

INSPECTION REPORT

Legh Vale County Primary School

St Helens

Unique Reference Number : 104782

Headteacher : Mr M.J. Hewlett

Reporting inspector : Mr J.P.Sudworth

T11185

Dates of inspection : April 26 - May 2, 1997.

Under OFSTED contract number: 506149

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

Information about the school

Type of school : Infant and junior

Type of control : County

Age range of pupils : 3 - 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Legh Road,
Haydock,
St Helens.
WA11 0ER

Telephone number : 01744 752495

Fax number : 01744 616913

Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Mr D. Marsh

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Main findings

1. Legh Vale County Primary School is a very good school, which has created a stimulating environment for learning and a positive ethos within which pupils make good progress in both academic and social development. Particular strengths include the high quality of the teaching and the leadership, the investment in staff development, and the very effective partnership with parents and the community, all of which contribute significantly to the success of the school.
2. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average, though several have delayed language development and speech difficulties. They settle in quickly and make good early progress and by the age of five most children achieve above the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning. Early literacy skills are promoted very effectively and most have a positive response to books. Although the majority have appropriate confidence in speaking and listening, some children still have a limited vocabulary and their speech is not always clear. Standards of attainment in mathematics are high and children gain a good appreciation of mathematical concepts. Physical and creative skills, and knowledge of the world around are also fostered very effectively.
3. By age seven standards of attainment in English are above average. Children's progress benefits from the continued attention to developing speaking and listening skills during Key Stage 1 [infants] and most can express themselves clearly and with confidence by age seven, though for many the range of vocabulary and expression remains rather limited. Good progress is made in reading and by the end of the key stage most read with at least appropriate confidence for their age with many having above average fluency and skills. In the most recent National Curriculum test results for seven year olds almost all children achieved the national expectation and almost half reached a higher level. These results were well above the national average. Children have good opportunities to develop independent writing skills through a variety of appropriate activities and make good progress. Attainment levels by age seven are often above the expectation for the age group and children are able to use their writing skills to support learning in other subjects. Most achieved at least the expected level in the latest national tests of writing and the percentage at a higher level was well above the national average.
4. Progress in mathematics is good during Key Stage 1 and many seven year olds are reaching standards which are above the national expectation in all aspects of the subject. A well considered programme of practical activities allows them to apply their skills in a variety of situations across the curriculum. This is reflected in the latest National Curriculum test results in mathematics in which the percentage reaching the expected level and the proportion achieving a higher level were both well above the national average.
5. Many children attain above the expected standard in science by the age of seven and this reflects good progress during Key Stage 1. They acquire a very good foundation in scientific methods through a range of well structured investigations and their good knowledge of the National Curriculum topics is applied to other subjects. Almost all reached at least the expected level in the latest science assessments and a well above average proportion attained a higher level.
6. During Key Stage 1 children make very good progress in art and the quality of much of the work is well above the expectation for the age group. Good progress is made in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education and by the age of seven many achieve high standards. Attainment in information technology and religious education for this age group are broadly in line with those found in most schools and reflect satisfactory progress.

7. Overall attainment levels in English by age eleven are above the national expectation. Pupils are confident speakers with very effective listening skills. Good progress in reading is continued during Key Stage 2 [juniors] and most pupils read fluently. They respond well to a wide range of novels, plays and poetry and use research skills effectively to support work in other subjects. Pupils are currently not confident in finding books using the Dewey decimal system, although they retrieve information from computer based encyclopedias very readily. Pupils' writing develops very effectively during the key stage. Most can write in an appropriate style for a range of purposes and their responses to opportunities for creative writing are often sensitive and of a high quality. The current standard of work is an improvement on the previous year's test results in English for eleven year olds, which were not significantly different from the national average.
8. By the age of eleven standards of attainment in mathematics are generally in line with national expectations with some achieving a higher standard. Pupils' very satisfactory and often good progress benefits from structured approach to the development of skills and from the application of numeracy skills in a range of situations. In the most recent tests for eleven year olds, the percentage reaching the expected standard in mathematics was similar to the national average.
9. Progress in science during Key Stage 2 is good and attainment levels by eleven are often above the expectations for the age group. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the topics they study and use scientific processes very effectively. In the latest tests the proportion meeting the expected level was not significantly above the national average.
10. Very good progress is made in art and information technology during Key Stage 2 and pupils' attainments are well above the national expectation with some work in both subjects having outstanding features. Progress in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is good. This is reflected in the high standards that many eleven year olds achieve in these subjects. Attainment in religious education is broadly in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus by the end of the key stage and represents sound progress.
11. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into their classes and have full access to the curriculum. They respond well to the positive and supportive approach and most make good progress. Those benefiting from the personal attention of the Reading Recovery programme make particularly good progress. Some individual education plans detail specific targets for pupils' learning but others are too general to provide sufficient guidance for teachers and parents.
12. Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning, showing interest in their work and applying themselves conscientiously to it. They listen attentively, contribute willingly and work co-operatively when required. Behaviour in class and around school is good. The occasional inappropriate or immature behaviour is dealt with effectively in accordance with a well considered policy which emphasises good role models. The attendance rate is in line with the national average and most pupils arrive at school on time.
13. The high quality of teaching is a strength of the school. All the teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory and in two-thirds of lessons it was good or very good. The well structured support for planning and the very effective teamwork contribute to the high quality of teaching found in all sections of the school. In the best lessons imaginative tasks challenge the pupils to extend their thinking and to take some responsibility for their learning. Lesson activities are varied and well matched to learning objectives. They usually cater very effectively for the full range

of individual attainment and only in occasional lessons are higher attainers insufficiently challenged. Class and group discussions are particularly well managed and contribute significantly to pupils' understanding.

14. Curriculum leadership is very effective. The broad and balanced curriculum is supported by clear policies which ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met in all subjects and that pupils' work through the school builds on what they have previously learned. Imaginative planning ensures that appropriate links are made between subjects and this enables teachers to reinforce knowledge, skills and concepts across the curriculum. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including both competitive and recreational sport and visits to places of educational interest, enriches the curriculum.
15. Procedures for assessment are very effective and provide very good information about pupils' progress. Very thorough monitoring of individual attainment ensures that teachers are aware of the next steps that pupils need to take and can plan effectively for continued progress. The school's arrangements for promoting the welfare of pupils are also very good.
16. The school's very positive partnership with its parents is a strength of the school. The information parents receive about their children's progress enables them to provide good support and the many volunteers who help in school make a very effective contribution. The school is fully involved in the life of its community. Its premises are used for pre-school and after-school care, adult education, sporting activities, and the school is also the focus for some leisure and cultural activities. These links with the community are also used very effectively as a resource to benefit pupils' learning.
17. Pupils' personal development is good. They are given insights into values and beliefs which help to promote their spiritual awareness. Moral and social development is fostered effectively. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and they develop respect for the feelings and views of others. There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities which help to develop their self-esteem. A good appreciation of their own and other cultures is acquired through work across the curriculum. Pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of Britain today is less well developed.
18. The high quality of the management is a strength of the school. A clear set of shared values contributes to the caring ethos, the positive learning environment and the high expectations staff have of pupils' behaviour and presentation of work. Strong, confident, and supportive leadership has fostered successful teamwork and there is a shared sense of purpose. A number of imaginative initiatives have improved the facilities for learning. Positive roles are played by senior staff. The high quality of the staff development programme, which is a strength of the school, and the opportunities for all to contribute to school improvement have led to the school receiving recognition as an Investors in People establishment. The school benefits from the support and direction provided by an active Governing Body. The very thorough development planning, which is based on a detailed review of present practice and of needs, provides a clear direction for further progress.
19. The accommodation is very well managed and maintained. Several initiatives have been taken to improve the facilities and security and these were commended through a School Environment award. Teachers work very hard to turn the adequate accommodation for the numbers on roll into an attractive and stimulating environment through the creative use of displays, despite rather cramped conditions in some classroom bays. The extensive grounds are not currently fully exploited as an educational resource, because of concerns about security.

20. The school has built up a very good range of high quality resources for learning, including an information technology suite. The libraries have benefited from recent restocking but the range of non-fiction materials in the juniors and fiction books in the infants needs to be improved still further. The number of teachers is slightly below average for the number of pupils and most of the classes are large. Effective use of support staff and volunteers allows pupils to work in smaller groups for part of each week and this contributes significantly to pupils' progress.
21. Financial planning and control are very effective. Resources are managed very efficiently and the school has generated significant income through initiatives. The quality of the education provided by the school is very good. This represents very good value for money.

Key issues for action

22. There are no significant issues for development, but in order to improve the high quality of education still further the school should:

develop further pupils' appreciation of the variety of cultures represented within Britain, so that pupils become aware that they will encounter those traditions when they move beyond the immediate locality.

improve the consistency in the quality of individual education plans so that there are clear short-term targets for all pupils with special educational needs;

continue the re-stocking of the libraries and improve pupils' competence in locating books using the nationally recognised cataloguing and reference system;

develop the school grounds to provide an enhanced resource for learning, when improved security permits.

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

23. The school is a county primary school catering for boys and girls in the 3-11 age group in the Haydock area of St Helens. There are 480 pupils in the main school and 100 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The children attending the school come from a wide range of social backgrounds but there are fewer than average from both the most and least advantaged sectors. The proportions in the area around the school of adults with higher educational qualifications and of children from socially advantaged homes are both below the national figures but there are also fewer than average pupils from overcrowded homes. The percentage eligible for free school meals is broadly average at 21%. At the time of the inspection there were no children from ethnic minority backgrounds. There are 82 pupils on the school's special needs register including six with statements of special educational needs. The levels of attainment on entry are broadly average, although a significant and increasing number arrive with language development below that expected for the age group.
24. The school seeks to work with children and their parents to develop the concepts, skills, knowledge and attitudes which will enable each child to live in harmony with other people and the environment, and yet confidently pursue a wide range of personal interests and challenges with success, adaptability and enjoyment. Its goals include giving pupils a positive, secure self-image based on accurate self-knowledge with good habits of work, self-discipline, order and appropriate behaviour, together with a sense of personal responsibility. It aims to provide pupils with a good grounding in the knowledge, skills and understanding represented by the National Curriculum and to encourage them to use their language, mathematical, investigational, information technology, creative and evaluative skills with assurance across subject areas. It is hoped that children will acquire moral values with the confidence to make decisions and with respect for the views of others. The school fosters respect for the achievements of all regardless of abilities or disabilities and sensitivity to the needs, and the cultural and religious preferences of others. A sense of responsibility towards the community is promoted.
25. Current year's targets in the School Development Plan include reviews of mathematics, design and technology, and personal and social education throughout the school. New policies are to be implemented in English, science and in the Nursery, as are recommendations for improvements in library provision. Policies and practice in other subject areas will be monitored. Procedures for managing behaviour are being updated as part of a regular review cycle. The school is to build on its processes of target setting for school improvement for individual pupils, class groups and the school as a whole. The school also intends to build on the current partnerships with its parents and with St Helens College. As an accredited Investors in People institution, it will be involved in a review of its performance to ensure that its quality standard is maintained.

26. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1995-6	26	43	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	26	25	26
	Girls	42	41	41
	Total	68	66	67
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	98% (96%)	96% (100%)	97% (90%)
	National	78% (78%)	79% (80%)	82% (78%)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	25	26	26
	Girls	41	41	41
	Total	66	67	67
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	96% (99%)	97% (90%)	97% (84%)
	National	79% (80%)	82% (79%)	84% (84%)

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2 ¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1995-6	34	34	68

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	17	21
	Girls	26	18	26
	Total	38	35	47
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	56% (50%)	51% (60%)	69% (91%)
	National	58% (48%)	54% (44%)	62% (70%)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	16	17	20
	Girls	26	23	25
	Total	42	40	45
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	62% (66%)	59% (84%)	66% (89%)
	National	60% (56%)	60% (54%)	65% (64%)

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed
through absence for the latest complete
reporting year :

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.6%
	National comparative data	6.0%
Unauthorised Absence	School	0%
	National comparative data	0.5%

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age)
during the previous year :

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	19%
Satisfactory or better	100%

Less than satisfactory	0%
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PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

27. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average, though several have delayed language development and speech difficulties.
28. Good early progress is made and by the age of five most children achieve above the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning. The majority of children can express themselves clearly, although some still have a limited vocabulary and their speech is not always clear. Literacy skills are well developed for the age group and most have a good foundation for developing reading and writing. Children have a sound grasp of numbers, use appropriate vocabulary and know the features of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They have a good appreciation of the world around them and talk with understanding about science experiments and their observations on visits out of school. Children have a wide range of creative experiences and are able to express their ideas and feelings very effectively through art, craft, music, story-making and imaginative play.
29. By the end of Key Stage 1 the overall attainment of pupils in English is above that expected nationally for the age group. This is reflected in the latest National Curriculum test results for seven year olds in which almost all children achieved the national expectation in reading and almost half reached a higher level, while in the national tests of writing most achieved at least the expected level and the percentage attaining a higher level was well above the national average. The good progress made during Key Stage 1 is continued through Key Stage 2 and by eleven the attainment levels of many pupils are above the national expectation. The current standard of work is an improvement on the previous year's test results in English for eleven year olds, which were not significantly different from the national average.
30. Attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations by seven and most are confident speakers, able to express and communicate their ideas clearly, though for many this is within a rather narrow range of expression. By eleven most pupils can adjust their talk to a range of purposes and they listen carefully to the development of ideas in discussion and offer positive contributions. Attainment in reading is above the national expectation at the end of both key stages as the result of good progress. Confidence in reading contributes to pupils' success in work across the curriculum. Good progress is made in writing and by the end of both key stages standards are above national expectations. By seven most children produce extended pieces of independent writing with a good level of accuracy for the age group and by eleven the majority are writing for a range of purposes and producing creative writing which is often sensitive and of a high quality.
31. Children make good progress in all areas of mathematics during Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven they reach high standards. This is reflected in the latest national test results in which most pupils achieved the national expectation and a higher than average percentage exceeded this. Most can apply their skills of measurement and data handling to mathematical problem solving and to other subjects such as geography and science. Very sound and often good progress is maintained through Key Stage 2 when pupils continue to enhance their skills and knowledge in the use and application of all aspects of mathematics. By the age of eleven standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectations and a significant minority achieve a higher standard. In the most recent national test results for eleven year olds, the percentage reaching the expected level was similar to the national average.

32. Standards of attainment in science are above the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Pupils make consistently good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1 most children know how to carry out an investigation and some are able to devise and carry out their own experiments. In the latest teacher assessments for seven year olds in science almost all reached at least the expected level and a well above average proportion attained a higher level. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils carry out scientific investigations very competently and are able to draw sensible conclusions and give clear explanations of what they have discovered. In the latest national tests for eleven year olds the proportion reaching the expected level was not significantly above the national average.
33. In design and technology standards of attainment by the end of each key stage are above national expectations. This represents good progress throughout the school. Pupils have a very good understanding of the design process and many of the articles produced are of a high standard. During Key Stage 1 sound progress is made in information technology and by age seven standards of attainment are in line with the national expectation. Very good progress is made through Key Stage 2 and by eleven levels of attainment are well above the expectation for the age group. Pupils use a wide range of applications with confidence and are able to use programs for individual research and to support learning across the curriculum. Some individual pupils have an outstanding command of information technology for their age.
34. Good progress during both key stages leads to standards of attainment in both geography and history at seven and eleven which are above those expected nationally. Work on geographical themes complements the study of real places and leads to good knowledge and understanding. Pupils gain a thorough knowledge of the periods of history they study, a good insight into what it must have been like to live in earlier times and a well developed understanding of chronology and of different types of evidence.
35. Standards of attainment in art by ages seven and eleven are well above national expectations. Some of the work achieved in both key stages has outstanding features. Pupils of all levels of attainment make very good progress in techniques, composition, observation, accuracy of recording and knowledge about the works of famous artists. Good progress is made in music during both key stages. By the ages of seven and eleven attainment is often higher than national expectations in performance and composition skills and pupils have a good appreciation of a range of music .
36. Overall attainment in physical education by age seven is above the national expectation. Good progress is made during Key Stage 1, especially in the development of dance and game skills. Attainment by age eleven is high overall in relation to national expectations. Progress during Key Stage 2 is good and sometimes very good as pupils refine and extend their skills, widening their range of experience and becoming increasingly fit and agile.
37. By the age of seven and eleven levels of attainment in religious education are in line with the expectations for the age groups, following sound progress through both key stages. Pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the stories and practices of the Christian faith, and of aspects of customs and festivals of other major religions.
38. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into their classes and have full access to the curriculum. They respond well to the positive and supportive approach and most make good progress. Throughout the school work in all subjects is well matched to their needs and they receive support where necessary as individuals or as part of a small group. The tasks they are set enable them to achieve

success and this helps to improve their self-confidence as well as their knowledge, skills and understanding. Those benefiting from the individual attention of the Reading Recovery programme make particularly good progress. Teachers are released from class responsibility regularly and part of this time is used to provide assistance for small groups of pupils who find learning difficult or to work on specific targets with individuals. This regular intensive practice of particular skills contributes to the good progress made.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

39. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and contribute positively to their progress and standards of attainment. Most pupils enjoy school life and this is reflected in their willingness to participate in lessons and the varied activities offered. They sustain interest in their work, show good levels of concentration and usually remain on task even when the teacher's attention is not directly focused on them. The youngest children are able to make confident contributions and are willing to listen to one another. By Key Stage 2 many are able to discuss a topic constructively as part of a group or to show initiative in developing ideas for a project. Pupils' willingness to seek help when necessary or ask questions about their work helps them to develop their understanding. In many subjects they are able to respond to problem solving in a mature and sensible manner, and many older pupils have a particular enthusiasm for computer assisted research.
40. The overall standard of behaviour is good. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner. During break times they usually play well together with few examples of immature or inappropriate behaviour. They are generally polite and courteous with each other and with adults. Throughout the school they respond well to the trust placed in them to work independently. They behave responsibly when asked to carry out a range of useful tasks, some of which involve the handling of money, or the care of property and equipment.
41. The good relationships and the mutual respect between teachers and pupils enrich teaching and learning and contribute to the good progress made in personal development. Most respond positively to the many opportunities for reflection in class and during collective worship. In religious education they are learning to respect the beliefs and practices of Christianity and other faiths, and most are willing to discuss their own attitudes and feelings and to respect the views of others. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. They develop an awareness of the younger and older members of the community and those less fortunate than themselves, through links with a toddlers' group, old people's homes and the school's support for charities. Their cultural development is good and benefits from enthusiastic participation in special events, extra-curricular activities and visits.

Attendance

42. Attendance rates are satisfactory and in line with the national average. There were no unauthorised absences in the latest year. Pupils come to school punctually, lessons begin promptly and children settle quickly to their work. Registration is carried out quickly and efficiently in accordance with statutory requirements.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

43. The high quality of teaching is a strength of the school. All the teaching seen during the week of the inspection was at least sound, and in seven out of every ten lessons with the under-fives, in two out of every three lessons in Key Stage 1 and in three-quarters of the lessons in Key Stage 2 it was good or very good.
44. Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes are well informed and knowledgeable about the areas of learning for children under five. Good classroom organisation and management are features of their work. Agreed learning objectives and methods of working are all very effectively planned beforehand with support staff so that no time is wasted on explanations. In the rest of the school all the teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum. Where individual staff lack the expertise or confidence in a subject to develop skills or take ideas forward, as for example in physical education, the use of a published scheme helps to promote at least sound standards. When a class is taught by a teacher with a particular interest in the subject, as in music, physical education or art, it leads to work of a high standard.
45. Teachers set realistic targets for what pupils are to achieve in lessons and organise activities that take account of their prior attainment. In all subjects expectations are usually appropriately high and only in an occasional history or geography lesson are high attainers not fully challenged. Pupils are expected to take some responsibility for organising elements of their work and this helps them to understand the importance of using equipment and time efficiently. In science teachers' skilled questioning encourages them to think more deeply and precisely about their work. Very effective support is provided for children needing extra help through the adaptation of tasks or the focusing of additional time and attention by support staff or teachers on developing specific skills.
46. Detailed planning and appropriate use of resources ensure work is well matched to the wide range of pupils' needs and attainment. Teachers within the same year group plan their classroom activities together. This sharing of ideas and expertise improves the quality of planning and leads to consistency across year groups. They take care to assess pupils' attainment levels accurately so that they can be placed in groups and receive appropriate work.
47. Teachers use a variety of methods and organisation which are very effective and appropriate for the learning objectives. Whole-class exposition and instruction are a feature of most lessons and are used judiciously to teach important new information. Where this is linked to relevant pupil practice and skill refinement it works especially well. Good use is made of questioning to draw out pupils' own ideas, as well as to inform the teacher of the extent of their understanding. Teaching is especially successful when it is based on a stimulus which captures the children's interest or on first-hand experiences. In art, for example, very effective use is made of the works of famous artists to encourage pupils to explore for themselves different styles and techniques. Throughout the school visits to museums and other places of interest give the children valuable insights and motivation, which are exploited very well in subsequent lessons.
48. Classroom management is good. Activities are well sequenced and soundly established routines enable pupils to move between tasks without fuss or loss of time. Throughout the school relationships are good and the positive encouragement for pupils to do well is a feature of the teaching. Classroom assistants and volunteers are well briefed to support individuals or small groups. This frees the teachers from routine group monitoring and allows them to focus their attention on teaching.
49. Books are marked on a regular basis. Comments are generally positive and supportive and in the best practice indicate clearly and precisely to pupils what they

should do next in order to improve on their last piece of work. Homework is used effectively to provide extra practice in basic skills, to promote personal research or to follow up scientific investigations.

The curriculum and assessment

50. The broad, balanced and relevant curriculum reflects the school's aims and provides for the desirable learning outcomes for children under five in Nursery and Reception classes, the requirements of the National Curriculum and those of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In addition an effective personal and social education programme addresses issues of relationships, health, drug and sex education. There is an appropriate time allocation for each of these subjects and also a brief but useful opportunity towards the end of Key Stage 2 to learn some French.
51. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs for developing reading, computers and drama, a range of musical activities, and many recreational and competitive sports. Educational visits are used as a valuable resource to support the study of topics and visitors to the school provide further enrichment. The organisation of special weeks of activities with a subject focus such as science or dance stimulates interest in these subjects and provides added challenges, which lead to work of a high quality.
52. The school's well thought out and detailed approach to curriculum planning contributes significantly to continuity and progression in learning. Long-term subject plans ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are addressed during the pupils' time in the school and year group teams draw up medium-term plans which indicate how knowledge, skills and understanding are to be developed. Careful thought is given at all times to the way in which subjects complement and support each other and opportunities to develop skills associated with one subject in the context of another are identified and developed. A good example is the link made between physical education and science through fitness programmes and the study of the body in science. Approaches such as this together with the particular attention given to developing and applying English and mathematical skills in other curriculum areas are strengths of the curriculum.
53. Staff make effective use of flexible grouping, sometimes using attainment groups to allow them to focus on developing specific skills matched to pupils' needs and at other times using mixed groups. Pupils are often made aware of the learning targets for a lesson, how their work will be used in subsequent activities and which features of it are particularly important. This enables them to take some responsibility for their own learning.
54. There is equality of access to curriculum opportunities. Provision for children with special educational needs is good and the recommendations of the Code of Practice for children with a statement of special educational need are fully met. A few individual education plans detail specific short-term targets and outline the precise skills to be developed but others are too general and do not provide a sufficiently clear focus for progress in pupils' learning.
55. The quality of the assessment procedures is very good. There are very detailed and effective systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school. Records are both systematic and manageable. Analyses of test scores in mathematics and reading present detailed and clear overviews of individual and group progress as pupils move through the school. These provide direction for planning and identify possible areas for concern that are then addressed. Regular assessment in foundation subjects also identifies concepts, skills and knowledge acquired and

contributes to future planning and to the matching of work to individuals.

56. The management of the curriculum and of assessment is very effective. The senior management team and subject co-ordinators provide good leadership and support to their colleagues and monitor effectively the quality of planning, the levels of attainment and the progress made by pupils over the years to ensure that standards are maintained and raised.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

57. The school successfully fosters pupils' personal development in line with its aim of promoting attitudes which enable harmonious living and it provides good opportunities for pupils to pursue a wide range of interests and pleasures.
58. The school ethos is conducive to spiritual and moral development, and acts of collective worship make a particularly effective contribution. The atmosphere within the school is one of care and respect for both people and property. This is reflected in the many attractive displays of carefully mounted pupils' work which demonstrate that their efforts are valued. There are many opportunities provided during religious education lessons and at other times for pupils to reflect and to discuss their feelings.
59. The provision for social development is very good. From an early age pupils are encouraged to be independent within a secure and caring environment. They are expected to select activities, tidy equipment away and play their part in acting as monitors and helpers. All pupils have increasing opportunity as they progress through the school to make their own contributions. In Key Stage 2 representatives from each class are elected as members of the School Council. These pupils have to discuss matters with their classmates, present these ideas in meetings and participate in debate about school policies and provision. The opportunities all pupils have to contribute ideas through their representatives helps them to develop a sense of ownership and become responsible members of the school community. Concern for others is very effectively promoted. Fund raising events for charity, older pupils assisting with the toddlers' group, and the school's link with a child in a Romanian orphanage are among the many opportunities for pupils to show social concern.
60. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provides for social, cultural and other interests to be developed including competitive sports. Work about famous artists and musicians and special events such as dance weeks successfully develop pupils' cultural awareness. Visits to places of interest and residential opportunities for older pupils greatly enrich the learning experiences. Regular participation in assemblies and drama, music and dance performances increases pupils' self confidence and helps them to recognise their own gifts. Knowledge of other cultures is effectively promoted through religious education, geography, history, music and art. However the ability, even of older pupils, to translate this knowledge into an understanding of the multi-cultural nature of Britain today is less well developed.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

61. The school provides a welcoming and caring environment in which children feel happy and secure. The good relationships and positive atmosphere allow pupils to approach adults confidently with any concerns. Children are well known to staff and they receive effective but sensitive guidance. Academic progress is monitored carefully and pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
62. Children entering the Nursery receive a high level of care and they settle quickly into their new surroundings. Several of their activities take place in the main school and

children are well prepared for the transfer to the Reception classes. There are good liaison arrangements with local secondary schools which help to ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of education.

63. All staff are consistent in their high expectations of pupils' behaviour and procedures to promote discipline are very effective. Pupils are keen to earn recognition for their achievements and they respond very positively to the school's rewards system. The infrequent incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with calmly but effectively. Parents appreciate the sensitive way in which the school deals with rare cases of bullying.
64. The school works hard to promote regular and punctual attendance. Monitoring procedures are good and pupils requiring additional support after absence are identified promptly.
65. Very effective systems in place to promote pupils' health and safety include regular safety talks, good liaison with school medical services and very good first aid arrangements. Pupils are well supervised at lunch times. There are very good child protection procedures and appropriate links with specialist agencies. Careful arrangements are made for visits away from school and safe practices in lessons are emphasised.

Partnership with parents and the community

66. The school's very positive partnership with its parents is a strength of the school. A successful Friends' Association holds regular well supported fund raising and social events, and substantial amounts of money are raised to benefit the school. Several parents, grandparents and former members of staff provide additional support within the classroom and this has a very positive effect on pupils' learning. Homework tasks, including reading, involve parents effectively in their children's education. Termly parents' meetings are held to discuss children's progress, but parents know that they are welcome to contact the school at other times with any concerns. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews of progress.
67. Written information for parents is of a high quality. The prospectus and annual governors' report are well presented and regular letters provide details of activities and events. Information for new parents is clear and detailed, and includes useful suggestions for helping children at home. Annual reports on children's progress provide detailed and informative comments in all subject areas.
68. The school is an important focus in the life of the community and it hosts many activities, which enhance the educational provision for pupils. The premises are used for pre-school and after-school care and holiday playschemes. Several parents attend courses at the school on topics such as developing children's literacy and mathematical skills. Pupils have access to very good computer facilities funded jointly by the school and the local college's adult education department, which uses the school as a centre for evening classes. A toddler group, run by health visitors, meets weekly and older pupils assist with the children. Local residents are involved in a community watch scheme to reduce vandalism at the school and several sports clubs use the fields regularly.
69. The close links with the community extend learning and social opportunities for pupils. A local youth band provides brass tuition for pupils, and members of a professional rugby club run coaching sessions. Pupils regularly compete in sporting events with nearby schools and the choir entertains local elderly residents. Good use is made of the immediate locality to support the curriculum. Geography and history surveys are completed and pupils visit a local nature reserve to conduct scientific studies.

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management

70. The high quality of the management is a strength of the school. A clear set of shared values expressed through the annual review of aims contributes to the caring ethos, the positive learning environment and the high expectations staff have of pupils' behaviour and presentation of work.
71. Strong, confident, and supportive leadership has fostered successful teamwork and there is a shared sense of purpose. A number of imaginative initiatives have improved the facilities for learning and extended opportunities for community involvement. Very positive roles are played by the members of the senior management team who take major responsibilities within the key stages and across the school. Curriculum leadership is very effective and there is a clear framework for progression and continuity in pupils' learning. Subject co-ordinators provide very effective support to their colleagues. They are released from class responsibilities regularly to work alongside teachers and to monitor work in their subject areas. These arrangements contribute significantly to the quality of education provided. The high quality of the staff development programme and the opportunities for all to play their part in school development has led to the Investors in People award.
72. The school benefits from the support and direction provided by an active Governing Body. Responsibilities are discharged conscientiously and all statutory requirements are met. Development planning is very thorough and based on a detailed annual review of present practice and needs. Clear points for action are identified together with time scales, resource implications and allocation of responsibilities. Progress towards these targets is regularly monitored.
73. Communications within the extended school site are very effective and staff feel well informed and part of a whole school team. The strong partnership with parents and the close links with community organisations also benefit from the attention given to the quality of information provided.
74. There is a very well organised system for the identification of pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Support for them is well managed and there is a regular review of learning targets and strategies for such pupils, which meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Class teachers take account of these targets in setting work. Particular help is provided for younger children with difficulties in literacy through the clearly structured Reading Recovery programme. This uses intensive individual support very successfully to increase pupils' skills so that they can be integrated into the normal work of the class.
75. The school reviews its academic performance regularly. Test scores are analysed and the progress of individuals and groups is carefully monitored. The information from this is used to set fresh targets and to improve performance still further. In particular, there has been a recent review of the provision in mathematics to ensure that there is appropriate challenge for pupils across all aspects of the subject.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

76. Teachers are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the age groups and full range of the National Curriculum and there is an effective mix of experience and expertise among the staff. The school has slightly below the average number of

teachers for the number of pupils on roll and most of the classes are large. There is an appropriate level of classroom assistants. Effective use of these and of volunteers allows pupils to work in smaller groups for part of each week and this contributes significantly to pupils' progress and to the quality of their work. The number of ancillary and clerical staff is well matched to the size of the school. Administrative tasks are carefully and efficiently carried out and this helps to ensure that the school runs smoothly.

77. Staff development is very well managed and is a strength of the school. New teachers receive an appropriate level of advice and support that enables them to develop their skills gradually. Appraisal for teachers and staff interviews are effective in identifying the training needs of individual teachers and areas where team development is required. All are given opportunities to improve their skills and information gained from training is systematically shared with other staff. Subject co-ordinators work with colleagues in planning and evaluating the curriculum and there are opportunities for staff to learn by observing each other's strengths.
78. The accommodation is generally adequate for the curricular needs of the school. Staff use available space very effectively, although some classrooms are rather cramped and movement around these rooms is difficult. Stimulating displays help to create an attractive learning environment. The buildings are cleaned and maintained to a very high standard.
79. The school site is well maintained and outbreaks of vandalism and theft have been much reduced in recent years. The outdoor area used by the Nursery provides effectively for the development of social and physical skills. However similar opportunities are not afforded to under-fives in the Reception classes. There is an adequate hard play area marked out for a range of children's games but these and adjacent areas are not developed to allow children to broaden their range of social and physical skills. The extensive grounds are not fully exploited currently as an educational resource, although plans exist to develop them for curriculum and social use when new security measures are introduced.
80. The school has made the provision of good quality resources to support the curriculum a high priority. The range and quality of teaching resources are excellent for many subjects and very good for all others. They contribute significantly in helping staff meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning resources are very well maintained and always clearly labelled and easily accessible. The quality of the resources, and the manner in which they are displayed, organised and cared for has a very positive effect on teaching and learning. The resources available to pupils are further enhanced by the good level of support given by the Friends' Association and by additional funds raised by the school itself.
81. Class bases are very well supplied with learning resources. There is an excellent selection of novels for each class and non-fiction books related to the topic theme of the class are also very good. The libraries have benefited from recent restocking but the range of non-fiction materials in Key Stage 2 and fiction books in Key Stage 1 needs to be improved still further. Information technology resources are very good. The provision of a computer suite through partnership with a local college leads to information technology capability well above that expected for the age group. The school uses visits to provide pupils with first-hand experiences and much of the work emanating from these is of a very high standard.

The efficiency of the school

82. Financial management at every level is very good. School development planning is very well established, linked directly to the budget, and used appropriately to evaluate the cost-effectiveness and impact of all spending decisions. The Finance Committee

meets on a regular basis to monitor and review spending patterns in order to achieve the school's aim of securing the highest possible standards of education for its pupils. Effective use is made of the support provided by the local authority's bursar service in planning and monitoring the budget. All subject co-ordinators have delegated spending powers and the school has effective financial procedures to support them in carrying out their responsibilities.

83. Though the number of teachers is slightly below average for the number of pupils and most classes are large, staff are appropriately deployed and very efficient use is made of the available teaching time. The governors manage and maintain the accommodation very well. Several initiatives have been taken to improve the facilities and security and these were commended through a School Environment Award. The school is in the process of exploring ways to implement a well thought out development programme in order to add to the facilities it can offer its pupils and the local community and has built these priorities carefully into its financial planning.
84. The school has managed to supplement its income significantly in a variety of ways including partnership arrangements with adult education providers, successful bids for grants, organising courses for teachers and through an active Friends' Association. As a result it has been able to build up a very good range of high quality resources for learning, including an information technology suite. Good use is made of the local authority's central purchasing arrangements to ensure that value for money is obtained.
85. The school allocates a significant amount of money each year to support pupils with special educational needs. The Reading Recovery programme, the employment of two non-teaching assistants to help implement specific learning programmes and the use of individual support have all proved to be worthwhile investments in helping to ensure that these pupils make good progress.
86. The high quality of education provided and the efficiency with which resources are used ensure that the school gives very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five

87. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average, though several have delayed language development and speech difficulties. Children make good early progress and by the age of five most children achieve above the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning.
88. In the Nursery the space, the range of resources including good outside play facilities and a favourable adult:child ratio provide a sound basis for further development in the Reception class. Here space is more limited and children have to share the teachers' and other adults' time with more children. The approach to learning through activity and relevant experiences and the goal of providing children with a sound basis for work on the National Curriculum is common to both Nursery and Reception.
89. Personal and social development is given a high priority in both the Nursery and Reception classes, and most children attain above the national expectation by the time they are five. Relationships with each other and with adults are very good. Well chosen stories and sensitive discussion of incidents that arise encourage children to co-operate well when they work in a group. Children have self-respect and behave in appropriate ways. They distinguish between good and poor behaviour and are learning to develop self-control and a sense of responsibility. They are eager to take part in activities and sustain concentration well, persevering until a task is completed to their satisfaction. They show independence in selecting and undertaking an activity, in dressing for outdoors or physical education and in personal hygiene.
90. Overall attainment in language and literacy is above the expectation for the age group by the time children leave the Reception classes. The systematic assessment of needs leading to the provision of a structured range of experience enables children to make good progress and by the age of five the majority can describe events and ask questions with confidence. Most children can express themselves clearly, although some still have a limited vocabulary and their lack of awareness of language structures means that their speech is not always clear. Children develop an interest in books and stories and some enjoy reading simple books themselves, while others are beginning to read with support. Their handwriting skills are well developed. Children write about experiences that are important to them, such as a newly hatched duckling. Some can create more than one sentence with capital letters and full stops.
91. Attainment in mathematics is above the expectation for the age group by the end of the Reception year. Progress in skills and in the understanding of concepts is promoted effectively through a range of activities in the Nursery and by the time they are five they can sort objects into sets, and are aware of numbers used in daily life. Children can count, recognise, match and write numbers to ten with the highest attainers using larger numbers. These pupils explore addition in practical ways. They learn appropriate mathematical vocabulary and are aware of the features of common two- and three-dimensional shapes.
92. In developing their knowledge and understanding of the world children use their natural curiosity very effectively. Most attain levels beyond those that are expected. In the Nursery role play, the use of outdoor equipment, and a walk around the streets near the school lead into the more detailed exploration of topics in Reception. By five children can explain about different types of houses, describe appropriate clothes for outdoor visits and different types of weather and talk about science investigations. They can relate experiments with colour to leaves and branches and describe some of the changes they see in tadpoles and ducklings.

93. The early opportunities in the Nursery to explore and develop body control in outdoor play and dance, under the careful supervision and intervention of adults, ensures sound foundations for development in physical aspects. By five they have attained the expected standards for the age and many are already working towards targets of the National Curriculum. The daily opportunities for children to use a variety of tools and implements for writing, art, water play and technology help them to make good progress. They have a good range of movements and have sufficient control to change from vigorous to gentle and fast to slow when participating in dance routines based round their work on space.
94. Children have a breadth of creative experiences and are able to express their ideas and feelings through art, craft, music, story-making and imaginative play. They are motivated to attain levels higher than those expected for the age group. Ideas in role play are developed well through well designed activity areas such as a space stations or market stall. They are able to sing reasonably tunefully and respond to rhythm using simple percussion. By the time they leave Reception drawings are clear and detailed, and they use techniques such as colour mixing and painting from observation to create imaginative and bold original work. They have explored the style of some famous artists.
95. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes staff work well together as a team. In two-thirds of the lessons the teaching is either good or very good and in the remainder it is satisfactory. Teachers have a very clear understanding of the needs of young children and the curriculum for under fives. Information gained from assessing children soon after their arrival is used effectively to provide for individual needs and rates of learning. At the end of the Nursery year further and more detailed assessment is undertaken and this supports the planning for continuity and progression of learning in the Reception classes. Teachers use their knowledge and skills very effectively to make continuous assessments of the children in order to direct, support and intervene in children's learning. The high quality of teaching contributes very effectively to the attainment and progress of the children.

English, mathematics and science

English

96. By the end of Key Stage 1 the overall attainment of pupils in English is above that expected nationally for the age group. This is reflected in the results of the latest National Curriculum test in reading for seven year olds in which almost all children achieved the national expectation and almost half reached a higher level, while in the national tests of writing most achieved at least the expected level and the percentage attaining a higher level was well above the national average. The good progress made during Key Stage 1 is continued through Key Stage 2 and by eleven the attainment levels of many pupils are above the national expectation. The current standard of work is an improvement on the previous year's test results in English for eleven year olds, which were not significantly different from the national average.
97. Children's progress benefits from the continued attention to developing speaking and listening skills during Key Stage 1. Attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations by seven and most are confident speakers, able to communicate their ideas clearly, though for many this is within a rather narrow range of expression. In class discussion they are encouraged to use talk to explore their understanding. Pupils listen attentively, and respond keenly and promptly to questions. They are beginning to develop the ability to speak appropriately in different situations. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils can adjust their talk to a range of purposes, engage in a tentative exploration of ideas and report back effectively to the whole class. They listen carefully to the ideas of others in discussion and offer contributions of their own.
98. Attainment in reading is above the national expectation at the end of both key stages as the result of good progress. Most can read accurately and with a good level of fluency for their age by the end of Key Stage 1. Although some seven year olds are still learning to read very simple texts, all have some word building skills and most are developing more complex strategies. They have a good understanding of the stories they read and they know how to find information from non-fiction books.
99. Excellent use is made of class novels and group sets of plays during Key Stage 2 and a wide range of reading material is explored imaginatively and in depth. The reading diaries and personal book reviews support pupils' progress. By eleven most read with accuracy, fluency and expression and can discuss characters and plot. They are very familiar with using the content and index pages to find information for their topic work and are confident in using the CD ROM to access information but they are less confident in using the nationally recognised library classification system.
100. Attainment in writing is above national expectations by the end of both key stages. By seven most children produce extended pieces of independent writing in a number of different forms in response to a range of stimuli. There is a good level of accuracy for the age group in spelling and handwriting is well formed. Sentences are generally well structured and properly punctuated and many pupils are able to sustain and develop their ideas quite well, with higher attainers seeking to use more complex structures. By eleven the majority are writing pieces of good length for a range of purposes and in a range of styles. Examples of poetry and play-writing reveal awareness and understanding of the specific structures required, and responses to opportunities for creative writing are often sensitive and of a high quality. The imaginative but practical approach to grammar helps pupils to improve their written style. The use of drafting enables them to refine their work and this also contributes to the good progress made in writing.

101. Pupils in both key stages have very positive attitudes towards learning, behave very well and enjoy their English lessons. They generally take a very lively interest in lessons, are keen to answer questions and express their ideas and feelings. An outstanding feature is the quality of the collaboration in small groups for exploring ideas.

102. The quality of teaching is good and often very good. All the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and two-thirds of the teaching in Key Stage 1 and almost all the teaching in Key Stage 2 was good or very good. Examples of particularly good teaching in Key Stage 2 are found when teachers' questioning encourages pupils to think more deeply, search for other ways to put their thoughts into words and reflect on the implications of these ideas. Teachers' planning includes clear learning objectives and a structure for development, based on continuous assessment of the pupils' skills and a good subject knowledge. They plan the use of time most effectively and outline the development of a session for the pupils indicating how it is building on previous work, the stages of development during the session and how that aspect of work will be developed throughout the week and across subjects. Teachers use literature very effectively as a basis to develop knowledge and understanding in all areas of English. In both key stages they expect pupils to have a high level of involvement. This is seen when pupils are given clear guidelines and criteria for developing and improving the quality of their work. Teachers value pupils' achievements, present their work in high quality displays or in folders and files for the remainder of the class to browse through in spare moments. This enables pupils to appreciate the importance of presentation and to gain a sense of audience for their work.

Mathematics

103. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn confidently, make good progress and demonstrate good levels of competence in all areas of mathematics. By the age of 7 they reach high standards, reflected in the latest national test results in which most pupils achieved the national expectation and a higher than average percentage exceeded this. Most pupils are able to handle numbers to 100, know some multiplication tables and can complete mental calculations accurately. They use mathematical language appropriately, are increasing their knowledge of patterns and properties of shape and space and can apply their skills of measurement and data handling to mathematical problem solving and to other subjects such as geography and science.
104. Very satisfactory and often good progress is maintained through Key Stage 2 when pupils continue to enhance their skills and knowledge in the use and application of all aspects of mathematics. Mental agility is encouraged through regular practice and they become increasingly skilful in the use of mathematical instruments, confidently applying these skills in a range of other curricular areas. By the age of eleven standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectations and a significant minority achieve a higher standard. In the most recent national test results for eleven year olds, the percentage reaching the expected level was similar to the national average. Throughout the school calculators are used as appropriate aids to teaching and learning and good use is made of information technology, particularly in Key Stage 2. Investigative tasks are an integral part of the programmes of study and these succeed in challenging pupils' mathematical thinking, although some could be developed still further for the highest attainers. Those with special education needs receive appropriate support and generally make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
105. Pupils enjoy mathematics and their positive attitudes to learning contribute significantly to the standards attained and progress made. In general they are responsive and well motivated. They listen attentively, work well individually, co-operate in group situations and handle equipment sensibly.
106. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers plan thoroughly in the medium term using the agreed school system and allocate adequate time for mathematics. They are confident in the subject. Individual lesson plans provide a clear focus with well identified learning outcomes, catering for pupils of all levels of attainment. Very effective use is made of an appropriate balance of class, group and individual teaching. The grouping of pupils within lessons is very well managed by all teachers and is a strength. Creative use is often made of displays to promote and reflect pupils' learning.
107. The provision for mathematics is regularly and effectively monitored by the co-ordinator. A recent systematic review of the subject provision has contributed significantly to teacher confidence. The very clear guidelines draw on several published schemes and emphasise the importance of mathematical language in the understanding of concepts and a practical glossary is provided for each year group. The thorough whole-school approach ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Monitoring of work is a continuous process, supplemented by regular testing. Results are analysed and careful records maintained. Resources in each building are comprehensive, well stored, easily accessible, and used appropriately.

Science

108. Standards of attainment in science are above the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress. In the latest National Curriculum assessments at Key Stage 1 almost all reached at least the expected level and a well above average proportion attained a higher level. In the latest national tests for eleven year olds the proportion meeting the expected level was not significantly above the national average.
109. Children in Key Stage 1 can make detailed drawings of their observations about the early life of ducklings and chicks. They notice and can point out the difference in materials as they investigate floating and sinking and they begin to make predictions. They ask appropriate questions when investigating and discuss their work with confidence. By the end of the key stage most children know how to carry out an investigation and some are able to devise and carry out their own experiments. Children displayed a high level of understanding in one lesson seen, as they made sensible observations about the separation of colours and were able to describe which substances would dissolve. They use appropriate scientific vocabulary. Children achieve particularly good standards as they investigate the properties of materials. They record their findings using simple record sheets and pictures and some write interesting extended accounts of their conclusions.
110. During Key Stage 2 pupils engage in a broad range of activities including very detailed work on electrical circuits and light, shadows and reflection. Older pupils refine their skills of planning, carrying out experiments, observation and measurement. By eleven pupils recognise the need for a fair test when carrying out a scientific investigation and they can make appropriate predictions. Many pupils are able to draw sensible conclusions and give clear explanations of what they have discovered. Pupils use their prior knowledge to make generalisations about the conditions for good plant growth. They talk confidently about their ideas and use their knowledge accurately. They develop confidence in using a wide range of equipment. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress particularly when additional help and guidance is provided by the teacher.
111. Pupils enjoy science lessons. They are interested in their work and show very good levels of concentration. They are keen to learn and curious about their investigations. Pupils are enthusiastic, well motivated and able to discuss and overcome problems. They co-operate well when studying in groups and are keen to discuss their findings.
112. The quality of teaching in science is good at both key stages and there are some very good features in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan lessons carefully and objectives are clearly explained to pupils. There is an appropriate balance between practical activities and the acquisition of scientific knowledge which is appropriate for the age and attainment of the pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to explore plant life through dissecting flowers and to investigate food chains by thorough research, including use of a CD-ROM. Teachers are skilled at ensuring pupils use the correct scientific language and use questioning effectively to extend pupils' understanding. Pupils observed devising investigations to examine the effect of exercise on the heart were engaged in a rigorous and challenging exchange with their teacher that demanded scientific thought and explanations of a high order. Suitable resources are always available to support learning. Pupils examining teeth were able to gain very good understanding by the use of dental mirrors, for example. Marking is systematic and at its best provides pupils with comments to stimulate further scientific thinking. Assessments are regularly undertaken and the findings influence future work. Many of the tasks set are challenging and informative.

113. A detailed scheme of work supports teachers' planning. It is very well monitored by the co-ordinator who supports planning, monitors classroom practice and leads in-service training. There are ample resources of a very good quality and these are cared for very well.

Other subjects or courses

Art

114. Standards of attainment in art by ages seven and eleven are well above national expectations. Some of the work achieved in both key stages has outstanding features. Throughout the school pupils are provided with a broad range of interesting activities and the subject makes a very valuable contribution towards personal development, the quality of the learning environment and to the fulfilment of the school's aims. Pupils of all levels of attainment make very good progress in techniques, composition, observation, accuracy of recording and knowledge about the works of famous artists.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are skilled in drawing, painting and modelling from close observation of flowers or artefacts or from their imagination or experience. They demonstrate a growing knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists when painting pictures or sketching figures in the style of Van Gogh, Paul Klee or L.S. Lowry. Some of this work is of a high standard. They use a variety of tools and materials for collage and model making, and learn to mix paint for different effects. During Key Stage 2 pupils experience a very wide range of activities and use different media with confidence, selecting and employing them carefully to create particular effects and moods. Landscapes fashioned from clay and sculptures modelled using wire and modroc are typical of the work of high quality. Information technology graphics packages and scanners are used very effectively to provide a further dimension to art work. Displays in classrooms and around the school provide further evidence of the high attainment of the pupils. Art is used successfully to support learning in other subjects such as history.
116. Pupils throughout the school show high levels of interest and enjoyment in their art lessons. They take a pride and pleasure in their work and respond enthusiastically to any new challenges presented to them. Pupils are very well behaved and show a growing sense of responsibility when using tools and materials. They appreciate the efforts of others and are able to work sensibly together sharing equipment and tidying up afterwards.
117. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and occasionally very good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the full range of art experiences to be covered, and plan lessons well together to ensure progression and continuity. High expectations are set, explanations and introductions to lessons are clear and delivered with enthusiasm. Particularly good teaching occurs when pupils are shown how to use specific techniques to improve their skills, while their individuality and creativity is still allowed to develop. Relationships are positive and supportive.
118. The subject benefits from clear leadership. The policy supports teachers' planning effectively and ensures progression and continuity in the pupils' acquisition of artistic knowledge and skills. The very good range, quantity and quality of resources contributes significantly to the art curriculum. Teachers make good use of the additional space for activities outside the classroom bases. An art club provides additional opportunities for pupils to experience specialist materials including oil paints.

Design and technology

119. Standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 are above national expectations as a result of the good progress children make throughout the key stage. They learn to handle simple tools and cut and glue with confidence. They use construction kits

effectively to follow their own designs when making models such as space creatures or castles for fairy-tale characters. They have experience of different materials and they are able to assemble simple moving vehicles. They can draw on their own experience to design a product for a purpose and then make it. They can evaluate the appropriateness of the design and suggest changes where necessary.

120. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue the good progress as they begin to make sophisticated use of the design process, helped by the systematic use of carefully structured briefing and design sheets. The careful development of measuring, sawing and joining techniques has led to the construction of some products of high quality. Examples of previous projects on display around the school or recorded in photographs, including funghlasses, working umbrellas and transport items, demonstrate work of a high standard. Older pupils show an awareness of design requirements as they produce plans for and make mathematical board games. They are able to solve problems by using and applying previous knowledge and their technical skills are well developed.
121. Pupils respond well in design and technology lessons. They are enthusiastic and willing to experiment. Key Stage 1 classes work with good concentration as they assemble and evaluate models of chicks or ducklings and older pupils co-operate very effectively in groups as they use construction kits to investigate the use of gears to alter speed.
122. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good with examples of very good teaching observed in Key Stage 2. One lesson involved pupils in the full design and technology process as they designed, modelled and evaluated play equipment for the Nursery class. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the pace of lessons is very good. Planning is undertaken effectively and there is always an appropriate focus upon the purpose of activities and the promotion of skills. Teachers ensure that a suitable range of materials and tools is available to pupils. Pupils' work is monitored and supported and teachers' constructive comments enable pupils to improve their techniques and evaluation skills.
123. The policy document is useful to staff and National Curriculum programmes of study are fully implemented. The co-ordinator supports colleagues effectively and provides good leadership. The range and quality of resources is excellent and the equipment is well stored.

Geography

124. Children make good progress during Key Stage 1 in their understanding of geographical concepts and their knowledge about their own locality and other contrasting areas. By the age of seven their levels of attainment are generally above those expected for the age group. Early mapping skills are well developed and good use is made of children's local and holiday travel to give them a sense of how their home area fits into the wider picture of the United Kingdom and Europe. They gain a good appreciation of how differences in climate and location affect the way people live as they compare the daily life of a schoolgirl in a Kenyan village with their own experiences.
125. Good progress is continued in Key Stage 2 and leads to standards of attainment at eleven which are above those expected nationally. Work on geographical themes such as climate, land use and rivers complements the study of real places and leads to good knowledge and understanding. Pupils are very competent in undertaking personal research to increase their knowledge of places. They show a good understanding of map work when they have opportunities to apply their skills through

fieldwork.

126. Pupils apply themselves well to their work and sustain concentration. They participate willingly in discussion, putting forward ideas of their own confidently and listening carefully to those of others. When they are asked to work in groups they co-operate well and they act sensibly when undertaking independent work.
127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers show a good knowledge of the topics and themes they cover and a good appreciation of the skills to be developed. Expectations are usually high and in most lessons appropriate account is taken of the different attainment levels, although occasionally the work set does not fully challenge the higher attainers. Planning is thorough and benefits from clear guidelines. There is a good balance of activities, which are well matched to the objectives of the lessons. In most lessons effective use is made of the time available. A positive working atmosphere is promoted and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own work.
128. The subject benefits from a very effective policy and a scheme of work, which clearly identifies how key skills are to be introduced, reinforced and extended through the various topics. The quantity and quality of resources is good, and fieldwork and visits enable pupils to apply skills and to put ideas into the context of real places. More effective use could be made of the extensive grounds as an environmental resource. Links with other subject areas such as information technology, mathematics and science help to reinforce pupils' understanding of geographical concepts.

History

129. By age seven children's levels of attainment are above the national expectation. They show a good understanding of changes over time in their discussion of artefacts and through work on the different generations of their own families. Further good progress is made as they consider stories from history such as the Great Fire of London.
130. Overall progress in Key Stage 2 is also good and by the age of eleven high standards are achieved. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the periods of history they study and an appreciation of what it must have been like to live in Roman Britain or at the time of the Spanish Armada. Their understanding of chronology and of the different types of evidence is also good for their age. When they undertake research on different aspects of Ancient Egyptian society, they apply good reference skills.
131. Pupils enjoy their history work and show a particular interest in the social conditions of the past. They contribute eagerly to lessons, responding well to questions and putting forward suggestions. When given work to complete they stay on task well, showing good levels of perseverance. When undertaking group or individual research they show initiative and a sense of responsibility.
132. The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good. Detailed planning, which is supported by a comprehensive scheme of work, is based on a good knowledge of the topics of the National Curriculum and takes careful account of the need to develop skills and concepts alongside knowledge throughout the school. Work is usually well matched to the needs of individual pupils, and skilful questioning challenges pupils to extend and justify their initial contributions. Only occasionally are higher attainers given a worksheet which does not demand enough of them. Teachers make good use of the wide range of good quality resources and of visits to stimulate interest and to give pupils a sense of the periods they study. Information technology is used effectively to support the study of history. The very effective

classroom management is based on a positive approach and good relationships. In the very good lessons observed teachers communicated their own enthusiasm and made the pupils want to find out more about the topics. Pupils responded to the high expectations of them by contributing ideas and personal research of a high quality.

Information technology

133. During Key Stage 1 sound progress is made and by age seven standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. Children manipulate the mouse with assurance and are growing in confidence in their basic computer management skills as well as developing a sound understanding of programmable toys. They have less facility in their keyboard skills. Very good progress is made through Key Stage 2 as the school emphasises the importance of making the pupils self-sufficient in computing. By eleven levels of attainment are well above the expectation for the age group. They write directly on to the computer, incorporate clip art, and are discovering the potential of desk top publishing. They use composition, data handling and graphics programs to support work in music, history, design and technology, art and science. The CD ROM is used with confidence as a source of information for research projects. Individual pupils are extremely confident in their technical computer skills, experiencing the potential of the newest acquisitions, such as the scanner, and exploring the internet.
134. Pupils' attitudes to information technology throughout the school are positive. The most enthusiastic are eager to use machines before school or in the computer club. Pupils are sensible as they work independently at computers, and when in pairs they collaborate effectively. The more confident were keen to support those with less experience.
135. Very little direct teaching of information technology was seen during the inspection. Management of class lessons with older pupils is effective. Information technology is planned across the school to ensure that every pupil has access to the full range of applications. Teachers are keen to monitor pupils' progress and to provide support when it is needed, but at the same time to encourage pupils to have confidence in their own skills, or to find an "expert" within the class to help with the techniques of that particular program. Teacher deployment of parent help is well managed.
136. The co-ordinator is very confident with the subject and together with the staff has planned a systematic and effective programme of development to move information technology in the school forward. Resources are excellent, and in Key Stage 2 outstanding. Each year group has an appropriate hardware system although the Reception classes do not have constant access in each base. The suite of personal computers is an excellent resource which provides the potential for developing work on the internet and electronic mail links with other schools. The school has a good supply of software including word processing and data handling packages, software for music and graphics, together with good programs to support learning in other subjects.

Music

137. Good progress is made during Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven attainment is often higher than the national expectation. Pupils sing from memory with good attention to pitch and most can control sounds on percussion instruments. Some are able to perform short musical patterns by ear or from symbols and can describe the sounds they hear. They listen and respond well to recorded music, confidently expressing their feelings verbally and in movement.

138. In Key Stage 2 good progress is maintained and by age eleven standards generally exceed those expected nationally. Pupils listen with developing critical appreciation to music of different genres. They perform the music they have created through group compositions and are able to record their compositions using notation. Some are acquiring skills on individual instruments in lessons provided by an outside agency. The standard of singing in assembly is very high and in school performances part singing is successfully achieved.
139. Pupils enjoy music-making and many older pupils take the opportunity to join after-school dance and guitar clubs and the school choir. Participation in concerts of a high standard enables pupils to share carefully rehearsed performances with a wider audience.
140. The quality of teaching is generally good with some aspects of music taught particularly well. In Key Stage 1 the balance and variety of activities and the pace of lessons are important factors in the high standards achieved. In Key Stage 2 the good subject knowledge of individual teachers and high expectations in singing contribute significantly to pupils' attainments. Teachers use confident information technology skills and a well structured programme of study to ensure that good progress is made in composition using computer software. Opportunities are successfully created for the investigation of a diversity of sound sources using melody and rhythmic ideas. The many opportunities which the school provides for pupils to experience the work of professional and amateur musicians and to participate in events such as the dance week greatly enrich their learning.
141. There is a comprehensive range of resources which includes a plentiful supply of good quality instruments, with some from other cultures. These are carefully stored, labelled and easily accessible. The music room is a valuable asset but its use as a general storage space detracts from its purpose and ambience as a learning environment. Teachers' planning is monitored effectively by the co-ordinator and National Curriculum requirements are met.

Physical education

142. The school offers an appropriately broad range of physical educational activities including gymnastics, dance and games throughout the school. Athletics and swimming are taught in Key Stage 2. A short period of residential experience which includes outdoor and adventurous pursuits is an annual opportunity for older pupils. A wide variety of extra-curricular sport is provided for all pupils during the school year and teachers give generously of their time to organise these activities. Games skills are further developed by the use of specialist coaching.
143. Overall attainment in physical education by age seven is above the national expectation. Good progress is made especially in the development of dance and games skills. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils are confident in the control of their movements and make very good use of all available space. They practise throwing and catching with increased accuracy and run and dodge round obstacles with sound body control. In dance lessons pupils are able to interpret and explore ideas as they respond with feeling and understanding to the different rhythms and moods of the music. They perform simple sequences, both alone and with a partner, and practise hard to improve the range and quality of their performance.
144. Progress during Key Stage 2 is good and sometimes very good as pupils refine and extend their skills, widen the range of experience, and become increasingly fit and agile. Attainment by age eleven is high overall in relation to national expectations. Pupils are confident in catching and travelling with a ball and have learnt the

strategies associated with various attack and defence games. The quality of movement in the dance sequences developed during the "Global Getaway" dance project was of a very high quality. This aspect of the subject makes a very valuable contribution towards pupils' cultural development. Good progress is made in swimming as pupils develop techniques for a variety of strokes. The inclusion of "Jump Rope" into the curriculum has helped pupils to understand more clearly the effects of exercise on their bodies.

145. Pupils generally respond well in physical education lessons. They listen attentively and follow instructions carefully. They are appreciative of the performance of others and eager to demonstrate their own work. From an early age pupils can organise for themselves items of equipment and this assists the pace of lessons. In indoor and outdoor activities pupils work safely and adopt good sporting behaviour. They support each other in paired work and co-operate in small team situations.
146. The quality of teaching throughout the school is often good and is never less than sound. Lessons are well planned and organised, make good use of routines and pay due attention to all safety aspects. An appropriate range of teaching styles provides pupils with opportunities for performance, planning and evaluation, observation, demonstration and discussion. Teachers assess pupils continually and encouraging comments are made to support their development and promote confidence. The scheme of work gives good detail and ensures that national requirements are met. Resources are more than adequate and are stored efficiently. The subject is well co-ordinated.

Religious education

147. By the age of seven levels of attainment in religious education are in line with the expectations for the age group, following sound progress during Key Stage 1. Through a series of cross-curricular topic themes children develop a knowledge and understanding of personal identity and their place in the world. They are introduced to stories and practices of the Christian faith, and aspects of customs and festivals of other major religions, appropriate to their age.
148. Sound progress continues in Key Stage 2, where religious education is usually taught as a separate subject, although often linked with other subjects such as English and personal and social education. Broad objectives are covered in increasing depth as pupils progress through the key stage, so that by eleven they achieve the standards expected for their age.
149. Pupils are attentive and responsive to the experiences provided in their religious education lessons. Throughout the school there is an encouragement for them to think about moral values, reflect on their experiences, express their own feelings and respect the view of others. Most pupils put these into practice, for example when sharing equipment or working collaboratively as part of a group.
150. The quality of teaching is never less than sound, with some good features in both key stages and some very good teaching in Key Stage 2. This is achieved by good medium- term planning across the year groups, usually giving appropriate representation to religious education. Individual lesson plans indicate clear learning outcomes and all teachers show respect for pupils' thoughts and opinions. Good use is made of a comprehensive range of artefacts from the Christian, Jewish, Hindu and Islamic faiths and visits, such as to the local church, have carefully planned learning objectives. Older pupils are encouraged to develop their research skills and effective use is made of information technology in the course of religious education lessons.

151. The programmes of study meet the requirement of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school's guidelines are comprehensive and give good support for the teaching of skills and knowledge specific to the subject, implicit attitudes, suggested links with other curricular areas, and tasks for the assessment of pupils' progress. A wide range of resources includes videos, books, artefacts and photocopiable materials. These are well stored and easily accessible. Arrangements are in place for the co-ordinator to monitor the provision effectively, and religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

152. inspection was carried out by a team of six inspectors, who were in school for a total of 25 inspector days.

During the inspection week

150 lessons or parts of lessons, representing 82 hours, were observed;

all the work from a significant sample of pupils was monitored;

the inspectors heard a cross-section of pupils read and held discussions with

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teachers' planning files and records, attendance registers and pupil records were examined;

the inspectors observed extra-curricular activities;

discussions were held with teaching, non-teaching and visiting staff.

Prior to the inspection week

a meeting to ascertain parents' views was held;

school policies, other documents and records of meetings were analysed;

meetings were held with the Governing Body and with staff.

153. Data and indicators

PUPIL DATA

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on schools' register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	480	6	73	103
Nursery Unit	50	0	3	0

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3

Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week	102

Qualified teachers (Nursery classes)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Education support staff (Nursery classes)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	65

Average class size:	32
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FINANCIAL DATA

Financial year:	1995/96
	£
Total Income	769,880
Total Expenditure	737,482

Expenditure per pupil	1,446
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,404
Balance carried forward to next year	51,802

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	417
Number of questionnaires returned:	280
Percentage return rate:	67.1%

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	58.2%	39.6%	2.1%	0%	0%
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	68.6%	30.0%	0.7%	0.7%	0%
The school handles complaints from parents well	33.9%	52.9%	12.9%	0.4%	0%
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	43.6%	53.2%	2.5%	0.7%	0%
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	56.4%	38.9%	3.2%	1.4%	0%
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	61.1%	36.1%	2.5%	0.4%	0%
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	51.1%	42.5%	5.7%	0.7%	0%
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	47.9%	42.5%	7.1%	2.1%	0.4%
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	52.1%	43.2%	4.6%	0%	0%
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	47.9%	46.8%	4.3%	1.1%	0%
My child(ren) like(s) school	64.6%	30.0%	3.9%	1.4%	0%

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