of work recorded is limited, particularly in Key Stage 2. There are weaknesses in the presentation of work at both key stages. From the work seen, pupils enjoy geography, producing models, maps and graphs and particularly enjoy practical use of geographical skills through orienteering tasks. However, a significant majority do not take sufficient care when recording their work.

139. Work seen indicates that teaching is satisfactory overall. There is a good emphasis on correct geographical terminology ensuring that pupils use these words with confidence and understanding. Teachers make good links with other subjects reinforcing skills, knowledge and understanding, for example in literacy and religious education. Planning lacks sufficient detail and learning objectives are sometimes vague, failing to identify clearly what pupils are expected to know, understand and do by the end of the lesson. Assessment is not yet established and does not inform planning well; a weakness identified in the previous inspection.

140. Sound co-ordination of the subject ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met through the introduction of the new national guidelines with due attention given to curriculum 2000. Monitoring and evaluation are underdeveloped in order particularly to set targets to raise standards in geography. Since the previous inspection resources have been improved, particularly atlases and globes as well as audio-visual resources.

## **HISTORY**

141. Strengths identified at the previous inspection, including good links with dance and art and design, have been maintained, assessment remains unsatisfactory but the overall structure of history topics has improved and some good work is seen at the upper end of the school.

142. Progress over time is good by the age of eleven but progress is not even across the school and the Year 6 teacher has to work hard to make sure pupils achieve these standards by the time they leave. At the age of eleven years they know about major periods of British history and have studied the locality extensively. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are introduced to ideas about the past by comparing everyday household objects such as irons and kettles. They look in close detail at the materials of manufacture and the source of power and reflect on daily life in a world without electricity. By the end of Key Stage 2 they begin to understand well how we know about the past as they study illustrations from Greek vases, look at pictures of Roman mosaics, study portraits of the Tudors and study artefacts from the Victorian period and World War II. They learn to question the reliability of evidence and understand that bias and prejudice can distort the truth. They use computers competently as a research tool and to record their findings.

143. Work in history provides good opportunities for older pupils to reinforce their literacy skills as they write moving accounts as a Jarrow marcher and contrast that with the views of a rich contemporary. They write letters to Hitler to express their concerns and show good understanding of the life of factory children in the Victorian age. Ways need to be found to help younger pupils record more of their knowledge and understanding about the past appropriately.

144. All pupils enjoy work in history and lessons are lively and interesting. Pupils are prepared to work hard and take great care over their work. The paintings of the Guildhall are of high quality.

145. The best teaching in history is lively and motivates pupils to work hard. In these effective lessons teachers make good use of artefacts and visits and visitors. The local area is a rich resource which is well used by the school to bring history to life. But teachers also made good use of the illustrations on vases to make pupils think about the daily life of the Ancient Greeks. They were also very careful to discuss with their pupils whether stories such as that of the Minotaur were likely to be true or a legend. Planning has been improved as a result of adopting national guidelines for history but assessment is not yet in place.

146. The co-ordinator is aware that the mixed age classes, which include a Year2/3 class, make planning the history programme complex. She has worked out a model which should avoid the duplication and omission of topics but this will need to be very carefully monitored as pupils move through the school. Currently she has no opportunity to observe the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

147. At the time of the school's previous inspection standards were broadly in line with those expected nationally, and pupils made sound progress as they moved through the school. Teachers were able to make effective use of ICT in other subjects, and the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall, although pupils were not given enough opportunities to select ICT for the tasks they were given. This inspection also found that standards in ICT are satisfactory overall, at both key stages. The school has therefore maintained satisfactory standards.

148. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils are given a range of interesting experiences in ICT, and they develop a familiarity with the computer. They are able to control the computer by means of the keyboard and mouse, and can save and retrieve information with appropriate support. They learn to work together with other children, even when the teacher is not close-by. In a Reception/Year 1 class, for example, pupils worked at the computer using a graphic programme. They made their own pictures, using the mouse and a variety of software tools. The teacher and classroom assistant gave them appropriate support, and much to the pupils' delight their pictures were printed out when completed.

149. By the time they are in Key Stage 2, pupils' confidence is further developed. They have experienced a range of software, and have been able to make use of ICT in the context of their work in other subjects. In a Year 6 special needs group, pupils developed their language skills by writing electronic mail messages to a friend of the school in Australia. There was good development of ICT skills, including logging on to the internet, accessing electronic mail, and using the mouse with accuracy. Pupils revelled at the chance to talk on-line with their friend with such clarity and speed.

150. In all age-groups pupils enjoy their activities in ICT, and they generally work hard. Many pupils have computers at home, and so are confident in the basic operations. By sharing, discussing ideas and working co-operatively, they are showing good development of their social and moral understanding.

151. The teaching of ICT is satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 1, teachers give their pupils interesting activities which often include the use of ICT. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were taught to use the 'Dazzle' programme to create line pictures. The teacher showed pupils how to select a brush, choose a colour, and draw with a line to make a picture. They were also shown how to 'flood-fill' an area with colour. The teacher showed good subject knowledge which she skilfully passed on to the pupils. Teachers generally demonstrate sound subject knowledge in Key Stage 2 classes. Where knowledge is good for example in a Year 4 lesson, pupils were working in groups of four, using the computers for

word-processing. The computer activity had been carefully planned as part of the overall lesson. At the end of the session the teacher discussed the work with the pupils, asking them to explain what they found easy, and what was more difficult. There are occasions in some lessons, however when pupils are left too much to their own devices. It was apparent from the slow pace of learning at such times that insufficient attention had been paid to providing support materials so that when they become 'stuck' pupils are given some means of continuing with their tasks.

152. The school's programme for ICT meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their ability to process data, monitor external events, combine information from different sources, and exchange and share what they discover. There is a need to continue to improve work on developing ideas and making things happen.

153. The school has been very successful in building up a very good range of both hardware and software, including those provided through the efforts of parents and friends in collecting supermarket vouchers. Much has been done during the past months to develop both hardware, software, and the working environment. A new computer suite is about to be brought into use, and it is important that the school gives careful thought to how this new resource will be planned for and used. Governors and managers have yet to consider the impact that this major investment will have both in financial and human terms on curriculum and ICT standards.

154. The subject is co-ordinated jointly by two teachers, and this arrangement is working effectively. Together they have made a good start in developing the subject. At present the school's definition of the co-ordinators' role is too restrictive, and needs to be expanded so that they can give attention to the urgent issues that are arising. As well as the introduction of the new computer suite, consideration needs to be given to the provision of appropriate in-service training for teachers, and to the linking of developments brought about through the National Grid for Learning initiative, and the school's on-going Development Plan.

## **MUSIC**

155. In the previous inspection standards in music were judged to be above those expected at seven and eleven years with pupils making satisfactory to good progress over their time at school. The subject has maintained its high profile and standards remain above those expected. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language take a full role in lessons and make similar progress to others in the class. The specialist teaching provided particularly in Years 2 and 5/6 makes a very good contribution to the school's success in music. Music is a strength in the school's provision.

156. Pupils have the opportunity to enjoy music in all classes with additional instrumental tuition for some pupils. This is provided by the music co-ordinator, supported by other class teachers as well as a visiting specialist. Progress is particularly good in these lessons where pupils are well challenged by tasks and teachers' expectations clearly demand high standards of performance. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in music appreciation and performance that is accelerated at the end of both key stages.

157. Pupils of all ages sing with enjoyment and enthusiasm in assemblies and most music lessons. They have good voice control and are able to perform a wide variety of songs, including rounds to a high standard. They demonstrate a very good understanding of rhythm and time. The lively singing is often accompanied by actions that support pupils in developing their understanding of changes of rhythm. Pupils confidently accompany singing, using a range of tuned and un-tuned instruments, for example morning assemblies are often enriched by high quality accompaniment from recorder groups or the brass band. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils extend their understanding of rhythm patterns with simple compositions. For example, compositions about the 'Rain Forest' involved Year 2 pupils in selecting instruments and creating sound effects for animals, machines and destruction recording their own compositions, using symbols. Regular planned opportunities for listening and appraising introduce pupils to a range of music, such as 'The Carnival of the Animals' by Saint S aens. Pupils work well together and perform confidently.

158. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their musical skills systematically, many playing recorders or wind and brass instruments under the guidance of the exceptionally knowledgeable music co-ordinator, supporting teachers and a visiting specialist. Older pupils have the opportunity to sing in the choir. Throughout the key stage the good balance of listening and appraising, composing and performing is maintained extending pupils' knowledge of pitch, dynamics and rhythm, as well as their knowledge and understanding of a variety of composers and their work. They listen to 'The Moldau' by Smetana, for example and compose river music as part of their topic on 'conservation', sing rounds such as 'Kookaboora' and 'Row the Boat', and sing a range of songs, such as 'The Water is Wide'. There is a good focus on other cultures through musical composition and good links are made to other subjects, for instance pupils in Year 3 use a 'seashore' poem as a stimulus and learn Israeli rounds such as 'Shalom' and 'Zum Gali Gali'. Links are made with religious education as they consider 'Special Places' whilst pupils in Year 6 study music and 'pop' culture from the 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's. There are very good opportunities for pupils to work together creating simple musical scores, with more advanced pupils using structured symbols, for example, to create a musical map of a storm. The daily assemblies make a powerful contribution to music, through the richness of the singing and performing. The singing and accompanying actions of 'He's got the whole world in his hands' is a joy to listen to, with well pitched delightful singing creating a spiritual moment and a shared celebration and praise.

159. These rich opportunities in music lead to good progress across both key stages with very good progress in singing. Skills are systematically developed, with accurate pitch, effective voice control and high quality performance. Attitudes to music are positive. Pupils work together well, with a good sense of purpose and enjoyment. They listen attentively, behave very well and remain focused throughout lessons. The shared involvement in music contributes effectively to pupils' personal development. Music also contributes successfully to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

160. Most teaching is good with very good specialist teaching. Where teaching is at its best there is very secure subject knowledge. The well planned activities are matched to pupils' ability and are both challenging and motivating. The high standards set by such teachers are reflected in the pupils' work. The brisk pace of lessons maximise learning in lesson time. Skills are developed systematically and skilful questioning reinforces learning and encourages self-evaluation. Pupils are encouraged to practise and refine their music making. Very occasionally, teaching is weak because lessons are not underpinned by careful planning and there is a lack of clear purpose and rigour. As a result pupils do not work at a good pace or with the same commitment.



161. There is good leadership of music by the co-ordinator who sets a very good example through her own teaching. Using national guidelines she has put in place effective documentation since the previous inspection to support teachers well, and where she is able to, she monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of work in music across the school. This is an area for further development. Assessment is not yet in place, an issue identified in the previous inspection. Resources are of a good quality and make a positive contribution to music in the school. The very good range of instrumental and extracurricular activities enhance the music curriculum. The choir, recorders and band perform to a high standard and often provide enjoyment and pleasure to a wider audience through their many out of school visits, such as to the hospice, the elderly or to perform in the cathedral.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

162. In the previous inspection the standards in physical education. were satisfactory at the end of both key stages with standards in dance being good. Progress was good throughout the school with pupils' participation in team games, both in lessons and in after school clubs, being a strength of the school. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection due to a well-structured curriculum and confident teaching that enables pupils to learn successfully through practical first-hand experiences. By the age of eleven, pupils have learnt many skills and use them in many different ways and have made good progress over their time at school.

163. In Key Stage 1, pupils use their natural enthusiasm for movement to develop skills in movement and co-ordination. They enjoy working in pairs and small groups and take part in team games involving a variety of physical activities such as skipping, hopping and jumping.

164. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn new skills which they can evaluate and refine. A group of Year 5 pupils learnt how to perform surface dives in swimming and by the end of the lesson had refined their techniques sufficiently so that they could turn a somersault in the middle of swimming a width of the pool. Pupils develop their skills in problem solving when taking part in orienteering in the grounds of the school. Pupils in Year 4 successfully create, rehearse and perform a dance based on the 2000 Olympic Games using Aboriginal music. The regular visits from the Kidderminster Harriers gives pupils the opportunities to learn from, and work with, skilled athletes.

165. Teaching is consistently good across both key stages. Teachers enjoy teaching the subject and this shows in the good quality learning that results. Subject knowledge is good and the teaching is well planned with challenging activities and good pace. Lessons are well managed and instructions are clearly understood by pupils. Teachers have high expectations and always ensure that safety rules are adhered to. The expertise of visiting teachers and athletes has a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils have taken part in rugby, short tennis and cricket coaching through Worcester City Leisure Services. The setting up of an orienteering course by the chair of the governing body and his involvement in developing orienteering skills has not only given the school a valuable resource but has increased pupils' problem-solving skills.

166. Because the quality of teaching is good throughout the school, pupils respond very positively. Pupils enjoy physical education and dress appropriately for physical activity. Their enthusiasm is channelled into good effort. Pupils' interest and involvement is frequently secured before the lesson starts through appropriate introductions such as playing the record "What have you done today to make you feel proud" before a dance lesson on the Olympic Games.

167. Boys and girls enjoy a good range of extra-curricular clubs. They are well motivated through frequent visits to and participation in dance festivals and sports matches and tournaments. There is a policy and scheme of work for each strand of physical education and the co-ordinator is due to review these in the light of Curriculum 2000 and the new Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work for physical education. Monitoring and assessment are still under-developed, and as a result the co-ordinator has only a partial view of the standards being attained in the subject. physical education is well resourced and the school makes good use of its hall, playground, fields and the neighbouring swimming baths and sports hall.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

168. The satisfactory provision for religious education is much the same as at the previous inspection. Teaching has improved and is good overall and progress by the age of eleven is satisfactory with some good gains being made in the last years in the school. The work in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

169. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of eleven years, they have studied six major world religions and are also learning a set of principles by which to live. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are introduced to stories from the Bible both in lessons and in assemblies. They learn about the major Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter and about important festivals such as Diwali or Passover celebrated by other faith groups. Older pupils learn about Sikhism and Islam. In a very good lesson about the Khalsa, pupils not only learned about the 5 K's of Sikhism but also what they stood for. This lesson was very well presented because the teaching style ensured pupils were very keen to contribute. In Year 6, pupils learned how Muhammad received the Qur'an. They also recognised the similarity of this story to the story of Moses receiving the ten commandments. They also learned how to treat the Qur'an respectfully.

170. Pupils have good opportunities to record their thoughts and ideas in religious education. In Years 3 and 4 they studied the diary of a minister and worked out how she spent her time. Pupils recorded their resolutions for the new year and thought about things they regretted in the past. They visited the cathedral and identified the different parts of the building. Much of the work in Key Stage 1 is oral with brief pieces of writing and pictures. While this satisfactory, collecting the items together to make a class book would provide a permanent record of the work covered in a more satisfactory way.

171. Pupils often show enthusiasm for work in religious education. The Key Stage 1 assembly about David and Goliath was very well received and pupils hung on the teacher's words. But work does need to be pitched at the right level and pupils in the unit soon lost interest in discussing the Creation story.

172. Teaching in religious education is good overall with a small proportion being of very good quality. In the best lessons teachers make good use of resources, dramatic tension and open-ended questions which increase the contributions from pupils. In these effective lessons debate is lively and encourages pupils to work hard. Visits and visitors make a valuable contribution to the subject for example pupils are well prepared for a visit to the Gurdwara and derive much insight into the worship of a different religion. Teachers are careful to make sure pupils show respect for the beliefs, rituals and artefacts of all faiths and that they treat all contributions to discussion appropriately. Planning has been improved as a result of adopting a whole school format but assessment is not yet in place.

173. The co-ordinator is aware that the mixed age classes, which include a Year2/3 class, make planning the religious education programme difficult. She is also aware of differences

between the locally agreed syllabus and national guidelines for religious education. She has devised a plan of topics to be covered which should avoid duplication or omission but this will need to be very carefully monitored as pupils move through the school. Developing a manageable approach to assessment is her main priority. Currently she has no opportunity to observe the quality of teaching and learning across the school.