

# INSPECTION REPORT

**New Invention Junior School**  
West Midlands

LEA area : Walsall

Unique Reference Number : 104192

Headteacher : Miss J.E.A. Tyler

Reporting inspector : Mr. M. Lester  
20596

Dates of inspection : 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706700

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	7 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Cannock Road Willenhall West Midlands WV12 5SA
Telephone number :	01922 710376
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Appropriate authority :	The governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs. L. Staffiere
Date of previous inspection :	March 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. M. Lester RgI	Design technology Physical education	Attainment and progress Teaching
Mr. B. Twiss Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and community Leadership and management Staffing, accommodation & learning resources The efficiency of the school
Mr. Kevin Cassidy	English Information technology Equal opportunities English as a second language	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Mrs. Mary Hamby	Science Religious education Art	The curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
Mrs. Vanessa Ward	Mathematics Geography History Music Special educational needs	

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics are above average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The pupils' demonstrate a positive and often enthusiastic, attitude to their work.
- The teaching is consistently at least satisfactory and in approximately half of the lessons seen it is good.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are good.
- Staff care effectively for the children's well-being
- The head and governors provide clear educational direction
- Resources for information technology are very good.
- The school provides good value for money.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- Although standards in English are average overall, attainment in writing is below average.
- The behaviour around the school of a small number of pupils is unsatisfactory.
- Work is not consistently matched to the needs of individual pupils.
- The management team and subject co-ordinators have yet to become fully effective in contributing to school improvement.
- Library resources are unsatisfactory.

**The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

New Invention is an improving school that has effectively addressed the weaknesses raised in the last report. All pupils benefit from a revised and further strengthened curriculum, which effectively incorporates the Literacy and Numeracy strategies. The provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development has been improved and an appropriate, but not consistently applied behaviour code has been introduced. Several initiatives to more fully involve parents in their children's learning have been introduced for example, the development of homework games in mathematics has effectively contributed to the raising of standards.

In addition the very thorough analysis of assessment data by the headteacher has begun to support teachers in more accurately setting challenging targets for raising attainment. The sound quality of teaching has become more securely established and the percentage of good or better quality teaching has been maintained. However, there still remains an issue about fully matching work to the needs of individual pupils.

The school has made satisfactory progress since it was last inspected and is securely placed to make further improvement in both its provision and the standards attained by the pupils.

## Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	D	E
Mathematics	B	B
Science	C	C

*Well above average*    A

B

*Average*                    C

D

E

*n.b. Similar schools are those with more than 8% and up to 20% of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

This table takes account of attainment both at and above the expected Level 4. It shows that in comparison with all schools and those with similar circumstances standards were above average in mathematics and average in science. Whilst standards in English were below average in comparison with all schools and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Standards have improved since 1996, particularly in mathematics and science. In 1999 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above was broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels varied considerably; the number of pupils attaining Level 5 was very high in mathematics, high in science but low in English.

The inspection findings indicate that the pupils make good progress in mathematics and satisfactory progress in English and science. Progress in writing has been slow but is now improving. The good progress in mathematics is directly linked to the school focus on this subject including the early introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. By contrast the delayed introduction of the Literacy Strategy, although justifiable, has resulted in slower progress. However, the current focus on developing literacy skills enables the pupils to make satisfactory progress overall in English.

The inspectors judged attainment in English and science to be average overall whilst in mathematics it is above average. In mathematics significantly more pupils than usual, and in science more pupils than usual, are working at a higher level than expected by the age of 11. Whereas in English, and in particular in writing, fewer pupils than usual are working at a higher level and more are working at a lower level than expected.

Across the school, the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans.

The pupils benefit from the recent introduction of a computer suite and make good progress in information technology attaining standards that are average overall and often good. The standards reached in the other areas of the curriculum are typical for pupils of this age and they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

## Quality of teaching

<b>Teaching in:</b>	<b>7 - 11 years</b>
English	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good
Science	Satisfactory
Information technology	Good
Religious education	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory overall. In 40% of lessons, the teaching was good and in a further 10% it was very good.

The teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory overall and often good. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good overall but with more consistency in Year 6. The quality of teaching is good overall in mathematics and information technology and in all other subjects it is satisfactory. Although the quality of teaching in English is satisfactory overall, the teaching of writing is less effective than the teaching of reading.

One of the strengths of the teaching is the effective sharing with the pupils of what is to be learned. When this is reviewed at the end of lessons, it reinforces the main teaching point and helps both teachers and pupils to assess progress. A general weakness of the teaching is that the tasks are not always matched to the needs of the pupils. Although the pupils are often put into sets on the basis of their prior attainment, the spread of ability within the sets is still wide. The teachers recognise this, and make sure that their questions are pitched at various levels, but the work provided is not always suitable for the full range of abilities present.

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

## Other aspects of the school

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Satisfactory overall; most of the pupils are well behaved but there is a small but significant minority who cause concern around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory; fewer unauthorised absences than other schools.
Ethos*	Good. The school has a positive climate for learning and is working effectively to raise standards.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory overall. The head and governors provide clear educational direction for the school. However the roles of senior staff and curriculum co-ordinators are not effectively established.
Curriculum	Satisfactory overall. It is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Appropriate emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good support and provision enables the pupils to make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' social development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. Resources for information technology are very good. Library resources are unsatisfactory. The staff effectively overcome the problems of cramped and restrictive accommodation.



Value for money	Good.
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\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

• **The parents' view of the school**

• <b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children enjoy school</li> <li>• They find the school approachable</li> <li>• The school's values and attitudes</li> <li>• The standards of work and behaviour</li> </ul>	

Inspectors' judgements generally support the parents' positive views. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire expressed a range of views about the pupils' behaviour. The inspection findings are that, in the main, they are satisfactory. However, a small but significant number of pupils cause concern around the school.

Diverse views were also expressed about homework. The homework given to pupils is in line with government guidelines and judged to be effective in supporting pupils' learning. This is particularly so concerning the provision of mathematics homework games.

Most parents felt that the teachers were accessible and approachable if they needed to talk to them about their child's progress and were also aware of the formal consultation evenings that are organised. The inspection team found that end of year reports lack sufficient detail about attainment, progress and targets for improvement. However, taken overall the arrangements for informing parents about their children's progress are just satisfactory.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The headteacher, governors and staff should now take steps to:

### **Raise standards in writing by:**

- further consolidating the curricular provision;
- improving teachers understanding of how to develop writing skills;
- providing work that is more clearly matched to the individual needs of the pupils;
- enhancing library resources and then fully utilising them.

*(paragraphs 11, 26, 71, 72, 81.)*

### **Establish consistently appropriate behaviour through:**

- ensuring consistency in expectations of behaviour within and outside the classroom;
- reviewing levels of supervision around the school;
- identifying and meeting the training needs of supervisory staff;
- improving parental knowledge of and support for school behaviour guidelines;
- ascertaining the pupils' feelings about this issue.

*(paragraphs 20, 47, 60, 68.)*

### **· Provide work that is more clearly linked to the individual needs of the pupils by:**

- clearly identifying the range of abilities and needs within teaching sets;
- planning tasks that cover the range of identified needs.

*(paragraph 28.)*

### **Strengthen the role of the senior management team in leading school improvement initiatives by:**

- clearly defining their role;
- fully involving them in the analysis of relevant data;
- identifying their professional development needs.

*(paragraph 57.)*

### **Give co-ordinators more opportunities to influence the development of their subject through:**

- monitoring teaching and learning;
- using the available data about pupil's progress to guide teachers attention to weaknesses;
- disseminating good practice;
- advising teachers on the content of lessons;
- fully involving them in leading target setting initiatives.

*(paragraphs 37, 59.)*

*In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. Measures should be considered to:*

- *ensure that end of year pupil reports fully comply with statutory requirements.*
- strengthen the procedures for informing parents of their children's progress.*
- support teachers in marking work in a way that helps pupils to improve.*
- *improve the opportunities for pupils to develop skills of artistic appreciation.*
- review the most efficient use of the cramped accommodation.*

*(paragraphs 29, 51, 60, 62, 65, 88, 89, 77, 96, 112.)*

### **· INTRODUCTION**

#### **Characteristics of the school**

1. New Invention Junior school, which shares a site with the infant school is located in the Willenhall ward of Walsall. The number of pupils on roll has risen during the last two years. This has significantly changed the character of the school's intake which in part is attributed to the widely publicised "Beacon" status of the infant school. The Years 5 and 6 have seen considerable take up of spare capacity by parents wishing to move their children from other schools. For example twenty percent of the current Year 6 pupils did not transfer from the infant school whereas all of the current Year 3 pupils transferred from the infants.
2. The pupils are drawn from a large and socially mixed catchment area which is just average when compared to a range of national indicators. For example, the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (13.4%) is broadly average whilst the percentage of adults with higher education is below average.
3. The profile of the children's attainment on entry varies from year to year but has usually been above average. Analysis of the Key Stage 1 results for the current intake shows attainment to be broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. The school caters for pupils from seven to eleven years of age and is bigger than usual with 346 pupils. This reflects a twenty per cent increase in numbers during the past two years. Approximately 85 per cent of the pupils are white; the remainder are mainly of Indian, Pakistani or black British descent. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (8.8%) is high. There are three pupils with a statement of special educational need and a further 25 are on the school's register for special educational needs, a below average proportion.
5. As required the school set attainment targets for Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics for 2000. These targets: English 67%; mathematics 58% Level 4 and above were exceeded in 1999 (English 70%, mathematics 75%). Appropriately revised targets of 75% English and 80% mathematics have been set for 2001.
6. The school aims are wide ranging but can be summarised as:  
the experience of school should be happy and rewarding for each pupil.
7. In order to achieve this the curriculum aims to:
  - challenge pupils to develop their full potential;
  - motivate pupils to learn and instil an enthusiasm for learning;
  - provide the necessary information and skills to enable pupils to keep themselves safe and healthy;
  - encourage pupils to recognise, develop, refine and express opinions of their own and to respect those of others;
  - provide opportunities for pupils to take the initiative and hold responsibility.
8. The school's current priorities for development include:
  - raising the standard of teaching and learning for all pupils;
  - improving standards in Year 6 in line with similar schools;
  - effectively introducing the literacy hour;
  - more effectively sharing targets for improvement with pupils and parents.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	35	32	67

<sup>1</sup>

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

<b>National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils At NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	21	26	26
	Girls	26	24	27
	Total	47	50	53
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70 (56)	75 (48)	79 (56)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils At NC Level 4 or above	Boys	22	27	29
	Girls	26	25	27
	Total	48	52	56
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (64)	78 (53)	84 (62)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) Missed through absence for the Latest complete reporting year		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.4
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.2
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:	Number
Fixed period	16
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :	%
Very good or better	10
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

#### **Attainment and progress**

9. The results of the 1999 national tests for 11 year pupils show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 and above was broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, the percentage of pupils attaining above the expected level varied considerably across these three subjects. The number of pupils attaining Level 5 was very high in mathematics, high in science but low in English. When taking account of attainment at and above the expected Level 4 standards were above average in mathematics and average in science in comparison with all schools and those with similar circumstances. Standards in English were below average in comparison with all schools and well below average in comparison with similar schools.
10. Analysis of test results in English, mathematics and science for the last four years indicates that standards in 1995, just after the last inspection, were similar to those in other schools nationally, and since then the school's standards have been broadly in line with the national average. A notable exception to this trend was in 1998, when standards dropped across all three subjects; most significantly in science. Standards then were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. This drop has been attributed to a less able group of pupils and disruptions in the teaching due to staff absence. This year's results show significant improvement with the following increases in the percentage of pupils attaining level four and above since 1998: English 14%; mathematics 27%; and science 23%.
11. The inspectors judged present attainment in English to be average overall. However, attainment in speaking and listening and reading is average whereas in writing it is below average. Attainment in science is average overall whilst in mathematics it is above average. In mathematics significantly more pupils than usual, and in science more pupils than usual, are working at a higher level than expected by the age of 11. Whereas in English, and in particular in writing, fewer pupils than usual are working at a higher level and more are working at a lower level than expected.
12. The school has made sound progress in improving the curriculum in English, mathematics and science and the way in which it is delivered. Inspection findings indicate that the pupils make good progress in mathematics and satisfactory progress in English and science. Progress in writing has been slow but is now improving. The good progress in mathematics is directly linked to the school focus on this subject including the early introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. By contrast the delayed introduction of the Literacy Strategy, although justifiable, has resulted in slower progress. However, the current focus upon developing literacy skills is supporting satisfactory progress overall in English.
13. The profile of the children's attainment on entry varies from year to year but has usually been above average. However, analysis of the Key Stage 1 results for the current intake shows attainment to be broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

14. By the end of Key Stage 2 most of the pupils are reasonably confident talkers in a range of settings. They speak clearly and explain their ideas in whole-class discussions and smaller groupings. They generally listen carefully to their teachers and each other, and make contributions, appropriate for their age. Many pupils read aloud from a range of texts with accuracy, fluency and expression. The pupils progress satisfactorily in their handwriting, and by the age of eleven most have developed an appropriately neat and cursive style. However, although many pupils are able to write in a range of forms their ideas are not generally organised and developed in a sustained way using adventurous vocabulary within more complex, grammatically correct sentences.
15. In mathematics Year 6 pupils work out equivalent fractions and convert fractions to decimals accurately, with the highest attaining pupils being able to place in order numbers that contain three or four decimal places. All the pupils apply their understanding of number well when solving a wide range of mathematical problems and use numeracy skills competently in other subjects, including science, geography and information technology. The pupils measure accurately and, by the end of the key stage, work out the perimeter and area of shapes. The highest attaining pupils understand and use formulae to work out the areas of rectangles and triangles, and accurately draw angles using protractors. Most of the pupils are competent to draw and interpret a range of graphs. They understand and use accurately the terms mean, mode and median, when interpreting data they have collected.
16. In science the highest attaining pupils in Year 6 understand how to follow an investigation through, make accurate predictions, and realise the importance of accurate measurement in their work about forces. They have started to make generalisations on the basis of their observations, and know for example, that a weight can be more effective if it is nearer to the pivotal point of a see-saw. Average attaining pupils know that various factors affect whether an object floats or sinks, and are beginning to understand that upthrust and gravity are the most significant influences. Lower attaining pupils recognise that a scientific test needs to be fair to achieve validity, and make sensible predictions about the most suitable places for a hedgehog to hibernate.
17. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards which match their abilities, and make generally sound progress in relation to their prior attainment. The attainment of higher attaining pupils is sound, and often good, especially in some mathematics lessons where work is especially challenging. Similarly the pupils who receive support for English as an additional language make satisfactory progress
18. The pupils benefit from the recent introduction of a computer suite and make good progress in information technology attaining standards that are average overall and often good. The standards of work in all other areas of the curriculum are typical for pupils of this age and they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. However, the pupils do not show a satisfactory capability concerning art appreciation. The pupils receiving additional instrumental tuition in music usually make good progress and attain above average standards.

• **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

19. Many parents express satisfaction about the positive attitudes of the children towards the school. Inspection findings are that the pupils generally demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They participate well in discussions and confidently seek help when necessary. Most pupils are interested and involved in their lessons and want to do their best. They enjoy receiving house points, and merit awards for good work and good behaviour. The pupils work industriously and sensibly, and by Year 4 the majority show the capacity to sustain concentration and persevere with the task in hand. An exception is that some of the pupils, particularly in Year 3, show less positive attitudes to work, and can be very lively and excitable. This is particularly noticeable when the classrooms and the computer suite appear overcrowded and the pupils become restless, chatter or call out. On occasions this can be related to the teaching being insufficiently focused on the individual abilities of the pupils. K13
20. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire expressed a range of views about the pupils' behaviour. The inspection findings are that overall the behaviour of pupils in and around the school is satisfactory and enables the school to function as an orderly community. However, the behaviour of a small but significant minority of pupils on the playground and in particular in the dining hall is often boisterous. This appears to be directly linked to the amount and effectiveness of adult supervision. One example of oppressive behaviour was observed in the playground at lunchtime, where supervision did not prevent the kind of boisterous play, which was commented upon during the last inspection. There have been sixteen exclusions in the past twelve months; relating to a very small number of pupils, who have been excluded on a number of occasions each. The rate of exclusions has fallen over the last three years. Considerable effort has been made to clearly identify the school expectations concerning good behaviour. However, the school has yet to achieve consistently appropriate behaviour from all pupils throughout the day.
21. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and teachers are satisfactory. The teachers provide good role models, which are characterised by mutual respect and trust. Due regard is shown for others' values and beliefs in lessons.
22. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory, and the teachers are effective in their efforts to promote consideration of right and wrong in lessons and assemblies. Pupils throughout the school are courteous and friendly. They open doors for visitors and ask politely for chairs to be moved so that they may pass by. The pupils show respect for the property of others, handling books and equipment sensibly in lessons. When pupils are given the opportunity to display initiative or take responsibility they respond well. The older pupils demonstrate initiative, willingly undertaking tasks which help in the smooth running of the school, working in the class libraries, collecting registers, manning the external doors, helping younger pupils to read and looking after younger pupils in the playground.

• **Attendance**

23. Attendance levels are broadly in line with the national average. However, the rate of unauthorised absence is below average. Registration sessions are efficient and the teachers use them to accurately record the pupils who are present. The school carefully monitors lateness and as a result the majority of pupils arrive at their lessons on time.



## · **Quality of education provided**

### **Teaching**

24. Since the last inspection, the sound quality of teaching has become more securely established and the percentage of good or better quality teaching has been maintained. The quality of teaching observed was never less than satisfactory. In 40% of lessons, the teaching was good and in a further 10% it was very good. The teaching results in the pupils making satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school.
25. The teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory overall and often good. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good overall but with more consistency in year 6. The main characteristics of the good or better quality lessons was a greater pace and challenge that resulted in the pupils being well motivated and keen to work their hardest to achieve clearly understood targets. The teachers' very effective questioning techniques and their ability to accurately assess the pupils' understanding were also positive factors. Throughout these lessons both the children's and the teacher's enjoyment and enthusiasm was apparent. When teaching was satisfactory but not better, this was generally as a result of less effectively communicated lesson aims and lower expectations of standards of work and behaviour.
26. The quality of teaching is good overall in mathematics and information technology and satisfactory in all other subjects. These two subjects have been the focus of considerable staff development and are curriculum areas in which the teacher's knowledge is generally good. This knowledge is usually effectively applied to planning and teaching interesting and challenging lessons. Although the quality of teaching in English is now satisfactory it is more effective for reading than for writing. Overall the teachers do not show a secure knowledge and understanding of how best to support the development of a range of writing skills.
27. Teaching is more consistent than in the last inspection and this is partly due to curriculum revisions especially in English and mathematics. The teachers effectively share their knowledge and expertise in collaborative planning which clearly identifies the intended learning for the pupils. A strength of the teaching in English, mathematics and science is the sharing with pupils of what is to be learned in lessons and what targets they have to achieve over the course of a half term. Overall the teachers make good use of classroom management approaches that motivate pupils to learn. Throughout the school and across most subjects the teachers also effectively make on going assessments of the pupils' progress in order to clearly identify next steps in learning. Homework also plays an increasingly helpful part in the school's attempts to raise standards particularly in reading, spelling, mathematics and science.
28. A general weakness of the teaching throughout the school is that the tasks are not always matched to the needs of the pupils. Although the pupils are often put into sets on the basis of their prior attainment, the spread of ability within the sets is still wide. Whilst the work is well planned to meet the learning needs of each set overall, there is sometimes an insufficient range of work within a lesson to meet the variety of pupil's individual learning needs.
29. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, but there are variations regarding the usefulness of comments in helping the pupils know what they have done well and how they should improve.
- 30.

There is appropriate support to promote learning for those pupils who have English as an additional language. There is a part-time specialist teacher who knows the pupils well and supports them both within the classrooms and at times by withdrawal groups where necessary. He is knowledgeable and sensitive to the needs of the pupils. The planning for this work is sometimes insufficiently focused on the planning of the individual class teachers. It tends to be a reaction to what is going on in the lesson at the time, rather than targeted beforehand upon the individual needs of the pupils.

31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs varies between satisfactory and good, but is satisfactory overall. When teaching focuses on specific needs, such as when a small group works with a teacher, it is good. At other times, when a whole class carries out the same task, the work is sometimes too hard for them and they make less progress than they should. Similarly, on such occasions, work can be insufficiently challenging for more able pupils.

• **The curriculum and assessment**

32. The curriculum overall is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils' needs. It meets the statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and for religious education. In addition it promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development, and prepares them well for secondary education. The school has adopted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and these are being successfully implemented throughout the school. The governors have an effective policy for sex education, and this, together with drugs education, is included to meet the needs of the pupils as they go through the school.

33. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection with curriculum issues. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The headteacher has introduced successful measures to ensure that time outside of that devoted to the National Curriculum is used productively. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. A sound policy, which pays due regard to the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, has been drawn up and put into practice effectively. The precise nature of any special educational needs of pupils are identified at an early stage and satisfactory individual education plans are provided. Some of the pupils are learning English as an additional language, and their needs are suitably promoted by additional tuition.

34. Planning for the curriculum is satisfactory, and is clearly linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum. This shows how the various themes and topics are covered within the course of a year, and over the key stage as a whole. Most subjects are taught individually, but the teachers make good links between them to enhance the pupils' learning, for example, between science, mathematics and technology. This helps the pupils to reinforce skills in numeracy, data handling and word processing.

35. Provision for personal and social education, and health education is good. The planning for personal and social education shows that the pupils are taught life skills that are appropriate to their age. For example, in Year 3 the pupils talk about feelings, in Year 4 they discuss friendship, in Year 5 the pupils are made aware of the need to value the opinion of others, and in Year 6 the pupils are helped to cope with physical changes. The pupils are taught to take care of themselves, the importance of hygiene and healthy eating, and the value of exercise as part of a healthy life style.

- 36.

A good feature of the school's provision is the attention that it gives to citizenship. The pupils are made aware of roles within their community, like that of a councillor, and they make visits to local places of interest. They have contact with local elderly residents and there are links with a shelter for homeless people. In Year 6, the pupils are taught to listen carefully to persuasive argument, and to make decisions in the light of what they hear. Extra-curricular clubs enrich the school curriculum satisfactorily. These are well attended, and include such things as the Textile Club, and the Computer Club. The teachers give willingly of their time to organise the clubs. This provides time for the pupils and teachers to work together with parents and ex-pupils in a genial and informal atmosphere. The school takes part in local sports competitions and has been successful in winning some of them. The teachers encourage pupils with a particular talent. During the week of the inspection, for example, one boy had been selected to attend a football school of excellence.

37. The school fulfils its statutory duty to undertake the end-of-key-stage assessments, and undertakes a range of other standardised tests throughout the school each year. The headteacher takes a particular interest in assessment along with the assessment co-ordinator. The school has an impressive amount of data about each pupil to show the levels achieved in English, mathematics and science. However, the potential influence of all the data has not yet been fully realised, for example the teachers are not yet fully involved with tracking the pupils' progress in order to accurately identify targets for improvement.
38. The teachers make generally accurate assessments of their pupils. Their understanding of the levels of achievement in the national Curriculum is mostly good. They keep examples of work, which illustrate the various levels, and these are useful, particularly to less experienced staff. At the end of Year 6, the teachers make assessments about what their pupils might achieve in the national tests. Last year these were very accurate in mathematics and science, but not so good in English. The teachers over-estimated what their pupils could do, particularly in writing. On the whole, however, assessment in English, mathematics and science is a good feature of the school. The school accurately uses test results to inform decisions about the setting of pupils and what their half termly targets should be.
39. The pupils are involved in choosing work to keep in a record of achievement, and these are passed on to the appropriate receiving school. Good systems are in place for the transfer of information between classes when the pupils move up in school, and there is good liaison between the school and the local secondary schools for the transfer of pupil records.

• **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

40. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The school has maintained the satisfactory provision for pupils' moral and cultural development and its strengths in the provision for pupils' social development, which is still good. The parents express their satisfaction with this aspect of the school's work.
41. The school promotes the pupils' spiritual development effectively through assemblies, lessons, extra-curricular activities and through its positive ethos. The pupils show reverence in their prayers, and respected the request for two minutes silence at eleven o'clock on Remembrance Day. In lessons, for example in Year 4, the pupils are encouraged to think about places of worship, and the meaning of words like *sacred* and *holy*. They understand that there are special places for worship like churches and mosques, but that worship can be equally significant in the home, at school, or in a community centre. Some of the pupils learn to play instruments, such as the recorder, and some pupils willingly sing a solo as part of hymn practice. The quality of their music, and the joy with which they play and sing has a clear spiritual dimension, and is a good feature of the provision.
42. Provision for moral education is sound. There are clear *Golden Rules*, which are prominently displayed throughout the school. The rules are related to sensible expectations of behaviour and considerations of right and wrong. However, the implementation of these rules is inconsistent. Themes in assembly are selected with the intention of reinforcing positive community values, and

these make a good contribution to the pupils' moral education. The recent themes have brought home to the pupils that everyone can help, and that physical strength is not always the best way of overcoming difficulty.

43. The school provides well for the social development of its pupils. The pupils are encouraged to be sociable with each other in lessons, when they have the opportunity to work for some of their time in class groups and at other times in ability-based sets. Group work and work in pairs, for example in science lessons, enable the pupils to see that collaborative efforts can have valuable outcomes. They also learn that elements of give and take are necessary when working with a partner, for example in physical education. They are taught to respect and value companionship. The pupils have an easy rapport with visitors, and are courteous to them, by opening doors and showing them routines. The pupils are given suitable responsibilities, like register duty, assembly duty and some are chosen to be house captains.
44. The pupils are encouraged to think about the world in which they live, and their place in it. Activities such as the Harvest celebration, and charitable collections are successful in helping the pupils to be aware of the need to share, and to consider those who are less fortunate. There are numerous opportunities for the pupils to rise to personal and collective challenges, and these make a very strong contribution to their social development. For example on field trips the pupils overcome feelings of homesickness and in competitions such as the swimming gala and book quiz they learn how to celebrate victory and accept defeat.
45. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is sound. In English lessons the Year 6 pupils study a range of poetry styles and comment on how the mood of the poem makes them feel. In art, the pupils in Year 3 look at pictures by Gainsborough and Millais and identify what season the mood of the pictures evoke. The pupils are made aware of the ways in which people from different faith communities celebrate notable events, like Christmas and Diwali, and they show respect for cultural traditions within and beyond their community. A range of visitors enriches the school's cultural provision, and stimulates work by extending the pupils' experiences. For example, the recent visit from an author inspired the pupils to recall the visit with delight, and talk animatedly about his books. Stories are chosen from different countries and religions so that the pupils begin to appreciate the richness and diversity of the world in which they live.

· **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

46. The support and guidance offered to the pupils whilst in the care of the school is satisfactory overall with some good features. The culture of care and support highlighted in the last inspection report has been maintained. The teachers demonstrate a good personal knowledge of the pupils. They conscientiously monitor the pupils' academic and personal needs and offer sensitive support and guidance. For example, a pupil who moved into a different group for some lessons was given extra support to ease the transfer. The school is starting to foster a sense of pride in the pupils' achievements. In a Year 6 merit assembly, for example, several pupils were rewarded for their good work in the recently implemented literacy strategy.

47. The majority of the pupils enjoy sound relationships with each other, their teachers and visiting adults. Since the last inspection, the school, in consultation with the parents, has formalised its procedures for promoting good standards of behaviour into a policy and rules of conduct. However, these are not consistently applied throughout the school and there still remains a need to establish appropriate behaviour by all pupils throughout the school day. This is particularly an issue at lunchtime. The school has good procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance, these are consistently applied and result in satisfactory attendance levels.
48. The headteacher and her staff enjoy good working relationships with the adjoining infants' school. Together, they ensure that pupils coming to the school for the first time are given appropriate opportunities to get to know their new surroundings. For example, the school arranges visits so that the new pupils can see its assemblies and celebrations.
49. A particularly strong feature of the support offered to the pupils is that concerning their health and well being. The school nurse visits regularly and routine health screening takes place. The school is a health promoting school and makes a valuable contribution towards the pupils understanding of issues such as nutritious eating and healthy exercise. A robust health and safety policy is in place. Risks are assessed regularly and timely action is taken to rectify any shortcomings.
50. The school has well-understood child protection procedures which are recorded in a detailed policy. The headteacher maintains suitable arrangements with the professional support agencies although the need for references to them is rare.

• **Partnership with parents and the community**

51. Overall, the school has satisfactory relationships with the parents and its links with the community are good. The parents' views expressed in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were generally positive and indicated satisfaction with the school. The quality of information given to the parents is satisfactory. Newsletters inform the parents of the school's successes and forthcoming events. A reading record, listing comments about the books that the pupils have read, goes home regularly. The school has recently introduced a comprehensive diary for the pupils in Year 6. This is valued by the parents. However, the annual reports for the parents lack sufficient detail about pupils' attainment and progress and do not set targets for improvement. Some parents commented that they would like clearer information on their children's progress. The inspection findings confirm that the reports do not include clear evidence of progress in writing nor do they provide a basis for constructive discussion about attainment and progress during the end of year consultation.
52. The staff show care and concern for the pupils who need extra help with their learning. Parents are invited into school to talk about what help is available and to review how their children's progress.
53. The parents' involvement in their children's learning is sound. The school has made satisfactory progress concerning this issue since the last inspection. For example, a small nucleus of parents regularly come into school to help with the newly implemented literacy hour. The school makes considerable efforts to encourage the parents to help their children at home. The majority of the parents recently attended a workshop at which they learned how to use mathematical games. As a result of this, the pupils regularly take home suitable games and this is making a positive contribution to the improving standards in mathematics. The parents expressed diverse views about homework. Inspection findings are that the homework given is in line with government guidelines and is effective in supporting the pupils' learning.
54. There is a formal association for the parents. This is actively involved in raising funds for the school and also supports school performances and community events.

55. The school has good links with the community. The teachers invite senior members of the community into school to talk about important historical events such as World War 2. Good use is made of the locality to enhance the pupils' learning. In a Year 4 history lesson, for example, the pupils followed up their visit to a local industrial museum by analysing historical data and writing about their findings.
56. The headteacher and staff maintain good working relationships with the secondary schools to which most of the pupils transfer when they leave New Invention. Induction visits are a routine feature of this work. The teachers make suitable use of the resources available at the local secondary schools. For example, to help with their science work. The teachers from both schools plan together to ensure that the pupils transfer to their new schools with the minimum of disruption.

## · **The management and efficiency of the school**

### **Leadership and management**

57. The last inspection reported that the school was effectively managed. The findings of the current inspection confirm that the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall with some good features. The leadership and the clear educational direction shown by the governors and headteacher are good and effectively support the raising of standards. The governing body effectively monitors the work of the school and evaluates its success. Until recently, the school has experienced a high number of long-term staff absences and some difficulties in recruitment of teachers. This has significantly restricted the shaping of a coherent and effective management team. As a result, the headteacher has conscientiously identified suitable priorities and promoted these through the management resources available to her. For instance, the school decided upon early implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy as an experienced co-ordinator was in post. This is contributing to the good quality of teaching and standards achieved in mathematics. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy was appropriately delayed until an experienced subject leader was appointed. This initiative is beginning to impact positively upon standards in English.
58. The school is making sound progress in the management and development of some subjects. There is for example, a clear enthusiasm for the development of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and for ambitious use of information technology throughout the school. The co-ordinators for these subjects are drawing upon their good subject knowledge to support colleagues in firmly establishing the curriculum in English, mathematics and information technology. However, this has been less successful concerning writing. The co-ordinator with responsibility for special educational needs offers effective support to the staff in devising and reviewing targets in individual education plans. She keeps the register up-to-date and is fully involved with teachers and parents in monitoring and evaluating the pupils' progress. The governing body has appropriately appointed a governor to oversee the school's provision for special educational needs. A new governor has recently taken over this position and has already visited the school to gain knowledge of the special needs provision.

59. The school has satisfactory systems for the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development. There are policies and schemes of work for most subjects and these provide useful guidance for teachers. From time to time, the governors visit lessons and provide feedback to the teachers. The headteacher undertakes very detailed and effective analysis of the pupils' attainment. She regularly monitors the teachers' planning, the delivery of lessons and the pupils' work. Although similar opportunities are provided for the English and mathematics co-ordinators, this is not the case for other subject co-ordinators. Accordingly they have limited opportunities to contribute effectively to the improvement of provision in their subject or to identifying targets for raising standards.
60. The school's aims, policies and values are satisfactorily implemented overall. The headteacher regularly checks the effectiveness of the implementation of policies. The recently introduced policy on homework, for instance, is ensuring that regular homework contributes towards the pupils' learning. The school has an appropriate policy to promote equality of opportunity for pupils. The headteacher has been particularly effective in monitoring the attainment and progress of the pupils, by gender, and ethnic background to ensure access to the full curriculum. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the implementation of the behaviour and marking policies.
61. Development planning is satisfactory, although the formal plan for school improvement is largely short-term. The headteacher reviews the achievements of the previous year and consults with the management team and staff on the priorities for the coming year. In this way suitable targets are set for maintaining progress, initiating school needs and promoting national initiatives such as the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. The governors and headteacher regularly monitor progress towards school improvement targets and appropriately amend them in the light of experience and changing circumstances.
62. The school has developed a positive ethos. The pupils' good attitudes to learning, combined with a strong desire to raise standards, help to form a climate that is conducive to learning. The teachers, for example, share objectives for learning and improvement with all of the pupils thus giving them clear expectations on how they intend to raise standards. The school complies with most legislation, but the annual reports for parents do not fully meet the statutory requirements.

• **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

63. The school has enough teachers with relevant qualifications and experience to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum. Responsibilities for subject management and the co-ordination of special educational needs are sensibly allocated. The staff approach their duties conscientiously and have time allocated so that they can discuss and plan their lessons. The school has sufficient staff for the administration and management of the premises. These findings echo those of the last inspection report.
64. The school has suitable induction arrangements which are matched to the individual needs of new staff. Newly qualified teachers are supported by a colleague who acts as a mentor, together they devise a suitable programme for professional development. Arrangements for the appraisal of teachers are in place. All teachers have a regular professional development review. This is used as a positive way of setting targets for improvement and as a method of aiding their professional development. Satisfactory arrangements for the training and professional development of staff are in place. Much of this has rightly concentrated on the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The school makes its newly opened computer suite available to staff for training. This helps them to gain confidence in their use of computers and in the teaching of the subject.
65. The school's open plan accommodation is restrictive and not naturally suited to the current requirements for whole class teaching. This difficulty is further exaggerated by the setting of pupils in many subjects resulting in periods of considerable pupil movement throughout the school. Although the school has worked hard to improvise, many of the classrooms are cramped

and experience high noise intrusion from adjoining classes. The school has very limited areas for quiet learning or confidential withdrawal for extra help. The mobile classroom currently used by Year 6 is in a poor condition and creates an uninspiring atmosphere for the pupils. However, the school's care taking staff ensure that the building is clean and tidy.

66. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Their quality, use and accessibility are also satisfactory. The school has a very good range of up-to-date computers situated in a room specially adapted for the purpose. Mathematical games are of good quality and plentiful in supply. The library provision is, however, unsatisfactory and many of the books are old and in poor condition. Several pupils reflected this by saying that they would like a wider choice of books to read in class and at home.

### **The efficiency of the school**

67. The efficiency with which the school administers and manages its budget is satisfactory. The current plan for school improvement reflects the school's priorities for the year ahead. It records the amount of money apportioned from the school's budget and contingency reserves that will be spent on those priorities. Each year, the headteacher and governors consider the options available to them for spending the school budget. Consultations with the staff take place before the plan is finalised. Regular reports by the headteacher to the governing body enable the school to identify any variations from the planned budget. The school receives grants from the schools' standards funds. These grants are properly accounted for and are spent for their intended purpose.
68. The school's staff is deployed effectively. The teachers and support staff work conscientiously and often volunteer for extra duties such as supervising the school's extra curricular sporting activities. The supervision at lunch-time is occasionally ineffective in preventing incidents of misbehaviour. The restrictive accommodation available to the school is used satisfactorily to provide facilities for teaching, assembly and play. Resources are used effectively throughout the school. .
69. The school's administrative and financial controls are good. The secretary maintains efficient administrative procedures aided by up-to-date computerised systems. Relevant records of expenditure are kept and rigorous controls are applied to all financial transactions.
70. The school receives less money than the national average for primary schools. Its spending is broadly in line with the national average. Taking into account the school context and cost per pupil, the standards attained and the improving quality of education provided, the school gives good value for money.



## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **· English, mathematics and science**

#### **English**

71. The number of eleven year old pupils reaching the expected level 4 or above in the 1998 National Curriculum tests was below average. In 1999, the results improved by 14%, to be broadly in line with what is expected nationally. However, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was low, and when this is taken into account the school's standards were below average in comparison with schools nationally. In line with the national picture results in reading were significantly higher than in writing and the performance of girls was better than that of boys. This position was exaggerated by the fact that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 was broadly average in reading but below average in writing. Nevertheless the school exceeded its target of 67 per cent of pupils attaining Level 4 or above in the tests, and has subsequently increased its target to 75 per cent for 2000. The findings of the inspection are similar to the last inspection; the pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are average overall. However, attainment in speaking and listening and reading is average whereas in writing it is below average.
72. The standards are improving both in reading and writing. This is as a result of effective teaching during the recently implemented literacy hour supported by stringent and extensive monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress that identifies appropriate targets for improvement. The headteacher appropriately delayed the introduction of the Literacy Strategy until a suitably qualified and experienced English co-ordinator took up post. However, the school is well aware that there is some lost ground to make up and teachers, ably led by the co-ordinator are working hard to support pupils in making better progress in English as a whole but particularly in writing.
73. By the time the pupils leave school they speak clearly and explain their ideas in a range of situations. They generally listen carefully to their teachers and each other, and confidently offer relevant responses. However, the school does not make clear provision to extend these skills through, for example, the use of regular drama as part of the pupils' work across the curriculum.
74. By the age of eleven most pupils are able to read independently the sorts of texts expected of pupils of this age. Many of them read aloud with accuracy, fluency and expression. When discussing their reading many pupils make reference to the text in order to explain their secure understanding of issues such as setting, plot and character. They generally are confident when using reference books to locate information drawing upon their understanding of the contents and index.
75. The pupils progress satisfactorily in their handwriting, and by the age of eleven most have developed a neat and cursive style. Although many pupils are able to write in a range of forms their ideas are not generally organised and developed interestingly in a sustained way using adventurous vocabulary within more complex, grammatically correct sentences. Good examples of improving writing were seen in Year 6. In one case the teacher successfully highlighted a writer's use of language. The pupils delighted in using such imagery as, "snow coming down on tiptoe," and describing the quality of a smile that was "thin as a miser's mouth." On another occasion pupils discussed the terms personification, alliteration, metaphor, and simile and used a thesaurus to extend their vocabulary.

76. The attitude of most pupils to their work is generally satisfactory, and is often good. The pupils listen attentively during the introductory part of the literacy hour, and are keen to answer questions. They co-operate with each during the group sessions and are able to work sensibly without direct adult supervision. Older pupils in Year 5 and 6 show great enthusiasm in reading out their work. Throughout the school the pupils behave well in lessons, and most pupils usually settle to their tasks quickly and persevere to complete them. An exception is at Year 3 where some of the pupils have an immature attitude to their work.
77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some good features contributing to the clear progress made in the development of the pupils' technical vocabulary, so that they are able to understand, extend and discuss their work. The teachers' planning sets suitable learning objectives. Introductions to lessons are usually effective, teachers know the books they use well, and most lessons are appropriately paced. The quality of marking is generally positive and encourages pupils to do their best, but the marking policy is not consistently implemented. For example, when correcting pupils' spellings, teachers do not always follow the procedures set out in the curriculum handbook. Sometimes teachers do not ensure that pupils have taken account of the comments made. Overall limited emphasis is given to discussing and refining work with the pupils as part of a process of producing finished work of high quality. There are, however, some examples of very effective marking, for example in Year 6, where pupils are clearly shown what they need to do to improve. The end of lessons are often used appropriately to review the learning objectives, and pupils read out their work to share it with the class.
78. In the recently introduced literacy hour, whole-class questioning is usually effective, and guided reading sessions are well focused. The National Literacy Strategy is effectively supporting the teachers' efforts to broaden the range of literature that the pupils encounter. Homework plays an increasingly helpful part in the school's attempts to raise standards, particularly in reading and spelling. There is an appropriate structure for teaching reading which is clearly understood and consistently implemented by teachers, and supported by parents. Considerable effort has been made to extend the range of writing across the curriculum. However, there is still too much writing that consists of short tasks, often linked to worksheets which do not always help the pupils, especially the more able, to write at length. A very good, recent, initiative was to invite a male author of children's books to the school. This visit caused great excitement, stimulated the pupils to read some of his books, write letters to him after the visit and enthusiastically read his replies. The school successfully achieved its aim of motivating boys to read and write more confidently.
79. The school has an impressive amount of data about each pupils' attainment and progress in English. The teachers make generally accurate assessments of their pupils. An exception to this was last year when the teacher assessments of what their pupils might achieve in the national tests were inaccurate. The teachers over-estimated what their pupils could do, particularly in writing. On the whole, however, assessment in English is a good feature of the school. This provision has been further enhanced through the involvement of the education authority in very detailed analysis of the pupils' attainment in reading and writing. The school is now strengthening the curriculum provision in English in order to raise standards, particularly in writing.
80. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and these pupils are appropriately supported during the literacy hour, where good use is made of support staff, to achieve identified targets. A part-time teacher enables pupils who need extra support for English as an additional language to be taught in relatively small groups. These pupils enjoy this work and have very good relationships with the teacher. The work could however, be more tightly focused by being planned co-operatively with the class teacher
81. The scope for the choice of reading material, has been improved through the acquisition of some new good quality reading materials for the literacy hour. However, the quality, quantity and range of some of the books in the classroom libraries are unsatisfactory. Information reading skills are suitably supported by the use of a computerised library system, although this system

was not seen in use during the inspection, owing to a change over to a more effective system.

• **Mathematics**

82. The 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above, was in line with the national average, both compared to the national picture and with schools having pupils from similar backgrounds. Of these pupils, 35 per cent attained the higher level 5. This is a much higher percentage than usually found and when this is taken into account, the school's standards were above average in comparison with the national picture and with similar schools. The last inspection judged standards to be good. However, between 1996 and 1998, results were consistently below the national average. The 1999 results show very significant improvement, with the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 and above increasing by 27 per cent. The school exceeded its target of 55 per cent of pupils attaining level 4 or above in the 1999 tests, and has subsequently increased its target from 60 per cent to 80 per cent for 2000. Inspection findings show that, by the end of the key stage, standards are above average overall, and that over a third of the pupils, achieve high standards.
83. The school has made very good progress in implementing the national numeracy strategy, which it introduced in September 1998, a year earlier than required. The positive impact of this is reflected in the improved standards and in the good progress that the pupils are making. The increased focus on numeracy and, in particular on mental arithmetic, is having a positive effect on standards.
84. By the end of the key stage, pupils work out equivalent fractions and convert fractions to decimals accurately, with the highest attaining pupils being able to place in order numbers that contain three or four decimal places. All the pupils apply their understanding of number well when solving a wide range of mathematical problems. The majority understand how to use multiplication to check the accuracy of division calculations. They confidently round numbers to the nearest 10 or 100 in order to estimate the answer when adding or subtracting. The pupils use mathematics competently in other subjects, including science, geography and information technology. The pupils measure accurately and, by the end of the key stage, for example work out the perimeter and area of shapes. The highest attaining pupils understand and use formulae to work out the areas of rectangles and triangles, and accurately draw angles using protractors. Most of the pupils are competent to draw and interpret a range of graphs. They understand and use accurately the terms mean, mode and median, when interpreting data they have collected.
85. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of mathematics. Younger pupils learn that the position of a numeral determines its value and pupils in Year 6 work confidently with six digit numbers. In Year 3, pupils carry out simple measuring in centimetres. By Year 6, pupils carry out more complex measuring, calculating area and volume and drawing shapes using different scales. Pupils in Year 3 recognise and name the properties of two-dimensional shapes and can identify right angles. Pupils in Year 6 are familiar with the properties of three-dimensional shapes and measure a range of angles. Younger pupils use tallying to record data and express this information in the form of simple charts and graphs. By Year 6, pupils interpret and display data, using more complicated charts and graphs, such as pie charts showing data about their interests.

86. Pupils enjoy mathematics and are eager to learn and to find the correct answer. These positive attitudes are promoted by the way that the teachers make mathematics interesting, sustain enthusiasm and raise the self-esteem in pupils of all abilities. The pupils show confidence in explaining their methods of calculation and listen attentively to each other. They work well collaboratively. For example, younger pupils, applying their knowledge to find a particular number from clues given in a mathematical problem, shared ideas and helped each other work out whether their ideas were likely to be right or wrong. Most pupils, particularly the older ones, take pride in the presentation of their work.
87. The quality of teaching is good overall. For the older pupils it is consistently good and, at times, very good. One of the strengths of the teaching is the sharing with the pupils of what is to be learned. Where this is reviewed with them at the end of the lesson, it reinforces the main teaching point and helps both teachers and pupils to assess progress. A clear example of this was seen at the end of a lesson where pupils had been learning how to add two-digit numbers by initially rounding one number to the nearest ten. The teacher revised the process with the pupils and helped them to assess their own progress. Most teachers provide a good pace to their lessons, and this helps pupils to concentrate and to maintain good behaviour.
88. The pupils are taught in classes according to their prior attainment in mathematics. Whilst the work is well planned to meet the learning needs of each class overall, there is sometimes an insufficient range of work within a lesson to fully meet the variety of pupils' learning needs. For example, in an addition and subtraction activity, several pupils finished the task quickly and accurately because it was too easy for them. On another occasion, the whole class was given an identical worksheet to complete. Although the teacher provided additional support for the least able pupils, the quantity and level of work did not enable them to achieve success.
89. Teachers organise their lessons well, providing a good balance between whole class, individual and group teaching. The teachers promote good progress in mental calculation by giving clear explanations, setting a good pace, and adjusting their questioning using their knowledge of the pupils' abilities. The teachers use correct mathematical terminology and insist that pupils do so too. For example a teacher was quick to correct a pupil who used the word 'graph' instead of 'chart'. The teachers make good use of pupils' mistakes to promote learning. For example, when a pupil tallied incorrectly the numbers seven and eight, the teacher showed the class how his final tally should show three lots of five. The teachers know their pupils well and assess their progress carefully during lessons, intervening sensitively to correct misunderstanding, and adjusting their planning as required. A weekly numeral, mathematical shape and word displayed in each classroom helps to give status to the subject. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, but there are variations regarding the usefulness of comments in helping the pupils know what they have done well and how they should improve. The best marking relates directly to the learning intention for the lesson. Homework is used well to extend and enhance what is learned in lessons, this is particularly so concerning mathematical games.

· **Science**

90. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests show that the pupils left the school reaching standards that were average in comparison with all schools and those with similar intake. Significantly, the percentage of pupils who achieved the higher Level 5 was above average when compared with all schools and similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was below the average for schools with a similar intake.

91. At the time of the last inspection, in 1995, standards were similar to those in other schools nationally, and since then the school's standards have remained close to the national average. A notable exception to this trend was in 1998, when standards dropped. Standards then were well below average for pupils attaining level four, and level five. This drop has been attributed to a less able group of pupils and disruptions in the teaching due to staff absence. This year's results have improved significantly with a 23 per cent rise in the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above. There have been no significant differences in the performances of girls and boys during the last few years. Inspection findings confirm that standards meet national expectations.
92. The most able pupils in Year 6 understand how to follow an investigation through, make accurate predictions, and realise the importance of accurate measurements. For example, in their work about forces they have started to make generalisations on the basis of their observations, and know for example, that a weight can be more effective if it is nearer to the pivotal point of a see-saw. Pupils of average ability know that various factors affect whether an object floats or sinks, and are beginning to understand that upthrust and gravity are the most significant influences. Pupils of lower ability recognise that a scientific test needs to be fair to achieve validity, and they make sensible predictions, for example, about the most suitable places for a hedgehog to hibernate.
93. Progress is sound throughout the key stage. The pupils use more scientific vocabulary as they get older. The younger pupils use words such as *dissolve*, *liquid*, and *circulation*. Older pupils understand and use the words, *variable*, *resistance*, *friction* and *insulation*. Their written work shows suitable progress. Younger pupils write up their experiments using a given format, whilst older pupils are able to take notes for themselves, and have started to make good use of data tables and line graphs to illustrate their conclusions. Progress is good in some lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In these lessons the teaching moves along at a brisk enough pace for the pupils to acquire new knowledge, engage in scientific enquiry, and write down their findings. The teachers ensure that the pupils stay on task, no learning time is lost, and the lessons have good conclusions that remind the pupils about what they have found out.
94. The pupils' attitudes are generally positive. They enjoy practical activities and work effectively both individually and collaboratively, showing a sound appreciation of safety issues. Most pupils show interest and curiosity in lessons and a respect for living things and the environment.
95. Teaching is generally sound, with some very good aspects in Year 6. The teachers plan interesting activities and this helps the pupils to see the significance of the subject in everyday life. For example, the pupils in Year 6 used light sensors to find the best place to grow flowers, and the pupils in Year 5 tested the volume of various alarm clocks. The teachers are good at using the pupils' own experiences to enhance learning. For example, in Year Three, the lesson on forces used common objects like bottles and pencil sharpeners to illustrate directional forces, such as pushes and pulls. The teachers are also good at sharing the objective of the lesson with their pupils, and making sure that their pupils know what targets they have to achieve over the course of a half term. The best teaching in Year 6 makes significant demands on the pupils. In these lessons the teachers' expectations are communicated clearly to the pupils, both in terms of the learning intention and the standard of behaviour.

96. A general weakness of the teaching throughout the school is that the tasks are not always matched to the needs of the pupils. This was a weakness noted in the last inspection report, and has not been remedied. Although the pupils are placed into sets on the basis of their ability, the spread of ability within the sets is wide. The teachers recognise this, and make sure that their questions are pitched at various levels, but overall the worksheets they produce are not suitable for the range of abilities present. In consequence some pupils mark time. The subject knowledge and expertise of the teachers is variable, so that in some lessons the subject is brought to life and taught with great enthusiasm, but in others the delivery is rather dull, and the pupils lose interest.
97. A good feature of the subject is that it makes a strong contribution to key skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology. The pupils improve their word processing by using the computer to write up their experiments, they use light sensors and other gauges, and complete tables and graphs to record their findings. They understand the importance of accurate measurement, and are starting to appreciate the value of note taking.

## **Other subjects and courses**

- **Information technology**
98. The attainment of the pupils is average overall and often good. The inspection findings are broadly in line with those of the last inspection, and the comment made then about the positive impact of the subject on other curriculum areas is still relevant. The most substantial improvement since the last inspection has been the very good provision of hardware in the new information technology suite. This suite is well used to teach discrete information technology skills and to provide regular opportunities for the application of information technology skills to support learning in other subjects. There are signs that the quality of this provision is already impacting on the confidence of the pupils in learning new skills but not sufficiently yet to raise standards significantly overall.
99. Pupils in Year 3 pupils understand how to start the computer, and insert a floppy disk. They can use the spacebar, delete key, mouse and keyboard to correct problems in spacing and create text, as when they write about their, "Welcome to Year 3." Other pupils in this year group are able to change the size, type and colour of font. Year 4 pupils are able to generate and organise text on screen, inserting bullet points to highlight important areas in their writing about a historical visit made to a local Hall. They use a spreadsheet to input data relating to a science experiment on heart rate. Some pupils of lower ability effectively use a snake game to reinforce their work up to a hundred in number. Year 5 pupils effectively use their word processing skills to finalise some work on the Spanish Armada. Year 6 pupils can organise and amend a spreadsheet to enhance their topic on building a bridge. Others support science learning by use of a light sensor to record data, and are able to insert a table in the text to record their results. Those who attend the club after school use the word processing programme well.
100. The pupils make good progress in developing their information technology skills. The new computer suite is very well timetabled to support English, mathematics and science in the mornings, and to enable the specific skills of information technology to be taught during the afternoons. New programmes are introduced systematically and the pupils become confident using them through a mixture of introductory taught lessons and opportunities to practise their skills working with a partner. The good links with other subjects help to deepen the pupils' understanding by giving them genuine purposes to use information technology. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to that of other pupils in the key stage.
101. The pupils show good attitudes to learning. They enjoy using the computers, and by the time they reach Year 6 they are becoming confident users who will persevere when faced with a problem. They usually behave well and concentrate when working individually and collaboratively. They share the resources fairly and help one another.

102. The quality of teaching is generally good. The best teaching is characterised by effective planning, secure subject knowledge, sustained pace, and the ability to keep the pupils on task. Good teaching combined with the good provision in the new suite promote the good progress made by many of the pupils. The short term planning is suitably based on the good medium term planning produced by the co-ordinator. The teachers plan effectively together in order to achieve a balanced curriculum across the year groups. A range of appropriate programs are already installed onto the computers and the pupils are taught to save their work to floppy disks so that they achieve continuity, from lesson to lesson. In the best lessons, the teachers, or other adults, monitor the pupils work well, and intervene to make pertinent teaching points when necessary.

### **Religious education**

103. Attainment is in line with expectations set out in the local agreed syllabus. The pupils have an appropriate understanding of Christianity and some of the other major world faiths. They know that people from different denominations can worship the same God, and that there are elements that are common to the nature of worship. The older pupils are beginning to understand that belief can affect lifestyle, for example in making restrictions to a believer's diet, or daily routine.

104. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the key stage. The pupils in Year 3 remember that rangoli patterns are associated with the celebration of Diwali, and they can summarise the main elements of the related story they heard. Pupils in Year 4 know that places of worship have special significance to believers, and that prayer is an important part of religion. In Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of the story of the creation, and they know that the story is found in the Old Testament of the Bible. Throughout the key stage the pupils have an awareness of their own uniqueness, and understand that there are connections between their experiences and those of others.

105. The pupils have a growing appreciation of the part played by artefacts, symbols and traditions in religion, but progress in this aspect of the syllabus is generally less well developed. Older pupils could offer an explanation about why Christians revered a crucifix, but were unable to recall symbols that might have a strong significance for believers in other religions. They knew that fasting is a part of some religions, but could not put a name to any periods of fasting from the main world religions. They were aware of rituals for baptism and marriage in the Christian religion, but were not sure about how these might be celebrated in other faith communities.

106. Overall the pupils respond well in lessons. They are keen to learn about holy places and share their views willingly and confidently. They show respect for each other's views and listen to their teacher attentively.

107. The teaching is sound, with some good features in Year 6. The good features are evident when the teachers show confidence with the subject, for example in the lesson on the Creation story. In this lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to support their views with rational argument, and to evaluate each other's work. The lesson moved along briskly so that the pupils had chance to learn new facts, and was pitched at the right level to build on the pupils' previous learning. Some of the lessons have a calm and reflective atmosphere, which is beneficial to the subject. They have good introductions to them, which captures the pupils' interest straight away. However, this is not always the case. In Year 3, for example, the subject is taught in the afternoon along with music and physical education, and this has an adverse impact on the lesson. The lesson observed in Year 3 was late in starting, the pupils were tired and excitable, and the noise from the lessons nearby was not conducive to learning.

108. A good feature of the provision is that the subject makes a strong contribution to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.

### **• Art**

109. The pupils make sound progress overall and reach standards that are typical for pupils of this age. This is a similar picture to the findings in the last inspection. Attainment in the practical aspects of this subject is more secure than in other aspects of the subject, such as remembering the works of famous artists and comparing art from different times and places.
110. The pupils in Year 3 make collages using torn paper, and are starting to understand that colours appear feinter as they recede into the distance. They are starting to appreciate that using an horizon will give their pictures a feeling of space, and are learning the principles of perspective. The work from Year 6 shows that the pupils have learned to use pattern and texture to good effect and that they take pride in the presentation of their finished pictures. The pupils clearly enjoy the opportunity to experiment and investigate. They look after equipment, do not waste resources and they share the materials willingly. They persevere with their work, even when they encounter difficulties like cutting out an intricate shape, or working out where a shadow needs to be drawn. Overall the pupils show satisfactory attitudes to learning.
111. The teaching is sound throughout the school. The teachers know their pupils well, and give them suitable individual encouragement. They make the aims of the lesson clear to the pupils. For example, in Year 4, the teacher made good reference to the original learning objective to praise those pupils who had tried hard to use a variety of shading techniques to add interest to their black and white drawings. This enabled all the pupils to see how their classmates had achieved a successful result.
112. The school has a reasonable plan to help the pupils understand and comment on the works of famous artists, but art appreciation is not taught in sufficient depth. In consequence, the pupils cannot recall much of the work that they have covered. For example, even the older pupils cannot name any modern artists, women artists, or famous schools of painters such as the Impressionists. They are not sure about the methods that artists can use, the range of styles or traditions, and have a limited vocabulary when appraising their own work.
113. A good feature of the provision is the links made with other subjects. The work on war artists in Year 4, for example, strengthened the pupils understanding of their history topic about life in Britain since the 1930s. The work on landscapes in Year 3, made good connections with geography. Throughout the school good links are also made with technology, particularly in the development of skills such as cutting and joining. The subject is enriched by extra-curricular activities, like the textile club, and by visits to museums.

• **Design and technology**

114. In line with the judgements made at the last inspection the pupils make satisfactory progress overall and attain standards that are appropriate for pupils of this age. For example Year 3 pupils had effectively designed and built model houses and Year 6 pupils had as well as designing, building, and testing model bridges also evaluated the cost effectiveness of their finished products.



115. The curriculum has been appropriately revised and is well planned to provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to design, make and evaluate products drawing upon a range of knowledge and techniques. Interesting units of study, often linking with work in other subjects such as science, information technology and music, are incorporated into a helpful scheme of work. A limited amount of evidence was provided to indicate how consistently this well planned scheme is implemented. The co-ordinator is well aware of the need to more systematically record evidence of pupils' attainment and progress in this subject.
116. In the one lesson observed; a three teacher team-teaching session in Year 6, the pupils made good progress in developing their capabilities in designing, making and evaluating as a result of overall good quality teaching. The pupils were very enthusiastically but purposefully realising their designs for bridges and contributing positively to discussions on how to test and improve their finished items. A particular strength of this project was the introduction of the idea of efficiency through comparing cost with outcome. This was achieved by costing the materials that the pupils were using and comparing this with the effectiveness of the finished bridge. Information technology skills were also effectively harnessed to this project through the use of spreadsheets to accurately show the costing for each bridge. The collaborative teaching approach enabled the teachers to share their strengths and to provide an interesting, challenging and purposeful lesson that encouraged pupils to draw upon skills developed in other lessons and subjects. Scrutiny of teachers planning, pupils work and discussion with adults and children indicate that the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory.

#### • **Geography and history**

117. The pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are similar to those normally found for pupils of this age. Geography was not being taught in the current term, so judgements are based on discussion with pupils and scrutiny of previous work. The curriculum provides a good balance of history and geography throughout the key stage. Each termly topic has a main focus on either history or geography, but the two subjects are inter-linked wherever possible. For example, pupils learning about Tudor England traced the route of the Spanish Armada, marking the significant cities, countries and seas on their map.
118. The pupils make sound progress in their understanding of chronology and, by Year 6, can sequence accurately events which they have studied, including such events as the invasion of Britain by the Romans, the Victorian era and the second world war. Pupils in Year 4 make sound progress in gathering information from artefacts, such as clothes and household goods used since 1930. In Year 5, pupils successfully apply their knowledge to explain the reasons for differences in the opinions expressed in two descriptions of Elizabeth I. The pupils make sound progress in understanding the difference between fact and opinion in studying information about Henry VIII. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils studying the local lock-making industry made good progress in understanding why the industry had developed.
119. In geography the pupils show a sound understanding of climate and the effect of weather on people's lifestyles. They know that where flooding is a regular feature of climate, this has a significant impact on people's lives. The pupils show good understanding of the water cycle and can describe the effect of mountains on rain clouds. They satisfactorily discuss differences between their locality and a rural area they have studied. Their work shows satisfactory progress in map drawing, from simple plans and routes in Year 3, to more complex maps, showing features such as rivers, cities, rainforests and deserts, in Year 6. Discussions with pupils about rainforests indicated that they have a sound understanding of their environmental importance.

120. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They listen attentively as lessons are introduced and are willing to offer explanations, such as why an Englishman and a Frenchman might have different opinions of Elizabeth I. They mainly settle well to tasks and work diligently.
121. The teaching of history is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and show enthusiasm for the subject. This has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes. Very good use is made of both visits and visitors to enrich the pupils' learning. Recent visits to a lock museum and to re-enact aspects of life during the second world war are good examples of this. Satisfactory use is made of information technology to enhance learning in both subjects. Although teachers know their pupils well, there is no consistent procedure for recording their progress in either subject. Pupils are mainly taught in classes according to their previous attainment in literacy, and teachers plan activities with this in mind. However, where the whole class carries out the same activity, the learning needs of every pupil are not always met. Planning shows good attempts to develop writing skills through history, as, for example, in teaching note-taking during study of the Tudors.

### • **Music**

122. The pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are appropriate for pupils of this age. This judgement is similar to that made at the last inspection. Over the key stage, pupils make sound progress in singing tunefully in unison and in accompanying their singing with percussion instruments. They use their growing knowledge of the sounds that instruments make to create more appropriate sounds to illustrate a theme. For example, pupils trying to illustrate a beach scene used bells and glockenspiels to create a sense of light-hearted enjoyment. Pupils gain a sound understanding of 'timbre' and illustrate this by the way they use their voices and play instruments to produce particular effects.
123. Progress in lessons is satisfactory overall, and is sometimes good, especially for the older pupils. Pupils choosing percussion sounds to illustrate the words of poems made good progress in selecting suitable instruments to create the intended effect, such as a creaking door. Pupils listening to music made satisfactory progress in identifying musical instruments, interpreting mood and identifying high and low pitch. Twenty-five per cent of pupils receive instrumental tuition and make good progress. Lessons provided by visiting teachers in woodwind, brass, violin and guitar contribute significantly to the pupils' attainment. All pupils are given the opportunity to join the extra-curricular recorder club.
124. Pupils work well collaboratively for example when developing percussion accompaniments they share out responsibilities sensibly. They listen attentively to each other's performances and make constructive comments about the effectiveness of different sounds. Pupils, fitting the actions of the hand jive to a song, concentrated well so as to keep to the rhythm of the music.
125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Planning builds well on previous learning. The teachers make sure that all pupils are involved in making music. Teachers are enthusiastic and make learning interesting. They provide good opportunities for pupils to perform in front of a range of audiences, both in school and in the wider community. The teachers plan conscientiously, but sometimes have insufficient knowledge and understanding of how to develop practical activities to their full extent. Little evidence was seen of pupils using forms of notation to record their compositions. Assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed overall to provide regular information about progress. Although the open-plan design of the building is unsatisfactory for the teaching of music, the teachers organise their lessons to make best use of the accommodation. Teachers also manage resources well, so that maximum use is made of the time available for each lesson.

### • **Physical education**

126. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall and attain standards that are appropriate for their

age. This is a similar picture to the findings in the last inspection. In the games, dance and gymnastics lessons observed most pupils joined in enthusiastically planning, practising and applying their skills to sound effect. On occasions, when the teachers provided a more effective balance between vigorous physical activity and time for evaluation progress was good and the standards achieved were higher. Overall the pupils show good attitudes to learning.

127. Pupils at the beginning of the key stage respond satisfactorily to music in dance lessons when working on their own or with a partner. When encouraged to evaluate their own and others' performance they respond more precisely and imaginatively. In Year 4 gymnastics lessons pupils practise and refine their movements appropriately in response to the opportunities provided. In indoor games lessons developing targeting skills pupils in Year 5 show secure levels of control when using a variety of equipment. They generally show a secure understanding of the limits of the available space, associated safety issues and the need to comply with rules. When encouraged to evaluate the effectiveness as well as the speed of their actions attainment is better. Pupils in Year 6 work effectively as members of groups or teams in a variety of small games drawing upon their sending and receiving skills. When a good pace is maintained and balanced with challenging questioning standards are higher. Through regular use of the local swimming baths Year 6 pupils are usually able to swim at least 25m by the time they leave school.
128. The quality of the teaching observed was satisfactory overall and on occasions good. Overall the teachers demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the need for an appropriate pace and range of activities balanced by opportunities to evaluate performance. When this balance is effectively achieved in lessons the progress and achievement of the pupils is usually good. This has yet to become firmly established throughout the school.
129. The curriculum for physical education is effectively enhanced through the provision of extra-curricular activities and involvement in partnership and district events for example in swimming, football and athletics. The school has a good tradition of success in competitive swimming having won the Sneyd Partnership Schools Gala for the past six years.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **Summary of inspection evidence**

130. A team of five inspectors worked in the school for a total of 19.5 inspection days and during that time;

- fifty-nine hours were spent in direct classroom observation seeing a total of eighty-six lessons or part lessons;
- six hours were spent in hearing a representative sample of pupils, from each year group, read and talking to them about their work;
- fourteen hours were spent in scrutinising samples of the pupils' work from each class;
- thirteen hours were spent in discussion with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff and with representatives of the governing body;
- informal discussions took place with all classteachers;
- inspectors met and spoke with individual pupils in lessons, on the playground and during lunchtime;
- the day to day operation of the school was observed closely;
- a very extensive range of documentation about the school and its work was examined in detail;
- seven parents attended a pre inspection meeting, and 109 parents returned questionnaires giving their views on a wide range of topics about the work of the school. These views were noted and used to inform the inspection process.

## Data and indicators

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	346	3	28	31

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	13.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

#### Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	22

Average class size:	29
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## Financial data

Financial year:

1998/1999
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	£
Total Income	470518.00
Total Expenditure	456748.00
Expenditure per pupil	1445.41
Balance brought forward from previous year	30734.00
Balance carried forward to next year	44504.00

## Parental survey

Number of questionnaires sent out:

346

Number of questionnaires returned:

109

### 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	17	58	17	6	2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	26	62	7	4	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	8	58	28	4	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	10	61	15	12	2
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	13	51	19	13	4
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	25	57	15	2	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	14	52	26	7	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	16	61	8	9	6
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	21	60	15	2	2
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	17	66	10	5	2
My child(ren) like(s) school	30	62	6	1	1