

# INSPECTION REPORT

**LITTLE GADDESSEN C OF E VA PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Little Gaddesden, Berkhamsted

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117443

Headteacher: Mr T W Bowen

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Sinclair  
19824

Dates of inspection: 3 April to 6 April 2000

Inspection number: 187203

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Little Gaddesden Near Berkhamsted Herts
Postcode:	HP4 1NX
Telephone number:	01442 842464
Fax number:	01442 842825
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body, Little Gaddesden School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D W Stevens
Date of previous inspection:	4 March 1996

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J G L Sinclair	Registered inspector	English, Music, Equal Opportunities	Characteristics, Attainment, Teaching and Learning. Assessment. Leadership and management. School Improvement
Mr I Tatchell	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information Technology, Geography, Physical Education, Special educational needs.	Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources, Efficiency
Mrs C Perrett	Team inspector	Science, Art, Design and Technology, History, Under fives	Curricular Opportunities, Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural provision
Mrs G Osment	Lay inspector		Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development , Pupil Welfare, Partnership with Parents

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Associates Ltd  
QAA  
8/9 Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school for boys and girls of 4 to 11 years of age. It is in the small village of Little Gaddesden and has 99 full time pupils on roll. The school draws its pupils from the village and surrounding local area. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds, some of which are privileged, and their attainments are generally above average when they join school. There are 20 pupils with special educational needs, which is in line with the national average but there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need, which is below average. About 5 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is below average. At present the school does not have any pupils who speak English as an additional language.

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

Little Gaddesden primary school is a good school, which cares well for its pupils. Staff are hardworking and create a positive climate for learning.

Standards are high in English and mathematics and above average in science at Key Stage 1 and this is because the teaching is consistently good and the work pupils are given is challenging. The leadership and management of the school are good; the headteacher has raised standards and improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The school provides sound value for money

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

- Pupils achieve high standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science at Key Stage 1.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. Staff provide good role models.
- Development planning is very good and well thought through; this impacts well on standards and has enabled the literacy and numeracy strategies to be successfully implemented.
- There are very good community links and a high level of parental involvement.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school; the school is a caring community.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs enabling them to make good progress.
- The headteacher provides good educational direction for the work of the school and is ably supported by the governing body.
- The quality of teaching is good and this is directly related to the good quality, regular monitoring carried out by the headteacher.

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

- Information technology, but particularly at Key Stage 2, through more detailed teacher planning and clear and specific assessment of pupils.
- The breadth and relevance of the under five's curriculum, by providing for all the identified areas of learning through purposeful play.
- Use of time throughout the school day to ensure a better balance to the curriculum.
- The limited size of the classroom accommodation to allow pupils to engage in practical and independent activity.
- The use of clear assessment criteria to inform teachers' short term planning.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in March 1996 and most issues raised in the last inspection have been successfully dealt with through the implementation of the school's subsequent action plan. Through regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching the school has improved significantly the quality of its teaching and as a result the quality of learning. Standards in art and information technology now meet expectations at Key Stage 1. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and teachers plan satisfactorily across the curriculum. Some improvements have been made in assessment as test data now informs planning for groups in English and mathematics and teachers

make a variety of individual on-going assessments of pupils. There are two areas where there have been limited improvements and they are design and technology and the breadth of the under fives curriculum which remains a key issue. The school is currently considering a number of options to ensure improvement in the under-fives provision but has been slow to act. Standards of attainment in English and mathematics have risen well over time and the school is set to meet its current targets. The head teacher, governors and staff have successfully moved the school forward since the last inspection and it is well placed to continue its improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The school's annual cohort of pupils is small and this can cause wide variations on statistics year on year. However over this three-year period standards at Key Stage 2 were consistently high in English and mathematics and, until last year, high in science. In 1999, when compared with similar schools (based on the number of pupils having free school meals) the school was attaining well in English, satisfactorily in mathematics and well below average in science. Children enter the school with above average levels of ability and they make satisfactory progress in the reception year. During the inspection, pupils aged 7 were found to be attaining high standards in English and mathematics, above average in science and achieving in line with expectations in all other subjects except design and technology where standards were below expectations. At age 11 pupils were found to be achieving in line with expectations in all subjects except information technology, art and design and technology where standards were below expectations. However there are a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs this year and this has had an impact on the overall standards. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their learning. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in music

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school and are interested and involved in the activities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They move around the small classrooms and in the play area very sensibly and are courteous and respectful to all adults and each other.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school and all staff provide very good role models and show care and consideration to the pupils in their care. There are too few opportunities provided for pupils to use their initiative or to take responsibility for their own learning, particularly the oldest of children.
Attendance	Satisfactory; in line with the national average.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and sometimes very good at Key Stage 1 and varies between satisfactory and good at Key Stage 2. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school. Resources and support staff are used effectively to support the delivery of the lessons. Assessment is used well to inform planning for pupils who learn at different rates in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching is good overall. Sixty-four per cent of the teaching was good or better and of that 18 per cent was very good. Much of the good and almost all of the very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 1. Seven per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and all of this was at Key Stage 2. It was linked to weaknesses in subject knowledge, lack of challenge in the tasks and limited opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the under fives is unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 1 and 2, although the curriculum is broad and relevant it lacks sufficient balance. The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for information technology at Key Stage 2. There are good extra – curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for special educational needs enables pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is good and provision for social development is very good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall but there are insufficient planned opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of modern Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for pupils. There is a strong, caring ethos. Satisfactory assessment procedures to monitor academic progress are in place.

The under-fives curriculum does not provide satisfactorily for all the areas of learning and there are too few opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play. At Key Stage 1 and 2, insufficient time is allocated for subjects other than English and mathematics within the curriculum. All strands of information technology are not covered at Key Stage 2.

The school works well in partnership with parents and they make a very good contribution to their children's learning through their involvement in the work of the school and helping with homework.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership by the head teacher who is ably supported by the governing body.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory duties well and are fully involved in the life of the school. There is an effective committee structure in place with good working practices
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses and carefully monitors its progress against the priorities identified in the school development plan
The strategic use of resources	Good and careful use of resources. Educational priorities are well supported.

Staffing levels are satisfactory and support staff are well trained for their role. The accommodation is very cramped in spite of the very good initiatives, which have taken place in order to extend the teaching space. Resources are satisfactory overall with a good level of resources in place for literacy.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school promotes excellent values and attitudes.</li><li>• The children like coming to school</li><li>• Teachers are very caring</li><li>• There is a good level of extra curricular activities.</li><li>• Parents are encouraged to help</li><li>• Children are well behaved.</li><li>• Parents are given a good level of information.</li><li>• Their children are well taught.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li></ul> |  |
|--|--|

The inspection team agrees to a large extent with most of the views expressed by the parents but in slight contrast the school was found to promote very good attitudes and values and children were very well behaved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The school has made good improvements in standards in English and mathematics at both key stages and good improvements in science, art and information technology at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. Standards remain unsatisfactory in design and technology at both key stages and in information technology and art at Key Stage 2.
- 2 The attainment of pupils when they enter the school is above average. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in the Reception class and by the time they are of statutory school age exceed the recommended learning outcomes in all areas of learning except creative development where they meet the recommended learning outcomes. Pupils' behaviour is very good and they enjoy good relationships with adults and each other. They work well in groups sharing materials and equipment. Their skills in speaking and listening are good and many of the pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds and recognise many individual words. Higher attaining pupils are writing their own stories and are reading simple texts. They recognise numbers to 20 and count sets of objects showing a good understanding of the concept of "more" when adding on.
- 3 The school has small cohorts of pupils with 14 in an average year. This causes variations in the school's performance year-on-year and makes it inadvisable to place too much emphasis on one year's results.
- 4 The Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results for 1999, based on average points, are very high in comparison with the national average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. The results are well above average when compared with similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The results have been consistent over a three-year period. There is no significant difference overall between the attainment of boys and girls. Teacher assessments are broadly in line with test results. The school has set modest targets for improvement this year due to the continuous high level of achievement at Key Stage 1. These are appropriate and likely to be met.
- 5 The end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results for 1999, based on average points, are well above the national average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. When compared with similar schools results are above average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. These results for science are lower than in the previous two years. Standards in English and mathematics have remained broadly similar. The school has set realistic and achievable targets for this current cohort of pupils.
- 6 Current standards based on lessons seen, pupils' work and displays, reflect the test results at Key Stage 1 and this is due to the good and sometimes very good teaching the pupils receive, the strong focus on improvement and the good support given by parents. Standards at Key Stage 2 are lower, but overall in line with the expectations. This is partly due to the larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs in the current cohort and, with small cohorts of pupils, this can affect the overall standard significantly. It is also due to the fact that teaching is overall satisfactory and sometimes unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, particularly at the end of the key stage.
- 7 Standards in speaking and listening are good by the end of both key stages. Pupils listen attentively to the teacher and by their response show they have clearly understood. Most respond in sentences that are clearly and competently delivered and relevant to the subject. Attainment in reading is high. By the end of the key stage most pupils read confidently, accurately and with a good level of expression. Attainment in writing is well above expectations. Many pupils write well-structured stories with a clear beginning, middle and end and some higher attaining pupils use good descriptions in their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, many clearly articulate why they enjoy particular books. When given the opportunity they convey their opinions confidently and give clear explanations for their views. They read and enjoy a wide variety of

books and know how to use information books effectively. Writing is clear and well presented most use punctuation well within sentences and some pupils make appropriate use of paragraphs. Standards of handwriting are good across the school with most pupils writing in a neat, legible hand. The quality of presentation of written work is good.

- 8 In mathematics pupils achieve well above expectations at Key Stage 1. They have a good understanding of number, solve problems requiring mental recall of number bonds and estimate accurately using standard units. Pupils achieve in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Many use all four number operations in their calculations and higher attaining pupils calculate to two decimal points. They demonstrate a good understanding of probability.
- 9 In science, pupils achieve above expectations at Key Stage 1. Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of how to conduct a fair test. They have well-developed investigative skills and can predict sensibly and record their results. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is below expectations. Pupils know about the major organs of the body and are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.
- 10 Standards in information technology are similar to expected levels at Key Stage 1 and below at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 2 use information technology to sort and classify information and word process their written work. By the end of Key Stage 2, although they change font size, use the spell checker and make some use of data bases, they have limited experience of using information technology to control models or screen turtles.
- 11 Pupils' literacy skills are satisfactorily developed through other subjects such as science. Computers are used appropriately to support the development of word processing skills. Numeracy skills are not used regularly or systematically in other subjects although there are some opportunities for measuring in design and technology lessons.
- 12 Standards in all other subjects are broadly in line with the levels expected of pupils of a similar age except in design and technology at both key stages and art and information technology at Key Stage 2 which are below the expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs who receive support in lessons or who have individual or group lessons, make good progress.
- 13 At Key Stage 1 pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment in English and mathematics and make good progress. They make sound progress and achieve appropriate standards in all other subjects of the curriculum except design and technology where progress is unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 2 pupils achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment in English and mathematics but achievement in science is unsatisfactory. This is due to unsatisfactory teaching at the end of the key stage, the two-year cycle of work and a lack of tasks, which are matched to pupils' differing ability. They make sound progress in all other subjects except art, and information and design technology where progress is unsatisfactory and this is similar to the last inspection. This unsatisfactory progress is due to the limited amount of time given to these subjects, insufficient emphasis on skills development and limited use of assessment to inform planning. No judgements on progress in music could be made, as there was insufficient evidence.

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

- 14 The pupils come to school with very good attitudes. 98 per cent of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children like coming to school. Pupils enjoy their schoolwork, they settle promptly to set tasks and want to learn. In a Year 2-literacy lesson the pupils showed good levels of concentration when working with text from 'Dinosaur Dinners'. The pupils are keen to please and able to sustain concentration for reasonable periods of time. During a Key Stage 2 choir practice the pupils exhibited very good levels of intellectual and physical effort whilst singing. Pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to learning. When working individually or in a small group with the support of a teacher or learning assistant they show a level of confidence not always seen in the classroom situation. They persevere with challenging tasks and enjoy the sessions.
- 15 Pupils' behaviour is very good both in classrooms and when moving around the school and this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. They respond well to the requests and

instructions of teachers, classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to teachers and other staff, as well as to visitors. They are trustworthy and show respect for property, treating the resources they use with care. There were no exclusions from the school during the year prior to the inspection. Inspection findings confirm the views of 98 per cent of the parents that behaviour is good.

16 The personal development of the pupils is good. They have very good relationships with fellow pupils and adults, built on tolerance for the work, ideas, beliefs and values of others. They work well as individuals or in pairs or small groups. The pupils are learning to be kind to each other, take turns and help their classmates. The school has both infant and junior councils and they meet with the headteacher to discuss aspects of the school. For example, they discussed the provision of cycle racks so that pupils who cycle to school have somewhere secure to leave their bicycles. Pupils support charities through fund raising activities including Help the Aged and the sponsorship of two children in a Christian school in Guatemala. As the pupils grow older they have increasing opportunities to take responsibility in the life of the school. For example pupils from Years 5 and 6 take part in partner lessons with reception and Year 1 pupils. However, pupils have too few opportunities to develop their independent learning skills through regular use of the library or to devise experiments and investigations in science lessons.

17 The level of attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average.

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

18 The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good, and sometimes very good, at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. It was good or better in 64 per cent of lessons, very good in eighteen per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 7 per cent. Almost all of the very good teaching seen was at Key Stage 1 and the unsatisfactory teaching seen was at Key Stage 2. There has been a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection when at least 30 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The main contributory factor to this improvement is the rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching undertaken by the headteacher and the targets set for improvements in practice.

19 The quality of teaching in the under- fives is good. It is good and frequently very good in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 it varies between satisfactory and good in English and mathematics and in science varies between satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The teaching of geography and physical education is good overall. In art, design technology, information technology and history, insufficient teaching was seen to make a judgement.

20 The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. Planning is good; it is firmly based on guidance from the national strategies and ensures that pupils' skills are developed sequentially. In most lessons high expectations lead to a good level of challenge for high attaining pupils while maintaining a supportive environment for pupils with special educational needs. This helps them to concentrate and extend their thinking in an appropriate manner. In English, teachers ask well-focussed questions during lessons to ascertain pupils' understanding and to give explanations. This enables pupils to gain new knowledge and skills. However, pupils in years 5 and 6 do not make the progress of which they are capable due to a lack of challenge in the work and limited questioning to develop skills and understanding. In mathematics, teachers challenge pupils by asking probing questions. They make good use of the final part of the lesson to check pupils' understanding and identify errors. Teachers generally make good use of opportunities across the curriculum to help pupils develop their literacy skills and, to a lesser extent, their numeracy skills. There are good summative assessment procedures in place enabling teachers to group pupils appropriately but teachers' on going assessment of pupils' work in English is too general. It does not focus specifically on where pupils are at in their learning and what they need to learn next.

21 The standard of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is generally good. Sessions are well planned, resources are effectively used and lessons move at a brisk pace so that much is achieved. Tasks are challenging and are matched to the ability of the pupils. Staff build up a good relationship with these pupils and by gentle encouragement takes every opportunity to

extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In classes, pupils with special educational needs receive additional support where necessary

- 22 Pupils' learning is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. There are good features in almost all lessons, which contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Teachers expect good behaviour and a responsible attitude towards work. They create a purposeful atmosphere, which helps pupils' to learn. This is clearly reflected in the way pupils listen attentively, settle to group tasks quickly and sustain concentration for extended periods of time. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English and mathematics and use this well to question pupils, clarify misunderstandings and increase their vocabulary. For example in a Year 2 discussion on dinosaurs pupils were asked to explain firstly what a 'herd' meant and then why dinosaurs lived in herds. In class 1, the teacher made good use of vocabulary such as 'primary colours' and 'rectangular' in the art lesson. Teachers generally manage pupils in a pleasant, firm and consistent manner. This is based on good relationships and respect for each other which the school works very hard to foster. They value pupils ideas and help them to develop confidence in articulating them as seen in a lesson in class 3 when the teacher ensured all pupils were given an opportunity to contribute and sufficient time to formulate an answer.
- 23 There are several aspects to the teaching which distinguish the good and very good teaching from that which is satisfactory. In well-taught lessons in classes 2 and 3 the teachers share their objectives for the lesson with pupils so they are clear about what they are expected to learn. This helps them to make good progress. In lessons where this does not take place pupils are often uncertain and confused about what they have to do. In many lessons the quality of questioning and the level of challenge to make pupils think and develop their ideas is high. In the less effective lessons teachers ask very few questions to extend thinking or to involve pupils in the lesson and this leads to a loss of interest and concentration. There is only one class, Class2, where the teacher sets targets for pupils' learning which are shared with them. These pupils are clear about how to improve their work. Where teaching is unsatisfactory various factors are present; insufficient subject knowledge and lack of planning for pupils who learn at different rates, insufficient challenge in the work, over directing lessons which does not allow pupils to find solutions to problems or experiment with their own ideas. In these lessons pupils make very little gains in their learning and occasionally it has a detrimental effect on good relationships and the esteem in which teachers are held.
- 24 The level of planning in English and mathematics is good. It is well structured and well matched to pupils of differing prior attainment. However in most other subjects, plans do not clearly state what pupils are expected to learn, pupils are generally given the same task, no clear progression in skills development is identified and there are few opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning or research skills. Marking is used inconsistently across the school, which limits its usefulness as a tool for improvement. Homework is used effectively across the school to support the curriculum and parents very willingly help in this area by ensuring it is completed.

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

- 25 The last report stated that the youngest pupils required a broader and more balanced curriculum, and this key issue remains a weakness. The curriculum for the under fives is still inappropriate, as it follows discrete subjects such as literacy and numeracy, rather than an integrated programme, which is more suitable for very young children. There is still too much passive learning as highlighted in the last report, and the curriculum is not planned to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Insufficient time is given for children to learn through purposeful play. The curriculum is not sufficiently balanced to ensure that the children receive a regular worthwhile experience in all the recommended areas of learning, as the vast majority of time is spent teaching aspects of English and mathematics.
- 26 The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and meets statutory requirements to deliver all the subjects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum at Key Stage 2, however, does not meet statutory requirements as all the requirements of the information technology curriculum are not met. There are sound sex and drug education policies. Although the curriculum is sufficiently broad, it lacks balance. The balance between the subjects is

unsatisfactory, as numeracy and literacy receive over-generous amounts of time. This means that there is insufficient time for the remaining subjects to be adequately taught. In particular, there is insufficient time for the planned teaching of information technology throughout the school. Good use is made of 'Buddy time' in Key Stage 1, which allows reception children to follow their own programme of work and successfully develop their reading skills. Partner work with class 1 and class 4 is used satisfactorily to promote the personal and social skills of the pupils.

- 27 There are a good variety of extra-curricular activities, and pupils are given opportunities to learn various musical instruments and this is similar to the situation found at the last inspection. The school enjoys very good links with the community, and the numerous visitors to school, and many visits to local places of interest, further enrich the curriculum, and contribute to pupils' learning. Pupils can attend music, sporting and chess clubs, and for a small cost can attend French and drama classes. The older pupils have opportunities to attend residential visits each year, where areas of the curriculum such as history and science are further enhanced. There is a commitment to provide equality of opportunity in the daily life of the school, and boys and girls have opportunities to join in all the lunchtime sporting clubs. The curriculum is further enhanced by the generous donations that the 'Friends of the School' provide through their many fund-raising events. There are good relationships with partner schools, particularly Great Gaddesden; staff share staff meetings and in-service training days. Pupils take part in music and sporting festivals with partner schools. Good liaison with receiving secondary schools ensures a smooth transfer to the next stage of learning.
- 28 Opportunities for pupils to cultivate their personal development are good. The school has a strong Christian ethos, which permeates school life. Pupils are encouraged to care for each other, and value the beliefs and ideas of others. Opportunities for spiritual development occur during assemblies, where pupils learn about the life of Jesus. The pupils sing hymns and choruses with enthusiasm and meaning, giving a real spiritual feeling to these events. Opportunities are given for pupils to reflect quietly on their lives and the lives of others.
- 29 Provision for pupils' moral development is good. A strong moral code pervades the life of the school, and all pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. The school promotes very good behaviour, where pupils are aware of the needs of others, and the oldest look after the youngest.
- 30 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships are very good, and pupils work co-operatively without fuss or disagreement. The needs of the whole school community are developed through lower school and upper school councils, which consider ways to improve the school environment for the benefit of all. Good provision for social development is made through the wide variety of extra curricular and social events, which are an integral part of the school.
- 31 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils learn about their own culture through the curriculum, in subjects such as art, music literature and history. The school takes part in numerous village activities, such as the millennium book when a pupil wrote about his daily life. They learn about the world of work, when the oldest pupils visit a variety of work places, and shadow people doing a variety of jobs. Opportunities are very limited for the pupils' multi-cultural development. Although pupils learn about other cultures, for example, in their geography lessons, when they learn about settlements in other parts of the world, such as Peru, there is insufficient emphasis on this area of the curriculum. There is a lack of multi-cultural artefacts, such as musical instruments, and prints of non-western artists. Pupils are not sufficiently prepared for life in multi-cultural Britain today.
- 32 The curricular needs of pupils identified through the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are well met. The individual educational plans have specific, achievable targets and comply with the recommendations of the Code of Practice. Pupils are successfully integrated and the timing of additional teaching support is carefully linked to class timetables to provide benefit. Pupils' individual education plans set appropriate targets so that work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils. The national Code of Practice is fully met in the identification and assessment of pupils' special educational needs and continuing assessment is good.

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

- 33 The school takes very good steps to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. There are very good relationships at all levels and all pupils feel confident that there are sympathetic adults to whom they can go with any problem. All staff work hard to maintain positive relationships, they know the pupils well and are able to monitor personal development both informally and formally through the newly adopted local education authority framework for the assessment of personal and social development.
- 34 The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. The governor, with responsibility for health and safety reports every term, on risk assessments and any action taken, to the premises committee. Fire practices take place regularly and are recorded and the caretaker undertakes weekly testing of the fire alarm system. There are suitable arrangements in place for first aid and medical support. The school has very good arrangements in place for child protection issues. The headteacher is the named responsible person and has received training for this role.
- 35 The headteacher regularly monitors attendance registers and instances of unexplained absence are followed up. Parents are reminded of their responsibility for their children's punctuality and attendance in the prospectus and newsletters. The school receives regular support from the Education Welfare Service. Registers are taken briskly at the start of morning and afternoon sessions and this ensures a prompt start to lessons. There are very good procedures for encouraging good behaviour. The school has a behaviour and discipline policy, which includes a system of rewards and sanctions. It is implemented consistently by all teachers to ensure that all pupils behave well in classrooms at all times. Good behaviour and effort are rewarded through praise, headteacher certificates and the weekly sharing assembly. Parents are happy that the school is helping their children become mature and responsible. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support within the school, from teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils. Systems are in place to enable pupils to cope with difficult situations. Their progress is monitored well. Specialist support from a variety of external agencies is sought when needed and used effectively.
- 36 The school has made good improvements in assessing pupils' work since the last inspection when assessment was considered to be at an early stage of development. There are now good summative procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and satisfactory procedures for science. Information from Key Stage 1 national tests and optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 is used to inform teachers' planning for pupils of differing attainment, chart pupils' progress over time and to set realistic targets. The headteacher and teachers analyse the progress of individuals within each class regularly and adjust the level of support and focus for their teaching as necessary. This helps to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. There are no procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment in any other subject except physical education where the co-ordinator effectively uses assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' skills and the quality of provision.
- 37 On-going assessment is unsatisfactory. It is too generalised and inconsistently applied by teachers. There are no clearly identified criteria, agreed by all staff, against which to assess pupils' work or to help teachers provide work, which builds on pupils' previous knowledge or skills. The only exception to this is mathematics where on-going assessment is used well to inform planning and there is a good level of consistency in teachers' recording across the school. There are no targets agreed with pupils to focus them on improving their work except in Year 2 where pupils clearly know what they need to do better.
- 38 Assessment procedures for those with special education needs are good. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored, regular reviews take place and information from ongoing assessments is used appropriately to set targets for future improvement. Recording systems for pupils with special needs provide a useful overview of pupils progress

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

- 39 Parents are very supportive of the school, as they were at the last inspection. This is evident from the positive response to the majority of the questions on the pre-inspection questionnaire and from the comments made at the parents' meeting. Eighty three per cent feel that the school works closely with them and 98 per cent would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. The school uses a number of ways to inform parents about the progress their children are making. There are two formal parent and teacher consultations during the year where discussions on pupils' progress take place. Informally, the headteacher and teachers are very approachable and happy to talk to any parents with concerns or who would like more information on their child's progress at other times. The written annual reports to parents are unsatisfactory. They do not give a clear picture of pupils' achievements or inform parents what pupils need to do next to improve their performance in each subject
- 40 Throughout the school reading and appropriate homework is set and reading records show that many parents hear their children read at home on a regular basis, which is supporting the work done in school very well. The school has a homework policy and through newsletters the school's expectations on homework are effectively communicated to parents.
- 41 Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with the day-to-day life of the school, and the prospectus provides information on the curriculum. Parents are sent letters informing them of the topics to be covered each term. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved and informed at all stages of a pupil's assessment and review; contact is maintained at other times on an informal basis. Parents have access to class teachers, who have good communications with the special educational needs co-ordinator This maintains a steady flow of information.
- 42 Meetings were held for parents on the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. Parents are invited to Book Week, a Workshadowing Presentation, termly church services and the school productions. A number of parents regularly help in school listening to reading, helping with cooking, information technology and art activities and many parents help with the maintenance and décor of the school buildings. Through the Friends' Association parents are very supportive of the school. Funds are raised from a variety of events including the Little Gaddesden Summer Party, a Golf Day and a sponsored walk and the association has donated £4000 to the governors' new school hall fund.
- 43 All of these factors show that the school has a good range of productive and consistent links with parents and carers that have a positive impact on learning.

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

- 44 Overall the leadership and management of the school is good. Most issues raised in the last inspection have been successfully dealt with through the implementation of the school's subsequent action plan. Through regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching the school has improved significantly the quality of its teaching and as a result the quality of learning. Standards in art and information technology now meet expectations at Key Stage 1. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and teachers plan satisfactorily for all subjects of the curriculum. Some improvements have been made in assessment as test data now informs planning for groups in English and mathematics and teachers make a variety of individual on-going assessments of pupils. The only areas where there have been very limited improvements are design and technology and the breadth of the under fives curriculum which remains a key issue. However, the school is currently considering a number of options to ensure improvement in this area. Standards of attainment in English and mathematics have risen significantly. The headteacher, governors and staff have successfully moved the school forward since the last inspection and it is well placed to continue its improvement.
- 45 The head teacher provides good educational direction for the work of the school. He has a clear vision that is well rooted in raising standards within a supportive and caring environment. This reflects the school's aims and vision very well. He has ensured that subject co-ordinators have clear, delegated responsibilities through their subject action plans and in English and mathematics has enabled them to provide clear direction to their colleagues. In most other subjects co-ordinators are beginning to develop their role. The senior teacher is effective in her

pastoral role within the school. There is a good team spirit and all staff share a commitment to continued improvement. The newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator is already effective in monitoring the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in managing their support. However, the school does not yet monitor that class teachers are following targets set. All assessments and reviews are carried out accurately and regularly. The governing body supports and monitors the provision for pupils with special educational needs, and reports the school's provision for these pupils, including how resources have been allocated to and amongst pupils with special educational needs, in its annual report to parents, in order to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

- 46 The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They meet regularly and work well through a number of committees who report back, at termly meetings, to the full governing body on their involvement in the work of the school. All are committed to fulfilling an effective role within the governing body and there are governors with responsibility for special educational needs, language and literacy and numeracy. Classroom monitoring of their areas of responsibility has taken place. Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and support the school well in addressing these. They have worked extremely hard along with all other members of the school community to improve the fabric of the building and secure a large new hall, which is nearing completion.
- 47 The school development plan is a very good working document and the driving force for all major initiatives. The plan clearly identifies priorities and includes detailed information on the process involved in the areas for development. However, in some instances there is insufficient clarity on how the school intends to measure its success in specific terms. There are informative, on-going reviews carried out by the head teacher to show progress towards identified targets. Professional development interviews are held with all staff prior to the completion of the annual school development plan and issues raised are linked well to the school's priorities. The governors, through the finance committee, agree the priorities for the school and effectively link costings to the budget.
- 48 There is good monitoring of teaching and curriculum development both by the head teacher and by the subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and art. Recent monitoring has effectively focussed on classroom observations of the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and there is well-documented evidence to support this. Good financial planning and an appropriate allocation of non-contact time fully supports this system. The head teacher and the subject co-ordinators document all monitoring work thoroughly and systematically and there is a clear focus on setting targets for improvement. There is a strong whole school commitment to improvement and the school's success.
- 49 The school has a good ethos. It reflects the school's commitment to high achievement and equality of opportunity whilst providing a purposeful environment in which pupils can flourish. The school reviews and updates its vision statement annually in order to ensure it remains the focus for all members of the school community.
- 50 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the primary curriculum. The individual strengths of teachers are used well and the use of the head teacher to support music teaching enhances the pupils' curricular provision. The two part time classroom assistants are fully involved in working with pupils and provide good support to pupils with special educational needs.
- 51 Their qualifications and experience make a valuable contribution to the education of the pupils. The collaboration between teachers, support staff and visiting specialists is good in relation to planning and management of pupils. The school administrative secretary and clerical assistant are very effective in their support of the school and lunchtime supervisors make sound contributions to school life. The hardworking caretakers ensure that the school is well maintained.
- 52 The school's induction process is satisfactory and supportive for new staff enabling them to be quickly assimilated into the life of the school. Where necessary, appropriate in-service training is provided in order to enable new teaching staff to fulfil their roles more effectively. Arrangements

for the professional development of staff are satisfactory and well linked to the school's development plan. Arrangements for appraisal of staff are being revised to bring them in line with recent national guidance.

- 53 The accommodation is unsatisfactory. The available play areas around the school are restricted by the present building works associated with the new hall project, but the school makes good use of the adjacent parish playing field. There is no special outside play area for the under fives. The accommodation in most classrooms is cramped. Only two classrooms have facilities for water. The school benefits from some specialist accommodation in the form of small library and a small resource room, which are occasionally used for small group work. A number of minor improvements have been made to extend classrooms since the last inspection, for example, the Reception/ Year1 class has been lengthened and refurbished to include a sink. The present school hall is too small to accommodate the large Year 5/6 class for physical education, which is provided for half the class at a time. However the new hall project will provide much needed space for physical education, music and whole school events. A local pool is used well by the school for swimming lessons. The school has planning permission to extend classroom accommodation when funds become available.
- 54 Resources overall are satisfactory. The provision of books, materials and equipment in classrooms is satisfactory. Provision for the under fives is generally satisfactory although books are not so well presented, to some extent, due to the lack of space. Resources to support learning in English are good and have improved since the last inspection. Resources for information technology, are sound, hardware and software are regularly updated, however there is a need to consider how to develop the resources to provide for pupils with specific learning needs. Resources in the other curricular areas, except music, are sound. Resources generally have improved since the last inspection.
- 55 The school makes good use of resources and has good procedures in place to ensure that best value is obtained from school development. Good use is made of analysis of assessment results to target spending in order to maintain or raise standards. Formal tenders are sought for all major works and strict criteria are applied to ensure best value for money
- 56 The governors are actively engaged in financial planning. The head teacher and the finance sub-committee investigate proposed expenditure prior to planning the budget together. The budget is approved by the whole governing body and is linked to the school development plan, which covers three years and includes projected costs and evaluation procedures. Day to day financial administration is efficient. The school has responded satisfactorily to suggestions made in the last audit report. There are effective systems in place for financial control. The finance committee receives quarterly budget up-dates and discusses any issues at their meetings. Information from these meetings is used to keep the whole governing body informed of the progress of budget expenditure. Since the last inspection the role of the governing body in determining financial targets and effectively monitoring expenditure has been strengthened by their classroom visits, monitoring the school's provision and quality of education provided. Specific grants made to the school are used very efficiently, for example funds for pupils with special educational needs and professional development
- 57 Appropriate use is made of new technology. The administrative secretary has a good knowledge of computerised procedures. Good use is made of information technology for data analysis and tracking of pupils' performance. There are computers in all classes and the school now has computers with multi media capability and Internet access. However computers are not always used well in the classrooms.
- 58 The school deploys its staff effectively. Classroom teachers are used efficiently and the head teacher has a regular teaching commitment. Job descriptions ensure that there is clear delegation, and appropriate use of expertise. Most of the accommodation is used satisfactorily, however the library is under-utilised as a resource for all pupils. Resources are generally used satisfactorily and storage has been improved since the last inspection. Staff, resources and accommodation are effectively deployed to enhance the quality of learning and progress of pupils with special educational needs

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to raise standards, and enable pupils to make more progress, the governing body, headteacher and staff, as a whole team, need to:

Improve standards in information technology by:

- a. Planning in greater detail with particular reference to skills development,
- b. Assessing pupils' achievement in clear and specific terms
- c. Using assessment information to ensure that planning builds on prior knowledge and skills.

**Paragraphs: 10,26,97,115,117,118**

Improve the curriculum for children under five by:

- a. Planning appropriately for all the identified areas of learning
- b. Providing opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play
- c. Providing opportunities for independent learning
- d. Providing regular outdoor physical activity

**Paragraphs:25,45,61,67,69**

Improve the use of time throughout the school day to ensure a better balance to the curriculum by:

- a. Scrutinising the timetable to ensure sufficient time is given to subjects other than English and mathematics
- b. Allocation of appropriate teaching time for all aspects of the curriculum

**Paragraphs:26,104,106,117**

Improve the quality of assessment criteria to inform teachers' short term planning by:

- a. Ensuring that the assessment criteria for each subject are clear and specific and set against National Curriculum expectations
- b. Ensuring that assessment criteria are agreed and used consistently by all teachers
- c. Using the information to plan work for pupils of differing prior attainment

**Paragraphs:37,38,80,81,97,102, 105,112,118**

Improve the accommodation by:

- a. Continuing the programme of school extensions and, with the support of the appropriate authority, alleviate the very cramped conditions within classrooms especially for the oldest pupils

**Paragraphs:47,54,69,71,88,100,124**

In addition the school may wish to consider the following points for inclusion in their action plan:

- a. Providing more planned opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures.
- b. Improving the quality of reports to parents
- c. Providing more opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative and develop independence in their own learning

**Paragraphs: 16, 23, 31,39,82,96,101,105.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	46	29	7	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		99
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y R– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		20

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		98/99	8	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	82	83	86

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	80	85	86

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		98/99	10	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	9
	Girls	3	1	2
	Total	13	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93	79	79
	National	65	65	69

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	2	1	2
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72	86	86
	National	65	65	71

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	99
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	24.8

**Education support staff: Y R – Y 6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	98/99
	£
Total income	198885
Total expenditure	200149
Expenditure per pupil	2063
Balance brought forward from previous year	5160
Balance carried forward to next year	3896

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	99
Number of questionnaires returned	58

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	26	10	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	5	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	43	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	38	10	2	0
The teaching is good.	74	25	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	44	0	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	17	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	36	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	57	34	9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	32	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	44	18	0	5

### Summary of parents and carers responses

#### Other issues raised by parents

Most of the comments attached to the questionnaires were very positive about the school. A few comments referred to the deficiencies in the accommodation or concerns about aspects of homework.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **Areas of learning in the foundation stage.**

59 Pupils enter school in the September or January preceding their fifth birthday, with a range of abilities, that overall are above those expected for the age. They are taught in the same class as Year 1 pupils, but work is generally matched appropriately to their age and abilities. The vast majority of children have pre-school experience, which has a positive impact on their personal and social development. All children make satisfactory progress, and by the age of five, children exceed expected standards in all the recommended areas of learning except creative development, and the majority of children are working on the Key Stage 1 programmes of study.

#### **Personal and social development**

60 Children enter school with well-developed social skills. They make satisfactory progress, and reach above expected standards by the age of five. Children behave very well, listen attentively, and show interest in their work. They are happy to come to school, and organise themselves for work activities with the minimum of fuss. Within group activities the children co-operate well, share and take turns, for example when playing a number game, and carry out tasks effectively with the minimum of supervision. Good opportunities are given for spiritual development in class assemblies, when children relate their own feelings of sadness to those experienced by Jesus' friends after he died. They say prayers, and reflect on their feelings and the feelings of others. The children relate well to older pupils when they work in partnership with them, for example, when making an egg cosy.

61 There are no formal plans for this area of the curriculum, as the curriculum is not planned according to the recommended areas of learning. Therefore, there are no records kept of the children's progress, but the adults in Class 1 know their children well, and respond to their individual needs. The adults set high expectations of behaviour, and the youngest children learn from the good role models set by the adults and older pupils in the class.

#### **Language and Literacy**

62 Children enter the reception class with a wide range of language skills. Some children express themselves well, and can write their names and recognise letters, while a few have limited vocabulary, and lack confidence to speak aloud. However, overall skills are above those expected for this age. The children make good progress, and, by the age of five have exceeded the Desirable Learning Outcomes with some higher attaining children working at the early levels of the National Curriculum. Children enjoy books and listen well to stories, and know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They recognise the names and sounds of most of the letters of the alphabet, and the majority use initial blends and sounds to help them read. They speak clearly in sentences, and can identify words from the text that rhyme. A few high-attaining children can read fluently, with due attention to punctuation. The majority of children can write their names and copy-write effectively. The higher-attaining children are working within the early levels of the National Curriculum, and are writing their own stories, forming their letters correctly.

63 The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good overall. The reception children are well integrated into the school's literacy strategy, although this does mean these young children are expected to sit for long periods of time on the carpet. The teacher plans tasks that are well matched to the children's abilities, providing them all with appropriately challenging work. The teacher and the classroom assistant set high expectations of what the children are to learn, and use questioning well, to ensure that the children contribute well to class and group discussions. Appropriate emphasis is placed on learning to read, and children take their books home each night to read with parents and carers, and this has a positive impact on their learning.

#### **Mathematics**

- 64 In mathematics, attainment on entry to the school is above expectations. Children make satisfactory progress, and, by the age of five exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes and are working within the National Curriculum programmes of study. They can count easily to at least twenty, and can recognise appropriate coins to make a given amount. They can effectively sort objects according to colour and size, using vocabulary such as 'shorter' or 'longer than', and order their shoe size from the shortest to the longest. They recognise and correctly name simple two and three-dimensional shapes and form repeated patterns using colour and shape. The higher-attaining children are learning to understand number operations, such as addition and subtraction, 'more than' and 'less than'.
- 65 The quality of teaching in mathematics is good. The children are effectively integrated into the school's numeracy strategy, and lessons are well planned to ensure that activities are well matched to the age and abilities of the children. Direct teaching, skilful questioning and a range of follow-up activities are successful in promoting good learning. On occasions, however, children are left to complete activities on their own, and this sometimes limits progress, as no further stimulus is given when children complete the task.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the world.**

- 66 Children have a good knowledge of the world around them when they enter school. They make satisfactory progress, and, by the age of five, exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They recognise the special clothes that are required for different sports, such as a riding helmet. They know that different materials mop up water with different effectiveness. They recognise the differences between houses built a long time ago and modern ones, and that children wore different clothes in Victorian times. They investigate the different materials around them, and classify objects according to what they are made of. Children use the computer effectively, and list new words that occur in their reading. They show confidence when using the computer, and use the keyboard and mouse with developing skill.
- 67 The quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory. The curriculum for this area of learning is delivered through National Curriculum subject areas to link with the needs of the Year 1 pupils. This is not always appropriate for the younger children as the format of the lessons are too prescribed, and there are missed opportunities in other lessons to develop a wider understanding of the world. The teacher and classroom assistant work well together to support the learning of all the children, through setting interesting tasks and effective questioning to ensure all pupils are involved. However, there is insufficient difference in the level of challenge for the oldest and youngest children, as all children complete the same work.

### **Creative development**

- 68 By the age of five, children's creative development is average. They make satisfactory progress throughout the reception year, and learn to mix paint effectively to create frogs using differing greens, and they use stripes and spots to paint animals. They can identify the primary colours, and use their thumbs effectively to print repeated colour patterns with paint. No music was seen during the inspection, but children sing choruses well in school assemblies.
- 69 In the one lesson observed, the quality of teaching in this area was satisfactory. However, there are limited opportunities for children to use their imagination when painting, or to have the freedom to express their moods and feelings through their drawings and paintings. Lessons are very teacher-directed, and there are few opportunities to develop their imagination through role-play. When making things, there are insufficient opportunities for children to design or plan their own work, or to make imaginative models using re-cycled materials. The classroom is very small and cramped, and there is limited space for creative activities, which limits the learning in this area. For example, the limited table-space available when the children were printing meant that children's work was smudged by the work of the neighbouring child.

### **Physical development.**

- 70 The children have appropriate access to the hall for physical activities, and they make very good progress in lessons. Attainment by the age of five is well above expected standards. Children control small and large balls well by rolling, bouncing and using feet. Higher-attaining children have good hand-eye co-ordination, and can regularly catch balls thrown to them. They move with a good awareness of space using the confined environment of the hall well. In other lessons they manipulate a range of small tools such as brushes, scissors and glue sticks, effectively and carefully, and handle construction equipment with deftness. They show good control of pencils and the majority of children form their letters correctly, and colour pictures keeping well within the lines.
- 71 In the one lesson observed teaching was very good, and activities well planned to appropriately challenge all abilities. The teacher has good subject knowledge, and activities are interesting, ensuring all pupils concentrate well to improve their performance. However, there are no opportunities for the youngest pupils to improve their physical deftness through controlling wheeled toys, and through imaginative use of climbing equipment. There is no separate outside secure area for use by the children under five to further improve their physical development without interference from older children.

## ENGLISH

- 72 Attainment in English has improved since the last inspection. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 the proportion of pupils reaching the average level 2 and the higher level 3 in reading was very high in comparison with the national average. When compared with similar schools pupils' performance is well above average. Results in writing were well above the national average at the expected level 2 and well above average at the higher level 3. When compared with similar schools pupils' performance is well above average. There are no significant gender variations. Results have been consistently high over a three-year period.
- 73 In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 the proportion of pupils reaching the average level 4 was well above the national average and the proportion reaching the higher level 5 was above average. Results are above average when compared with similar schools. Results have been consistently high over a three-year period. There are no significant gender variations. Teachers' assessments generally match the test results.
- 74 The inspection findings show pupils' attainment in reading and writing to be well above expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Progress is good overall. The cohort of pupils is small, generally being around 14 and this can have a significant impact on results year-on-year. In the current Year 6 there are a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs and this is impacting on the standards achieved. The less good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 is also having an adverse effect on pupils' attainment. Pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with expectations. Pupils make satisfactory and some times good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the good level of support they receive.
- 75 Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils enter school with good speaking and listening skills and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing them through a variety of class and school activities, but there is no planned progression for the development of speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school they listen well to their teachers and each other during whole class and group sessions. Pupils in Year 1 discuss confidently what to wear on special occasions following their work on 'Special Clothes'. Most answer in sentences relevant to the subject matter. By Year 2, they clearly explain their reasons for why they think the dinosaurs behaved in a certain way when discussing 'Dinosaur dinners' in the literacy hour. Most pupils can adapt their talk to the required purpose and listen with good levels of concentration. By Years 3 and 4, they confidently read aloud, use a widening vocabulary when discussing their work and give clear explanations of their views. By Year 6 they talk and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts. They clearly articulate the reasons why they enjoy particular books and ask questions to develop their ideas and extend their knowledge.

- 76 Standards in reading are high by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make a good start to reading in the reception classes. They enjoy reading books and some are competent readers. They make good progress in Year 1. They read confidently and use phonic skills well to work out unknown words. By Year 2, the higher and average attaining pupils read confidently and accurately with a good level of expression. They recount enthusiastically the content of the stories they have read and are keen to compare the stories of their favourite authors. For example, they compare Roald Dahl's books' with those of Enid Blyton. They find them "similar adventure stories but Roald Dahl's are a bit more about magic". They read and extract information appropriately from non-fiction books. Lower attaining pupils read confidently at their level using their phonic skills well. They talk about their favourite characters and understand the story content. Pupils in Year 4 read very well with good levels of expression and discuss the events and characters in books such as 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets'. Many have good library skills although they make limited use of the school's library. By the end of Key Stage 2, the higher attaining pupils read in a very mature manner and quickly identify key features and relevant information to support their views. They explain their choice of book carefully. For example, one pupil is reading "Letters to Henrietta" written during World War 1 as a result of studying World War 2 when she was in Year 5. Average attaining pupils also attain a good standard in reading whilst lower attaining pupils, although competent to read, are reading simple texts and rely mainly on their phonic skills. There is no evidence of whole school planned progression in the development of reading skills nor of good use being made of guided reading in the literacy hour to focus on specific skills development.
- 77 Pupils achieve very good standards in writing at Key Stage 1. They make good progress in both Years 1 and 2. Evidence from pupil's work shows good gains in their writing in reception and Year 1 both in terms of accuracy and quality of writing. In Year 2, pupils further develop their writing through a variety of activities such as poems, writing instructions, stories and comprehension activities. By the end of the key stage, the higher attaining pupils write imaginative stories using capital letters and full stops. Some make good use of descriptive vocabulary choices. For example, when writing about Floppy the Dog, 'Floppy has large, floppy ears. He is certainly not energetic'. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 improve their writing skills through increased use of punctuation within sentences, reconstructing compound sentences so they make sense and through writing for a variety of purposes such as writing slogans. By the end of Key Stage 2 higher and average attaining pupils punctuate their work well. Stories are interestingly told and some make good use of paragraphs. Writing in a variety of styles is well developed and vocabulary choices are imaginative. For example one pupil wrote, 'Soaring high, I hovered a while'. Simple and complex sentences are used appropriately to create atmosphere. Pupils use thesauruses effectively to help them find homophones. Some pupils learn to present points of view in a reasoned manner when writing about walking to school versus coming in the car. Lower attaining pupils write simple sentences, which are correctly punctuated with capital letters and full stops. The school places appropriate emphasis on the development of handwriting skills, including its recent drive to ensure a consistent approach to its development across the school. Pupils have regular practice and standards of handwriting and presentation are good throughout the school.
- 78 Pupils have spellings to learn on a regular basis and, as a result of this, and a good focus on spelling within the literacy hour, most pupils spell well for their age. Standards in literacy are good and literacy skills are used appropriately across the curriculum, for example, pupils in Year 2 use their speaking and listening skills well when discussing historical evidence and how it is recorded. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 write for different audiences, for example, when explaining the process of photosynthesis.
- 79 Pupils enjoy their work in English and their response is always good. They listen well in lessons and are keen to take part or answer questions on the lesson content. They stay on task extremely well and are keen to complete their work accurately. Behaviour in lessons is almost always good and there are good relationships with their teachers and each other. Behaviour deteriorates slightly in some lessons when pupils find the work boring or the lessons are over-directed by the teacher and there is limited pupil participation.
- 80 The quality of teaching in English is good at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, fifty per cent is satisfactory and fifty per cent is good. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and use the National Literacy Strategy well in order to provide work at appropriate levels for pupils who learn

at different rates. Teachers plan lessons well and questioning is used effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons generally have a brisk pace and learning resources are used well to support the lesson content. For example, in the Year 3/4 class the teacher made good use of a variety of cereal packets when working on the identification of slogans and this helped pupils greatly when writing their own. In all lessons pupils are managed well and this contributes effectively to their learning. In the very good lesson seen in Year 2 the teacher provided a good level of challenge, used questioning very effectively to enable pupils to learn new skills and gain a greater understanding of the text. In the lesson seen in the Year 5/6 class the work was too teacher directed with little opportunity for pupil involvement resulting in a loss of interest and concentration. The work had limited challenge and pupils did not make the progress of which they are capable. Marking is generally sound, although variable across the school, and apart from Year 2 does not set targets for improvements that are shared with pupils, although this is part of the new marking policy. Pupils, particularly older pupils, are insufficiently involved in the process of improving their work. Parents make a very good contribution to pupils' developing reading and writing skills through an effective homework partnership.

- 81 The curriculum for English is based on the National Literacy Strategy, which the school has very successfully implemented. Work is well planned and matched to pupils who learn at different rates. There are good summative procedures in place for assessment, such as the optional tests for pupils in years 3,4 and 5 and the school charts pupil's progress over time well. However, there is no portfolio of moderated work, which has been agreed by the whole staff to ensure that judgements are based on clearly identified criteria or reading records which clearly show the skills required for each level of reading. Test data is used to inform planning for groups of pupils and this is an improvement since the last inspection but limited use is made of clear specific assessment criteria to inform on-going assessment and there is no consistency across the school.
- 82 The co-ordinator is newly appointed to the role but has already implemented a policy for handwriting as a result of monitoring work in classrooms. She has given formal feedback to all staff in the teaching of literacy and has clearly identified strengths and weaknesses. She is aware that reading records need to be more focused on strategies and skills, pupils need more challenge in their work at the end of Key Stage 2 and speaking and listening skills need to be developed in a systematic way. There are good resources to support literacy and a good level of texts for guided reading sessions although these are not used well to focus on specific reading skills. There is a small library however this is not used well by pupils as an aid to developing individual research skills. The school has set appropriate targets to improve standards across the school bearing in mind the issue of small cohorts and year groups with high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Regular book weeks are used effectively to promote reading within the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 83 Since the last inspection standards have improved. The school has made good progress in raising and maintaining high standards through the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has improved the quality of planning, teaching and learning. Teachers' assessment, target setting and the results of National Curriculum tests in mathematics are now used effectively to inform future planning.
- 84 In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests pupils' performance was very high in comparison with the national average in the number of pupils reaching the national standard level 2 or above. The pupils' performance was well above the national average in the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils reaching levels 4 or above and level 5 or above was above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, based on the 1999 results, pupils' performance in mathematics was well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and close to the average at the end of Key Stage 2. However over the four-year period 1996 to 1999 the figures show that the performance of the pupils in mathematics was above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2, with no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Teachers own assessments closely matching the test results.

- 85 Inspection evidence shows that pupils are achieving well above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. They have a good understanding of number, count confidently and solve problems requiring mental recall of number bonds. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils in Year 2 indicate that this year's pupils confidently classify two and three-dimensional shapes by using faces, edges and corners and can find lines of symmetry. Children use coins to complete multiplication and subtraction sums when buying fruit from the class shop. The most able pupils know how to subtract money to one pound and how to work out the change. They measure carefully large and small objects such as a table or pencil, and in doing so, use standard and non-standard units. Many estimate quite accurately and then check results to see whether they are right. They collect data and interpret it. Year 2 pupils researched the number and type of pets owned by pupils and displayed the results as table and block graphs using the class computer.
- 86 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of number and pupils make good progress as they move through the key stage. Inspection evidence supports the schools predicted results for this year's National Curriculum mathematics tests. Due to the wide range of ability in this cohort standards of work overall are broadly in line with the national average.
- 87 Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is well above average and the development of number skills takes place quickly. Progress in lessons in Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils in Year 3 count in tens and have an understanding of place value, while able pupils in Year 4 complete sequences of numbers involving fractions and use calculators to convert fractions to decimals. Pupils of average ability in Year 5 understand the differences of odd and even numbers and use this knowledge to check their answers. Higher attaining pupils write word problems containing negative numbers.
- 88 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is always good and sometimes very good. In Key Stage 2 half of the teaching is satisfactory and half of it is good. Teachers manage pupils well and this has a positive impact on the well-structured learning that takes place. They give appropriate amounts of time to direct class teaching, group teaching and individual support. Teachers plan lessons with care and focus their work accurately on the learning objectives, enabling pupils to make good progress in mathematics, particularly in their number work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers support them appropriately by explaining special vocabulary and mathematical procedure. Pupils gain experience of investigative work throughout the key stages. Higher attaining pupils make good progress due to the challenging nature of their work. Pupils enjoy their mathematics work, they respond positively, particularly when the teaching is interesting and challenging. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 worked hard to complete the shopping tasks involving 'their' money, calculating and recording the results of each transaction. Teachers challenge pupils by asking probing questions. Pupils listen attentively to the teacher and to one another and most are eager to suggest possible answers to problems and to describe how they have thought them through. Pupils in Year 6 were able to explain how they checked their answers using previously learnt rules about odd and even numbers. Teachers' management skills are very good and they have high expectations that their pupils will understand and achieve. They use plenary sessions of lessons effectively to check pupils' understanding and identify their errors and misconceptions. The teachers analyse pupils' responses and respond constructively in order to take the pupils learning forward. Teachers set well-focused homework to reinforce and develop what has been learnt at school. The main weakness in the teaching arise out of the limited opportunities teachers are able to provide for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in practical applications, due to lack of space in three out of the four classrooms.
- 89 The curriculum co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and has a development plan to inform curriculum development. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, structure of the daily mathematics lesson and its emphasis on improving mental arithmetic skills is having a very good impact on pupils learning. The careful monitoring by the headteacher and the subject co-ordinator, through classroom observation and scrutiny of planning have been significant and positive factors in pupils' very good achievements. Resources are generally adequate but accommodation is limiting practical aspects of the subject due to lack of space. Further use of information technology to improve

learning opportunities for pupils in mathematics is already part of the school development planning for mathematics. Assessment is used satisfactorily to track pupils' progress over time and to set work, which is appropriate and challenging.

## SCIENCE

- 90 The 1999 national assessment results for the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly in line with the national average, but results were well below the level expected for schools of this type. Over two of the past three years, results have been above average, but were in line with the national average in 1999. Evidence of current standards observed during the inspection shows that pupils are again in line to meet national expectations. Overall there is deterioration in standards at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. Although standards meet the expected national averages, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory compared with their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. This is as a result of the unsatisfactory teaching at the end of Key Stage 2, and the way the science curriculum is delivered. The curriculum is delivered through a two-year cycle, which results in long periods of time when parts of the curriculum are not revisited. For example, forces were taught in Year 5 and not revisited in Year 6, and this has had a negative impact on the national results. There are plans, however, to address this weakness by adopting a new scheme of work in September, which gives more guidance for teachers on how to deliver the curriculum for mixed-age classes. The Year 6 cohort is small, only sixteen pupils, three of whom have special educational needs, and this will have an impact on this year's results.
- 91 In the national teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, pupils' attainments were well above the national average. Current inspection evidence confirms that standards are above the national average, and pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on entry. This is as a direct result of the very good focussed teaching at the end of the key stage. There is also a good emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills throughout Key Stage 1, where pupils are given opportunities to carry out their own experiments, and this has a very positive impact on the standards achieved.
- 92 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have well-developed investigative skills, and know what it means to conduct a fair test. They have a good understanding of different materials, and know about the senses, and the digestive system. They investigate the effect of heat and cold on bread, and appreciate that cooking is an irreversible reaction. They are beginning to predict sensibly, and record their results using a variety of charts and diagrams. The very youngest pupils are given opportunities to find out what the best material would be for a mop. They predict their results, and then adjust their knowledge and understanding in response to their findings.
- 93 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know about the major organs of the body and their functions. They investigate the effect exercise has on pulse rate, and they can separate mixtures by using dissolving and filtering. They are aware of what constitutes a healthy life style, and they learn about the adverse effects of smoking. Pupils in Year 5 do the same work as pupils in Year 6. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 do similar work, and learn about the human skeleton and the different food groups. They investigate materials, and carry out experiments to find the best material for swimwear. They learn about evaporation and condensation and the water cycle. Some of the work covered in Years 3 and 4 is the same as that done in Years 5 and 6, and there is no significant development in the work or its level of difficulty. This adversely affects achievements.
- 94 Pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons, which has a positive impact on their learning. They are interested, concentrate well on the task, and co-operate well while doing experiments. They discuss their findings sensibly when working in-groups, and respect the opinions of others. They are keen and eager to learn, and many pupils carry out their own investigations at home, thus furthering their knowledge and understanding.
- 95 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall, with some very good teaching at the end of the Key Stage. Lessons are well planned with a clear focus so that pupils know exactly what they are to learn. Pupils are managed well, and given appropriately challenging activities. Lessons proceed at a good pace, and in the best lesson the pupils are constantly questioned about how, why, and what has happened. This makes the pupils think about what they are doing, and reasons behind their discoveries. A very effective quiz session: 'What am I?' ensured that

all pupils understood the differences between ordinary and frozen bread and toast. Although pupils do the same activity in all lessons, very effective questioning and support ensure that all abilities make good gains in their learning.

- 96 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory overall, although there was some satisfactory teaching seen. In the satisfactory lesson the teacher has sound knowledge and understanding of the subject, and uses the plenary session well to establish what pupils have learned. There is a lack of teacher confidence and expertise at the end of the key stage, which has a detrimental effect on the learning for those pupils. This lack of confidence results in activities being very prescribed, and opportunities for pupils to make their own choices and plan their own experiments are limited. This prevents pupils reaching the required standards, in the investigative strand of the subject, by the end of the Key Stage. There are low expectations of behaviour, and the inappropriate emphasis on being quiet, and being careful not to spill things on the carpet, is unnecessary for such mature and well-behaved pupils. Teachers' planning generally lacks a range of differing challenging activities for different abilities and age groups. However, teachers give additional support in lessons to ensure all pupils understand the task, and are able to complete it.
- 97 Science has not enjoyed a high profile, as the school's priorities have appropriately been on the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The co-ordinator, therefore, has not had opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in science, but there are plans to start this in September. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, and teachers do have a clear idea of what level of learning their pupils have reached, but the results of these assessments do not sufficiently inform changes to the curriculum. The new scheme of work, due to be implemented in September, gives helpful guidance on how to plan the curriculum for the mixed-age classes, so that there is a continuous progression of learning. Aspects of the curriculum will then be visited more frequently without unnecessary repetition. There is insufficient use of information technology to support the curriculum.

## ART

- 98 Only one lesson was observed in each key stage during the inspection, but evidence was gathered from close scrutiny of pupils' work displayed around the school and examination of teachers' planning. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line to meet the expected level for seven-year-old pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were described as unsatisfactory. However, standards have not improved sufficiently by the end of Key Stage 2, and are still unsatisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 in relation to their achievements on entry, but progress is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. This means the key issue from the last inspection has only been partially addressed.
- 99 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils mix paint well, and use pastel and pencils effectively to create observational drawings of daffodils, and paintings in the style of Salvador Dali. They make repeated patterns using junk materials, and make a large collaborative, colourful, collage showing different materials that are used in a street setting, linked to their science work on materials. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their use of paint by making representations of *The Kiss* by the artist Gustav Klimt. The older pupils use pastel well to shade and smudge when drawing fantasy landscapes and mountains, but the results are all very similar, suggesting that insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to use their own ideas and imagination. This limits learning in Key Stage 2.
- 100 In the two lessons observed pupils show positive attitudes to their work, and enjoy their lessons. They concentrate well, and use equipment sensibly. The youngest pupils access their own materials with a degree of choice and clear away afterwards with the minimum of fuss. Due to the cramped accommodation, pupils in Key Stage 2 had their equipment prepared for them and cleared away afterwards. In addition within this lesson there were limited opportunities for them to experiment with the medium.
- 101 Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, but teachers' planning shows that there is still a lack of development of the necessary skills to raise standards

further. For example, there is no evidence of the pupils developing a progression of observational skills. Activities are planned well, but there is a lack of clarity in the planning as to what skills the pupils will have learned by the end of the lesson. The work on display shows that lessons are very prescribed, and that all pupils do exactly the same activity, thus denying them the opportunities to experiment with media, try their own ideas, and learn from experience. There is little evidence that pupils are given the opportunity to create large collaborative works, paint pictures in response to moods and feelings, and there is little three-dimensional work, or work with textiles. All this adversely affects the learning of the pupils.

102 The allocation of teaching time has improved since the last inspection, and now art is taught regularly as a subject in its own right, rather than servicing other areas of the curriculum. The accommodation has improved, and some classes now have access to water. The subject leader has worked hard to raise the profile of art in the school, with some success. She has monitored the quality of teaching, and given training for teachers to raise their competence and confidence. Teachers are now more aware of the artistic skills involved in the subject, particularly in Key Stage 1, and this has helped to raise standards. There is no assessment for the subject, which prevents teachers being able to analyse pupils' work and monitor progress. Teachers' plans are not monitored to ensure that the activities planned continuously challenge pupils, and develop their skills. There is a good portfolio of pupils' work, but the work is not annotated to give guidance to teachers on how skills can be developed.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

103 Only one lesson of design and technology was seen during the inspection, but close examination of pupils' work, and scrutiny of teachers' planning, show that there has been some improvement since the last inspection. The key issue of raising standards has been partially addressed but literacy and numeracy training has been a priority and teacher training for design and technology has been put on hold. Standards throughout the school are still unsatisfactory, and pupils' progress overall is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils are not given activities that are sufficiently demanding, and there is no progressive development of skills throughout the school. A new scheme of work has been introduced, but it has not been in place for long enough to have an impact on standards.

104 At Key Stage 1, pupils design and make a cover to keep an egg warm, and create a picture of a girl, using their printing and sewing skills. The opportunities for design and technology are limited, and there is no evidence that pupils use tools or design items, such as cards with moving parts. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to do very simple tasks. In Year 3 and 4 they effectively use glue to join wood, and card to make simple bases for their Millennium Dome project, but do not make a wooden framework first. Pupils' skills are underdeveloped as many pupils are unable to measure accurately, and designs do not give clear guidance on how to achieve the task pupils have set for themselves. The older pupils effectively design and make a shelter, by joining twigs and covering them with material, but by the time pupils leave the school they have had no experience of designing and making models using mechanisms to make their designs move.

105 Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, but examination of teachers' plans shows there is a lack of teacher expertise, and no clear progression of skills is taught. Plans do not make it clear exactly what pupils will have learnt by the end of the lesson, and there are no clear assessment procedures to establish what pupils have learned. The activities set are very teacher-directed, and give little room for pupils to use their own ideas. Activities do not get progressively harder as the pupils get older; indeed the project set for Year 5 and 6 was considerably less challenging than the project being undertaken by Years 3 and 4. As a result pupils' skill acquisition is unsatisfactory, and standards remain as they were at the last inspection.

106 Since the last inspection there are specific design technology lessons planned which is an improvement since the last inspection, but there is little curriculum time dedicated to the subject to enable pupils to develop their skills at the appropriate rate. Pupils from Year 5/6 join with pupils from the reception/Year 1 class every two weeks to complete a design technology project. This enhances the older pupils' social development whilst the content of the lesson is pitched at the needs of the youngest pupils. The new scheme of work gives excellent guidance for teachers

to help them plan their lessons, but teachers are not using it adequately to enhance pupils' skills and raise standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107 Standards are in line with those of pupils of the same age by the end of both key stages. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection. At Key Stage 1 no geography lessons were observed. Evidence is derived mainly from the work in pupils' books, discussions with pupils, work on display and teachers' planning.

108 Key Stage 1 geography is taught under the heading of topics. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have made good progress in knowledge and understanding of their own environment and are developing an awareness of the wider world. Pupils in Year 2 spoke about last term's topic of comparing two localities - Katie Morag's Scottish Island and their own village, listing the differences between the two places. They also identify countries on a world map, describe the use of a key to identify particular features and have a detailed knowledge of places associated with Florence Nightingale. They have an understanding of the effects of weather on people and places and have a good geographical vocabulary.

109 Key Stage 2 pupils build on their knowledge and understanding of places, by the study of their own and contrasting localities and investigate rivers and the weather. Pupils at the beginning of the key stage make a detailed study of the effects on their school environment of the new school hall building project. They make maps of the area, survey opinion and plan for the development of the areas around the new hall. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 study the differences between their village and Pampagrande, a poor Peruvian village in the Andes Mountains. Pupils show a good understanding of the differences, making good use of resources including maps and photographs to raise their awareness of localities beyond their own. They describe and compare physical and human features and describe how the different localities affect the lives of people.

110 The quality of teaching seen was good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. In the lessons seen the teachers have clear learning objectives, make links with other areas such as art, data handling in mathematics and information technology. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively. Teachers make effective use of questions and review to check pupils' understanding and to challenge and extend their thinking. Teachers make good use of resources to raise pupils' interest including visits around the school and a recent visit by pupils in Years 3 and 4 to the Millennium Dome. The pupils are positive and teachers manage them well. Attitudes and behaviour in geography lessons are at least satisfactory and often good and this is because the work is well planned and presented in an interesting manner.

111 Since the last inspection the school has produced a scheme of work based on recent national guidelines. Resources have improved to include more maps and information packs. The school's assessment and recording procedures are unsatisfactory, as they do not sufficiently ensure that the work meets the needs of individual pupils or informs future planning. The co-ordinator monitors the medium term planning but does not monitor the teaching of the subject or the standards of pupils' attainment across the year groups.

## **HISTORY**

112 Only one lesson was seen, but evidence was obtained from the scrutiny of pupils' work and examination of teachers' plans. Standards in history at both key stages are at the expected level and this is a similar finding to the previous inspection.

113 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils compare life in the past with life now, and learn about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale. They begin to appreciate the importance at looking at first-hand evidence such as photographs, and are aware of the different types of evidence that help to inform us about the past. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn about the Victorians and Tudors, and through these topics gain a reasonable sense of chronology. Too few lessons were seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. The work seen suggests that history lessons are very teacher-directed, and there is a dependence on the use of worksheets rather than finding out from primary sources. However, good use is made of local places of interest, such as Kentwell when pupils become Tudors for the day. This Tudor experience helps pupils to fully

appreciate what life was like in those days, and has a very positive impact on their learning. Good use is also made of the local community when pupils talk to older residents about their lives.

114 A new scheme of work has recently been introduced, ensuring that the curriculum is balanced, and that there is a progression of skills taught. There is a lack of consistent formal assessment to check the level of pupils' learning, or to inform future curriculum planning.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

115 Standards of attainment in information technology at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with national expectations. However despite improved provision for information technology, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are lower than national norms.

116 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use appropriate programs to create illustrations for art work and can word process examples of their writing, contributing pieces of finished work to the class story book. They use data handling programs to support their work in mathematics and illustrate the results of a class pet survey as a block graph. They have sound keyboard skills and control of the mouse. Most pupils can, with help, use information technology to sort, classify and present information and have a sound range of word processing skills. The number of computers available restricts the use of information technology in other subjects. However, Year 1 pupils used their computer to support work in English, mathematics and geography, illustrating their weather record by the use of an information technology generated pictogram. Standards are enhanced through the use of other resources such as video and listening centres. Control technology is being developed through the use of a Roamer and screen turtle.

117 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' word process stories and poems effectively, they change the font and size of text and some use a spell checker when writing as part of English or geography topic work. They are beginning to understand the use of databases and the advantages of using a computer to store, retrieve, sort and present information. A more able group of Year 6 pupils used a data handling and presentation program to collate information gathered about a recent work-shadowing project run by a number of local schools. The pupils used the information gathered and with support created a good quality presentation. However pupils have had little experience of using the computer to control models, screen turtles or using sensors to monitor temperature, light and sound. They have limited awareness of the use of information technology and control in the wider world, such as in shops, banks, and industry and in home appliances.

118 Since the last inspection the school has improved its information technology resources and now has computers with multi media capability and Internet access. A planned programme of In-service training has raised teachers' information technology skills. The operating skills of pupils have kept pace with new advances in technology and standards are improving.

119 There was little evidence of teachers and pupils working together on information technology. An analysis of planning shows that all teachers make some reference to information technology work, though planning lacks detail and there are few references to the skills to be developed. During the inspection computers in the classrooms were not being used sufficiently and opportunities for the teaching of information technology were not always fully utilised. This adversely affects the rate of pupils' progress. The school makes good use of parent help to support pupils' learning and the school is presently building its own web page with pupil input supported by parent help.

120 There is insufficient opportunity for pupils to monitor external events or use modelling and control technology. There is insufficient guidance on how the recently developed scheme of work is to be used to support the teaching of information technology across the school. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. This affects progress, as tasks do not build on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Not all computers have printers that work, which limits their effectiveness, as pupils are unable to print out their work. Other resources, for example tape recorders, televisions with video recorders are satisfactory.

121 The school has recognised through its development plan for information technology the need to improve standards and provision for information technology. Some of the areas that are highlighted for development in the previous inspection report are still outstanding.

## **MUSIC**

122 No lessons were seen in music during the inspection. There is therefore insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards and progress in music. In the last inspection there was sufficient evidence to judge that pupils were attaining satisfactory standards. Evidence from teachers' planning and pupils' response to music both in assemblies, peripatetic music lessons and recorder clubs indicate that apart from the limited percussion instruments and limitations due to accommodation the subject is covered satisfactorily.

123 In assemblies, pupils at Key Stage 1 enjoy singing. They sing songs such as "Thank You Lord" tunefully and all know the words well. They are keen to suggest their own verses for the song. There are a good number of pupils in the Key Stage 2 choir and a good mix of boys and girls. They sing clearly and melodiously, their diction is clear and they have learnt good breathing techniques. They have a good repertoire of known songs that they sing confidently, paying good attention to changes in dynamics. They are confident to perform to an audience, have very good musical skills and clearly understand the requirements of being part of a choir. There are two lunch time recorder groups taken by the head teacher and pupils have good opportunities to improve their playing, use musical notation accurately and learn to recognise musical symbols. The teacher's very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils enables them to make good progress.

124 A good number of pupils in the school benefit from the peripatetic music provision. They are learning to play instruments such as the violin and make good progress in improving their performance. Pupils read the notes on the staff with a good level of accuracy. They learn to vary dynamic as a result of the teacher's good focus on appropriate terms such as 'mezzo' 'forte' 'piano'.

125 There is an appropriate scheme of work in place for music and this together with teachers' planning and a good level of support from the co-ordinator ensures subject coverage. There is good enhancement of the music provision through a variety of lessons given by the music teacher from Tring School, regular visits from musicians, Christmas musical productions and opportunities for the choir to sing at the Albert Hall.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126 By the end of both key stages, pupils attain overall standards in line with national expectations, and some pupils exceed these standards particularly in athletics, gymnastics and games. The present limitations on space and range of apparatus for indoor work restrict the development of a full physical education programme. However pupils participate in a range of physical activities including athletics and swimming.

127 In Key Stage 1 pupils develop good control and balance in the basic actions of travelling, jumping, turning and being still. In games skills lessons pupils demonstrate good ball control, agility and co-ordination. Planned opportunities to perform simple rhythmic patterns and use movement expressively to explore moods and feelings in response to stimuli including music are limited. In both gymnastics and games, pupils learn to link actions and movement into short sequences. Pupils enjoyed the challenge of planning, performing and evaluating their performance.

128 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have good ball skills. They kick accurately and understand and play simplified versions of football, rugby and netball. They position the ball well, anticipating where and when they need to pass the ball. Most pupils develop good tactical skills of anticipating where they need to be in order to receive the ball. The school's success in inter-schools games, cross-country and athletics tournaments underlines the good standards achieved by pupils across a range of activities. Nearly all pupils attain standards in swimming that match or exceed national expectations. Most pupils have a good understanding of the value of exercise in maintaining health and fitness.

- 129 Since the last inspection standards of achievement have improved. The limitations of indoor space have been offset by an increasing amount of opportunities for pupils to improve their games and athletics skills by using the school's good outdoor facilities and local facilities including a swimming pool.
- 130 The quality of teaching is most often good and sometimes very good. The main strengths in the teaching lie in the teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, in the brisk pace of many lessons and in the challenge set for pupils at all levels. For example the activities in one Key Stage 1 lesson gave pupils good opportunities to practise and improve a range of skills and provided them with the opportunity to evaluate their own and one another's performance. Nearly all the pupils respond well to lessons, especially when they are suitably challenged. They behave well and respond well to the teacher's direction. In a Year 5 lesson pupils made good gains in their ability to practise and evaluate a sequence of fitness activities. The teacher provided good, clear explanations of the task and was effective in ensuring that pupils were always sensible in their use of the restricted accommodation.
- 131 The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has developed a good scheme of work for physical education to ensure that the pupils experience most aspects of the subject including outdoor adventure activities. There are effective methods for recording individual pupil's attainment, enabling the co-ordinator to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' skills and the quality of provision. The accommodation for physical education is unsatisfactory, however the school's new multipurpose hall, ready for use next term, will provide the school with very good accommodation for gymnastics and dance. Lunchtime clubs and after school activities, which include football, netball, rounders and cricket, make a positive contribution to the pupils' physical and social development.