

INSPECTION REPORT

Castle Hill Infant School

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique Reference Number: 124663

Headteacher: Sheridan Wilks

Reporting inspector: Gulshanbir Kayembe
2901

Dates of inspection: 6th –9th December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707809

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Wendy Atkins
Date of previous inspection:	November 1995

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Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
G Kayembe Registered Inspector	Science Design and technology Equal opportunities	Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Staffing and learning resources
S Smith Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Efficiency of the school
I Chearman	Areas of learning for children under five Information technology Art Physical education	Accommodation
M Leyland	Mathematics Religious education Music Special educational needs	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
D Parfitt	English Geography History	Curriculum and assessment

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Leadership and management are outstanding and a key factor in the improvement made by the school. The very effective partnership with governors coupled with well-established teamwork amongst staff result in a successful school.
- There has been very good improvement in educational provision and outcomes for pupils since the last inspection.
- Children under five are given a good start to their education and provision for those with special educational needs is very good.
- Standards of attainment are above average in reading, science, art, design and technology and well above in mathematics.
- Curricular provision is very good and the literacy and numeracy strategies are very effectively implemented.
- Target setting is very well developed and used as an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Teaching is of high quality and successfully promotes pupils' progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are very good. This is a result of the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and careful nurturing of positive values and attitudes.
- There is an excellent ethos, geared towards establishing an effective environment for learning.
- The work the school does to promote links with parents is excellent and they are valued as important partners in the education and welfare of their children.
- The provision of support staff is very good. They are highly valued and provide very good support to teachers.

Where the school has weaknesses

The school has no significant weaknesses and the following represent areas where there is room for improvement:

- I. Whilst pupils reach appropriate standards of attainment in information technology, there is scope for teachers to make wider use of computers in all subjects

in order to raise standards further.

- II. There are some shortcomings in accommodation. For example, although one is planned, the lack of a separate play area for children under five restricts faster development of their skills of co-ordination with equipment such as tricycles.

This is a successful and thriving school with many strengths and no significant weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the areas identified for improvement during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection in improving itself and tackling all the weaknesses identified in the last report. There has been significant improvement in the standards of attainment achieved by pupils. This was a key issue for action and the school has systematically addressed it, particularly in writing and mathematics. The quality of teaching is considerably better now and pays particularly good attention to the development of pupils' skills in independent learning. The provision for children under five years of age has also been enhanced and now meets pupils' needs very well.

Given the outstanding quality of leadership, the capacity to improve further is very good.

Standards in subjects

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
Reading	C	A
Writing	B	A
Mathematics	A	A

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

*Similar schools are defined on the basis of the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

The table above shows that pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests in 1999 matched the national average in reading, were above average in writing and well above in mathematics. Results in all three subjects were well above the average found in similar schools, indicating that the school does well by its pupils and enables them to attain well relative to their starting points. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above average in reading, well above in mathematics and average in writing by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1. Speaking skills are below average, however, although the school has taken comprehensive steps to counter this.

Results of teachers' assessments for 1999 indicate above average standards in science, especially for high attainers. This is reflected in the work seen during the inspection. Attainment in information technology is average and in religious education it matches the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

By the age of five, children's standards of attainment have improved significantly in the short time they have been attending school. Although attainment remains below average overall, especially in language and literacy and knowledge and understanding, it is closer to the standards expected than when children start school. Attainment in the mathematical and physical areas matches expected standards and exceeds these in creative development.

Overall, children under five make good progress and pupils in Key Stage 1 make very good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years
English	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good
Science		Very good
Information technology		Satisfactory*
Religious education		Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

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

*Where computers are used, pupils are well taught and as a result attain average standards. However, not enough use is made of information technology in subject teaching and this is an area for improvement.

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. During the inspection, it was satisfactory or better in all lessons. In 85 per cent, it was at least good and, in 40 per cent, teaching was very good or excellent.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour Attendance	Very good in spite of some challenging pupils. Relationships are excellent. The rate of attendance is broadly similar to the national average but unauthorised absence is lower. Punctuality is very good.
Ethos*	Excellent.
Leadership and management	Outstanding overall. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction to the school. The deputy headteacher provides strong support and is an excellent role model for other staff. Governors are very well led and provide active support for the school. Co-ordinators' roles are well developed and they provide clear direction and good support for the development of their subject areas.
Curriculum	Very good provision. Work is very well planned throughout the school to ensure that there is step by step and progressive development of key skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas. Assessment procedures are excellent and assessment information is very effectively used to inform planning and promote pupils' progress.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The area is very well led and support staff are very effective in helping pupils with learning difficulties. All staff provide sensitive and well-informed support, in both the area support centre and in the main school.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Outstanding for social development. Very good for spiritual, moral and cultural.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. Staff development is very good. There are good resources in most areas. These are of good quality and well used. The quality of display is very good. However, the toilet for disabled persons doubles up as a medical room and there are no separate male and female toilets as well as no designated play area for children under five.
Value for money	Very good.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

Parents at the meeting and in their responses to the questionnaire made it very clear that they were very happy with all aspects of the school's

What some parents are not happy about

Very few parents voiced any concerns and these were mainly to do with work sent home. Inspection evidence points to very

work.

good arrangements for homework.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to further improve the standards of attainment and the quality of education provided, the headteacher, governors and staff should build on the wide range of existing good practice and tackle the following issues:

- Make more effective use of information technology as part of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that all teachers are planning the use of computers as part of their teaching in other subjects, particularly in science and mathematics;
 - making sure that all staff are confident and have the appropriate skills for using computers;
 - increasing the amount of whole-class teaching of information technology. (paragraphs: 14, 18, 33, 35, 82, 86, 115, 124, 126, 130, 132)

- Improve the accommodation available within the school by:
 - providing a separate medical room so that the disabled toilet no longer doubles up as a sick room;
 - ensuring there are separate toilet facilities for men and women;
 - developing, as planned, a separate play area for children under five. (paragraphs: 62, 78, 79, 95)

- Areas for further development

In addition to the key issues, the following less important and more minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Extend the good skills and level of confidence shown by the majority of teachers in teaching music to all teachers (paragraphs: 35, 164).
- Continue with promoting the positive play initiative in the playground (paragraphs: 25, 60).
- Build on the excellent practice observed of encouraging short paired discussions in response to teachers' questions in order to add to the strategies already in place for improving pupils' speaking skills (paragraph: 123).
- Extend the best questioning methodologies so that they are used even more widely and frequently (paragraph: 36).
- Increase the range of artefacts available for the teaching of religious education (paragraph: 140).
- Continue with strategies to address the differences in the attainment of boys and girls (paragraph: 10).

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. The school has a roll of 219 pupils aged between four and seven years. There are roughly equal numbers of boys and girls at the school, although in the Reception classes, there are more girls than boys. The roll rises to about 270 by the start of the summer term, when the final intake of pupils has been registered. It is of similar size to other schools of the same type nationally. The number on roll has been fairly steady for the last four or five years. Pupils join the Reception class on a full-time basis at the start of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. There were four pupils under the age of five at the time of the inspection.
2. The school is situated in Ipswich and the majority of pupils are drawn from the area immediately surrounding the school. However, about a third come from further afield. Pupils come from a mixed range of backgrounds, but fewer come from well off homes than is the case nationally. Currently, 21.5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. About nine per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, but none have English as an additional language.
3. About 15 per cent of pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is about average, but the proportion for whom statements of special educational need are maintained is well above average at 5.5 per cent of the number on roll. Most of those with statements are taught in the area support centre, which is a designated special educational needs unit sited in the school. The majority of pupils in the centre and mainstream classes have moderate learning difficulties, and a significant minority have behavioural and emotional needs.
4. Tests carried out when pupils begin school show that the overall attainment on entry is below average, significantly so in relation to language and literacy skills.
5. The school's main aims as published in the school prospectus are to:

'create a happy and caring school where children will feel safe and secure and thereby develop in self-confidence and independence. The school will provide an environment that promotes high standards of conduct and develops positive relationships having regard to the diversity of modern society. We encourage a partnership between home and school so that through a shared understanding the needs of the individual child are met.'

All children are offered an education that it is balanced, relevant and coherent, and is in accordance with the National Curriculum or Desirable Learning Outcomes. We aim to plan teaching and learning so that a positive attitude to work is fostered and high achievement is encouraged.'

6. The school has clear priorities which include the development of a range of curricular initiatives such as implementing the numeracy strategy, reviewing and further developing the programme for personal and social education, developing information technology further. Other priorities include developing governors' roles further in areas such as health and safety; expanding community links and liaison; developing the outdoor areas and resources.

6. Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	44	44	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	35	40	42
	Girls	40	44	40
	Total	75	84	82
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (81)	95 (80)	93 (93)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	36	40	37
	Girls	43	40	42
	Total	79	80	79
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90 (81)	91 (92)	90 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.6
	National comparative data	5.4
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

¹

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

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	40
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

6. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

7. Results of tests administered when children begin school shortly before they are five years old indicate that their attainment is below average. Development of language and literacy is particularly weak, with many children showing limited skills in expressing simple opinions and ideas and narrow vocabulary for their age. Few pupils show the early signs of reading or writing when they start school. Given this slow start, by the time they reach the top of the school, their standards of attainment are above average as a result of the very good progress they make overall. Much of this is due to the very good quality of teaching and the overall commitment of all staff to raising pupils' attainment.
8. By the age of five, children's standards of attainment have improved significantly in the short time they have been attending school. Although attainment in language and literacy and knowledge and understanding remains below average, it is closer to the standards expected than when children started school. Speaking skills are below average, with many children having narrow vocabulary although most are confident speakers and are developing a wider repertoire of familiar words. The few higher attainers express ideas well, giving clear explanations of what they are doing. In reading and writing, children's attainment is only slightly below average. In the mathematical area, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations showing good development of numeracy skills in particular. Many count accurately to twenty and correctly identify one less or one more than a given number. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world around them is limited for age, particularly in relation to talking about events and phenomena they encounter in everyday life such as identifying objects which use electricity. However, children's skills in construction and understanding of how moving objects work, for example, are sound. Attainment in creative development is above average for their age, and in physical development it matches national expectations.
9. The results of National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and writing have been improving at a good rate, and at a very good rate in mathematics, since the previous inspection. Overall, the improvement has been considerable and the school has very firmly met the requirements for improvement identified in the previous report. The latest test results of 1999 show that pupils' attainment in reading was in line with national averages, in writing it was above and in mathematics it was well above. When compared to the average results found in similar schools, as defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school's results are well above average. The results of teachers' assessments in science indicate performance that is above the national average, particularly in relation to the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels.
10. Girls' attainment in the tests has improved at a faster rate than that of boys, however, girls had further to go. For example, in the 1996 and 1997 tests, girls' performance was worse than that of boys in all areas when compared to the performances of their respective counterparts nationally. In 1999, girls' results were higher than those of boys in reading and writing but similar to those of boys in mathematics. This broadly reflects the national picture where girls perform better than boys in English whereas results for girls and boys are similar in mathematics. However, there may be a wider gap between girls at the school and girls nationally than between boys at the school and boys nationally. The national variations between boys and girls for 1999 have not yet been published. The school has already set

about putting measures in place to improve boys' attainment further such as purchasing more books which would appeal to boys and starting a Dads' and boys' reading and writing workshop. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds reach similar standards of attainment as other pupils.

11. The inspection evidence broadly reflects the results of national tests and teachers' assessments. Attainment in reading is above average, in writing and listening it is broadly average but in speaking pupils' attainment is below average. In mathematics, the vast majority of pupils are currently reaching at least the expected level, with many reaching the higher level and overall attainment is well above average. In science, attainment is above average. Slight variations between results and inspection evidence, such as in writing, are due to differences between the group of pupils currently in Year 2 and those in Year 2 last year. Differences might also be apparent due to the timing of the inspection, which took place some time before the end of the academic year. Reading standards are higher because of the continued focus of the school in this area and hence continuing improvement in pupils' attainment.
12. The overall progress made by pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, over time is very good. They go from below average attainment on entry to above average attainment by the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 1. In lessons, progress is consistently good and frequently very good. In English, pupils make good progress in lessons, very good progress in reading. The younger higher attainers make a good start in reading. They quickly develop knowledge of a good number of useful words. They make rapid gains through Year 1 in developing understanding of what they read and in fluency when tackling straightforward stories. By Year 2, most higher attaining pupils are well launched into reading. Average attainers make very good progress in using their knowledge of the alphabet to find information quickly from books. By Year 2, most are reading accurately with good development of appropriate expression evident. Below average attainers, of whom there are a significant number, make very good progress from a very low base in learning to distinguish text from pictures, saying words and telling stories through the illustrations. By Year 2, most are beginning to gain confidence in reading simple stories but some still need a good deal of adult support. Progress is good in writing and, by Year 2, the majority of pupils are producing writing that is average in standard for pupils of a similar age. Most pupils are making good progress in learning to write for different purposes, for example stories, diaries, poems, descriptions and exercises in punctuation and word building.
13. In mathematics and science, pupils are making very good progress. The majority reach good standards of attainment in number work and have good recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten and in recognition of even and odd numbers. High standards of attainment in the use of number skills to solve problems are successfully achieved through the high expectations of teachers and the use of tasks which really stretch pupils' thinking. Very good progress in the use and application of mathematics is achieved through teaching which encourages pupils to think for themselves. In science, the progress made in developing scientific vocabulary and in providing explanations about scientific ideas and phenomena is very good. For example, pupils develop from limited skills in explaining the results of investigations in Year 1 to explaining and talking confidently about conductors and insulators in Year 2. Overall, by the age of seven, most pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas and have well-developed skills in investigational work. Many of those in Year 2, for example, devise their own methods of recording experimental results and most pupils are competent in making relevant observations and noting them down.
14. Attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations by the time pupils reach Year 2. There are some examples of very good work involving the use of digital cameras and wordprocessors. Progress is a little variable, with good progress evident when pupils are given opportunities to make use of computers. Progress in Year 1, for example, is often good. Overall, however, pupils make only satisfactory progress in spite of the good and

very good work seen as not enough use is made of information technology in subject teaching. There is scope for them to be making good progress and reaching higher standards of attainment.

15. In religious education, pupils make good progress and reach the standards of attainment expected within the locally agreed syllabus being followed. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have a sound grasp of the main tenets of Christianity and are familiar with some of the traditions and celebrations inherent within other faiths. For example, the majority of pupils in Year 2 understood the story of Diwali and its significance to Hindus.
16. There are good opportunities provided for pupils to practise and develop skills of literacy across the curriculum. Speaking and listening skills are effectively encouraged in most subjects. There are good opportunities for writing in history, geography, science and religious education. In mathematics, science and music, pupils are expected to use appropriate subject vocabularies.
17. There is good development of numeracy skills through other subjects. Numeracy skills are effectively enhanced in science lessons through collecting data and sorting and organising information. In physical education lessons, the pupils' mathematical vocabulary is improved through references to place and position. In music lessons, rhythmical clapping and playing percussion instruments consolidate simple counting skills. In design and technology, pupils develop well their skills in shape and space by, for example, using templates to measure out the shape and size of material needed for a glove puppet.
18. In the majority of other subjects, pupils make good progress. They make very good progress in developing skills of designing in design and technology, particularly in terms of developing a range of different ideas and making informed choices about which is the best design to actually make. Very good progress is also made in the extent to which they produce their own products with minimal help from the teachers. For example, pupils in Year 2 were making hand puppets and had designed and made their own templates for the shapes of the puppets. Progress in information technology is a little slower, although frequently good when pupils are given the opportunity to use computers. However, insufficient use is made of information technology, especially in relation to data-handling programs. Thus, pupils do not make as much progress as they might. Progress in religious education is good, with pupils developing good levels of knowledge and understanding of a variety of different faiths, and the relevance of stories and key customs and traditions within them.
19. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, in mainstream classes and in the area support centre, as shown in successful attainment of learning or behavioural targets in their individual education plans or statements of special educational needs. In the mainstream classes, there is clear evidence of very good progress in the number of pupils who are promoted between the stages of the Code of Practice. Pupils with special needs in the mainstream classes make very good progress in developing their reading skills and even though many do not reach the standards expected of their ages, they are able to read simple and familiar stories with reasonable accuracy by the time they reach the top of the school. In the area support centre, pupils make very good progress in developing their understanding of the stories they read and in recalling the major points through regular questioning and reinforcement by their teacher. These pupils are able to read very familiar and simple texts with suitable expression. Children under five with special educational needs, through the very good support they receive, are developing well their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds. Through good use of resources such as the concept keyboard, special needs pupils throughout the school develop very well their writing skills. The majority learn to construct simple sentences successfully using these aids.

20. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress in developing mathematical skills, and numeracy skills in particular. In the area support centre, for example, pupils are making very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of number recognition and how many objects a number represents and in identifying the value of coins. In the Reception classes, pupils with special needs are gaining skills in counting numbers to 10 and are making very good progress in developing simple sequencing such as what to put on first when dressing a teddy bear, and in becoming familiar with the language of sequencing. They continue to make secure gains in numeracy skills as they move through the school. For example, pupils with special educational needs in Year 1 gain clear ideas about sorting objects and in Year 2 learn to add numbers between 10 and 20.
21. In other subjects, pupils with special educational needs make similar progress as others. They make very good progress in science and design and technology, and good progress in most other subjects. In information technology, they make better progress than other pupils because, both in mainstream classes and in the area support centre, staff make good use of computers to support their learning.
22. The school is consistently setting appropriate targets for achievement in the National Curriculum tests and is meeting these comfortably.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

23. Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. The very positive learning environment and high standards of teaching result in pupils wanting to come to school and enjoying the challenges set for them. Pupils, therefore, thrive as learners and make very good progress. They are interested and involved in their work and keen to do well. They listen carefully to their teachers, respond suitably and are able to concentrate very well on their work until the activity is completed, often becoming completely absorbed by it. Pupils talk about their achievements with confidence and show considerable pride in their successes. As they move through the school, they increasingly make positive contributions to discussion and show initiative in their work and practical activities. They respond well to the high expectations for personal organisation. The many opportunities provided for them to take responsibility for the everyday routines of the school are discharged with pride. Response to the opportunities provided to develop independent learning skills is very positive and has significantly improved since the time of the last inspection. Pupils usually complete their homework well. There are good examples of them reworking pieces following marking. Pupils enjoy reading and many are able to choose their books independently. They are enthusiastic about the excellent opportunities for extra-curricular activities and attendance at these is high.
24. Children under the age of five make very good progress in relation to their personal and social development. They work willingly together, taking turns and enjoying sharing their achievements with adults and one another. Children make good progress in increasing their confidence and feel secure enough to participate in class discussions and to take part in performances of drama. Concentration is very well sustained and the majority of children show good levels of independence and self-reliance. They develop well their sense of right and wrong, demonstrating a good understanding of the classroom rule. Routines are followed well with children taking full responsibility for getting out and putting away equipment. Most dress and undress by themselves. Children respond just as well to changes in routine such as when they walk around the school to learn about the building or when they attend assembly. They are confident and happy in the company of older pupils as observed in the playground at lunch-time and in assemblies.

25. There is a very good response from pupils throughout the school to the clear and consistent expectations for high standards of behaviour. As a consequence of this, the school offers a calm and orderly environment for learning. Behaviour in lessons is of a high order and during the week of inspection pupils' response was always at least satisfactory and often much better than this. This has a positive impact on the progress made. On entry to the school, self-discipline is not always well developed, however, pupils respond quickly and well to established rules and routines in their lessons. Disruption to learning is rare. Pupils are confident, friendly and welcoming to visitors. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are well integrated into the school and are valued as members of the school community by other pupils and staff alike. In the playground, pupils usually socialise and play happily. This enables them to play an equal role in all aspects of the school and to become confident and secure learners. Some over exuberance leads to a few mishaps. These are dealt with well by supervising staff, as are occasional squabbles and differences. Pupils show high levels of respect for school property and equipment. Materials used in lessons are handled with care. The many displays of pupils' work and artefacts to be seen around the school are often at a suitable height for pupils to handle. They are valued and treated with respect by them. There are no recorded incidents of exclusions during the last year.
26. Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes and the area support centre have very good attitudes to learning. Those in the area support centre, for example, pay very careful attention during whole-class sessions and behave very well. All are keen to do well and often enjoy their work. These pupils take great pride in their work, for example in a design and technology lesson, they took great pleasure in choosing the materials and were delighted when they found they understood the methods for joining materials and decorating their product when making finger puppets. Similarly, the majority of pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes are keen to do well and willingly put a great deal of effort into their work.
27. The quality of relationships between pupils and with adults is a particular strength and excellent throughout. Respect for, and good will towards, others permeate the school community. In lessons, there are examples of pupils helping and supporting each other. Staff are approachable and ideas are shared with confidence. Pupils listen attentively to what others have to say, seldom interrupting. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that any such incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively. In group work, pupils co-operate well, sharing where needed. As they move through the years, they begin to develop the ability to collaborate, for example in devising their own games during the numeracy hour.
28. The response of pupils to the opportunities provided for their personal development is very good. A high order of social skills develops rapidly and progressively as they move through the years. This is particularly evident in the dining room where they socialise confidently and effectively with both their peers and adults. They are alert to the needs of others through the work they do for charity and also the entertainment they provide for elderly residents in the area. The many visitors they meet and various trips out of school result in good levels of self-confidence and an understanding of the community in which they live.
29. As pupils develop feelings of self-respect and self-esteem they have no difficulty transferring these to a respect for others and for school property. They learn from an early age that they are responsible for their own learning and soon take pride in not only choosing materials for a task, but also knowing where it is kept. Pupils are thus developing successfully on their journey to becoming independent learners. Overall, this is a considerable improvement from the previous inspection, when pupils were said to rely too much on their teachers.

Attendance

30. The overall rate of attendance for the last reporting year was 94.3 per cent, which is a significant improvement on the previous year and in line with the average for other primary schools. Unauthorised absence was lower than the national average at 0.1 per cent. The enthusiasm of pupils for coming to school results in high standards of punctuality both at the beginning of the school day and after lunch- and break-times. Lessons begin promptly resulting in the time available for teaching being used to best effect. Attendance and punctuality make a good contribution to attainment and progress.
31. Overall, the standards of attendance and punctuality cited in the previous inspection report have been well maintained.

31. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

32. The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is at least satisfactory in all lessons and is good or better in 85 per cent. In 40 per cent of lessons, teaching is very good or better. This is a considerable improvement from the time of the previous inspection and a key factor in the improvements in pupils' attainment.
33. The quality of teaching is good, often very good in the Reception classes. In Key Stage 1, it is very good. There is little difference between teaching in Years 1 and 2, a little more of the teaching is satisfactory in Year 1 than Year 2. With the exception of information technology, the quality of teaching is at least good in all subjects. Where pupils were seen being taught how to use information technology or given opportunities to work with computers, the quality of teaching was good, often very good. However, teachers do not make enough regular use of computers. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is very good and this is reflected in the progress made by pupils. Throughout the school, high expectations of all pupils are the norm and these make a major contribution to the success that pupils experience as learners.
34. The quality of teaching for the children under five is consistently good and often very good, with good interaction between adults and children to extend the learning for all children. Good use is made of specially designed play areas such as the Dentist's Room to help children develop their skills in using their imaginations for creative role-play as well as extending their language skills. Teachers and learning support assistants have a very good knowledge of children and their needs and great emphasis is placed on developing children's social skills as well as their speaking and listening skills. Learning intentions are clearly identified in planning and grouping of pupils is regularly re-organised and varied depending on the main emphasis of the lesson.
35. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall, and in some subjects it is very good. In many subjects, it is very well used to promote high standards and to devise well-structured work in order to promote key skills and knowledge. In music and religious education, subject knowledge is satisfactory and, in music, teachers are developing their skills further through the use of a structured scheme. Most teachers have good skills with aspects of information technology such as the use of wordprocessors, but not all are confident with a wider range of programs. Overall, there is scope for improving teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in music and information technology in order to promote pupils' learning further. On the other hand, teachers' knowledge and understanding in designing in design and technology and electrical circuits in science are very well used to promote very good standards of work.

36. The quality of planning is very good with well-defined learning objectives. These are invariably shared with pupils and help them as well as teachers to be clear about what they have learned. As a result of very good planning, work is well matched to pupils' individual needs and able pupils as well as low attainers are well catered for. Consequently, pupils flourish as learners. A key strength of the teaching is the use of lively, imaginative and interesting methods used to enable pupils to visualise complex ideas such as the notion of current flowing in a circuit, or to make accessible unfamiliar and new knowledge. For example, history is brought to life through the use of an adult dressed up as Florence Nightingale. In religious education, Year 2 pupils are taken into the school grounds to design Rangoli patterns on the pavement generating the same excitement and anticipation as might have been felt by ancient Hindus awaiting the return of Ram and Sita. Use of questioning is often perceptive, probing and, in the best example, relentless making pupils think hard and stretch their minds to the limits. Occasionally, questioning lacks vigour and rigour and is more routine. In mathematics, a major strength is the use of open-ended questions, coupled with interesting real-life problems to solve. In the majority of lessons, there is a good balance of whole-class teaching, group tasks and individual work. In English and mathematics lessons, the teaching of literacy and numeracy are very well structured, although very occasionally in mathematics, lessons are not completely successful when the teacher concentrates totally on one group. Summary sessions in literacy and numeracy are well used to reinforce key learning points.
37. Pupils are almost invariably well managed and teachers have the knack of motivating them and engaging their interests so that pupils frequently become totally absorbed in the tasks they are set. Behaviour is very well managed, although in one or two lessons, greater firmness is required. The school has worked very successfully to develop pupils' skills of independent learning. A very good feature of many lessons is the extent to which teachers organise pupils so that they have the opportunities to develop self-reliance and to be able to learn to get on with their work by themselves. Resources are carefully selected and very well used to promote learning. There is economic use of worksheets and where used they are well designed to provide open-ended activities for pupils and encourage thinking skills as well as reading and writing skills. Time is well used, and pace of teaching is usually good. In the few lessons that were satisfactory, pace is sometimes slow. In the best lessons, however, not a minute is wasted and every second counts.
38. Teachers mark work assiduously, and ensure that, where necessary, corrections are made. Oral feedback whilst pupils work is comprehensive, frequent and well judged. As a result, it visibly improves the quality of their ongoing work. Overall, teachers are very skilled in threading together ongoing assessment of pupils' work and refinements to planning, the use of resources and target setting in order to continually improve the quality of pupils' outcomes. Homework is well established, regular and of good quality. Overall, it effectively extends pupils' school work and makes a positive contribution to their academic development especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
39. The quality of teaching in the area support centre is very good. The learning of all the pupils is promoted, with high expectations which challenge them to think for themselves and develop the skills identified in pupils' individual education plans. Careful, daily assessment is carried out by the teacher and the support assistants who work together as a very closely knit team, with shared aims and aspirations for the welfare and education of the pupils. Highly detailed records enable the attainment and progress of each pupil to be closely monitored. Lessons are well planned and organised, with good reference to previous work. There is very good repetition of vocabulary appropriate to the subject being taught.
40. In mainstream classes, pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching. They receive work which is based on the targets of their individual education plans. Teachers are very much aware of their particular needs. They have clear records of pupils on the

register and a copy of each pupil's individual education plans which are used assiduously when lesson plans are being prepared. During whole-class discussions, questions are directed carefully to enable pupils with special educational needs to take a full part. Work is planned to challenge the pupils at their own level of attainment. The school aim to improve independence and self-esteem of all pupils is taken very seriously by all staff.

The curriculum and assessment

41. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced and goes a very long way towards meeting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development needs. There is an appropriate balance between teaching by topics and by subject. Good provision is made for the development of literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects. There are clear policies for the teaching of sex education and the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Most of this takes place in science and personal, social and health education lessons and in informal class discussions as issues arise. Home corners are equipped with suitable books and other resources to help pupils to gain independently understanding of these aspects of their development. There is a very good balance between individual, group and whole-class work and this makes a very significant contribution to the development of pupils' personal and social skills. Drama has been successfully introduced and effectively supports the development of pupils' personal and social skills as well as their speaking skills. Parents appear very pleased with the range and content of the curriculum.
42. The curriculum in English and mathematics is linked very closely to the recommendations contained in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school makes very good use of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education for planning lessons that enable all pupils to make good progress in studies of Christianity and the other major world faiths that it promotes. In the other subjects, there is a very good spread of knowledge, understanding and teaching of skills provided. Increasing demands are made on all pupils as they move through the school. There is very good step-by-step development of skills, knowledge and understanding so that by the time pupils are ready to leave they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. There is above the recommended time allocated to the teaching of English and mathematics and secure strategies in place for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Speaking and listening and writing are encouraged very positively in almost all subjects. Teachers emphasise well the teaching of subject-specific vocabularies and pupils have very good opportunities to practise reading and research skills in history, geography and religious education. Very good opportunities are provided for simple measuring in mathematics.
43. The curricular provision for children under the age of five has been improved considerably since the previous inspection, when it was identified as a key issue for action. Planning takes good account of the nationally recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes for the under-fives as well as the National Curriculum for older pupils in the Reception classes. There is well-planned transition from the Desirable Learning Outcomes to the National Curriculum. Overall, the curriculum for children in the Reception classes is well suited to meet their needs and provides them with a carefully balanced range of activities. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully adapted to provide children in the Reception classes with a good mix of under-fives activities and more formal methods of learning.
44. The very good curricular provision is underpinned by clear, well-written and informative subject policies, and detailed and precise schemes of work. There is very effective collaborative planning of subject coverage and skills' teaching. Learning objectives are very clearly set out in the planning and provide a very good resource for teachers to draw out more specific learning targets when planning lessons. Different tasks, very well matched to extend pupils beyond their prior attainment, are planned in all subjects. These factors enable all pupils to

make continuous progress as they move through the school.

45. Provision to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum is very good. All pupils have clearly identified targets for improvement and development, of which they are well aware and have helped to set. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils' individual education plans contain very clearly defined targets. They meet statutory requirements and are very frequently and regularly monitored and informally and formally reviewed. Targets are precise and organised well to promote progress in small and manageable steps. There is a very good level of in-class support that is very carefully targeted by the class teachers and supervised by the learning assistants. A good balance is achieved between this and withdrawal in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. In addition, there is carefully judged inclusion of pupils from the area support centre into mainstream classes for some of their lessons. Some of those in the main school with special educational needs sometimes have lessons in the area support centre. The school also identifies able pupils and provides additional support and challenge for them. Planning includes the use of learning support assistants to work with groups of able pupils in order to ensure their needs are being well met. Through these means, the school ensures very good provision for all its pupils and fully meets the curricular requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs.
46. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular and curriculum enrichment activities. Clubs and meetings that take place outside of school time include competitive sport, crafts and music. These play a highly significant part in the development of the social and practical skills of the 40 per cent of pupils who take part. Many visits are made to places of interest for the purpose of engaging pupils in practical learning, for example a local supermarket and different places of worship. Visitors to school make a very useful contribution to pupils' acquisition of knowledge as did, for example, older local residents when talking about the Coronation of 1953 during the inspection.
47. Overall, the school has much improved the curricular opportunities made available to its pupils since the previous inspection. The strengths have been maintained and the subject policies and plans, which had been recently established when the school was last inspected, have been fully implemented, refined and further improved.
48. The school has in place a wide range of excellent assessment procedures that spread across the whole curriculum. National test scores are analysed and a very wide range of published assessment tests in, for example reading, phonics, handwriting, spelling, numeracy, and end of unit assessment tests in all other subjects are carried out. All are used very effectively to examine trends, quantify value added factors and guide curriculum development. Portfolios for each pupil are kept that contain moderated work in each subject and from which new targets are set. Assessment outcomes are very carefully recorded to a common format and used consistently to build a comprehensive profile of pupils' attainment and progress. They are used effectively to place pupils in appropriate prior attainment groups within classes.
49. The school has very effective systems for identification of pupils with special educational needs and for monitoring their progress, both in the area support centre and in the mainstream school. An up-to-date register is kept and shows clearly the need of the pupils and their progress at each stage. Assessment procedures are very good and there is very effective tracking of individual special needs pupils in order to gauge their progress and refine and amend the targets set in their individual education plans. There are annual and termly reviews as required by the Code of Practice.
50. Overall, assessment information is used very well to inform future planning and influence the emphasis of teaching. This appears to be further improvement since the last inspection where

the emerging good practices have become firmly embedded and developed.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

51. The school provides very good spiritual, moral and cultural development and there is excellent provision for social development. This leads to an excellent ethos which enables all pupils to gain high self-esteem and feel valued members of the community. They, therefore, flourish as learners. School life is permeated with opportunities for pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-worth and confident independence. These opportunities are to be found in all subjects of the curriculum including religious education and personal, health and social education. There have been good improvements since the previous inspection in the influence of assemblies on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well-planned acts of worship comply with requirements and provide a reverent atmosphere in which pupils are given time for personal reflection or prayer. The themes for assemblies and religious education provide pupils with a very helpful insight into the values and beliefs of others, including other world religions as well as Christianity. A strength of teaching in the school is the success with which pupils' self-esteem is promoted through the value given to their views. Teachers regularly inspire feelings of awe and wonder in lessons. Good examples of this include the way in which they skilfully build up expectations as they tell stories or introduce interesting visitors such as the adult helper dressed up as Florence Nightingale.
52. The pupils are provided with very good moral development and are effectively given a clear perception of the principles which separate right from wrong. Behaviour is very good and excellent relationships exist between all members of the school community. These are true indicators of the success of particular philosophies expressed in the prospectus, the staff handbook and most of the school's policies. The prospectus advocates the development of self-control and consideration for others, which are evident in the everyday life in the school. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour in the handbook is carried out consistently by all staff with very good results. Pupils are given very good opportunities to consider moral judgements, with a clear understanding of honesty and truthfulness. In a personal and social education lesson, there was a good focus on enabling pupils to think about how they might be valued by others and that saying 'thank you' enables them to value what others do for them. There are good opportunities through the curriculum for pupils to consider important moral questions and develop understanding of commonly accepted moral values. These are strengths which arise directly from the very good example set by adults in the school and the implementation of the personal, health and social education policy.
53. The provision for the pupils' social development is excellent. The staff are very successful in helping pupils to develop a positive self-image and a responsible attitude. This is achieved through the caring atmosphere which can be felt in classes and throughout the school. A sense of pride in their work arises from the praise and the value it is given through helpful marking or when it is included in the beautiful displays on the school walls. This is a strength of the school and evident in all classes. Further evidence of the good development of independence can be seen in after-school clubs where parents and teachers encourage pupils to develop a range of skills. At the same time they are learning to participate fully in the school community. Pupils are given very good opportunities to take part meaningfully in the running of the school through membership of the pupil council or by helping with the Christmas post, delivering registers and many other helpful tasks. A sound understanding of citizenship is built up as pupils take part in such events as singing in an old persons' home and the town shopping centre. Families are shown to be part of the school community through such events as the Millennium competition or the decoration of Easter plates.
54. Very good provision for social development for pupils with special educational needs is fostered through careful planning so that pupils are presented with work which challenges

them at their own level of attainment. The school aims are followed well by teachers and support staff working with pupils with special educational needs in respect of placing great importance on the promotion of personal independence and self-esteem. Good behaviour is achieved through constant adherence to the positive approach to discipline and the very good use of praise. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to provide written comments for their termly reviews.

55. There is very good provision for the cultural development of the pupils. The work in art, history and religious education is enhanced through visits to museums, art galleries and churches as well as by interesting visitors to the school. The planned help to be given by art students in the production of a wall mural is aimed to promote an appreciation of local culture as well as improving links with the wider community. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to learn about the diversity and richness of other cultures. This is achieved through the subjects of the curriculum as well as through displays around the school. Pupils develop their musical, artistic and dance skills using instruments, music and examples of art from the continents of Africa and South America and other places around the world. Fruit from around the world at Harvest time was celebrated with a huge, colourful and helpful display in the hall, produced by the pupils. Further knowledge of other cultures and life-styles is presented to the pupils in a selection of exotic fruit trees in the library corridor. Also, in the library, the reading scheme contains a good balance of people and children from different ethnic backgrounds. The selection of Big Books contains a truly multicultural choice of stories. In assemblies, the pupils' social skills and their appreciation of other cultures have been enhanced through learning a series of interesting games for the playground, many of which are from other countries.
56. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs, including those in the area support centre, take a full part in the school's activities and benefit from the school's very good promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school actively and very successfully promotes acceptance of special educational needs and disabilities. Inclusion is achieved through the provision of suitable furniture and aids as well as well-trained support staff. Good examples of partial integration, according to a pupil's needs or strengths, occur successfully between the mainstream classes and the area support centre.
57. The school has made very good progress in improving its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the previous inspection and particularly so in the increased opportunities for promoting spiritual and cultural development, which are now very good. This has had a significant impact on the school's ethos.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

58. The overall standards set for the support, guidance, safety and protection of pupils are very good. The supportive and caring environment within the school is a strength and makes a positive contribution to effective learning. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils result in pupils feeling secure and confident that there is someone with whom they can share their problems. Effective induction arrangements for new pupils ensure they settle confidently and happily into school life. Assessment procedures and the quality of pupils' involvement in these have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and result in work set providing challenge and interest for pupils. Staff share learning targets with pupils and work with them to achieve high standards. The value placed on pupils' efforts has a positive impact on motivation. Marking is usually of a good quality and helps pupils to understand what they must do to improve their work. A great deal has been done to improve liaison with the junior school since the time of the last inspection. Its proximity does much to facilitate this and has resulted in full advantage being taken through paired-reading, older pupils supporting play at lunch-time and a

'buddy' scheme to support pupils at the time of transfer. Arrangements for the transfer of information and liaison about pastoral matters are very thorough and ensure that any disruption to learning is kept to a minimum. The school makes effective use of outside agencies to provide support for pupils where needed.

59. Arrangements for the personal, health and social development of pupils are particularly strong. The programme is broad and covers relationships, social development, citizenship and health matters amongst others. It is effectively taught during circle time but is also re-enforced by all staff throughout the school day, both as an objective within lessons and by example. This results in the rapid and progressive growth of social skills and personal effectiveness as pupils move through the school. There are high expectations for personal organisation and an extensive range of suitable opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for everyday school routines.
60. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance are very good and consistently applied throughout the school. This results in a clear understanding of expectations and contributes very effectively to the high standards achieved. Inspection findings confirm the view of parents that their children place a very high value on the encouragement and support they receive in all aspects of their life at school. Awards offered effectively match the efforts made by the pupils who receive them. Formal sanctions are rarely necessary and usually effective. Where there is cause for concern, pupils are monitored with care, the involvement of parents is sought and short-term targets set to support change. An anti-bullying culture is promoted well through the personal, health and social education programme, it is also re-enforced through an ethos of care and concern for others. A good start has been made on promoting positive play in the playground but it is too soon to assess the full impact on pupils. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements. Registers are meticulously kept and provide an accurate record. Procedures for following up unexplained absence are prompt and thorough. The services of the education welfare officer are used effectively to support the work of the school.
61. Arrangements for dealing with child protection issues are thorough. There is a designated person with responsibility who has been suitably trained. The school's policy meets local guidelines in the procedures it sets out. All concerns are referred promptly to social services. Staff have received suitable training, they are vigilant and aware of their responsibilities.
62. There is a suitable health and safety policy. Risk assessment procedures are addressed thoroughly and regular checks are made. There are effective arrangements for reporting and prioritising items requiring attention. Within teaching areas, staff are aware of the possible risks and ensure pupils are alert to the need for care, for example when using scissors. Requirements for the regular testing of fire fighting equipment, physical education apparatus and portable electrical appliances are fully met. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly. Arrangements to deal with first aid emergencies are generally sound, with a sufficient number of trained staff, suitably stocked first aid boxes and recording and reporting procedures that meet requirements. The medical room is unsuitable for the purpose as it doubles as a disabled toilet and there are no separate facilities. There are appropriate procedures for dealing with prescribed medicines.

Partnership with parents and the community

63. The range and quality of information provided for parents are excellent. There are very effective arrangements to familiarise them with the school prior to their children's entry. Both the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well written and provide a comprehensive range of information. Regular and informative newsletters that keep parents up-to-date about everyday events and remind them of diary dates supplement these. At the

beginning of each half-term, information about what their children will be learning over the next few weeks is sent home, parents appreciate this. They value the letters that tell them when their children have done well and are confident that when there are problems they will be contacted for discussion. Parents feel welcome and valued. They find it easy to share their concerns with staff, who are approachable and accessible at the end of the school day. They value the school secretarial staff who they feel are particularly helpful. Parents' concerns at the time of the previous inspection that arrangements for transfer to the junior school needed development have been fully dealt with.

64. The end of key stage tests have been explained at parents' evenings and parents receive their children's results together with national comparative information with annual progress reports. Parents of pupils with special educational needs confirm they are kept fully informed about their children's progress against targets set in individual education plans. There has been good quality information about the literacy and numeracy initiatives, with opportunities for parents to visit and see these in progress. Parents are invited to consultation evenings each term and are able to visit their children's classrooms and see their work at this time. They are appreciative of the feedback they receive about the progress their children make. Annual progress reports and annual reviews for pupils with special educational needs are of a high standard and express clearly what pupils know, understand and can do. They set suitable targets for them on which to focus future efforts. Appropriate arrangements are made for parents to discuss the reports with teachers. They are appreciative of the information they receive about how they can support their children's progress at home.
65. The school has a very successful partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs, both in the mainstream classes and the area support centre. The majority attend the meetings to review individual education plans and statements of special educational needs. The majority of parents take advantage of the opportunity to make a written input into the review. Pupils also record their views.
66. The school does all it can to involve parents in the life and work of the school and the work it does to promote links with parents is excellent. As a result, it receives a good response. There is a very active 'Friends of the School' association that successfully runs a wide range of social and fund-raising events. These are well attended and effectively support the work of the school through the substantial sums raised. A small group of very supportive parents further progress very well by regularly providing additional help in the classrooms and for trips and visits out of school. Parents receive a booklet that gives guidance about how to help their children at home, this, together with well-planned homework and suitable information about what their children will be learning, ensure parents are well equipped to take a practical interest in the work their children do at home. Many parents are appreciative of this and also use the reading log provided as an effective means of two-way communication.
67. Good links have been established with the community and these have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and personal development. Effective links with the adjacent primary school promote social development through opportunities for supported play. Pupils meet a wide cross section of the local community who help with activities which enhance learning such as giving prizes, helping with an environmental project, an art day and book week. Regular visitors include the community police and ministers from local churches. Pupils support charities and provide entertainment for the elderly at a local residential home. The local football club supports extra-curricular training at the school and donations of equipment have been received from local business organisations.

67.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

68. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and has set a very clear educational direction for the work of the school. This has taken the school a long way towards meeting its aims and setting a firm agenda for continued improvement. In consequence, there has been significant improvement in pupils' progress and attainment. Plans and policies are expertly translated into purposeful action that has visible impact on the quality of the school's work and the outcomes for pupils. The development and effective implementation of the teaching and learning policy is a good example of this. The school's aims, plans and policies are well reflected in its work, and much of the success of this is due to the high quality of the leadership. Emphasis is rightly placed on building a successful team where the strengths of individuals are valued and used for the common good, and in promoting key principles of partnership that extend beyond the immediate school environment to incorporate the wider community.
69. Governors and staff fully support the headteacher and share the same aims and goals. Staff responsibilities are clearly defined and there is very good delegation. As a result, staff understand the role they are expected to play in the development and running of the school and work well as a team. Governors too have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. They play an active and valuable role in the work of the school and are in tune with its main needs and priorities. They are very well informed and thus provide equally good leadership for the strategic development of the school as well as being a sensitive and astute sounding board for proposed developments. Statutory requirements are fully met in all respects. The governors take their curriculum responsibilities very seriously and fulfil their statutory responsibilities in monitoring curriculum developments.
70. The members of the senior management team ably support the headteacher and provide very good leadership in the areas of work for which they have specific responsibility. The assistant headteacher is an excellent role model for other staff and provides well-informed and very competent leadership in her own areas of work. The role of subject co-ordinators is well developed and they provide good support and guidance to colleagues in relation to teaching and curriculum development. They are actively and successfully involved in monitoring the quality of work in their subject areas. The management and co-ordination of provision for children under five and for personal and social education are of high quality.
71. Overall, procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are very good and provide an effective means of gathering information to inform the school development planning process. Governors and staff are fully consulted and involved in producing the school development plan, and subject co-ordinators play a key role in implementing the priorities and targets identified in their areas of work. Clear and achievable targets are set for improvement. This enables the development plan to be well focused on the school's needs and to serve as a useful tool for improving the school's provision in order to improve standards. Staff training needs are well linked to the development plan and generally appropriate success criteria are identified. This helps governors and staff to evaluate progress towards the targets set, and the plan is kept continuously under review. The overall monitoring of the progress of the plan is excellent, with regular reviews and evaluations forming an essential part of staff and governors' meetings.
72. Management of special educational needs in the mainstream school and the area support centre is very good. Special educational needs provision is based clearly on the demands of the Code of Practice and the co-ordinator ensures that the requirements are diligently followed. The team of special needs support staff is effectively led and managed in order to

maximise the impact of their work on pupils' learning. The designated governor for special educational needs is also a learning support assistant and ensures that the governing body has a clear view of special educational needs provision at the school. She gives good support to the co-ordinator for special educational needs. There is good liaison between the school and the support services of the local education authority. The school is very appreciative of the support which is provided.

73. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very successful in fostering an excellent ethos for learning. Equality of opportunity is safeguarded for all and pupils are valued as individuals. There is an unwavering commitment to high achievement and working relationships flourish to the benefit of pupils' learning.
74. The school has made very good progress in improving itself since the last inspection. This has been achieved through the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and through the development of a successful culture of self-evaluation and open examination of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Diligent planning, with very careful attention to detail, has ensured that all the weaknesses, no matter how minor, identified in the previous report as well as the key issues have been successfully tackled. Given the quality of leadership, the rigorous methods of monitoring and evaluating the school's work, it is very well placed to continue to improve further.

74.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

75. There are a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff to meet the needs of the pupils and to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Staffing provision for children under the age of five is good. Overall, there is a good match between the number and experience of teachers and the needs of pupils. The majority of teachers are infant trained with many having nursery training as a second phase, and as a whole they bring a wide range of experiences to bear on their work to the benefit of the school. The range, number and qualifications of non-teaching staff are very good and enable the school to run smoothly and for the work of teachers to be well supported.
76. The school has an adequate number of experienced teaching staff for pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes. There is good provision in the area support centre with one full-time teacher. The co-ordinator for special educational needs and the teacher in charge of the area support centre are well qualified and work very well together for the benefit of the pupils. There is good provision of support staff in the mainstream classes and the area support centre. They are very well trained and fully involved with planning and evaluation of pupils' progress.
77. The overall quality of provision for staff development is very good and effectively meets the individual needs of teachers as well as the needs of the school and its pupils. The overall impact on whole-school development and the quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Arrangements for the induction of new teachers, including newly-qualified teachers, are very good. Very effective procedures for establishing and addressing professional development needs of all staff are in place. For example, the headteacher conducts an annual professional development interview with each teacher. The programme for teacher appraisal is well established and well linked to the needs of the school and is viewed as beneficial to whole-school and individual development. Good arrangements for the professional development of support staff are also in place and contribute very well to their effectiveness.
78. The accommodation is mostly adequate and well organised. Classrooms are adequate in size and the fittings and furniture sufficient to deliver the curriculum, and to allow pupils to work individually or in groups. The class presently accommodated in the converted dining room has

no toilets other than those designated for the adjacent classroom. The medical room and rest area for sick pupils is unsatisfactory. It is currently located in the toilet for disabled persons. In addition, there are no separate toilet facilities for men and women. The pleasant library is accessible to pupils from the hall. It has a good collection of books covering all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, different cultures, hobbies and interests. These are well supplemented by topic boxes from the local authority's lending service.

79. Hard and grassed areas are adequate for pupils' play and learning. Well-maintained seating and climbing equipment is available. There is no safe designated play area for children under five, although there are plans to put one in place. The lack of an easily accessible play area holds back pupils from making better progress in developing physical skills with equipment such as three-wheeled toys. There are plans underway to provide a cover for the sandpit near the Reception classrooms, but it is presently uncovered if not in use and this is a potential health and safety hazard. The school has a pond and a wooded area to provide valuable support for the curriculum, particularly science.
80. Staff ensure that the environment is made pleasant with lively, attractive and interesting displays of pupils' work, pictures and artefacts. This gives good support to pupils' aesthetic awareness, accords status and value to their efforts and promotes their learning. The school is kept very clean and is routinely checked for repairs and safety. There is very little vandalism. The caretaker and staff ensure that the site is very clean and litter free. Landscaped and grassed areas are well maintained.
81. The school is well resourced and resources are of good quality. They are easily accessible to pupils and this effectively encourages their personal development and independence. This is a very good improvement from the previous inspection. Good quality resources enhance pupils' learning and use of artefacts in subjects such as history and religious education brings the subjects to life. The school is widening its range of artefacts for religious education as these are a little limited currently. There is very good provision of suitable furniture and equipment for pupils who lack mobility.
82. The range of computer resources, including the number of machines available, is good and helps to promote pupils' learning and progress, especially in the Reception classes and the special needs area. There is scope for teachers to make much greater use of information technology equipment in their teaching.
83. Overall, there has been considerable improvement in the quality, quantity and range of resources since the last inspection as well as in the staffing provision. The accommodation and grounds are undergoing further improvements currently with the construction of an additional classroom and development of play areas for pupils.

The efficiency of the school

84. The management of resources available to the school is very good. Financial planning is detailed and the result of suitable consultation with all concerned. It is very well directed at key educational developments and, thus, comprehensively linked to the school development planning process. Governors are actively interested and involved in the agreement of the budget. They show a clear understanding of the issues to be addressed and explore these carefully before the budget is finally set. Governors are aware of the need to monitor the results of their spending and have invested suitably in professional development to ensure that improvements are measured against the impact on pupils' attainment and progress, reasons for change fully understood and strengths built on. The clarity of financial reporting has a positive impact on governors' ability to monitor spending. Funding allocated to support

pupils with special educational needs is used very effectively. Resources available for professional development are principally focused on supporting the targets set in the school development plan. This has a positive impact on the ability of the school to achieve both its targets and high levels of motivation amongst staff. Funding provided for an additional classroom is being appropriately spent and building is well underway. The school has carefully reviewed the carry forward figure necessary to deal with emergencies and this has enabled the prudent use of surplus funding from the previous year during the current year to improve the quality of resources, including large play equipment for the external play areas, available for pupils' academic and personal development.

85. The deployment of teaching staff is very effective and meets the needs of the curriculum and of monitoring well. Suitable planning ensures that the time of classroom support staff is used effectively and has a positive impact on learning. The recent exceptionally high teaching costs are, in part, linked to the long-term sick leave of a member of staff. Other factors include the high proportion of experienced staff at the upper end of salary scales and the priority given to good quality assistance in classrooms. These priorities are closely linked to the needs of pupils and have a very positive impact on the progress they make. Spending on staffing for administration, lunch-time support and maintenance of the premises results in high standards of support and contribute effectively to the smooth operation of the school.
86. Accommodation is used imaginatively and very effectively to provide a stimulating learning environment. The school has adopted a flexible and practical approach whilst waiting for a new classroom to be built. This ensures that the accommodation available is used to best possible effect. Sharing kitchen facilities with the junior school maximises efficiency of this resource. The school makes good use overall of the resources available to support learning, however, those available for the teaching of information technology are not yet in full use. Spending for resources is effectively targeted at identified needs and purchases added to an inventory on a computer database for monitoring future requirements. Resources available within the community are used well and contribute effectively to the progress pupils make.
87. Financial control and administration are of an excellent standard. The administrative officer responsible is very effective in overseeing day-to-day expenditure and produces accurate monthly reports from which cash flow is carefully monitored. Governors are provided with good quality up-to-date financial information for discussion when they meet. Adjustments have been made to ensure this is in a format that best meets their needs. Administrative systems are very effective and provide efficient support to the academic and pastoral work of the school leaving teachers free to concentrate on their work in the classroom. The school's finances are regularly audited. The last auditor's report commended the school for its standard of records. The report noted the need for only minor adjustments to procedures and these were dealt with rapidly. There are no outstanding items from the audit.
88. Despite the attainment of pupils being below average on entry to the school, they make very good progress. Standards set for teaching are very good and resources available are usually used well. There is a progressive development of positive attitudes to work and high standards of behaviour. The excellent leadership and management of the school make a significant contribution to the high standards achieved. The school receives higher than usual funding per pupil in relation to other similar schools, nevertheless, it provides very good value for money. This is a good improvement from the time of the previous inspection when the school was judged to provide good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

89. Since the last inspection, the school has fully tackled all the weaknesses identified in the curricular provision for children under the age of five and provision is now significantly better. As a result, children make better progress and reach higher standards than at the time of the last inspection. Children enter the school at the beginning of the term in which they are five. They are overall below average on entry, although there are wide variations in what individual children can do and understand. A minority are beginning to read whilst others have little knowledge of words and sounds. Some have counting skills while others have very little knowledge or recall of numbers. Personal and social skills are generally poor when they start school as are speaking and listening skills. Overall, children make good progress in all the six areas of learning below. Only speaking and listening and knowledge and understanding are still markedly below levels of expectation by the time they are five.

89. Personal and social development

90. Children make very good progress and develop good skills. They work willingly together and enjoy sharing their achievements with adults and one another. They willingly take turns and have a clear sense of right and wrong, demonstrating a good understanding of the classroom rules. They have the confidence to take part in performances of drama and music and participate well in discussion. Routines are followed well with children taking full responsibility in getting out and putting away equipment, most dress and undress by themselves. They respond just as well to changes in routine such as when they walk around the school to learn about the building or when they attend assembly. They are confident and happy in the company of older pupils as observed in the playground at lunch-time and in religious assemblies. They sustain concentration very well. The majority show good levels of independence and self-reliance, and for their age very good levels of co-operation in group and whole-class work. They co-operate very well when sharing equipment and materials. There are very good opportunities for spiritual and moral development through religious education and assemblies. Children learn about the values related to friendship, caring for others and sharing through discussion. The high standards maintained in provision for their personal and social development have a good effect on children's learning in other areas of work.

Language and literacy

91. Children make good progress in the skills of speaking and listening and their overall attainment is below average. In reading and writing, they make good progress and attainment is just below levels of expectation for their age. They listen attentively and talk about their experiences confidently and are developing clearer speech and building a wider vocabulary. Most have good recall of the words they have learned in the literacy hour. Most are making good progress with speaking and listening through very carefully structured activities in role-play, drama and group discussion.

92. Children readily share books with adults and make good progress in understanding the meaning of print and increasing their sight vocabulary by systematic reading and practice with an adult. Books and words are taken home to share with a parent. They all make good progress in associating sounds with patterns and rhyme and enjoy learning and repeating rhyming words. They make good progress in learning letter sounds helped by the method of finger phonics, taking great pleasure in demonstrating their achievements. Most can write letters using the correct sequence of actions, the most able using pens and able to recall how

to write other letters. They use developmental writing well to express their ideas and, with the concept keyboard on the computer, build their own stories. By the time they are five, many can copy their name with an awareness of capitals and full stops. The most able can write their name in pen using capitals and full stops and write simple text on the computer. Pupils participate fully in the literacy hour which provides very good opportunities for enjoying books and developing language skills, particularly their knowledge and use of words. The teaching is good and sometimes very good providing a wide range of good opportunities for learning for all abilities.

Mathematics

93. Children's attainment at age five is in line with expectations and reflects the very good progress made. They build rapidly and constructively on their prior achievements. They make good progress in learning to sort and count to ten and identify one more or one less. Many can count to twenty and they are confident in acquiring number skills. They understand that containers hold different amounts of sand and that objects can be heavy or light. Many children can use clay to make three-dimensional shapes such as a sphere, cone and cube and identify corners and edges, some can describe differences clearly. All can sequence events and processes such as dressing Teddy using a computer program, and most the stages in dressing the Christmas tree. The more able can sequence four pictures and on one see the inverse, for example stages in getting up and going to bed. Most write numbers to ten correctly, a few without any support. Their knowledge of pattern is satisfactory and they make good progress in the use of mathematical language.

93. Knowledge and understanding of the world

94. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their attainment is below that expected at the age of five. Some show understanding of past and present as they talk about their families and some are only just able to know where they live. They have investigated their own life history using photographs and artefacts. The children took photographs around the school buildings and in discussion afterwards the more able could describe areas and their purposes but many were unsure and did not have the vocabulary to describe features and their use. Children have opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions. In examining pictures of implements and tools common to their homes to define those electrical or not, a very limited vocabulary for many hampered discrimination and caused confusion. Their skills in cutting, tearing and joining are good and they can cut to a line with good accuracy for their age. In making moving models of Father Christmas, they demonstrate good practical abilities. Using construction kits, many show good skills in joining components to make moving models. Most progress well in identifying colours and patterns. They develop good control of the mouse when using a drawing program on the computer.

94. Physical development

95. Children's attainment in physical development is in line with that expected for five-year-olds and progress overall is satisfactory. Progress in acquiring control of pencils, brushes, scissors and when modelling clay or using construction equipment is good. There is no dedicated outdoor area and climbing equipment for the under-fives, but they do have the opportunity to use equipment in the school hall. However, the lack of an easily accessible play area does hold back children from making better progress in the development of physical skills with large equipment such as wheeled toys. An outside play area specifically for children under five is planned. Currently, children have timetabled use of the hall and this enables them to make sound progress in awareness of space and improve their ability in moving and exercising with control and purpose.

Creative development

96. Standards achieved in creative development are good and children's attainment by the time they are five is above expectation. They make good progress overall in this area. There are attractive and well-mounted displays of children's work in the classrooms and around the school. For example, children's handprints of primary colours leading to mixing for secondary colours show a good knowledge, as do their paintings, in the use of paint and water. By the age of five, the children work confidently with a wide range of media and show a well-developed sense of colour, shape and space. They learn to make independent choices of media and materials. For instance, they make a pillow and duvet for Teddy using a choice of media and background and pattern to produce a good piece of creative work. They consolidate their work in literacy in their creative work. They make attractive, individual pictures and designs using collage and printing with a good awareness of texture and form. They are encouraged to be creative and imaginative using the home corner to consolidate speaking and listening skills and to widen their vocabulary through play.

96. Other aspects of provision for the under-fives

97. The quality of teaching for the under-fives is consistently good and often very good, with good interaction between adults and children to extend the learning environment for all abilities. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership. Teachers and learning support assistants have a very good knowledge of children and their needs. All have clearly defined roles and there are very good relationships between members of staff. There are good contacts with parents and the feeder nursery. Planning and assessment is very good and informal assessment takes place on a day-to-day basis and leads to learning targets that effectively meet children's needs and inform medium-term planning. The curriculum planning for children's learning fully meets all areas of the Desirable Learning Outcomes and is successfully designed to introduce children to the National Curriculum. This means that when children are ready they can move easily into the statutory phase of education.

CORE SUBJECTS

English

98. Results in the National Curriculum tests for 1999 showed that standards were similar to those nationally for reading with a higher than average number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. Standards in writing were shown to be well above average nationally with an average number of pupils attaining the higher level. When compared with similar schools, standards were above average for reading and writing. These figures represent a significant improvement on the test results for 1998 when standards were judged to be close to the national average and the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in both reading and writing was below. Taking the three years 1996-98 together, the performance of pupils in the tests for reading was below average and for writing was well below. There have been fluctuating differences between the results of boys and girls. On the whole, boys have been doing better but girls are catching up and have done significantly better than boys in reading and writing in the 1999 tests.

99. The findings of the inspection are that standards of attainment overall are in line with standards nationally. They are above average in reading, average in writing and below average in speaking and listening where the weakness is in speaking. It is not possible to make a secure comparison with the last inspection report as judgements about standards are not clearly stated. During the inspection, there was no significant differences observed in the

performances of boys and girls. Any discrepancy between the test results and the inspection findings are as a result of the differences between cohorts and the wider range of aspects subject to scrutiny during the inspection. Differences might also be apparent due to the timing of the inspection, which took place some time before the end of the academic year.

100. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has been very effective. It has been integrated sensitively into the good practice already in place. Very good curriculum planning is evident with learning objectives very clearly defined and made very well known to the pupils. The results of the 1999 national tests show a significant rise in attainment and almost all pupils are making good progress over time and very good progress in reading. Pupils with special educational needs in the area support centre and mainstream classes are receiving very good support and make very good progress as a result. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress as their peers and achieve similar results in all aspects of work.
101. The youngest pupils make good progress in learning to listen carefully. By Year 1, this is evident by the answers they give to questions. However, these are often restricted to one word and very few pupils are adding any detail to make their meanings clear. By the age of seven, progress is good in the development of listening skills over increasing periods of time but pupils' verbal responses continue to lack detail. In one spelling lesson for a class group of average attainers working at developing knowledge of phonics, the teacher tried very hard using a good number of different strategies to promote extended responses. However, very few pupils gave information other than the letter names and sounds. The school has put in place comprehensive strategies to improve the quality of pupils' speaking. For example, all teachers identify opportunities for focusing on speaking skills in lesson plans and make good use of such opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary in all subject areas.
102. The younger higher attainers make a good start in reading. They very quickly develop knowledge of a good number of useful words. They make rapid progress through Year 1 in developing understanding of what they read and in fluency when tackling straightforward stories. By Year 2, most pupils are well launched into reading. They are making very good progress in using their knowledge of the alphabet to find information quickly from books. Average attainers in the Reception class are making good progress in using phonic cues and initial letter sounds to read words and phrases. A significant number are making very good progress and becoming confident early readers. By Year 2, most are reading accurately with good development of appropriate expression evident. Below average attainers, a significant number, are making very good progress from a very low base in learning to distinguish text from pictures, saying words and telling stories through the illustrations. By Year 2, most are beginning to gain confidence in reading simple stories but some still need a good deal of adult support.
103. The majority of pupils in the Reception class attain below average standards in writing. About a third write simple sentences with considerable help from the teacher. The remainder copy letters and write, using a combination of letters mixed with drawings. The majority make good progress in developing confidence to write. In one lesson in Year 1, for example, when following up a study of simple punctuation and story structure in the shared text, about a fifth of the pupils put words they had made from a word wheel into sentences which were mostly legible. The writing of the remainder, however, was mainly not grouped separately into words and in the case of about thirty per cent, uneven and uncoordinated. However, progress is good and by Year 2 the majority of pupils are producing writing that is average in standard for pupils of a similar age. In one lesson, where pupils were learning how to use a glossary, a significant number wrote in legibly formed letters, grouped evenly into words, with some correct use of capital letters and full stops. Most pupils are making good progress in learning to write for different purposes, for example stories, diaries, poems, descriptions and exercises

in punctuation and word building.

104. Pupils in the area support centre make very good progress in developing their language skills, especially in relation to the literacy targets in their individual education plans. They further their understanding of simple stories and, through constant reinforcement and questioning by teachers, are able to recall the main events and characters that they read about. Those with special educational needs in the mainstream classes make very good progress in reading through the individual help and support they receive and many are able to read simple and familiar texts by the time they reach Year 2. Writing skills are well promoted throughout the school for pupils with special educational needs through the use of resources such as the concept keyboard.
105. The attitudes of almost all pupils throughout the school consistently are good and in a significant number of lessons they are very good. Most are keenly attentive in whole-class sessions and they settle purposefully to written tasks, often showing sustained concentration. They co-operate well with their teachers and with each other when working in pairs and small groups. Behaviour is often very good. Most pupils are enthusiastic when talking about books and some are already members of public libraries.
106. The quality of teaching is very good overall and rarely less than good. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate a very good understanding of how to adapt their secure subject knowledge to suit the age range of the pupils. Lessons are very well planned with tasks very carefully matched to pupils' prior attainment so that they are able to make consistently good progress in the development of reading, writing and listening skills. In one lesson in Year 2, for example, higher attainers were expected to write in correctly punctuated sentences while the lowest attainers were well supported in copying out words to gain competence in letter formation. Teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and are provided with a detailed plan of how it is intended that they should support pupils during the group activities. Literacy lessons follow very closely the format recommended in the National Literacy Strategy document. Teachers are well aware that this structure does not always give sufficient time for pupils to develop extended writing and regularly adapt it to provide for this shortcoming. The pace of lessons is brisk and this is employed by most teachers in most lessons as an effective strategy for the management of pupils' behaviour. Teachers use assessment well at the ends of lessons to develop pupils' knowledge of what they have learnt and to help them to make independent choices. In one lesson, for example, pupils were expected to choose what they thought was their best sentence to read out to the class.
107. Leadership and management of the subject are very good and the co-ordinator provides very effective support and guidance to other staff. This has resulted in the successful implementation of the literacy strategy. Regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning ensure that these are of high quality. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are excellent. Work is monitored, analysed and moderated frequently and pupils' progress is measured by use of a wide range of tests. The information gathered is used very effectively to influence teaching and adapt planning.
108. There are good opportunities provided for pupils to practise and develop skills of literacy across the curriculum. Speaking and listening are well encouraged in most subjects. There are good opportunities for writing in history, geography and religious education. In mathematics, science and music, pupils are expected to use appropriate subject vocabularies. The library has a good collection of books covering all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, different cultures, hobbies and interests. These are well supplemented by topic boxes from the local authority's lending service.

Mathematics

109. Attainment by the end the key stage is well above national averages. In the 1999 national tests, the pupils maintained the very good standards of 1998, with 91 per cent attaining the average level and above, and over a third, 35 per cent, attaining above average. These standards are well above those attained both nationally and in similar schools. This is a very good improvement over the standards in the previous inspection when pupils were in-line with national averages.
110. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain well above national averages in using and applying mathematics and number and above average in shape, space and measures. All teachers use the daily sessions of mental mathematics extremely well. Pupils are taught specific strategies to reinforce their learning of basic numeracy skills, such as naming and ordering numbers or mental recall of pairs of numbers adding up to ten. The majority of pupils have good recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten and in recognition of even and odd numbers. Pupils of lower ability are not confident in the place value of digits to 100. High standards in the use of number skills to solve problems are successfully achieved through the high expectation of teachers and the use of tasks which challenge pupils to think for themselves. For example, pupils of higher ability need to use the sequence of adding to produce even numbers in order to discover the appropriate rule. They successfully adapt their knowledge and apply it to solve such problems.
111. Pupils develop a good understanding about money through well-organised practical experience in the class shop. This is followed by open-ended questions on buying or giving change using £1. The result is good recognition of coins and their respective values. Pupils work to a high standard in the collection of data and the creation of tables and graphs. As well as successfully learning the basic skills of tallying and graph production, pupils rise to the challenge of providing their own questions. This gives them good skills in the interpretation of data in tables and graphs. A good example of this was seen in the work on a daily study of 'Weather' over several weeks. Pupils are beginning to measure accurately using centimetres and metres. Pupils of higher ability tell the time successfully and can interpret analogue and digital times, changing one for the other.
112. Progress is very good in all aspects of mathematics, in the time, since the last inspection and in the majority of lessons. In Reception classes, there is very good progress in sequencing when dressing a teddy and in the language of sequencing such as 'before', 'after', and 'next'. Pupils' recognition of numbers to ten shows good improvement through the enthusiastic counting during the story 'Blooming Cats'. The class teachers plan both activities carefully across the year group, with good practical support from learning support assistants. Very good progress in the understanding of subtraction is encouraged in the area support centre through the use of songs. Similarly in Year 1, galloping horses of different colours are sung about to enhance the pupils' knowledge of pairs of numbers adding up to ten. An exciting game in Year 2 classes motivates good learning about the difficult concept of place value of digits. Constant factors in pupil improvement are the suitability of the teaching methods and organisation of lessons. Teachers challenge pupils, at their own level, both in oral and written work.
113. Very good progress in the use and application of mathematics is achieved through the quality of lessons which encourage pupils to think for themselves. A major strength is the use of open-ended questions, coupled with interesting real-life problems to solve. Pupils are not required to complete pages of examples to learn skills. For example, they progress well in counting and sorting skills, as well as tallying, by practically creating sets of different types of shoe or, in another example, types of school sweatshirt. This information is then used purposefully for recording in table or graphs.

114. There is no significant difference between the progress of girls and boys. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress as their peers and reach similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes and the area support centre make very good progress. The targets in their individual education plans are used conscientiously to plan their work and their progress is carefully assessed and recorded. As a result, they make very good progress towards these targets and in their general awareness of number. Pupils in the area support centre make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of numbers and how many objects a number represents. Those with special needs in the mainstream classes also make similar progress in developing their competence in sorting and grouping objects and in using practical equipment to help them add simple numbers.
115. Numeracy skills are enhanced in science lessons through the use of data collecting and graphs. In physical education lessons, the pupils' mathematical vocabulary is improved through references to place and position. In music lessons, rhythmical clapping and playing percussion instruments consolidate simple counting skills. Some good use is made of numeracy skills when pupils use information technology. For example, pupils enter data into a simple data-handling program to produce bar charts. They make effective use of programs such as 'My World' to reinforce their understanding of grouping and sorting objects. However, there is scope for pupils to engage in higher level data-handling skills through the use of a broader and more challenging range of data-handling programs.
116. Pupils enjoy lessons and reflect the enthusiasm of their teachers. They are very attentive and answer questions willingly, using appropriate, controlled ways of gaining the teachers' attention. Pupils are happy to applaud the success of others and show respect for their answers. Independence is a strength. Pupils respond very positively being given responsibility from an early age. Good spiritual development can be seen when pupils' answers are given real worth by their teacher, thus improving their self-confidence and self-esteem. There is eager participation in mental mathematics sessions with quick-fire questions being directed at pupils of different levels of attainment. Behaviour is very good in direct response to the high expectations of class teachers. Pupils use equipment carefully and purposefully and volunteer keenly to tidy up. They persevere well with problems and work diligently when unsupervised. There is good collaboration when pupils are engaged in well-organised group tasks, designed to extend their learning at their own level of attainment.
117. The quality of teaching is very good with nearly three-quarters of lessons being very good. One lesson was excellent and the rest satisfactory. Planning is a strength with clear learning objectives and detailed activities for range of attainment. Helpful references are made to the targets for the subject. Pupils are very well motivated because of the enthusiasm of the teachers, coupled with high expectations of effort, behaviour and attainment. Pace of lessons is brisk, with the recommended organisation of the National Numeracy Strategy being closely followed. Management of pupils is very good with teachers' expectations clearly understood by pupils. The level of training for independence is high with pupils able to find appropriate resources and having the confidence to use their own ideas. Teachers closely follow the school aims in their positive efforts to increase confidence and self-esteem, both in their questioning techniques and the respect which is given to pupils' answers. The plenary is generally used very well to celebrate good work and reinforce learning. Some lessons are not completely successful when the class teacher concentrates on one group totally, to the detriment of others. Sometimes the organisation of an activity confuses pupils rather than promotes progress. There is the very occasional lack of sharpness in pupil management and use of time which result in lack of progress.
118. The significant rise in standards over the last few years has been brought about by improvements in several important areas of the school. The mathematics curriculum, including the National Numeracy Strategy, has been well established owing to the very good leadership

and management provided by the co-ordinator. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, with a very good planning system being standardised throughout the school. Plans have clear learning objectives for each lesson, based firmly on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teaching strategies for mental mathematics particularly have benefited greatly from the co-ordinator's attendance on an important course. This, coupled with the school's involvement in trying out National Numeracy Strategy methods in advance of its national adoption, have led to positive benefits for the development of pupils' mathematical acuity. Careful analyses of assessment results have been used to set the school clear targets for improvement. Pupils also have very specific personal targets to achieve each year which help to drive progress. However, the most important factor in improving standards of attainment has been the unity of the teaching and support staff in their consistent application of the school aims which endeavour to improve the confidence and self-esteem of all pupils as well as the quality of their education.

Science

119. Standards of attainment are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and are an improvement on the standards found at the last inspection. This is reflected in the results of teachers' assessments of pupils in Year 2 in 1998 and 1999.
120. Towards the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas. Pupils' skills and competence in experimental and investigation work are good for their age. The majority of Year 2 pupils have a broad understanding of what a fair test is and make simple but informed predictions of outcomes of experiments. They carry out practical experiments and tests competently and make salient observations. Most record their results accurately, often devising the method of recording themselves. Able pupils make good efforts to try to explain their observations. There is no perceivable difference between the attainment of girls and boys, or in the standards achieved by pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
121. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress throughout Key Stage 1. Most make very good progress in developing practical skills such as making observations and recording them. Progress in their knowledge and understanding and their ability to provide explanations is very good. Pupils move from very limited use of vocabulary and knowledge of the world around them in their Reception year to providing clear explanations of how circuits work, demonstrating very good familiarity with terms such as 'conductors' and 'insulators'. Those with special educational needs both in the mainstream classes and in the area support centre develop their knowledge and understanding as well as their practical skills at a very good rate given their prior attainment. For example, they learn to make their own switch, and although requiring some adult help to complete this task, they develop sufficient understanding of electrical circuits to know how the simple switch they have made actually works.
122. Pupils' attitudes to science are very positive and most are keen to do well. They find the work interesting and are willing to concentrate on the tasks set. They persevere with work even when it is difficult and have well-developed skills of independent learning. Pupils throughout the school show a growing concern for their environment and living things. They frequently respond with wonder and awe when they discover something new, and in this respect the science curriculum offers them very good opportunities for spiritual development.
123. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use with great success to plan suitable work. Tasks are very well matched to individual pupils' need. Higher attainers are really stretched whilst lower attainers are given very well supported work, so that they too make measurable gains. Learning support assistants are well

used to work with groups of able pupils as well as lower attainers. They are effectively briefed and skilled in the use of questioning to help pupils to develop their understanding of key scientific principles. Practical activities are very well structured to develop pupils' experimental and investigation skills. For example, this was seen in Year 1 lessons when pupils were investigating which materials were waterproof and which not in order to decide the best material for a rain-hat for Teddy. In Year 2 lessons, examination of a wide range of switches helped pupils to make their own and to gain a secure understanding of how switches work. Questioning is well used to probe pupils' understanding and help them to develop scientific ideas, and there is very good attention to teaching scientific vocabulary. A particularly noteworthy example of attention to the development of pupils' speaking skills was seen in a Year 1 lesson, where the teacher asked pupils to tell the person next to them about how umbrellas kept us dry. Pupils' work is regularly marked. Good use is made of exercise books to record work and this helps pupils to use and further develop their literacy skills.

124. There is a very well-planned curriculum in place. Pupils' development of scientific knowledge and ideas is firmly linked to relevant, practical experiences, which contribute well to the very good progress that pupils make over time. Some good use of information technology was seen in Year 1, for example where a group of pupils recorded and analysed their experimental results using a simple data-handling program. Overall, however, not enough use is made of computers to support learning in science.
125. The co-ordination of science is very good and has a very positive impact on the development of the subject and the good level of understanding established amongst all staff of what denotes high quality teaching in this subject. Very good assessment systems and use made of assessment data make a valuable contribution to driving pupils' progress.
125. **Information technology**
126. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the level expected for their age. Only a limited amount of Year 2 work was available for inspection at this stage of the school year but inspection of the school assessment folder indicates that pupils have experience in all areas of the National Curriculum over a full year. However, the amount of work covered this year in Year 2 is less than would have been expected and not sufficiently applied across the curriculum. Overall, there is scope for wider use of information technology in subjects, particularly within science.
127. Most Year 2 pupils have satisfactory wordprocessing skills. They effectively access programs, making competent use of the mouse. Pupils select or alter formats and fonts, draft, save and print successfully. Some make sound use of programs with menus and windows which they access with relative ease. Pupils use programs effectively to model pictures and place text in a speech bubble, modifying the size of the print to make it fit in the bubble.
128. Year 1 pupils have completed a wider range of work this term than those in Year 2. Most are able to model a street plan and install public buildings, traffic lights, pedestrian crossings and other utilities using the mouse to drag and drop. Pupils devise imaginative pictures using a drawing program. They enter data drawn from class statistics onto a simple data-handling program which produces a bar chart. The majority make good use of wordprocessing for their personal writing, and modify font styles and print the finished work.
129. Pupils in their Reception year make effective use of the concept keyboard to learn simple words and to write their own stories. They know how to use a modelling program to dress Teddy in the correct sequence and some to draw patterns for Teddy's pillow and duvet. Most use programs related to the reading scheme to consolidate learning and are introduced to simple wordprocessing. Some produce text for home reading. Two computers were seen to be

used well to support two groups of pupils with differing abilities to learn about number

sequences. Pupils throughout the school have good access to tape recorders and calculators and make appropriate use of them to support their learning in information technology. There is good audio equipment and the overhead projector is used well for teaching. Pupils also use cameras well for learning.

130. Progress in learning is satisfactory overall. It is often good in Reception and Year 1 where pupils have reasonably good opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge across the curriculum. For example, in Reception, pupils identify the numbers from one to ten and match them on the monitor, thus learning about patterns. In Year 1, pupils produce patterns of multiples on a hundred counting square. There is good progression in wordprocessing and this extends through to Year 2. However, progress in data-handling work is not as good or as much in evidence. Progress is good for pupils with special needs and this is very evident in all year groups. Particularly good use is made of the concept keyboard for this purpose to support reading and writing.
131. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They respond to opportunities very positively and are very well behaved. Most pupils are independent and confident in using computers and work at tasks enthusiastically and with concentration. They are very careful with the hardware and software, and work sensibly and maturely with the good resources provided.
132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Where computers were being used, the quality of teaching was generally good, however, teachers were not making enough use of computers in their teaching of other subjects. Where information technology is used, teachers' organisation and management of the curriculum is good. They have high expectations and match the work well to individual abilities. Pupils are given some opportunities to practise and develop skills across the curriculum, for instance in geography, English and art. However, there is scope to increase these and make better use of information technology. The planning and assessment to inform and to promote continuity of learning is good. It is a strength in planning that all skills acquired from the simplest to the most complex are carefully identified and assessed by teachers. They carefully organise the roles of learning support assistants in their support of individuals and groups using computers. Teachers overall have good subject knowledge of the programs they are using, but need to extend their skills and confidence with a wider range. Parent helpers provide a very good input to the work in the classroom.
133. The hardware and software provided for pupils' use is good and there are long-term plans to provide a computer suite that will accommodate up to half a class with simultaneous access so that teaching would be more consistent and better targeted to learning. The subject co-ordinator gives very good leadership and has recently organised in-service training for teachers to improve skills at an individual level of need. She has very good subject knowledge and has involved children in work with digital cameras to demonstrate how images can be translated into television pictures. The school now has a website and pupils will learn to use the two laptops in school.
134. Although there is further to go, there has already been substantial improvement in the use of information technology since the previous inspection. Resources are much improved and boys no longer dominate the equipment. Staff skills and competence are also much better. Greater use is made of wordprocessors and computer use is much more frequent than it was at the time of the last inspection.

134. **Religious education**

135. By the end of the key stage, pupils are achieving standards that match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are similar to those at the previous inspection, but several improvements have been made in crucial areas, with the result that pupils are beginning to make good progress. The subject is taught regularly across the school, using a modified scheme of work with themes which are helpfully supplemented by assemblies and the personal, health and social education curriculum. Teachers' planning provides precise learning objectives which are decided upon in year group meetings. The sharing of ideas for activities and teaching strategies has helped to increase the teachers' confidence and has brought about improvements in standards in both teaching and learning.
136. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a sound understanding that religions have many similarities as well as differences. They appreciate the importance and significance of light in Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. This message was expressed well in a recent assembly. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the important books, the Torah, the bible and the Ramayana. The parts of a Christian church building are well known, but pupils are not very familiar with other places of worship. Pupils have significant feelings for the children in the world who have very little to eat. They appreciate that Harvest festivals give us opportunities to thank God and at the same time give something to those who are less fortunate. There is no significant difference in the progress made by girls and boys and pupils from minority ethnic groups attain similar standards as others.
137. There is good progress in the pupils' knowledge of how everyone belongs to a group, whether it is a family, a school club or a religion. They know that all groups have rules to help them live happily together. This social issue is reinforced for the pupils in their input into their own class rules as well as deepening their understanding of the need for rules for behaviour at school as well as for following a particular religion. The school places great emphasis on the promotion of self-confidence and self-esteem. In religious education lessons, pupils show increasing confidence and awareness when they give reasons for why they feel happy or sad about something that has happened. They have a growing knowledge of stories from the bible such as Noah or the first Christmas. In this school term, they have increased their understanding of the Jewish Sukkot ceremony and learned how to produce colourful, exciting Rangoli patterns. Knowledge and understanding of an important ceremony, such as the Christian wedding service, are reinforced in an assembly, added dramatic effect being provided by pupils from the area support centre and their teacher, complete with 'dog-collar'. Pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes make good progress in developing a secure basic understanding about Christianity and other religions. Those in the area support centre gain a good grasp, through role-play activities, of the importance of celebrating a marriage and what a Christian wedding ceremony involves.
138. Pupils' attitudes and responses to learning are very good. They listen attentively to expressive reading of stories which stimulate their interest and involvement. They enjoy the lively approach of the Hindu learning support assistant who very effectively engages their enthusiasm and curiosity. Pupils learn well about Diwali celebrations in a practical way. They are most willing to answer questions and react very positively when given opportunities to ask questions themselves. Their behaviour is very good and they sustain concentration very well. A very occasional loss of focus occurs but pupils respond quickly to the class teacher's recognised management strategies and expectations. The youngest pupils show a great keenness to play roles in a simple play, in which they show a lot of self-confidence. All pupils, including those in the area support centre, enjoy role-play and are very stimulated by a well-told story.

139. The quality of teaching is good. One very good lesson was observed, with the rest being good. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives. Introductions are clear, interesting and enthusiastic. There is good use of questions which are open-ended, to encourage pupils to think for themselves and to ask further questions. Teachers are very adept at getting pupils involved, with very effective use of finger puppets in a Reception class. A helpful tone and attitude produces a good level of reverence for the birth of Jesus. Lots of praise for well-behaved pupils ensures very good behaviour. Plenaries are used well to reinforce the main points of lessons.
140. A useful up-to-date policy is in place, backed up by a very well-organised scheme of work, based firmly on the guidance in the local education authority agreed syllabus. Monitoring of teaching and learning is planned to take place in the spring term to fully review the impact of the scheme. The school development plan will enable in-service training to be provided to further improve the teachers' confidence and competence. The co-ordinator is building up a useful stock of artefacts from several religions which are of good quality. Pupils of higher ability in particular do not have sufficient opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding in writing. Useful assessment procedures are available, but not yet used extensively.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Art

141. By the end of Key Stage 1, the quality of pupils' work exceeds the standards expected of their ages. A close examination of the assessment portfolio of a whole year's work indicates a high standard of attainment for all year groups. This term's work on tone using charcoal, chalk colour and pastels to explore tonal scales is good. Pupils cover a rectangle dark at one end blending gradually to light at the other, demonstrating good visual discrimination. They sketch tonal portraits demonstrating a good control of shade and tone using charcoal or chalk, good observational skills and a good level of ability in selecting materials or media for a purpose.
142. In Year 1, pupils' work on patterns is good and often very good. They are able to choose media, print patterns and express ideas and views on how to improve or extend their work. For instance, they were able to discuss their preference for the choice of a particular secondary colour or colour mix. Most effectively produce secondary colours from the primaries and enjoy the effects they can make on their art. Many outline shapes accurately and are aware that methods and techniques individually chosen make their work pleasing to themselves and for others. In the Reception year, pupils enjoy hand printing primary colours one on top of the other to produce secondary colours. They create patterns with skill and confidence when given a choice of media and paper. Pupils take pleasure in their creations and want to share these with others. Cutting, joining and tearing skills are good. Most pupils manipulate clay, and some shape good models of mathematical solids. All can make a finger pot using tools to pattern the surface, and then paint it a chosen colour.
143. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the key stage. The portraits representative of all year groups in the school hall demonstrate the development of visual discrimination and the use of line, colour and form seen in the good standards at Year 2. Development of colour mixing and painting skills in Reception are well built upon in Year 1, where there are very good still-life paintings of fruit after the style of Cézanne. Progress is good in making, designing and using tools. Pupils in the Reception classes competently design a pillow and duvet for Teddy, pattern them and cut and stick to mount them on their choice of background. With good skills in cutting and joining, older pupils create weaving patterns on paper and textiles showing imaginative use and choice of

materials and techniques to produce good and some very good work. The interpretation of styles such as Cezanne and Van Gogh in creating self-portraits and pictures show good development in the skilful and imaginative use of forms and techniques. Their own evaluations of their work and appreciation of others' work show good progress in their confidence in using artistic vocabulary.

144. Pupils show lively interest and enthusiasm for the subject and overall their attitudes to learning are very good. This supports the good progress they make. Most concentrate on their work and have enormous pride and satisfaction in their finished products. This is evident in the care pupils take over the quality and presentation of their work. They are keen to show their appreciation of others' work and share the enjoyment of creating and making. Pupils work co-operatively with each other and take good care of equipment and materials.
145. The quality of teaching is good. Lesson planning and assessment are very good and this ensures that lessons are meaningful and enjoyable for pupils. This provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all ability levels. Pupils are well managed and classrooms are well organised to create a good learning environment. Classroom assistants and parent helpers are used effectively. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate and improve their work. Teachers focus well on helping pupils to speak about their own work and in turn listen to others.
146. The art co-ordinator has very good knowledge of the subject and leads the subject very well. The scheme of work and precise planning and assessment promote good continuity in work across the year groups. The quality of display is very good. Provision of resources and materials is good and they are deployed well. All these factors make a valuable contribution to the good progress pupils make and the high standards of work they reach.

Design and technology

147. The quality of pupils' work seen is much better than usually found for pupils of a similar age and a significant improvement from the previous inspection. Designing skills are particularly well developed and very good for pupils' ages. For example, pupils in Year 2 working on a glove puppet developed several ideas from which they chose the best one to make. Overall, pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, are making very good progress. They are developing their graphics skills extremely well, with design work often being lively, imaginative and colourful. The work of Year 1 pupils on developing a new biscuit is of high quality, with the designs for packing being well informed by research work into existing packaging for biscuits. The quality of evaluation work is good throughout the school and pupils are becoming increasingly aware of how to use specific criteria to judge the quality of the products they make. Pupils' skills of construction are sound, although given the deliberate lack of help and support in cutting and joining, their skills are considerably better than most pupils of a similar age. For example, in producing a glove puppet, pupils in Year 2 made their own templates to use to shape and cut out the front and back of the puppet before joining the pieces. Pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of how artefacts are constructed through modelling in a variety of materials such as paper and card, construction kits and plasticine.
148. Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes make very good progress in developing their own ideas for producing a glove puppet and making a simple template. Those in the area support centre make good gains in their ability to choose appropriate materials and methods for making the glove puppet. They are encouraged and helped by staff to explain how suitable the method used is in practice and so develop a greater awareness of construction methods.
149. Pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly very good and make a significant contribution to the

very good progress they make. Pupils enjoy the work in this subject often becoming totally absorbed in it. They are very well motivated and keen to produce work of the best quality. This is very evident in the work on display for all year groups; the quality of presentation is very high and it is clear that pupils have put much care and effort into their work. Year 2 pupils demonstrate very good skills of independent learning and rise well to the challenges presented to them. Behaviour is invariably impeccable.

150. The quality of teaching is good overall, and is often very good. Planning is meticulous and tasks and projects are interesting and well structured to develop pupils' skills effectively in relation to designing and making. Expectations are usually high, although occasionally work is not particularly challenging. For example, when decorating pots they had made, there was insufficient attention to developing pupils' appreciation of aesthetic considerations. A major strength of the teaching is the extent to which teachers encourage and plan for pupils to make products with the minimal amount of help from adults. Getting pupils to make models of products before their final fabrication is very effectively used by teachers as a strategy for developing pupils' technical mastery of construction procedures.
151. The area is well led and co-ordinated. There is good attention to planning and assessment. As a result, these are very good and ensure that pupils build systematically on prior skills and knowledge. Good quality resources are advantageously used to further promote pupils' skills and knowledge. The school has improved the provision and outcomes in this area significantly since the previous inspection, which found standards of attainment to be low. Standards are now good overall, and very good in designing.

Geography and history

152. A sufficient number of lessons were seen in history from which judgements can be made but this was not the case in geography which is blocked into units, none of which were being taught during the inspection. Pupils' past work was scrutinised together with teachers' planning and geography and history were discussed with pupils.
153. In history, pupils are attaining standards higher than those expected of most pupils of a similar age throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 know that they can find out about events in the past by looking at television and video film, old newspapers, and photographs and by listening to older people. They are aware of chronology and how it is used to place events on a time line. In one lesson about the Coronation of 1953, for example, they used information in books and on artefacts, such as pottery, to discover and record dates. In geography, they draw a simple map, accurately, of the journey they make to school showing their own choices of landmarks along the way. The oldest pupils show a good understanding that some things were different in the past. In a lesson where they were formulating questions to ask Florence Nightingale, they were clearly aware that the conditions in the hospital in Scutari were far different from those in hospitals today. In geography, pupils in Year 2 draw maps, effectively to scale, of their classroom and of the surface of their tables and label them correctly.
154. In history, the vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making very good progress in the development of skills of historical research and in understanding of chronology. Many are making very good progress in development of knowledge of events beyond their living memory, for example by examining artefacts and old documents to learn about the succession of a monarch. In one lesson, most pupils made very good gains in how the past is represented, for example candle lanterns for light and vastly different styling in underwear. In geography, a good number of pupils are making satisfactory progress in the development of mapping skills, for example from outline drawings to correctly labelled maps to scale by Year 2.

155. Pupils' attitudes in history lessons are very good. They become very excited at the prospect of handling artefacts and looking at old photographs and newspapers. They listen very attentively when visitors talk with them and take a very serious attitude to the framing of questions to help them find out about the past. They settle purposefully to recording their work. They treat artefacts with a very high level of respect. Behaviour is very good and this has a very positive effect on their learning.
156. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers demonstrate a very secure knowledge of the subject and adapt it very well to enable pupils to gain a wide range of information about the past. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' willingness to learn from historical research and from the study of items of historical significance. Lessons are very well planned and resources very well prepared. The organisation is good. In one lesson about the life of Florence Nightingale, for example, it enabled pupils to listen to historical fact, find out further information for themselves and record what they have discovered. The pace of lessons is brisk and this has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour and allows them to make very good progress. Lessons end with a good self-assessment by pupils of what they think they have learnt in relation to their understanding of the learning intentions.
157. Teachers' planning for lessons in geography is very good and evidence in pupils' past work indicates, clearly, that the learning intentions have been met.
158. The planned curriculum for history and geography is very good and allows for different tasks well suited to pupils' prior attainment. Assessment procedures are very good for both subjects and are used very effectively to adjust the planning. There are good resources for geography and the school recently has placed an order for more globes to distribute around the classes. Resources for history are very good. The school has shown a high level of enterprise in asking parents and people in the local community to donate items of historical significance and the result has been the acquisition of a very wide range of artefacts relevant to the scheme of work.
158. **Music**
159. The quality of attainment matches expectations for pupils of the same age and progress throughout the school is good. Pupils in Year 2 follow a short piece of graphic notation accurately, interpreting the music vocally and with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They have a satisfactory understanding of long and short notes and a good grasp of dynamics, playing loudly or softly, to match the patterns of the notation. They create patterns of sound in small groups much more successfully than when performing as a whole class, when the total volume is confusing. After listening to a tape-recording of their performance, pupils identify ways in which their work could be improved, with good ideas to change and reorganise their interpretations.
160. Pupils in Year 2 in the recorder group are beginning to control the tone of their instruments. Their fingering is becoming confident and accurate over a range of several notes. They do not yet play from music. Pupils play satisfactorily on percussion instruments in assembly, supplying an appropriate, rhythmic accompaniment to the singing. They mainly play identical sets of beats rather than varying the patterns between different instruments. Pupils sing songs well from memory in assembly, with a very good sense of rhythm and a pleasing tone. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys or girls, although girls are more willing to join percussion and recorder clubs.
161. There is good progress in performing and composing throughout the school, including for pupils with special educational needs. The youngest pupils know a good range of number rhymes, nursery rhymes and songs, which they perform with great enthusiasm. They quickly

learn a new song when listening to a recorded version, soon singing the words accurately with satisfactory control of the melody. Year 1 pupils make good progress in controlling sound made by clapping or using untuned instruments, accompanying the singing of such songs as 'The Grumpy Sheep'. Their standards improve well, following helpful comments by the teacher. Pupils make appropriate choices of instruments to use, with a good understanding of the operation of a range of instruments. Year 2 pupils make good progress in their confidence when playing from a graphic score. They respond imaginatively when composing music for percussion instruments in response to a painting. Those with special educational needs make good progress in using the differing lengths of lines and shapes in the painting to control the lengths of sounds they make using percussion instruments.

162. Musical activities of any kind are very much enjoyed by all pupils. They respond positively to opportunities to compose, perform and listen. Pupils settle down quickly to lessons, with an anticipation of enjoyment. They take their work very seriously and concentrate well. Good independence is shown when pupils are encouraged to choose an instrument. They listen carefully to their class teacher and to the performance of others. Sensible comments are made on their own work and on the work of others. Many are keen to demonstrate their work. Pupils comment confidently on the mood aroused by listening to music. They show respect for instruments and tidy them away willingly.
163. There is good use of music in mathematics lessons, both in the area support centre and in mainstream classes. In the area support centre, pupils are very responsive to counting rhymes and sing well, with good concentration. In Year 1 classes, songs are used very constructively and enthusiastically to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of number pairs adding up to ten.
164. The quality of teaching is good, with three-quarters of lessons seen being good and none unsatisfactory. Some teachers are still building their confidence in the subject and benefit greatly from the guidance of the published scheme. The best lessons are when the teacher is secure in the knowledge and understanding of the subject. Many teachers are enthusiastic and create a keen sense of anticipation in the pupils, greatly increasing their enjoyment and standard of work. Behaviour management is good, with teachers adhering to the school's positive use of praise successfully. The pupils' progress is enhanced when their teacher assesses their work constructively or gives opportunities for them to evaluate their own work. The quality of work is enhanced when good reference is made to the target set for the lesson. There has been a good improvement in teaching since the last inspection. This is most apparent in the way teachers follow the school ethos of giving as much choice as possible to the pupils, when choosing an instrument.
165. The published scheme is becoming established satisfactorily. Suitable resources are readily available for composition and performing in groups. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and is very supportive and keen to improve further the profile of the subject. At present, this is achieved through regular singing and opportunities to listen to music in assemblies. A further boost is given by such events as singing to people in a retirement home and in a local shopping centre. Lunch-time clubs enable pupils to enjoy themselves while extending their skills. Monitoring of teaching and learning has commenced and is providing valuable information on where there is room for improvement. For example, when the school development plan allows, in-service training will be provided to improve class teachers' confidence and range of skills. A lack of CD players slows down some lessons where teachers have to wait for tape-recorders to be re-wound in order to repeat a particular part of a lesson.

165. **Physical education**

166. Gymnastics was not being taught during the inspection. Examination of the teachers' assessments and good planning for this area provided sufficient information to enable judgements to be made.
167. The overall standards of attainment shown by pupils match the standards expected of their ages. The majority show satisfactory levels of co-ordination, balance and control in their movements. In dance, for example, pupils in their Reception year soon learn to co-ordinate their movements and interpret characters, actions and animal movements with a satisfactory level of precision for their age. In Year 1, most pupils use space with satisfactory control and thought for others, when running, hopping, performing star jumps and balancing in pairs. Almost all Year 2 pupils, including most of those with special educational needs, throw, roll a ball, and receive or catch with success. Some throw and catch well whilst moving and a few demonstrate very good balance and anticipation. Pupils show sound ability in thinking and talking about their movements and the skills involved in different activities. Most are able to plan and execute improved performances. Many pupils are aware of, and recognise the effect of, exercise on their bodies.
168. All pupils make good progress in developing physical skills and most make very good progress in evaluating their experiences by speaking about their own and others' achievements and listening to others' ideas. The development of appropriate language and ideas is good. In Year 1, for example, pupils played team games and showed good compliance with rules during the game, evaluating others' performance and sharing their experiences. Those with special educational needs also made good progress in learning and applying the rules. The majority were able to suggest modification to the game for improvement and listen to and accommodate others' views, making valid judgements about their performance. Year 2 pupils were able to suggest good strategies for others to improve throwing and catching in pairs. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 were improving well their ability to throw and catch a ball accurately from a standing and a sitting position.
169. Pupils enjoy the activities, and virtually all join in activities with much energy, determination and concentration. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils use apparatus sensibly and safely. They take turns and are patient. They show considerable responsibility and initiative when carrying out demanding tasks or putting equipment away, co-operating well in doing so.
170. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned showing clear expectations. Assessment is used effectively to set appropriate challenge for all abilities and there is good organisation of appropriate activities and resources to enable pupils to make good progress. A football club after school provides a very good additional activity for some pupils. Teachers are successful in promoting positive attitudes, effort and behaviour. There is a good balance between structured instruction in skills and good opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and extend themselves in all areas of the subject. The effects of exercise and the importance of safety are always key elements of lessons.
171. The co-ordinator's management of the subject is very good and the monitoring and support of planning and teaching ensure that pupils are well taught. Very comprehensive and detailed planning and very good assessment arrangements ensure that pupils make good progress and successfully build new skills and knowledge on prior learning.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- A team of five inspectors visited the school for a combined total of 17 days. During the week of inspection, the team observed 68 lessons, or parts of lessons, a sample of morning and afternoon registration periods and all assemblies.
- All teachers at the school during the period of inspection were observed teaching, all on more than one occasion. Planned discussions were held with governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher as well as all members of staff with management responsibilities. Further, informal discussions were held with non-teaching staff and support staff across the school. In addition, it was possible to meet with the school's education welfare officer, who happened to be visiting at the time of the inspection.
- Documentation provided by the school about all aspects of its work was scrutinised before, as well as during the inspection. In addition, inspectors looked in depth at all the work of a representative sample of six pupils in each year group as well as the work of many others during lesson observations. A representative sample of pupils from each year group also read to inspectors so that their reading skills could be evaluated. Informal discussions took place with many pupils on numerous occasions during lesson observations, and around the school, for example at lunch-times.
- The registered inspector held four meetings at the school before the inspection: with the headteacher, with governors, with teaching staff and with a group of 13 parents who attended the parents' meeting. The team considered responses from 56 parents to a questionnaire about their views of the school.

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
YR – Y2	219	12	32	47

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week	173

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	444504
Total Expenditure	412903
Expenditure per pupil	1757
Balance brought forward from previous year	8366
Balance carried forward to next year	39967

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	219
Number of questionnaires returned:	56

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	46	50	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	52	45	4	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	17	51	30	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	41	59	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	43	54	2	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	38	55	5	0	2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	38	56	5	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	25	67	5	2	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	40	58	2	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	46	46	7	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	66	29	4	2	0

Other issues raised by parents

The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire were very happy with the school's overall provision. There were very few concerns expressed. About three parents had concerns about homework, but the inspection findings indicate that this is very well organised and extends and supports pupils' learning well. A couple of other concerns expressed have now been resolved.

Parents attending the meeting with inspectors had nothing but praise for the school and its staff. Particular praise went to the headteacher, and the school secretary who was said to be very welcoming and helpful.