

INSPECTION REPORT

Stokes Wood Primary School
Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique Reference Number: 120038

Headteacher: Lesley Kibble

Reporting inspector: Brenda Iles

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707556

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Blackett Avenue Leicester LE3 9BX
Telephone number:	0116 2875305
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. P. Meadows
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

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Brenda Iles, Registered Inspector	Art	Attainment and progress
	Religious education	Teaching
	Areas of learning for children under five	
Richard Barnard, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community The efficiency of the school Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Brian Aldridge	Special educational needs	
Graham Bate	Design and technology Science History	Leadership and management
Judy Dawson	Physical education Mathematics Information technology	The curriculum and assessment
David Hill	Music English	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Geography	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is of good quality and enables pupils to make good progress in learning.
- Provision for children under five is very good and enables children to make good progress.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress.
- The headteacher and senior management team provides very strong leadership and clear direction for school improvement, aided effectively by staff and governors.
- The curriculum and assessment procedures are effective and support the aim of raising attainment.
- Relationships are very good. The staff have a very good knowledge of pupils and this supports pupils' personal development very well.
- The quality of information provided for parents is very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in speaking are below average.
- II. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory

The strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses identified will be addressed by the governors in their post-inspection action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Very good progress has been made in improving almost all the areas raised as key issues in the previous inspection through systematically addressing the weaknesses in order of priority. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, science and music and by the age of eleven more pupils attain levels which are average and above. Standards remain unsatisfactory in information technology. Raising attainment in this subject is a current curriculum priority and remains a key issue for the school to address. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Curriculum planning is now of good quality and assessment procedures enable the needs of all pupils, including the more able, to be well met. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good.

Arrangements for the professional development of staff have successfully supported teachers in extending their management roles. The school improvement plan is of a high standard, analysing and identifying clearly current and future priorities. There is very effective delegation of responsibilities, which enables targets to be achieved. The senior management team is very effective and staff and governors share a clear understanding of current and future priorities. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are effective and inform decision making. Leadership and management are now significant strengths of the school and as a consequence the school has made very good progress since the last inspection and has a very good capacity to continue to improve. Targets set for both individuals and cohorts of pupils are challenging but realistic.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in Year 6 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	with	Compared with similar schools	·	Key
					<i>well above average</i> A
					<i>above average</i> B
English	E		E		<i>Average</i> C
Mathematics	E		D		<i>below average</i> D
Science	C		C		<i>well below average</i> E

This table shows that in the 1998 tests for eleven-year-olds attainment in English and mathematics was well below average and in science it was average. Comparisons with similar schools suggest that attainment in English was well below average, in mathematics below average and in science average. Similar school comparisons do not take account of the much higher than average proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs and the inclusion in the figures of pupils in the small unit for children with moderate learning difficulties. Half of the 1998 Year 6 cohort was on the register of special educational needs; 22 per cent were on stage 2 and a further 22 per cent on stages 3 to 5. Twelve per cent of pupils had statements of specific need and a further seven per cent of pupils received provision for moderate learning difficulties. Fifteen per cent of pupils joined the cohort in the year preceding the assessments.

The most recent test results for pupils aged eleven in 1999 show that standards are improving in English and mathematics and have been maintained in science; inspection evidence indicates that standards are now average in Year 6 classes in all three subjects. By the time pupils leave the school attainment in information technology is below average. Information technology is a current initiative and recent progress in this subject is satisfactory. Attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Progress in art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education is satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Very Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Good
Religious education		Good	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Very good	Good	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching is at least good in two-thirds of lessons and in almost a quarter of lessons it is very good. The remainder is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection, which shows a significant improvement from the previous report when a fifth of lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching of children under five in the nursery and of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very good. The good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress in their learning.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils behave well in lessons and at play. They have a good understanding of the school rules and strive to maintain them.
Attendance	Rates of attendance have improved and are satisfactory.
Ethos*	The ethos for learning is very good. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and attitudes to learning are positive.
Leadership and management	The headteacher and senior management team provide very strong leadership and are well supported by committed staff and governors who share the vision for school improvement.
Curriculum	The curriculum is of good quality and effectively supports teaching and learning.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Spiritual and cultural development is promoted well.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Teachers and support staff effectively support pupils' learning. Resources are mainly of good quality and range. The building and grounds support the delivery of the curriculum and are well maintained.
Value for money	The school provides good value for money

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

• **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- III. The good progress they feel their children make
- IV. The values and attitudes that encourage pupils' cultural and social awareness
- V. The code of conduct that supports good behaviour
- VI. Suggestions and complaints are dealt with effectively
- VII. The progress the school has made since the previous inspection

What some parents are not happy about

- VIII. A small number of parents feel there is
- IX. A small number of parents would like more

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. The amount of homework expected of pupils is appropriate to their ages and abilities and is regularly reviewed. A current priority is to increase opportunities for parents to become involved in school life and support their children's education. Funding from the Education Action Zone supports this initiative.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To improve further the quality of education offered by the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- . Raise standards of spoken English across all age groups by:
 - . providing a range of structured opportunities for pupils to present their ideas and opinions to a range of audiences;
 - . raising awareness and confidence in the use of Standard English;
 - . encouraging clarity of pronunciation to support accuracy in spelling; and
 - . introducing subject specific language across the breadth of the curriculum to increase pupils' vocabularies and enable them to explain fully their personal knowledge and understanding.Paragraphs: 8, 16, 86, 102-4

- . Raise standards in information technology by:
 - . providing appropriate training to increase staff competence and expertise;
 - . ensuring efficient use of the computer suite throughout the school day; and
 - . improving resources to support its development across the curriculum.Paragraphs: 8, 22, 68, 71, 75, 140, 146-51.

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

- . Improve the consistency of marking to ensure pupils have a clear understanding of their significant achievements and how work can be improved. Paragraphs: 35, 108, 117, 125.
- . Ensure the provision of more frequent, regular and up to date information for governors to improve the monitoring of finances. Paragraph 73.
- . Ensure consistent expectations in the presentation of pupils' work. Paragraph 35, 106.
- . Ensure the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements. Paragraph 62, 66.

· **INTRODUCTION**

Characteristics of the school

1. Stokes Wood Primary School serves the New Parks and Western Park areas of Leicester. Most pupils live in New Parks with a quarter of pupils attending the school from the Western Park area. A significant proportion of pupils live in rented and small owner occupied housing. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The school has an attractive and spacious site and generous accommodation with a hall, gymnasium and nursery. There are separate playground facilities for nursery, infant and junior pupils. There is designated provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Circumstances are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. The social difficulties of the area have resulted in the school's inclusion in the local Education Action Zone and it now receives additional funding which is being used to develop links with parents and the community and to enrich pupils' learning.
2. There are 257 pupils on roll, 134 boys and 123 girls. In addition 10 pupils currently attend the Moderate Learning Difficulties department. A further 22 boys and 15 girls attend the nursery.

Twenty attend on a part time basis and a further 17 on a full-time basis. Pupils are organised in nine banded mixed-age classes from reception to Year 6. During the inspection there were 47 children under five in school. Children are admitted to the nursery from the age of three according to agreed priority criteria. Reception-aged children with autumn and spring birthdays are admitted full-time to the reception classes in September. Summer born children are admitted in January prior to their fifth birthday, in line with local procedures. Most children attend the nursery before starting their full-time education.

3. Thirty-seven pupils come from non-European backgrounds and 23 pupils from homes in which English is not the first language; a figure which is higher than most schools. Eighty-six pupils are identified as having special educational needs, of whom ten have statements. Thirty-one pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The proportions of pupils with special needs and statements are well above average. Twenty-nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above average. At the time of the inspection, one class was taught by the headteacher due to staff illness.
4. The school aims state the intention to:
 - raise attainment and progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science
 - raise attainment and progress in the foundation subjects and particularly information technology and music
 - give pupils the time and opportunity to give meaning to ideas and experiences within and beyond the National Curriculum
 - maintain high standards of behaviour by developing an interesting and motivating curriculum.
1. The following targets have been set for achievement in 2000:
 - By the age of eleven:
 - 66% pupils attaining level 4 and above in English
 - 26% pupils attaining level 5 and above in English
 - 68% pupils attaining level 4 and above in mathematics
 - 26% pupils attaining level 5 and above in mathematics.
1. In addition school improvement priorities for 1999- 2000 include:
 - implementing the National Numeracy Strategy
 - raising standards in information technology
 - encouraging parents as partners
 - reviewing curriculum planning in line with new national guidance.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18(20)	22(19)	40(39)
		(98)))

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	15(12)	13(13)	16(18)
	Girls	18(15)	18(15)	18(18)
	Total	33(27)	31(28)	34(36)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84 (69)	79 (72)	85 (92)
	National	- (80)	- (81)	- (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	13(10)	16(15)	13(13)
	Girls	18(14)	18(15)	17(13)
	Total	31(24)	34(30)	30(26)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (62)	86 (77)	75 (67)
	National	- (81)	- (85)	- (86)

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

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	21(18)	21(20)	42(38)
	(98))))

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys Girls Total	11(7) 14(15) 25(22)	12(9) 14(8) 26(17)	14(12) 16(13) 31(25)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School National	62 (59) - (65)	63 (46) -(58)	74 (68) - (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys Girls Total	12(8) 14(13) 26(21)	12(8) 15(6) 27(14)	13(7) 15(13) 28(20)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School National	65 (57) -- ()	65 (38) -- ()	71 (54) -- ()

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:				%
	Authorised	School		5.6
	Absence	National comparative data		5.7
	Unauthorised	School		0.1
	Absence	National comparative data		0.4

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:			Number
	Fixed period		1
	Permanent		0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	27
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

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

· **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

· **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

· **Attainment and progress**

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1. National Curriculum test results for pupils aged eleven in 1998 show that attainment in English was well below the national average and well below that of similar schools. While the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 was close to the average, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was well below average. In mathematics the proportion of pupils at both level 4 and level 5 was well below the national average and below that of similar schools. Attainment in science was about average when compared with national figures and with those of similar schools, with fewer pupils attaining the higher levels. Comparisons with similar schools do not take account of the well above average proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs. Half the pupils were on the register of special educational needs; 22 per cent were on stage 2 and a further 22 per cent on stages three to five. Twelve per cent of pupils had statements of specific need and a further seven per cent received provision for moderate learning difficulties. In addition, 15 per cent of pupils joined the year group in the year before the assessments.
 2. The most recent test results for pupils aged eleven in 1999 are higher than in the previous year and show that standards are improving. Inspectors found that standards in Year 6 are now average in English, mathematics and science. However, formal speaking skills and attainment in information technology remain below average in Year 6. Attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and progress is satisfactory. Progress in art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education is satisfactory.
 3. This shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Raising standards in English, science, information technology and music were key issues for the school to address. Trends over the last three years show that results have risen steadily in all the subjects identified for improvement except information technology. The school has addressed the key issues in order of priority and raising standards in information technology is the current focus.
 4. In the 1998 national tests for seven-year-olds attainment was well below average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools reading was below average, writing average and mathematics above average. In science, teacher assessments at the age of seven showed that attainment was well below average with no pupils attaining the higher level 3. The most recent 1999 test results indicate an increase in the proportions of pupils attaining level 2 and above. Results are 15 per cent higher in reading and seven per cent higher in writing. Results in mathematics have fallen by seven per cent. Teacher assessment in science shows eight per cent more pupils reaching the expected level 2. Trends over the last three years indicate that by the age of seven pupils' attainment in reading, writing and science has improved. However, standards in speaking are below average.
 5. Taking into account the much larger than average proportion of pupils with special needs and statements who take the tests and the well below average level of attainment of most children on entry to the school, the number of pupils who attain levels which are average or above reflects the school's determination to attain high academic standards. Accelerated and precisely targeted learning programmes have a significant impact on the attainment and progress of all pupils.
 6. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Children make good progress because of the good quality teaching they receive, which is carefully planned to meet individual needs.

However, their attainment remains below average in all aspects of the nationally prescribed Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds. By the age of five children continue to need support and intervention to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world, the physical and creative areas of learning and in their personal and social development.

7. Pupils make good progress across both key stages. Progress in lessons, for example during the literacy hour and in mathematics, is almost always good. This is because the quality of teaching is good. Variations in rates of progress occur when teachers do not consistently well manage pupils' challenging behaviour or maintain rigorous pace and timing in lessons. This results in a slowing down of the good progress observed in other classes to a satisfactory rate. Where progress is consistently at least good and occasionally very good in the nursery and Years 5 and 6, pupils are constantly challenged and expectations of progress and attainment are high.
8. Pupils in the moderate learning difficulty provision and those in mainstream classes with special educational needs make very good progress. In their literacy skills pupils make very good progress in meeting the targets set in their individual education plans. They recognise the links between reading and writing and this helps them to be confident when tackling new work. Spelling is carefully reinforced and the use of a wide range of teaching methods supports pupils' learning styles. Although many pupils experience difficulty in speaking clearly, their listening skills are satisfactory. Opportunities to talk in small groups and class situations help them gain confidence. In lessons, particularly when pupils apply their practical skills, attainment can reach national averages. Very good rates of progress are evident as pupils acquire the skills of observation and testing in science. Pupils use new vocabulary to describe how sound is made and how the movements that make sound can be seen and felt. A further example is in mathematics as pupils add two digit numbers mentally. Good teaching ensures that pupils are given useful ways of working out answers. Pupils repeat these methods and patient, helpful support from teachers and learning assistants helps pupils with special educational needs to maintain very good rates of progress.
9. The school's priorities as part of the Education Action Zone are to raise standards in the basic skills. The successful practice observed in both the literacy hour and numeracy sessions are supporting the improvement of standards at both key stages in these core subjects.
10. Progress in listening is good. In all classes the majority of pupils listen carefully, although concentration spans are limited. Progress in speaking is satisfactory and pupils develop a wider range of vocabulary; however, by the age of seven pupils do not articulate words clearly and frequently answer questions using single words and phrases. They still need support to speak in sentences and to use the specific vocabulary introduced in subjects across the curriculum. They have insufficient confidence and language to express themselves with the precision usual for their age, although higher attaining pupils are beginning to use tone, pace and expression when reading text and putting forward a point of view. By the age of eleven a number of pupils continue to find speaking difficult. This is especially the case with the pupils who join the school at seven who have special needs. These pupils arrive with a considerable language deficit and considerable efforts are made by all adults within the school to help overcome this. While most pupils in Year 6 speak in sentences when required to do so, they rarely use Standard English. They use subject specific language in their responses in more formal situations, for example when discussing the vocabulary used by authors in passages of text, but many do not have the confidence to present their ideas to a large audience without a prepared script. There are too few opportunities for pupils to offer their opinions and back them up with carefully considered arguments.
11. Progress in reading at both key stages is good. The use of accelerated learning sessions for individual pupils is supporting pupils in linking letter sounds during word building exercises. Lower attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 have a very limited vocabulary and are unable to recognise three letter words. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 recognise most initial letter sounds, are able to

use phonics to read unfamiliar words and predict with accuracy. By the age of seven most pupils are beginning to read appropriate text with fluency, expression, understanding and interest. Most are able to identify the author, title and contents and to use pictures for clues to the story. By the age of eleven most pupils show considerable enjoyment in reading and the majority identify favourite authors and books including non-fiction books. Many know the Dewey identification system and are able to find a book quickly within the school library. They read an unseen text with competence and use expression to engage the listener. Progress in reading is well supported by a strong partnership between home and school.

12. At both key stages, progress in writing is good and the progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good. By the age of seven, story writing is of good quality and the range of writing includes imaginative and descriptive writing and poetry. Presentation and handwriting is satisfactory, although spelling is a weakness, mainly because pupils do not articulate words clearly. By the age of eleven pupils use a broader range of technical vocabulary in their writing, for example when writing about events in history such as the impact of the volcanic eruption at Pompeii. Pupils use correct punctuation, including apostrophes, and are able to paragraph their work with accuracy by Year 6. The quality of handwriting is, however, variable and although it is legible, letters are too frequently poorly formed and joined. In addition, spelling of some everyday words is not sufficiently secure with a number of pupils who do not pronounce words accurately. Pupils' progress is well supported by the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.
13. In mathematics pupils make good progress. By the age of seven they count in twos, add and subtract numbers within 20 and write number stories using the symbols for addition, subtraction and equals accurately. Many have difficulty forming digits accurately and also reverse digits in their recording. Higher attaining pupils add and subtract two and three digit numbers and solve simple money problems. They use the 100 square to multiply and divide by 2,3,4,5 and 10. Pupils understand the properties of shapes such as squares, rectangles and triangles and most measure short lengths in centimetres. Pupils create repeating patterns using colour and shape and know that "half" means a number or object is divided into two equal parts. Pupils record data from surveys in block graphs and tallies and are beginning to interpret this information independently. All pupils have made very good progress in developing their mental arithmetic skills because all lessons start with short mental arithmetic sessions that require pupils to explain how they calculated their answers. The early introduction of the numeracy strategy has been a major factor in raising standards.
14. By the age of eleven pupils identify ways of solving problems mentally. They make approximations, round up or down to make calculation easier and break down complex problems into simple stages. As it is the beginning of the academic year, the inspectors were only able to observe pupils working with numbers. All aspects of mathematics are planned for and it is to the credit of both pupils and teachers that the majority of pupils are working at the average levels for their age. Higher-attaining pupils are given challenging targets and are working at levels appropriate to their abilities and a very small proportion of pupils are likely to achieve the higher levels by the summer term.
15. In science pupils aged seven show a satisfactory understanding of the senses, plant cycles, varieties of animal habitats, the development of seeds and sorting materials according to their properties, such as magnetic and non-magnetic. They carry out simple investigations, for example when examining waterproof materials. By the age of eleven pupils have a sound understanding of the properties of solids, liquids and gases. They are able to construct simple electrical circuits, describe the structure of flowers and the function and structure of organs of the body. They understand scientific vocabulary introduced in lessons but many pupils need ongoing support to use this vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils are conversant with such terms as photosynthesis, ecosystems, and micro-organisms and are beginning to use the formula for carbon dioxide correctly.

16. While standards in information technology remain below average, the recent reorganisation of the way the subject is taught is enabling pupils to learn the skills they need. The rate of progress in lessons is now satisfactory and has the capacity to improve further as current practice becomes more firmly established. However, at present, pupils lack confidence in the subject, for example while pupils aged seven use commercial programs to move objects round the screen developing their mouse control, they have limited word processing skills and tasks take longer than usual because of their lack of experience. In Key Stage 2 pupils in Years 5 and 6 require teacher instructions for every step of the process when retrieving data. By the age of 11 most pupils understand the basic vocabulary and carry out simple control techniques, for example maximising the screen and printing their work. They are competent in the use of the keyboard and respond appropriately to on-screen instructions.
17. In religious education satisfactory progress is maintained across both key stages. By the age of seven pupils understand the importance of family and celebrations such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. They respect the beliefs of others and recall stories about Jesus from the New Testament. They know the Bible is a holy book and that places of worship are special. With support, pupils recall stories and events from other major world religions but they have difficulty recalling names and pronouncing words that are unfamiliar. By the age of eleven pupils have a sound knowledge of similarities and differences between Christianity and other world religions. They understand Jesus as the Son of God and give opinions about the actions of people such as Judas Iscariot and King Herod. They relate their knowledge of world religions such as Hinduism to aspects of historical study, for example the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils continue to have difficulty expressing their thoughts and ideas because they find names and vocabulary difficult to remember.
18. In line with the priorities and principles of the Education Action Zone and national initiatives, the allocation of time given to teaching other subjects has been reduced. The attention given to literacy and numeracy is successfully raising standards and appropriate strategies have been introduced to reinforce links between subjects. This is evident where teachers model the specific language they expect pupils to use in lessons, for example in geography and art, and require pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills. Overall, standards in other subjects have generally been maintained since the previous report. However, the reduction in time to develop skills and knowledge means that there is less depth in learning and fewer opportunities for practising skills and subject specific language, for example in subjects such as art and religious education. As a result, while standards and progress are at least satisfactory in all subjects except information technology, rates of progress are not as rapid as in English, mathematics and science .

24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

19. Pupils' good attitudes to their work and their good behaviour have a positive impact on their attainment and progress. Children under five settle well in the nursery and reception classes and have positive attitudes to work. They listen attentively and love listening to stories. Many have limited levels of oral communication and lack confidence with new adults. They generally share resources and take turns well.
20. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have consistently good attitudes to learning. Pupils usually respond well in lessons and most pupils listen well to instructions. The very few exceptions occur in afternoon sessions with younger pupils, who are still adjusting to the length of the school day. (The inspection took place very early in the academic year.) They become tired and lose concentration. Teachers successfully adapt their lessons to meet the needs of pupils on these occasions. Pupils are generally interested in their work and eager to do well. They persevere when they find tasks difficult, for example, in a Year 5/6 physical education lesson pupils tried very hard to succeed and improve their performance as they interpreted music linked to the evacuation of children in World

War Two.

21. Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the moderate learning difficulty provision, have very positive attitudes to their work and make a full contribution to the life of the school. Skilled staff in the moderate learning difficulty provision maintain a calm, very supportive atmosphere and pupils understand the clear guidelines about their working habits and how they should behave. Pupils work together very well. Of particular note is the paired work undertaken in mathematics, where pupils co-operate together to calculate accurate answers. Pupils persevere, trying hard to complete their work. Some pupils find concentrating difficult and staff are skilled in ensuring tasks are interesting, as well as giving frequent reminders.
22. Standards of behaviour have improved since the previous inspection and are good in classes and at other times. Pupils know the school rules well and strive hard to maintain them. Movement of pupils around the school is orderly at all times and they behave well at lunchtime. No bullying was observed, although a small number of pupils display challenging and disruptive behaviour at times. Most of the pupils respond in a most positive way to the great efforts made by the school to deal with their problems, especially valuing group counselling sessions. One pupil was excluded temporarily in the year prior to the inspection, an improvement on previous years.
23. The quality of relationships is very good. Pupils co-operate very effectively in pairs or groups and are always willing to help each other. They show very good respect for each other and all adults and have a developing understanding of a range of cultures and faiths. They take turns very well and are polite and courteous. They openly appreciate the efforts and hard work of others. Their personal development is very well provided for. Pupils enter the school with a low level of personal and social skills but by Year 6 they have developed a very strong sense of responsibility and show great pride in their school. House captains take their responsibilities very seriously, for example seeing themselves as role models for younger pupils. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school. Pupils respond very well to the responsibilities given to them as members of the School Council. They undertake roles of chair, treasurer and secretary very effectively, arranging fund raising events both for school resources and charities. They also arrange the purchase of resources with great care and awareness of value for money. Pupils throughout the school are keen to help with jobs in the classroom and around the school. They take advantage of the opportunities provided for extra-curricular activities.

29. **Attendance**

24. Attendance levels are much improved compared with the last inspection and the school now has a satisfactory level of attendance, broadly in line with the national average. The level of both authorised and unauthorised absences is now below the national average whereas, at the time of the last inspection, the school's rate was approximately twice the national average. The school has striven hard and successfully to improve the level of attendance which has risen steadily over the past four years. This is having both a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and their attainment and progress. There is no significant difference in absence levels between classes. Most pupils arrive at school promptly and lessons start on time. A small number of pupils are persistently late.

30. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

30. **Teaching**

25. The quality of teaching is very good in almost a quarter of lessons and in a further four out of ten

lessons it is good. The remainder of the teaching is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the period of the inspection. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when a fifth of the teaching was unsatisfactory and concurs with the interim HMI monitoring report when teaching was mainly good. The school's planning has provided a very good structure for teachers and secures continuity between classes and year groups.

26. Teaching for children under five in the nursery is very good. A feature of this very good provision is the regular reinforcement of essential language skills and vocabulary and the calm, confident approach which enables children to develop trust, confidence and security. All sessions are carefully planned to provide a range of directed and independent activities, enabling children to make choices and discover their world in a secure, attractive setting. Nursery assistants work in close liaison with the teacher and through the establishment of a very good partnership they secure an in depth knowledge of children which enables their individual needs to be identified and met at the earliest stages of learning. Record keeping is thorough and detailed, and maintained to a very high standard. Relationships are of very good quality and children are confident that they will be helped and cared for at all times. This has a significant impact on the rates of progress children make, as many start school with a learning delay of eighteen months.
27. Teaching for reception children and pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. Examples of very good teaching were observed in Years 1 and 2 and 5 and 6. Features of very good teaching include the identification of precise learning objectives and task outlines for groups of pupils to ensure that the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils are met. Weekly planning is thorough, indicating how lessons build upon prior learning. Time keeping is also precise, particularly during the literacy and numeracy sessions. Lessons usually have a rigorous pace and maintain pupils' interest and motivation. This was evident in the literacy hour when teachers used text very effectively, for example 'The Gingerbread Man' in Years 1 and 2 and 'Goodnight, Mr. Tom' in Years 5 and 6. These sessions also had good cross-curricular links to history and pupils' social and cultural development.
28. Expectations of work and behaviour are high. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and their expertise in literacy, numeracy and science and the current focus on information technology is increasing competence and confidence in that subject. This was evident in lessons held in the computer suite when teachers taught pupils in Years 3 and 4 to create titles and headings. Where teaching is very good teachers use subject specific vocabulary well and have high expectations of pupils to use these terms in their own speech and writing. This practice is not consistent across all classes and is one of the features that differentiates lessons which are satisfactory from those which are of a higher standard. For example, in an art lesson in Years 5 and 6 the teacher emphasised words such as 'portrait', 'mood', 'tone' and 'composition' and required pupils to evaluate the pictures they had created in the style of Peter Blake. The use of a wide range of teaching strategies, introduced through the accelerated learning programme and the literacy and numeracy strategies, meets well pupils' different learning needs and styles. Specific direction, discussion and class, group and individual work support individual needs and encourage a well-judged combination of rigour, reflection and motivation.
29. Teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils, based on the strength of the school's assessments of progress and links with parents. They use the results of assessments to structure classes based on suitable rates of learning, planning for pupils' individual needs. Assessment information provides on going measurement of rates of progress made towards meeting individual targets. However, the quality of marking is variable and this is a minor weakness. Oral marking is good. Teachers praise achievement and identify aspects of work that need to be improved. Teachers regularly discuss work with pupils and enable them to evaluate the progress made towards meeting their targets. Written marking, while satisfactory overall, does not consistently identify significant progress or indicate to pupils the areas to improve in their next piece of work. Comments are mainly single words or phrases and a few critical comments are not supported constructively. For example,

criticisms of presentation and handwriting do not indicate how weaknesses might be improved. Teachers do not always insist on high enough standards of presentation.

30. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is mainly good. Teachers reinforce school rules and the discipline policy effectively. They approach the challenging behaviour of a small proportion of pupils with firm insistence, reinforcing expectations positively. There are a small number of occasions when pupils' responses result in lessons being shortened, for example in reception and Year 1, when the youngest pupils have difficulty concentrating during afternoon sessions as they adjust to the length of the school day. Teachers use support staff and volunteers well. They ensure the objectives of tasks are clearly communicated and the roles of support staff are clearly defined. This enables them to maintain the pace of lessons and ensures objectives are met. This makes a significant contribution to progress in learning, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Classrooms are well organised and attractively displayed, enabling pupils to work in large and small groups and to use resources independently to retrieve information.
31. Teachers give homework in all classes. The recent introduction of homework diaries and commitment to the school's homework policy are already effectively influencing pupils' attitudes to learning beyond the classroom. Funding from the Education Action Zone is supporting this initiative, involving parents in supporting their children's learning. The scheme has not been in place for a long enough period to assess accurately the full impact on pupils' attainment and progress.
32. Teaching for pupils with moderate learning difficulties is mainly good. Teachers have good levels of knowledge about how pupils with special educational needs learn, and set work that is always challenging; for example, in mathematics and science, work is often taken from programmes suited to pupils' ages rather than their stages of intellectual development. Planning is very good. Lessons are carefully drawn from pupils' individual education plans and they understand what they have to achieve in each lesson. In the moderate learning difficulty provision pupils' targets are prominently displayed in the classroom. A good range of methods is used; these enable pupils, whatever their learning style, to make at least good rates of progress. Behaviour is managed very well. Those pupils who experience difficulties in managing their behaviour are supported very well to maintain their levels of concentration and to complete their tasks. Lessons are brisk and teachers ensure that a number of short, interesting tasks help pupils to work hard and at a fast pace. Staff keep very good records of pupils' progress and by careful questioning and observation make accurate assessments which help them plan the next lessons. Homework is built into each school week and the positive relationships with home help pupils to build well on that they have learned during the school day.

38. **The curriculum and assessment**

33. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. As the majority of pupils start school with much lower than average attainment in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, the school places appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics with about two-thirds of the teaching time dedicated to these subjects. This has had a positive effect on standards and there has been an improvement in pupils' attainment since the previous inspection. One hour per week has been allocated to the teaching of information and control technology in the computer suite in order to address the issue of below average attainment in the subject. This has resulted in a reduction in time allocation to other curriculum areas in line with national guidance and participation in the Education Action Zone project. The school maintains a reasonable breadth within the curriculum as a whole but pupils do have difficulty describing names and significant detail within subjects, for example religious education, because there is less opportunity to reinforce their learning. This is why progress is not as rapid as in subjects such as English and mathematics. There is appropriate provision for pupils' physical development and moral and social

development is very good throughout the school. Sex education is in line with the Leicester Education Authority guidance. The recently implemented national literacy and numeracy initiatives are very effective. The planning is of a high standard and ensures that the needs of pupils of all abilities are met in full. The mixed-aged, banded classes in Key Stage 2 have been organised to accommodate pupils of similar abilities within each class, enabling teachers to match work to pupils' abilities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is particularly good and the policy for special needs now meets the Code of Practice. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties within the unit join their peer groups for many of their lessons. This enables them to improve not only their educational but also their social skills. The provision for children under five is very good. The curriculum is based on the nationally prescribed Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds and attention is focussed on meeting intellectual needs as well as social and emotional aspects of learning. Good liaison procedures between the nursery and reception classes ensure that the curriculum links well to the early stages of the National Curriculum and it gives good support to transition between classes.

34. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Careful attention is given to the requirements of statements of special educational needs and targets for each pupil are developed which clearly identify what pupils have to learn. The curriculum is divided into small achievable steps and teachers and learning support assistants ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise the new skills they are to learn. Pupils from the moderate learning difficulty provision join other classes for subjects where it is appropriate. Adults ensure that each pupil achieves success and that confidence is gained whilst working in the mainstream classes. These integration arrangements are very good and build happy relationships and working arrangements. The grouping of pupils by attainment into classes and sets for literacy and numeracy has a very good effect on the rates of progress of pupils with special educational needs. This allows teachers to prepare lessons which are sharp in their focus and therefore more successful in encouraging pupils to work at their fastest rate.
35. All pupils have individual targets for learning and personal development and they are encouraged to meet and review their targets regularly. In this way the school actively promotes equal opportunities for all. Pupils in Key Stage 1 who have difficulties with reading have a concentrated programme to learn how to decode words. This is being implemented by classroom support staff and is designed to be accessible to parents. The curriculum is consistently implemented throughout the school. Continuity in planning supports teaching and learning effectively. Each subject has a scheme of work to ensure continuity throughout the school. Teachers in parallel classes plan together, identifying the learning objectives for each lesson and adjusting their expectations to meet the needs of their pupils. The school makes use of the local area to support the curriculum through educational visits. Older pupils have a residential trip to Kingswood in Norfolk where they study orienteering and work with computers. There is a variety of extra-curricular activities including sports clubs, drama and general knowledge. The school is part of the Leicester Education Action Zone and is involved in a project to strengthen home/school links. There is a good homework programme for all pupils, with clear guidance for parents. It is too early to evaluate the outcomes of the new homework policy but the majority of pupils complete the tasks set and take pride in their efforts. Initiatives like the reading project have been designed to help parents support their children's learning effectively. The curricular provision has improved since the previous report when schemes of work did not provide a reliable basis for continuity and progression and the code of practice for pupils with special needs was not met.
36. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good throughout the school. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly and the results of both national and internal testing are carefully analysed. The school measures the progress the pupils have made as whole year groups and as individuals. These are compared with other schools in the Education Action Zone and schools in a similar context. Pupils are set individual targets and a pupil survey indicates that they find this very useful. Procedures for identifying higher attaining pupils and those with special needs

are very good. Early in their school life pupils are assessed and if gaps in skills and important ideas are identified, support is targeted appropriately. The records that teachers keep are of very good quality. Learning support teachers and those in the moderate learning difficulty provision track pupils' progress with notes of achievements and areas for further development.

37. The results of assessments are analysed and the information used to place pupils into appropriate classes and groups in Key Stage 2. Subject co-ordinators analyse the test results and identify any consistent weaknesses; for example, below average attainment in reading resulted in a change of emphasis in the teaching of reading and the new reading initiative. A lack of achievement in mental arithmetic prompted daily mental arithmetic sessions. The schools' assessment procedures, analysis of assessments and subsequent adjustments made to the curriculum have had a major contribution to raising standards overall. The targets set for both individuals and cohorts of pupils are challenging but realistic due to the accurate assessment and tracking of progress. Assessment procedures have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now very good and a strength of the school.

43. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

38. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Provision in all areas has improved considerably since the last inspection when the key issues called for a strengthening of the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

39. Throughout the school pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their experiences in order to develop a spiritual awareness. Nursery children attend school assemblies and are taught to reflect on aspects of life, for example, friendship. In their unit they encounter the miracles of birth through watching eggs hatch in the incubator and of growth from the planting of seeds. These early experiences are successfully built upon in Key Stage 1 and further extended in Key Stage 2. Pupils are encouraged to listen to and reflect upon each other's points of view. In an assembly on the theme of friendship, they were encouraged to think about implications of bullying and how best to respond to bullying. In this session care was taken to reinforce the proposition that both boys and girls can be bullies. The assembly was particularly effective through the use of a series of short, dramatic representations which had been carefully planned. Displays throughout the school encourage pupils to reflect on natural beauty, on spiritual aspects of world faiths and about their local environment. This is well represented in a display on Hinduism when incense is lit each morning as the pupils enter their class area. The school meets the legal requirement for daily acts of worship when pupils are asked to observe a moment of reflection about the assembly theme and listen and respond to appropriate music. Assembly is a special time when the school comes together, quietly and reverently, to reflect particularly on spiritual and other experiences.

40. The school has a strong behaviour policy which is well thought out and adhered to by the whole school community and which provides the basis for teaching the principles that separate right from wrong. Adults within the school show care and concern for each other and for their pupils and set high standards. This is reflected in the attitudes pupils show to each other, their environment and to adults. Pupils with special educational needs including those in the moderate learning difficulty provision, are given clear guidance concerning what is right and wrong. Pupils receiving this provision are told clearly when they behave in a manner likely to upset one of their friends. There is no graffiti and pupils are expected to keep classrooms and playgrounds free from litter, thus contributing to ensuring the school environment is of a very good standard. Stories are used effectively to illustrate behaviour, for example, in the nursery where story is used to illustrate that fighting is wrong. In other classes, the biblical story of Adam and Eve was well used to illustrate temptation, helping pupils gain an understanding of the need to exercise self-restraint. In another

area, pupils had contributed to a 'Red Card' display, which illustrated the notion of stopping racism. In Key Stage 1 targets are set on moral and social themes, for example, on being a good friend to someone today. These targets are making a very good contribution to establishing moral principles. The strong ethos of the school based on the very good relationships and positive attitudes means that pupils are self-disciplined and behave well.

41. Pupils' social development is promoted very well by the school through a series of measures. From the earliest age, children are taught the importance of sharing and working in co-operation with others. In the nursery this is well developed through play activities, for example, in the café area where pupils serve imaginary meals to their friends. At lunchtime their teacher and helpers sit with the children to make this an important social occasion. In both key stages pupils are frequently involved in joint activities and discussions which they conduct well, listening to each other's points of view. Each classroom has a set of agreed school rules which promote self-discipline and good social behaviour. The house system effectively promotes self-competition and the School Council, made up of house captains who act as role models, plays an important part in the very good social development of pupils. In addition, each class has monitors for various tasks which not only aid social development, but assist in the well-running of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support to understand how to work alongside each other amicably. They are encouraged to view their peers as working friends and to co-operate with each other to complete tasks. Teachers and learning support assistants provide many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups. They are encouraged to show their pleasure when their friends achieve notable success; for example, when a class member has finished one section of the reading scheme.

42. Cultural development of pupils is good. All major festivals are celebrated appropriately and good attention is paid to cultural traditions such as harvest, the Chinese New Year and Diwali. As part of the Education Action Zone, visiting artists and musicians extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures. Pupils have looked carefully at Japanese art and have made their own representations of waterfalls in a similar style. Visits are made to various places locally, for example the University Botanical Garden, the National History Museum and an annual residential visit takes place for older pupils when they live and work together in a seaside environment. Opportunities are sought to make contributions to this area through a range of subjects and the school is committed to further development, particularly though extending the literacy strategy.

48. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

43. Provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is very good. There were no issues or concerns expressed in the previous report and the overall standard of support and guidance for pupils has continued to improve. There are very good systems for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development. Staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the pupils, based on meticulously kept records. Staff also provide very good pastoral support. Pupils feel safe, cared for and valued. Very good relationships between staff and pupils give pupils confidence to approach members of staff or house captains if they have worries or problems. Parents feel the school takes good care of their children.

44. Children are well prepared for their entry into the nursery which helps them to settle quickly; the introduction of home visits before children enter the nursery has been very beneficial. Good care is taken of the youngest pupils to ensure they are collected by a responsible adult at the end of the school day. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and has a positive effect on their level of progress. Learning support teachers and assistants keep very good notes of the progress of these pupils, including those who are taught in the moderate learning difficulty provision. The learning support teacher maintains well-written reports and pupils' successes are

well documented. Individual education plans are of good quality and clearly show how pupils have progressed during the course of the term. The high quality of records, advice and liaison contributes well to the support given to pupils on their move to secondary school.

45. The school has very good procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour, which are particularly well geared to the requirements of pupils and have a marked impact upon attitudes, relationships and standards of behaviour. Teachers and other adults have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school rules are of paramount importance and are clearly displayed around the school and understood by all staff, parents and pupils. The consistent, strong emphasis on praise and rewards is very effective. Arrangements to raise awareness of bullying are very good and any incidents are dealt with very promptly and effectively. Counselling sessions provide pupils experiencing difficulty with very good guidance and support.
46. Efforts to promote improved attendance and punctuality are effective and have led to a steady improvement over the last four years. The school closely monitors all reasons for absence and, with good support from the Educational Welfare Officer, makes good efforts to support and pursue the few persistent cases of regular absence or lateness. The use of certificates to reward full attendance has been very effective; the number of pupils achieving the termly target of 100 per cent attendance increased from 138 in 1996/97 to 200 in 1998/99.
47. The school's procedures for child protection are good. The headteacher, as the designated person, ensures all staff are aware of issues and liaise appropriately with local agencies. There are thorough policy documents covering health and safety and staff and governors make regular, effective checks.
48. The school is clean, tidy and secure. Fire drills and tests are recorded regularly. The school effectively promotes pupils' health and well-being, including drugs and sex education, both through the curriculum and with good support from local health and fire services.

54. **Partnership with parents and the community**

49. Though the partnership between the school and parents and the community was evaluated as satisfactory in the last inspection report, the school is now making considerable efforts to improve parents' involvement in the life of the school and in their children's education, and is developing further the school's role in the local community. Current partnerships are satisfactory, with signs of improvement, and they are beginning to have a more positive impact on pupils' attitudes and progress.
50. Parents are kept very well informed about the life of the school and their children's attainment and progress. The great majority are pleased with the information they receive. Annual reports on pupils' attainment and progress, along with regular consultation meetings, give parents very good information on the work their children are undertaking, excellent detail on attainment and progress and set precise targets for future development.
51. The annual reviews of progress for pupils with statements of special educational needs are of very good quality. Parents receive very good quality reports before reviews take place. These reports are well written, clear and informative. They chart the progress pupils have made and show what the next steps in the learning plan should be. Annual and interim reports are also of very good quality. They are based on the targets set out in the individual education plans and help parents and pupils to understand what has yet to be covered and what has been successfully achieved.
52. The consistent use of homework diaries and the recent implementation of the homework policy are providing considerable encouragement to parents to help in their children's education. Early

indications are that parents are responding well to this encouragement. Parents are welcomed into the school and teachers are approachable and helpful. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's education. A small number of parents provide valuable classroom support. Parental support for the school's behaviour policy is generally positive. Most parents ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. Most attend concerts and performances and the small number of social and fund raising events. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved well.

The school is making good, positive steps to increase parental involvement through initiatives led by the Education Action Zone, forming a parents' group, and making home visits to new parents in the nursery to promote an early, effective partnership.

53. Local community links are satisfactory. Visits support the curriculum, for example to a local bakery and fire station. Staff regularly attend the local community forum. Through involvement in the Local Education Action Zone the school positively seeks to enhance its position as a local community facility and access to local business support.

59. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

59. **Leadership and management**

54. The drive to raise standards in all subjects and improve behaviour is evident in all aspects of the school's management. The basic policy objectives underpin every initiative, plan and policy. The improvement in the management of the school, noted in the monitoring report of 1997, has continued and is now an outstanding and considerable strength of the school.

55. The headteacher is a very strong leader. She receives very good support from the senior management team and a very committed staff and governing body. Whatever their role within the school, everyone takes an effective part as a member of the team; for example, teaching support staff are involved in in-service days, governors monitor teaching, the deputy head assumes the role of headteacher for one day each week and subject co-ordinators are enabled and expected to manage their responsibilities. This commitment and the 'open' style of management in the school results from the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and deputy head. It also helps to ensure that everyone has a very clear view of the current and future direction of the school, including the provision for children under five and the moderate learning difficulty unit.

56. At the heart of the vision for the school lies a very careful and systematic analysis of children's needs. As a result the inadequacies pointed out in the last report have been very effectively addressed and the school's overall performance has improved very significantly since then. However, the school is not content only to address these issues and is actively seeking to initiate other developments, for example, the accelerated learning programme which is designed to 'take pupils' learning beyond what they thought possible'. In addition, the school has recently gained an award for excellence from the Basic Skills Agency. The school improvement plan provides a very effective and clear path to follow, including operational plans, future and strategic planning and intent. It is of the highest standard. Although written by the head and deputy, there was input from the school's review groups and liaison with the chair of governors. A governors' planning meeting is scheduled later this term. Details of the planning are now being effectively examined by the governing body but there is currently no formal annual evaluation of the plan by it. However, progress towards the goals in the plan is summarised by the headteacher in her termly report to the governors.

57. The quality of support and monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is excellent and a significant strength of the school. The monitoring results are carefully recorded and there is very effective use of feedback, both written and oral, by the headteacher. A programme of peer partnerships, in which

the teachers, including the headteacher, take part, provides a very successful strategy for the improvement of teaching, the curriculum and the sharing of effective learning strategies. Monitoring of teaching by members of the governing body, with an agreed focus and a shared protocol with the teachers, has significantly raised governors' awareness of issues facing the school, for example, the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies.

58. Special educational needs are managed well and the policy, which is of good quality, meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. The policy has been improved since the last inspection when it was found to have weaknesses. The policy is now straightforward and provides clear guidance on how the success of special educational needs provision can be measured. The governing body is strongly committed to high quality special educational needs provision and the governor responsible for monitoring this aspect of the school's work is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is keen to see fully effective integration arrangements and other aspects of the special educational needs policy work successfully. She is ably supported by learning support teachers and assistants.
59. The school has a clear set of aims. They are clearly evident in the work of the school, for example, maintaining a high standard of behaviour by developing an interesting and motivating curriculum and ensuring staff and governors maintain a collaborative team approach with a common sense of purpose. The very successful implementation of the aims, the school's plans and policies, is a particularly significant contribution to the very good and positive ethos of the school. This is well illustrated by the commitment to raising expectations, the quality of relationships and equality of opportunity for all pupils.
60. Routine administration is carried out very effectively, with good systems of internal communications. This has a positive impact upon attainment, for example by ensuring that adequate resources are readily available. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements except that some details are missing in the annual report to parents.
61. The management of the school has systematically and successfully addressed almost all of the areas raised as key issues in the previous inspection report. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, science and music but they remain unsatisfactory in information technology. Raising attainment in this subject is a current curriculum priority. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Curriculum planning secures progression and continuity in pupils' learning and assessment procedures enable the needs of all pupils, including the more able, to be well met. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good. Improvements in the quality of management include better arrangements for the professional development of staff and for monitoring and evaluating teaching, an improved school improvement plan and more effective delegation of responsibilities. The senior management team is a very effective unit which has led the school's very good progress since the last inspection; it has the capacity to bring about considerable further improvements, many of them embraced in the challenging but realistic targets set for both individuals and cohorts of pupils.
67. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
62. There are enough suitably qualified and experienced staff to teach the curriculum, though not all staff are fully equipped to teach information technology. The school benefits significantly from a good number of support assistants who work closely with teachers. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are taught in the moderate learning difficulty provision, are supported by well-trained and committed teachers and support staff.
63. The arrangements for the induction of new teachers are very good; working in partnership with an

experienced member of staff they are successfully introduced to school routines. The systems are comprehensive and teachers new to the school and those who have recently been inducted testify to their high quality. All teachers have opportunities for professional development and the impact of this training is seen in the quality of the teaching and curriculum provision. Procedures for identifying the training needs of staff are very effective. The training the school designs incorporates national priorities and those which are designed to help the school and individual members of staff. The deputy headteacher and others with management responsibilities are given excellent support by the headteacher to develop the skills and attributes they need to fulfil their duties. Very good appraisal procedures are in operation; these processes help staff members to set targets for themselves and support the rapid improvement of the school.

64. The quality of accommodation is good. Classrooms are of reasonable size and well equipped and attractively displayed work enhances the quality of the environment. One of the halls houses an adequate library and the first stage of an information technology centre. Teaching rooms enable small group or one to one teaching to take place in appropriate surroundings and useful music and art and craft rooms have been set up. The grounds are large and attractive offering hard play and grassed areas with plenty of space for sporting activities. Attractive displays add to the stimulating environment. The school houses a moderate learning difficulty unit in one of the classrooms and a small glass-screened room provides useful space for small group work to be carried out in relative privacy. The school is clean and well maintained.
65. Overall, resources are mostly at least adequate, well organised and accessible. However, there is a shortage of large-scale Ordnance Survey maps and globes of good quality. There is a generally adequate stock of appropriate books for subjects across the curriculum, though the library has too few books on famous artists to enable pupils to undertake independent research. There are not enough computers to be able to teach a class of pupils and the school is in the process of increasing the number of computers. All other subjects have the necessary equipment and materials to teach the National Curriculum effectively. There are good resources for special educational needs to support effective and appropriately structured programmes, which promote improvements in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The broadly adequate staffing, accommodation and learning resources identified in the last report have been maintained and, in several respects, improved.

71. **The efficiency of the school**

66. Financial planning is very good. The annual budget allocation process takes full account of the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. The budget is carefully balanced and the governors and headteacher have a very secure knowledge of the level of financial commitments. Funding from the school's participation in the local Education Action Zone is effectively supporting the raising of standards and developing community links, for example the early learning programme introduced in the nursery to involve parents of children under five in the first stages of their children's education. They recognise the importance of future pupil numbers in the forward planning process. They are aware that the current level of funding gives little flexibility for future years and have identified clear priorities accordingly. The deployment of special educational needs learning support teachers and assistants is carefully monitored and the finances for the moderate learning difficulty provision and other special educational needs resources are carefully managed and used to good effect. Governors deploy special educational needs finances sensitively, meeting the needs of the pupils in their care.
67. Financial administration and budgetary control are satisfactory. Purchasing and ordering systems are effective. The governors do not receive sufficiently regular, frequent or up-to-date information to allow them to monitor expenditure and income effectively. This is a minor weakness.

68. Administrative staff provide good, well organised and effective support to ensure the smooth running of the school. The school reviews contracts for services well; for example, the decision to employ its own cleaning and caretaking staff is effective financially and has improved the quality of the service. Teachers and support staff are deployed very well to improve standards, for example in the nursery and through their involvement in the 'Accelerated Learning Initiative'. The deputy head's experience as acting headteacher for one day each week is beneficial to his staff development and contributes to the effective running of the school. Staff deployed to support pupils with special educational needs are very effective in assisting the very good progress made by these pupils.

69. The school generally makes good use of the accommodation and resources available, with a positive effect on standards achieved. Resources for information technology, especially the computer suite, are not used sufficiently well. There are too many times during the school day when they are not in use.

70. Taking into account :

- the well below average attainment of pupils on entry to the school;
- the unfavourable social circumstances of many families;
- the good quality teaching which supports good rates of progress;
- the average attainment of most pupils in English, mathematics and science at the ages of seven and eleven;
- the very positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour; and
- the above average level of funding received by the school to support local difficulties;

the school provides good value for money.

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

· **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**
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1. Children are admitted to the nursery from the age of three and in line with agreed criteria of priority. They attend on a part-time basis, which increases to full time in the term prior to transfer to reception classes. Children with autumn and spring birthdays transfer to two reception and Year 1 classes in September and those who are summer born transfer in January. Children who have their fifth birthday in the summer term transfer directly into Year 1 in the following September in line with local procedures. This means that the youngest children do not have reception class experience.

1. At the time of the inspection, there were 37 nursery children and ten reception children under five years of age. The majority of reception aged children attend the nursery before transferring to school. The school is recognised locally as being socially disadvantaged and has established good links with other early years agencies through the 'Education Action Zone Early Years Forum'. This is of great benefit to children and their parents, providing support and guidance during the earliest stages of children's learning. For example a parent link worker has been appointed to organise and take part in initiatives which include workshops and the establishment of links with families who have little contact with the school. This project is already successfully improving the liaison between home and school.

2. An important feature of the very good quality provision for children under five is the recently established practice of staff visiting children in their homes prior to their first session in school. This enables valuable information to be shared at a very early stage and establishes important communication between the teacher, parents and child.

3. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that expected of their ages. Early assessment involving external agencies shows a learning delay of a year and a half for many children. The early identification of children with special educational needs enables intervention and support to be established quickly. The very good teaching they receive in the nursery, good support given by nursery assistants and good provision in reception and Year 1 classes enable children to make good progress.

4. The curriculum is effectively planned to meet the specific needs of these children while working towards the nationally prescribed Desirable Learning Outcomes. Despite these many strengths, by the age of five the majority do not meet the expected levels in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and most aspects of physical, personal and social development. A very small proportion attains similar standards to children of the same age in other schools. Baseline assessments confirm inspection findings.

5. The introduction of an accelerated learning programme placing greater focus on intellectual development as well as personal and social skills is contributing well to raising standards. These findings are similar to those of the previous report and reflect the higher proportion of children who are socially disadvantaged.

Personal and social development

6. Children in the nursery and reception classes are happy and secure in their environment. Although

attainment is below that expected of most five-year-olds by the time they leave the nursery, children gradually gain in confidence. The very good liaison and integration programme structured between the nursery and reception teachers enables children to benefit from opportunities to spend time in both learning environments to extend their experiences and support social and emotional development. Children are encouraged to make decisions and to choose their tasks and activities. Although children's concentration is limited, they learn to listen for increasing amounts of time and to follow simple directions given by the teacher and adults. This was evident when they listened to stories, tapes and videos.

7. When working in pairs and groups they are beginning to share resources and co-operate with each other, for example playing in the café and the sand. However, many children need encouragement to explore activities with others. Children have positive attitudes, they persevere and value adult support, for example when manipulating scissors and drawing pictures. They are gradually introduced to school routines and positive reminders help them to understand school rules. When playing with large wheeled toys they show increasing awareness of the need to share and delight in looking after the rabbit in their play area.
8. The very good relationships between adults and children enable school values to become established from an early stage. Support staff make a valuable contribution to children's learning through the care and consideration shown to individuals and groups. They interact effectively during group activities, helping children to steer and pedal bicycles, talk about their feelings and to choose games.

Language and Literacy

9. Attainment in language and literacy is below the expectations of children aged five but, in relation to attainment on entry, progress is good. Many children have difficulty expressing their thoughts and ideas and do not articulate words clearly. Through a wide range of well-organised and imaginative play activities children are encouraged to develop speaking skills. However, they mainly use single words and rely on non-verbal forms of communication unless supported by adults. Children who have benefited from longer periods of nursery experience express their feelings and needs more clearly and are more confident to ask and answer questions.
10. Children listen attentively to stories and join in rhymes. In the nursery, they are beginning to talk about pictures and characters in stories and follow simple instructions. They are making good progress with their adapted literacy hour, enjoying large group reading sessions.
11. They are eager to share books and the recently established practice of nursery children taking books home is developing their interest in books. Parents are encouraged to record these early reading experiences and to talk to their children about characters and events in rhymes and stories. In addition, activity packs support parents and children in early learning and communication skills. This initiative is a direct outcome of the Education Action Zone Project and is very successful. By the age of five most reception aged children understand that print carries meaning and are able to identify the main parts of a book. They recognise some initial letters and sounds and use pictures to tell stories. More able children recognise familiar words and words which rhyme and make a good attempt to read. Writing activities, for example forming letters in salt and making play dough shapes, encourage awareness of shape and the development of hand and eye control. By the age of five most can recognise their names and write with adult support and guidance. They are taught to hold a pencil correctly and trace their names with reasonable accuracy. Writing progresses well in the reception classes with good opportunities to develop co-ordination to develop writing skills.

Mathematics

12. Attainment in mathematics is below that expected nationally for many children by the time they reach five but progress is good. Through a range of practical activities, children gain understanding of numbers. They count, match and order numbers based on group games led by the teacher and the introduction of number rhymes and songs. In the nursery, children are introduced to counting numbers up to five, they refer to a number line to identify which one is missing and to place them in the right order when mixed up. While these tasks are successfully completed with the teacher, children do not yet have a secure knowledge of numbers. In the reception classes this work is extended through the numeracy sessions and children become more skilled at recognising, matching and ordering numbers independently. Most children aged five can match numbers to objects fewer than ten and name the numerals. They count forwards and backwards to at least eight and write over numerals up to six. Mathematical understanding is developed through the play activities that require children to talk about number, shape and size. While many can recognise shapes, such as a circle and square, they find specific terminology difficult to use. There is still some insecurity with words such as 'full' and 'empty' and positional language such as 'before' and 'after', 'in front of' and 'behind'. Reception children continue to make good progress as they add, subtract and order numbers and objects against different criteria using counters, shapes and construction toys.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

13. Children are slowly developing knowledge and understanding of the world but by the age of five their understanding is below that of most five-year-olds. However, progress is good. The older nursery and reception children are reasonably confident in discussing their families and know who the oldest and youngest members are. Most reception children find their way around school with increasing confidence because they are supported to do so from the earliest days in the nursery. Historical and geographical understanding is promoted through learning about families, the local area and memories of the recent past. They remember walks, picnics and events such as birthdays when looking at books and pictures. Despite the focus placed on the local area, few are able to give their address or describe their walk to school in detail. Limited language skills inhibit children in describing their knowledge and understanding.

14. They recognise changes in the weather and know that as autumn approaches they need coats at playtime. They can point to a cooker or refrigerator to show understanding of hot and cold. Through observation, nursery children know that the colour of stones changes when placed in water and, by looking after the guinea pig, learn how to care for pets. Older reception aged children begin to understand that seeds need warmth, water and light to grow through planting seeds.

15. Children have opportunities to gain confidence in using the computer. Very few have computers at home. They listen to stories and understand how to use the mouse but still have difficulty controlling the movement of the cursor. With adult help these activities are completed successfully. The tasks are carefully chosen and prepared with precise learning objectives in mind. The organisation of activities enables children to investigate and explore independently and in groups.

Physical Development

16. Both in the nursery and reception class, children show increasing proficiency when playing with large wheeled toys. They learn to pedal and steer and take turns to use tricycles, scooters and prams. While progress is good, by the age of five children still need a significant amount of time to dress and undress independently and find the manipulation of buttons and shoelaces difficult. They follow simple single instructions in the hall but are hesitant in large spaces, carefully watching the movements of older Year 1 children before they respond. The older reception aged children show an

increasing awareness of moving at different speeds and directional control and move with greater confidence. Children enjoy outside play and benefit from the secure outdoor play areas which offer both grass and hard areas. A minor weakness is the lack of easy access to these areas by reception aged children who are still under five. The school is currently exploring how to extend the safe play area to provide easier access. Children have regular opportunities to use climbing apparatus and teachers ensure a variety of activities are planned to extend manipulative and physical skills.

Creative Development

17. Children sing a selection of well known rhymes in large groups but find it difficult to remember them accurately when saying them on their own. Reception children gain in confidence and most identify their favourite rhymes, although they still are unsure of word sequences. Children use crayons, pencils and paint to draw people and events. They learn to print using their fingers and to make patterns. These skills progress in the reception classes, for example through the opportunity to use scissors to cut card and a range of textured papers when making bird scarers. Although children make good progress, pictures are frequently immature. They have difficulty manipulating simple tools and persevere to control them when making models. Displays are of a high standard and show that children have frequent opportunities to express themselves imaginatively.
18. Children are enthusiastic when involved in aspects of sand and water play using small toys to create situations they have experienced. Sensitive intervention by adults in the role-play café and outdoor 'house' enables children to develop their ideas in a structured yet creative way.
19. Planning for the areas of learning is of very good quality. It is detailed and shows clear progression from nursery into the reception class. The effective teamwork of teachers and support staff gives very good support to the age range. Shared planning supports continuity between classes and structures progression in the development of knowledge and skills.
20. Teaching for children under five is very good in the nursery and mainly of good quality in the reception classes. Teachers and support staff have very good relationships with children, building their confidence and self-esteem. A feature of the very good teaching in the nursery is the regular reinforcement of essential language skills and vocabulary and the calm, confident approach which enables children to develop trust, confidence and security. The school's commitment to developing the provision for early learning is high.

97. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

97. **English**

21. In the 1998 Key Stage 2 tests for eleven year olds attainment was well below average and well below that of schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. At the age of seven, attainment in reading in the 1998 tests was well below average and below that of similar schools. In writing, test results were below average but at average levels for similar schools. Teacher assessment of pupils' speaking and listening skills shows attainment was well below the level expected of seven-year-olds nationally and of pupils at similar schools.
22. The results of the 1999 assessments indicate considerable improvement. At Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils gaining level 4 or above has risen by six per cent and 19 per cent of pupils now gain level 5. At Key Stage 1 reading results show that 84 per cent of pupils now gain level 2 or above compared with 69 per cent in 1998, while in writing the percentage has risen from 72 per cent to 79 per cent.
23. An analysis of the school's test results over a three-year period shows that overall there has been a steady improvement in standards. Although it is not yet possible to compare the most recent assessment tests in 1999 with national figures or those from similar schools, inspection findings are that the school's standards are continuing to rise at the end of both key stages in reading and writing. Standards are now average in both Year 2 and Year 6 except in speaking where they are below average.
24. Comparisons with similar schools do not take account of the large number of pupils with special educational needs attending the school, especially at Key Stage 2, and should, therefore, be treated with some caution. When compared with schools in the Education Action Zone, this school takes the lead in writing and is second in reading at Key Stage 1. It is in first position for English at Key Stage 2.
25. Listening skills for the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory but their speaking skills are below average. The very good work of the nursery is successfully built upon during Key Stage 1 and pupils listen to their teachers, other adults and to each other with care. They listen attentively in class, as indicated by the way they follow instructions. In literacy lessons when they are given independent or group learning tasks they know what to do because they are taught to listen carefully. In their speech, many have considerable difficulty in expressing themselves with clarity and their spoken vocabulary is very limited. By careful teaching, they are encouraged to enlarge their vocabulary and to respond in sentences rather than one-word answers. In a literacy lesson relating to the story of 'The Little Red Hen', a very small number knew the term 'ingredients', a third could name farm animals while a minority were unsure of animal names. Teachers take every opportunity to extend their limited vocabulary and improve the power of speech through reading with pupils, asking open-ended questions and expecting extended responses to questions. However, many pupils by the age of seven have insufficient confidence and language to express themselves with the precision expected of pupils of that age, although a few are beginning to use tone, pace and expression when stating their points of view and when reading text.
26. At Key Stage 2 listening skills are further enhanced but a number of pupils continue to find speaking difficult. This is especially the case with the pupils who join the school at seven who have special needs. These pupils arrive with major language deficits and considerable efforts are made by all adults within the school to help overcome this. Older pupils are beginning to express themselves in ways which will engage the listener by using tone and persuasive expressions. For example,

when discussing the differences between a film clip and the chapter from the book 'Goodnight, Mr. Tom', some pupils used words such as 'juncture', 'ominously', 'humiliated' and 'adamant'.

27. In assembly some of the oldest pupils expressed themselves well from a prepared script about bullying, engaging the interest of the audience. However, many younger Key Stage 2 pupils are unable to speak articulately and require adult support to use specific vocabulary and answer in sentences. Taking into account the well below average language levels of children on entry to the school, they make good progress. On arrival they speak using one-syllable words and when many leave they are beginning to use Standard English with reasonable competence. Standards of spoken English are not sufficiently developed across all age groups and this is a key issue for the school to address.
28. Progress in reading at both key stages is good. The school places great emphasis on the teaching of reading and employs several strategies to aid pupils' progress. These include the use of accelerated learning sessions for individual pupils and the use of a reading reflex scheme that is currently being evaluated. Pupils using these approaches are making slow but satisfactory progress in linking letter sounds during word building exercises. The pupils at Key Stage 1 who are below average have a very limited vocabulary and are unable to recognise three letter words. Pupils of higher ability in Year 1 recognise most initial letter sounds, are able to use phonics to read unfamiliar words and predict with accuracy. At Year 2 a few pupils continue to find difficulty in reading, being unsure of letter sounds, and have a very limited sight vocabulary, although most pupils are beginning to read appropriate text with fluency, expression, understanding and interest. Most are able to identify the author, title and contents and to use pictures for clues to the story. At Key Stage 2 most pupils show considerable enjoyment in their reading and the majority regularly attend public libraries in the area in order to borrow books, especially of their favourite authors and also non-fiction books of areas of interest. Many know the Dewey identification system and are able to find a book quickly within the school library. The oldest pupils are able to read an unseen text with competence. Lower attaining pupils are gaining confidence in reading more challenging text and are developing expression and fluency. A strong partnership exists between home and school to develop reading, with good quality reading diaries being well maintained from the nursery and throughout the school in all classes. The involvement of parents is making a significant contribution to raising reading standards.
29. At both key stages, progress in writing is good and with pupils with special educational needs it is very good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to write during the literacy hour and also in time set aside for additional writing activities. A majority of pupils in reception and in Year 1 make satisfactory progress with letter shapes, although only a few are able to write in sentences and are able to sequence a story. By the end of Key Stage 1 the good progress they have made is shown by the good quality of their story writing and the range of writing which includes imaginative and descriptive writing and some poetry. Presentation is satisfactory and handwriting of a fair standard, although spelling is a weakness. At Key Stage 2 pupils use an increased vocabulary to describe events and their range of technical vocabulary has increased sufficiently to enable them to use scientific and mathematical terminology in their writing with accuracy. In a narrative piece of writing on Pompeii, pupils were able to express events and aspects of their knowledge with accuracy and understanding. They write using correct punctuation, including apostrophes, and are able to paragraph their work with accuracy by Year 6. Handwriting is, however, not always satisfactory and although it is legible, letters are too frequently poorly formed. In addition, spelling of some everyday words is not sufficiently secure with a number of pupils.
30. The progress of pupils is considerably aided by the successful introduction of the literacy strategy. Pupils enjoy these sessions and are eager to learn. Their behaviour is good and they get on with their work during the independent work sessions, knowing not to interrupt their teacher. With Key Stage 1 pupils this is considerably aided by the use of well-briefed classroom assistants. During the discussion part of these sessions they listen carefully to the contributions made by others and are

eager to participate. Plenary sessions are well planned to enable pupils to demonstrate progress they have made in the lesson.

31. Teaching in the majority of lessons is good, often very good. The introduction of the literacy strategy has been carefully managed and teachers' knowledge and understanding of the strategy and its use is good. Their knowledge of the needs of their pupils is very good, with tasks carefully matched to ensure individual progress is made, with particular attention being paid to those with special educational needs. Teachers expect pupils to contribute in discussions and are skilled in ensuring pupils make an oral contribution. There is insufficient expectation in ensuring clarity of pronunciation to aid spelling and in handwriting at Key Stage 2. Lesson planning is of very good quality, with specific objectives to clearly identify the precise focus of learning. Classes are well organised and particular care is taken to make sure all pupils are easily able to see the book, whiteboard or film being used. Lessons are invariably conducted at a very brisk pace and time is used constructively to its fullest. Resources are well used. Work is regularly marked, although the quality of written marking is not consistent between classes and is insufficient to ensure pupils can improve their work. Homework is used well to support progress in English. It is carefully planned and set by all teachers throughout the school.
32. The leadership of the subject promotes high standards and quality, giving clear direction to the teaching. Support and monitoring of the teaching and of the introduction of the literacy strategy are detailed, thorough and regular. The use of peer partnerships in the appraisal of lessons is having a significant effect on improving standards of teaching. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good; there are weekly assessments of the overall success in meeting objectives and meetings about moderation to ensure consistency. Reading and spelling tests are administered and analysed carefully to ensure consistency of progress. Pupils are regularly reminded of their targets and older pupils are expected to carry out self-evaluation of their work. Detailed records are maintained of attainment and progress in order to aid the setting of achievable targets. Governors' involvement in the various monitoring procedures is high and contributes successfully to a consistent whole school approach in which all pupils are fully challenged. Resources are of good quality and support the curriculum well. They are well maintained and easily accessible.
33. A key issue from the last inspection was to take steps to raise attainment and progress in English. In the interim HMI report in 1997 it was noted that standards had improved markedly. This improvement has been successfully maintained and further appropriate targets for 76 per cent of pupils to reach at least average levels of attainment at the end of both key stages by 2002 have been set.

110. **Mathematics**

34. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in the 1998 national tests was well below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. These results include the pupils in the unit for moderate learning difficulties [MLD] in Key Stage 2 and the comparisons with pupils in similar schools should be treated with caution as the data does not accurately reflect the school's circumstances. 1998 is the latest year when national comparisons can be made. In the 1998 national tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was above the national average. Pupils' attainment was well above average in comparison with similar schools. This is partly because there were fewer pupils with special needs and statements in last year's Year 2 but the comparatively good results also reflect the recent success of action taken to improve standards in mathematics and accelerate progress.
35. The 1999 results show a slight drop in the number of pupils achieving level 2 at the end of Key Stage 1, but a considerable increase in the number of pupils attaining the required level in Year 6.

These results include the pupils in the MLD unit and reflect the positive attitudes of the pupils, the good mathematics curriculum, careful assessment of the needs of the pupils and the effective planning and teaching. This represents a significant improvement in standards since the previous report. Pupils in the present Year 2 and Year 6 are likely to attain the national average for their age at the end of the academic year.

36. Although children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes, by the time they are five, their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills are still below those of the majority of pupils of the same age. They make good progress through Key Stage 1. At the beginning of Year 2 they count in twos using a 10 x 10 number square. They add and subtract numbers within 20 and write these “number stories” down in their books using appropriate symbols for addition, subtraction and equals. Higher attaining pupils add and subtract two and three digit numbers and solve simple money problems. They use the 100 square and multiply and divide by 2,3,4,5 and 10. However, many pupils have difficulty forming their digits correctly, often reversing them or placing them haphazardly on the page. Pupils understand the properties of the flat shapes they use. Many use centimetres to measure short lengths. Pupils create and continue repeating patterns using colour and shape. They understand that “half” a number or shape means that it has been divided into two equal parts. They identify symmetrical shapes and record data from surveys in block graphs and tallies. All pupils use appropriate strategies for working out problems mentally and have made very good progress in developing their mental arithmetic skills. This is because all the teachers start each lesson with a short mental arithmetic session in which the pupils are encouraged to explain how they worked out the answer. Pupils are taught quick ways to compute and to apply these to solving problems. The early introduction of the numeracy strategy has been a major factor in raising standards in the use and application of mathematics. Standards have risen considerably since the previous inspection when standards in this aspect were unsatisfactory.
37. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress. They are in classes with pupils of similar abilities and an extra class is created in Years 3 and 4 with the addition of the pupils and the teacher from the MLD unit. The teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively. Pupils are given clear targets for each lesson, are taught as a class and then work individually or in groups with others of similar abilities. Each lesson concludes with a plenary session, consolidating the learning and evaluating how well the targets have been met. Before each lesson there is a mental arithmetic session. A major factor in the improvement in attainment has been the careful analysis of pupils’ performance in both national and internal tests. The teachers have identified areas that need more consolidation and make sure that these are included when planning the work to be covered. Individual pupils are given personal targets to work towards and there are class targets displayed prominently and referred to frequently. The scheme of work ensures continuity throughout the school and individual teachers apply the learning targets to make them relevant to their own classes. For example, in a lesson about “remainders” within division, the teacher adapted the work to accommodate the number of pupils on the class register when planning the number of minibuses needed for a school trip and the most effective group size when visiting the museum.
38. Pupils with special needs make good progress throughout the school. The work is carefully matched to their abilities and the teachers have high expectations of their ability to join in with the whole-class sessions. Pupils in the MLD unit are fully integrated into the mainstream school for mathematics and as far as possible work with pupils of their own age. This means that both their intellectual and their social needs are catered for. Pupils with special needs working with them make good progress, benefiting from the smaller class size and good adult support. The adult support for pupils with special needs is very effective throughout the school and classroom support staff are skilled in helping them to meet their targets.
39. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are skilled in identifying the best ways of solving problems mentally. They make approximations, round up or down to make calculation easier and break down complex problems into simple stages. They apply their skills to achieve target numbers, explaining their

methods clearly and, in some cases, with great panache! As it is the beginning of the academic year, the inspectors were only able to observe pupils working with numbers. All aspects of mathematics are fully covered by the comprehensive scheme and it is to the credit of both pupils and teachers that the majority of pupils are working at the average levels for their age. Higher-attaining pupils are given challenging targets and are working at levels relevant to their abilities. Some pupils in Year 6 will achieve the higher level 5 by the summer term.

40. Relationships within the mathematics lessons are very good. Pupils work hard. They listen carefully to their teachers and move swiftly to start their work. They work together amicably, respecting each other's point of view and supporting each other. The teachers maintain a brisk pace through the lessons and have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and abilities. All the teaching is at least satisfactory and almost two-thirds was good or very good during the inspection. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and plan the work very carefully, matching it to the scheme of work and the needs of their pupils. Teachers have a commendable knowledge of their pupils' abilities after two weeks in school due, in part, to careful assessment and record keeping as well as good communication between the teachers. They expect their pupils to behave well and to work hard. All follow the same pattern for the lessons and maintain a good pace throughout. The objectives for the lessons are shared with the pupils. Teachers intervene when appropriate and use examples from their pupils' work to reinforce learning. If they feel that more work is needed on a particular point, the plans for the next lessons are amended. Pupils' efforts are valued and oral assessment of pupils' work enables them to learn from their mistakes. The quality of marking in pupils' books is inconsistent throughout the school, especially over the formation of numerals. Not all teachers follow up mistakes with written comments to provide pupils with a permanent reminder to help them avoid the same mistake again. Homework is used very effectively, reinforcing the work in the lessons or gathering data for future work. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
41. The school has excellent plans for the development of mathematics throughout the school. The effective leadership of the subject has been instrumental in identifying priorities, setting targets and evaluating the results of the action taken. Teachers have been trained to implement the National Numeracy Strategy and use it well. The resources are good and deployed effectively. However, pupils do not have easy access to the computers to use as an integral part of the mathematics curriculum.

118. Science

42. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 4 in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1998 was close to the national average in comparison with all schools and to schools with pupils of a similar background. The trend of the last three years shows a very marked and continuous improvement, with the provisional results for 1999 showing a further rise in the number of pupils attaining level 4.
43. In the 1998 National Curriculum Key Stage 1 teacher assessments of seven-year-olds, a well below average proportion achieved the expected level 2 when compared to all schools and to those with pupils of similar backgrounds. At the higher level 3, overall performance was also well below average. In one aspect of the science curriculum, 'life and living processes', the pupils attained close to the national average at level 2. Provisional results for 1999 indicate an improving trend, with three-quarters of pupils attaining level 2.
44. Inspection evidence, including the scrutiny of previous work and conversations with the pupils, indicates performance is now broadly in line with that expected of both seven and eleven-year-olds. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show, for example, a satisfactory understanding of the senses, plant cycles,

varieties of animal habitats, the development of seeds and sorting materials according to their properties, such as magnetic and non-magnetic. They show an ability to carry out a simple investigation, for example, when examining waterproof materials. Evidence of previous work at Key Stage 2 indicates a sound understanding of such topics as solids, liquids and gases, simple electrical circuitry, the structure of flowers and the function and structure of organs of the body. Higher attaining pupils show they are conversant with such terms as photosynthesis, ecosystems, micro-organisms and use the formula for carbon dioxide correctly.

45. The teachers' high expectations for the use of scientific language, as indicated above, was seen in a lesson on levers when terms such as 'variables', 'fulcrum' and 'resistance' were used and understood by the great majority of the pupils. Pupils were also asked, in one Key Stage 1 lesson on the senses, whether the colours and aromas of some fruit 'correspond'. In some cases, however, high expectations for language and behaviour do not extend to presentational and handwriting standards.
46. The overall good progress that the pupils make is greatly assisted by the quality of the teachers' planning. Well defined learning objectives are planned, clearly identified at the beginning of the lesson and reinforced at the conclusion of the session. This leaves the pupils in no doubt about what is expected of them. As a result most persevere with the tasks and investigations they are set throughout the whole of the lesson. Pupils' learning is also assisted by the use of 'memory maps' when a topic is ongoing. These are effectively used by the teachers, for example in a lesson on the senses where pupils correctly linked the scent to the receptor organ and made good progress in recording the results of an investigation on smells. Progress in the ability to talk about and explain their work or results is often weak. However, the teachers are very aware of the need to extend literacy skills into such subjects as science and they appropriately encourage the pupils to speak in sentences and extend their language, leading one Year 6 pupil to effortlessly describe a boulder as "round, heavy and destructive".
47. The good methods, organisation and management of the pupils by the teachers ensures that practical science activities are effective in supporting learning and progress. Most pupils in the school respond effectively to the challenge of practical activities and wish to succeed in what they are doing. In a lesson on levers the pupils constructed a catapult and measured the distance it would throw a rubber. They take great care in carrying out the tests and ensure that variables, such as the force, are kept to a minimum. Most pupils have a clear idea of the notion of fair testing. Some higher attaining pupils show effective use of mathematical understanding, when they realise it is necessary to average the results in order to reduce the variables even further. In the practical sessions, the pupils show admirable degrees of collaboration and co-operation, which help to ensure the good pace in most lessons is maintained. Occasionally, introductory sessions are a little too long, the pace of learning drops and progress is restricted as not enough time remains for the completion of the set tasks. This lowers the motivation of the pupils, for example, in a couple of lessons on sound.
48. The teachers know their pupils well and they make good assessments of their understanding and progress. Marking of pupils' work, whilst generally regular, is lacking in consistency. The setting of individual target levels for the pupils helps considerably in the analysis of pupils' progress. The precision of the targets set for pupils with special educational needs helps them to make good progress.
49. The subject is well supported by an effective scheme of work which clearly indicates the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught at each stage of the pupils' development. It also ensures the coverage is broad and balanced. The school recognises the potential problems of a two-year rolling programme with classes that change each year and especially in a class that contains pupils from

the upper and lower halves of Key Stage 2. However, the very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment ensure these difficulties are dealt with very effectively. Other analyses of performance have, for example, ensured that all planning considers the possibility of including a practical approach to the topic. This helps to ensure good progress is made in experimental and investigative elements of the subject.

50. Science is well led by the co-ordinator. The regular monitoring of the teaching and curriculum successfully underpins the drive to raise standards. It also assists greatly in monitoring standards and the consistency of approach by the teachers. Visits to the National History Museum in London and Hunstanton's Sea Life Centre motivate interest in the subject, as does the annual science challenge week. The subject is well supported by a good range of well organised resources that are easily accessible, greatly assisted by audits of future needs, carried out in the preceding term.

127. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

51. The allocation of time for teaching other subjects has been reduced to focus on literacy and numeracy, in line with the priorities and principles of the Education Action Zone, school priorities and national initiatives. This strategy is successfully raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Overall standards in other subjects have generally been maintained, but the reduction in time to develop skills and knowledge means that there is less depth in learning and fewer opportunities for practising skills, for example in subjects such as art and religious education. Standards and progress are at least satisfactory in all subjects except information technology.

128. **Art**

52. Progress in art is satisfactory overall across both key stages. In the lessons observed progress was mainly good but the shared allocation of time for art and design and technology means that the good progress observed in the previous inspection has not been maintained to the same level.
53. In Key Stage 1 pupils look at the work of illustrators in the books they read in English and create their own pictures in a similar style, for example "Funnybones". They recall pictures which have formed the focus of their paintings and drawings but have difficulty remembering the names of artists. They create drawings that reflect close observation of the world around them and pastel portraits show good awareness of detail and the features of their friends. They name colours and explain how to mix colours, for example that blue and yellow make green. They understand that shades of colour can be mixed by adding white and black and use their personal experiences when representing ideas. Pupils with special educational needs receive good encouragement to record in pictures when they have difficulty using specific vocabulary, for example, when recording the results of experiments in science.
54. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop greater confidence in working with a range of media. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 created detailed pastel representations of the plant life in the school courtyard, benefiting from adult support to draw attention to detail and shade. By the age of eleven these skills are used to create designs based on the work of artists. Their interpretations show greater detail and they show greater skill in their use of colour and perspective. For example, they describe how they create pictures in the style of Peter Blake and water images in the style of Japanese art. Pupils experience working with paint, pastels and textures and independently make decisions about designs and the choice of media to represent their ideas.
55. Pupils enjoy art and behave well in lessons. They use tools and equipment sensibly and work co-operatively to share resources. At times pupils lack confidence in their ability to express their ideas and need adult support to work with large pieces of paper to create landscape pictures.

56. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and in half of the lessons it is at least good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Lessons have clear objectives and identify the specific skills and techniques to be taught. Teachers make good use of evaluative questioning to encourage pupils to reflect on the success of their work. A good example of this practice was observed in Years 5 and 6 when pupils evaluated the success of creating the background of their pictures in the style of Peter Blake. Teachers make good use of support staff and volunteer helpers to support art lessons.
57. National guidance for art is followed and teachers use this to inform their planning. Teacher assessment meets requirements and reports to parents which properly summarise pupils' strengths and weaknesses are of very good quality. The subject is managed by the key stage co-ordinators. They review planning regularly and offer good ongoing support to colleagues. Art has not been a recent priority area for development but ongoing monitoring of displays and resources have maintained standards at levels appropriate for the ages and abilities of the pupils. Resources to support the teaching of art are satisfactory but the range of books in the library to enable independent research in the study of famous artists and their techniques is limited.

134. **Design and Technology**

58. Three lessons were observed, one in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. Skills and knowledge are developed in close conjunction with work in other curriculum areas, for example science. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons and satisfactory progress overall. These satisfactory rates are improving as the knowledge, skills and understanding pupils acquire improve gradually as they move through the school. Standards have been maintained since the previous report. In Key Stage 1 pupils achieve very good progress when making a moving doll. They develop good quality construction skills when shaping and attaching the materials. They carefully considered the need to cut fabric accurately and managed their tasks well. In Key Stage 2 pupils made good progress finding solutions to problems and evaluating the success of their solutions. Most pupils are able to identify the purpose of a cam and make good progress in their understanding of how to change the rotation of a cam to the reciprocating motion of a shaft. Pupils plan the use of materials and resources and clearly identify the difficulties and problems that they face in their designs. When they are finished their models higher attaining pupils judge the success of their designs and suggest sensible improvements. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, explain clearly the uses of cams and how different types work. Construction kits are used effectively to promote an understanding of mechanical processes and the links between design and technology and science are productive as pupils talk with understanding about mechanical advantage.
59. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. In both key stages pupils listen with absolute attention to the good and at times very good quality direct teaching. These high levels of attention are evident in the way they carry out their work when they begin their practical tasks. They enjoy talking about their projects and showing examples of finished products. Pupils are thoughtful in their responses when asked to evaluate their work. They work very well collaboratively and show great care handling and using tools, sensibly taking turns and being aware of the needs and opinions of others.
60. The quality of teaching is at least good and at times very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and is shown in the clarity of introductions and the enthusiasm that teachers convey for the subject. This promotes high levels of motivation in pupils and thus brings about high levels of concentration and success in completing pupils' tasks. High expectations and very good planning push pupils to use the correct vocabulary and develop their thinking skills as they meet the targets for the lessons that their teachers set out clearly for them. Teachers show high levels of skill in

monitoring pupils' achievements and giving helpful advice to pupils about how to improve their work and skills. Teachers and learning support assistants work together very well to support pupils' learning.

61. The subject enjoys a satisfactory supply and range of materials for pupils to work with and learning benefits from the enthusiasm and encouragement of adults in the school.

138. **Geography**

62. Progress is satisfactory throughout both key stages with pupils increasing their knowledge and understanding of their local environment, of more distant places and of the formation of landscape features. Suitable emphasis is placed on the acquisition of map-making skills and the use of symbols to identify features. Some fieldwork is carried out, particularly in relation to the immediate locality and a contrasting locality when all pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit a coastal location in Norfolk for three days. Key Stage 1 pupils are gaining an understanding of different types of buildings and settlements of places more distant, through a study of postcards which show different features. Local excursions are well used. Two Key Stage 1 classes are planning to visit the local botanical gardens to experience a tropical forest climate. A good example was also observed of linking the literacy strategy to geography in a Year 4/5 class when the literacy hour concentrated on writing instructions for a journey to school, after which an exercise in mapping was carried out. The lack of large-scale Ordnance Survey maps of the area around the school meant that pupils had problems in perceiving a "bird's-eye" view of buildings on their maps. Despite this, the pupils produced good quality maps and linking this exercise to homework further aided the satisfactory completion of the exercise by the majority of pupils.

63. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory and expectations promote sound standards and quality. The curriculum is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency's (QCA) scheme and this aids planning. Little time is available for geography but it is used well. Assessment is satisfactorily carried out with pupils being helped to improve future work. There is a good balance between direct teaching and allowing pupils to find out for themselves through books or direct observations. Resources are mostly satisfactory, although there are insufficient large Ordnance Survey maps and there are very few good quality globes to illustrate the position of other countries, their physical features and climates. The contribution which information technology can make to the teaching and learning of geography is not being realised.

64. The last inspection report commented on certain features which needed improvement. These have been successfully addressed but there is still a need to enhance resources in several respects.

141.

History

65. It was possible to observe only one lesson at Key Stage 1 and none at Key Stage 2. Very limited evidence was also available from the work of the previous year but conversations were held with pupils about their work in history. On the basis of this evidence, the pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding. The Key Stage 1 pupils in the observed lesson showed an appropriate appreciation of how different sources can be used to answer questions about the past, for example, the use of Samuel Pepys' diary to understand the events of the Great Fire of London.

66. The teachers' planning is good at both key stages. It clearly identifies the purposes of the lessons. This was successfully reinforced in the observed lesson by very effective questioning of the pupils.

The good progress in the lesson was assisted by the very positive attitudes of the pupils, their perseverance with the set task and desire to succeed. The teachers' high expectations, for example of the use of extended language, helped ensure progress was made, particularly by the higher attaining pupils. The pupils also effectively translated Pepys' experiences during the Great Fire into their own ideas of what items of importance to them they would choose to bury, faced with similar circumstances. This was very successful in helping the pupils to realise that the cost of items and their relative importance changes over time. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully helped to make progress by the appropriate level of tasks they are asked to do.

67. Older pupils have a reasonably well developed sense of chronology and could place in the correct historical order periods such as the Tudors, the Romans, the Victorians and World War 1 etc. They explained very effectively a number of aspects of their previous work, for example, what life for a Victorian street child would have been like. Their sense of historical time scales is, however, less well developed, with estimates of how long ago the Romans were in Britain ranging from 500 to 5000 years. The pupils have a good understanding of the changes in Britain over the last 40 or 50 years.
68. Whenever possible the school is correctly and successfully using history as a vehicle to raise the standards of the pupils' literacy. It recognises that their planned programme of work, based upon a published national scheme, currently concentrates on breadth in the historical curriculum, frequently at the expense of detailed study in depth. Their awareness of the impact of current educational limitations on the study of history is good. They are in a good position, therefore, to respond to changing requirements. The effective monitoring of the planning helps to ensure a consistent approach to the subject throughout the school.

145. **Information Technology**

69. Pupils' attainment in information technology is still below the national expectations for pupils in Year 6 as it was in the last report. However, the subject is now a prominent part of the school development plan and recent changes to both the curriculum and the organisation of the way the subject is taught are enabling pupils to learn the skills they need. Progress is now satisfactory and has the capacity to improve.
70. As it is the beginning of the academic year there is little evidence of the work pupils have completed throughout the school. The scheme of work and teachers' planning indicates that all the aspects of the subject are taught. From the beginning of this term the computers have been organised centrally to enable teachers to teach the whole class. This is already having an impact on pupils' progress and in most of the lessons observed it was good or very good. However, in the aspects that were observed, for example retrieving data in Years 5 and 6, pupils did not have the skills to complete the work without teacher instruction for every step of the process. Most pupils of this age understand the basic vocabulary and carry out simple control techniques like maximising the screen and printing their work. They are competent in the use of the keyboard and most know how to respond to on-screen instructions. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 type the title of their work and their names using the shift, space bar, enter and back space keys. They print their work independently. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use commercial programs to move objects round the screen, developing their mouse control.
71. All pupils enjoy their lessons. They concentrate hard and help each other. They are very proud of their efforts, especially when they are printed out. Pupils who are working at tables (usually about two-thirds of the class) work with application at their support tasks, amiably waiting their turn to use the computers. They persevere when they make mistakes and are willing to try again, although they are not confident in the use of the computers, needing a great deal of support.
72. In all the lessons observed during the inspection the teaching was at least sound, and it was good or

excellent in over half. Most teachers have sound subject knowledge and skills, although one or two are not well enough equipped if things go wrong. All know exactly what their pupils need to learn and plan work that is appropriate to the abilities of the class. In one excellent lesson the teacher generated a rapid pace, which in turn motivated the pupils to learn swiftly. They had to respond to a series of instructions rapidly in order to meet the targets for the lesson. Any lack of concentration would have resulted in failure. They all achieved the task!

73. The teachers manage the pupils effectively and organise the lessons very well. Three groups rotate within an hour so that all pupils have some keyboard time. Others carry out related activities. The classroom assistants give very good support and several have good skills in the use of the computers. However, the computer suite is not used for much of the day and pupils do not have access to computers when working on other subjects. They cannot, for example, use a CD-ROM for research and are unable to opt to use the computer for language or mathematical work outside the timetabled access to the suite. Pupils with special needs are supported well. Those in the MLD unit work with other classes for learning skills and have a computer in their classroom.
74. The subject is effectively managed and it now has the potential for raising attainment because of the emphasis on the teaching of skills and the good scheme of work. Teachers have received training both internally and from an external adviser. A volunteer parent gives valuable support in maintaining the systems.

151.

151. **Music**

75. The school has introduced the BBC music scheme since the last inspection, which is supported by music tapes. This has been effective in promoting continuity and progression in the subject throughout the school. In addition there is now a good range of interesting instruments including both tuned and untuned percussion as well as a good range of recorded music. This has improved the provision for music throughout the school. Pupils' progress in the subject is now sound and has improved since the last inspection.
76. Pupils enjoy their music lessons. All are told the purpose of the lessons and they work hard to achieve the targets. Older pupils discuss their work sensibly. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 discuss how to phrase the music they are studying and give their reasons coherently. Younger pupils sing to the tapes and "play" pretend instruments. They sing number songs and act them out enthusiastically. All pupils sing enthusiastically in assemblies and listen attentively to recorded music, sometimes joining in. The teaching was at least sound in all the lessons observed and the BBC tapes overcame the effect of any lack of expertise in the subject. The planning is generally good and the good management of the pupils and the expectations of good behaviour enable pupils to make progress in the lessons.
77. The school has had some support from the local music adviser and "Travelling by Tuba" visited last year and worked alongside pupils. There is an annual concert involving the whole school when pupils have the opportunity to play the recorder and play percussion instruments. There are a small number of extra-curricular music clubs for recorder and percussion. There is no instrumental tuition at present although there were plans to extend these facilities at the time of the last inspection.

154. **Physical Education**

78. Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress in the development of their gymnastic and games skills. At both key stages progress is good in dance. Satisfactory progress is made in swimming and by the time the pupils leave the school, about 90 per cent are able to swim 25 metres unaided and safely. It was not possible to observe any gymnastics or games at Key Stage 2 during the course of

the inspection.

79. Most of the pupils show an obvious enjoyment for the activities that are well planned for them by the teachers. Changing into appropriate clothing for the lesson is done rapidly and this sense of pace continues right through the lessons. The teachers set a good example by taking the lessons in suitable clothing, by demonstrating the skills and activities and joining in the introductory warm-up sessions.
80. The insistence by the teachers that the pupils respond immediately to their instructions ensures that lessons are not only effective but are carried out with due regard to safety. In nearly all the lessons the pupils worked hard physically and often with commendable degrees of concentration, for example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson on ball control, the pupils caught and threw a ball accurately and also moved around the gym balancing a ball on a racquet. On the very rare occasions that the pupils' concentration and the teachers' management of them lapsed, progress towards learning a new skill was not made, for example, in a lesson on the use of space in the gym and avoiding contact with others. In many of the lessons pupils are required to work with a partner or in small groups; the great majority of them learn to do so very effectively due to the overall good level of response in the lessons and good quality of teaching.
81. Key Stage 1 pupils worked well during a dance lessons on movement related to music, showing well developed skills of interpretation. This is built upon very successfully in Key Stage 2. The pupils' excellent response to the music related to children's evacuation during the Second World War ensured that a Year 5/6 class produced a very good performance of expressive, imaginative and collaborative skills. They made very good progress in improving performance through practice. This progress was due not only to the good planning, high expectations and the clarity of the objectives set by the teachers but also to the every effective reinforcement of skills already learned and the very positive attitudes displayed by the pupils. In some of the lessons the appropriate and effective warm-up sessions at the beginning were not complemented by a suitable relaxing cool-down session at the end.
82. The school has a useful policy with appropriate attention to time allocation, safety and overall aims. Coverage of the range of physical education activities, for example, dance, games, gymnastics and swimming is made on a half-termly basis. Currently, there is no scheme of work to develop these activities and ensure a systematic development of skills through the school. The school is aware of this and has plans to work on such a scheme. Progress in the subject is aided by the very good accommodation, the level of resources and the availability of extra-curricular activities, such as the football club open to both girls and boys. The school also participates in football, cricket and netball competitions.

159. **Religious Education**

83. Attainment is in line with local expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and progress is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the age of seven pupils understand the importance of friends and family and the purpose of important events such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. They know that people have different beliefs, for example that some people go to church and others do not. They recall stories from the New Testament about the birth and death of Jesus and through observations, displays and artefacts understand the importance of holy books, prayer and places of worship. They find it difficult to talk in depth about world religions but through discussion remember stories and events from other major world religions. They have difficulty recalling names and pronouncing words which are unfamiliar but can describe festivals such as Divali in simple terms. Pupils develop positive attitudes to religious beliefs and show interest in the customs and beliefs of their friends.

84. By the age of eleven pupils have a sound knowledge of similarities and differences between Christianity and other world religions. They recognise the value of rules such as the Ten Commandments and their relevance to life today. They retell stories from the Old and New Testaments, for example the story of Joseph and his dreams, Moses in the bullrushes and the feeding of the 5,000. They understand Jesus as the Son of God and relate in detail the stories of his birth and death, giving opinions about Judas Iscariot and King Herod. They understand the Bible is a special book to Christians and that while Christians believe in one god, in other religions people worship more than one god. They also relate this to their study of the Ancient Egyptians and the gods that people worshipped. Pupils continue to have difficulty expressing their thoughts and ideas, finding complex names and vocabulary difficult to remember. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the MLD department make good progress through adult intervention.
85. The quality of teaching in the four lessons observed was good in Key Stage 1 and ranged from satisfactory to very good in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The consistent and very comprehensive approach to lesson planning promotes continuity and the use of a range of teaching strategies across the school.
86. Objectives are precise and clear, lessons are well structured and teachers talk positively and sensitively about values and beliefs, promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. Teachers' knowledge and understanding in the few lessons observed was variable but never unsatisfactory. The scheme of work, of good quality, is based on the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and supports teachers' planning well. Assessment is based on teachers' very good knowledge of pupils and their responses in lessons. These are communicated well in the end of year reports.
87. Religious education has not been a recent priority area for development and is co-ordinated by the Key Stage 1 and 2 leaders. Planning is regularly reviewed with teachers and they receive good support. Resources are sufficient to support learning and several attractive displays promote world religions, displaying a range of artefacts and books to encourage interest and develop understanding and awareness of the traditions within other cultures.

164. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

164. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

165. The school was inspected by a team of six inspectors who, over a period of four days, completed a total of 20 inspection days.

88. Inspectors visited classes, talked with individuals and groups of pupils and evaluated the work they had done. A total of 65.83 hours (100 observations) was spent on these activities. In addition, interviews and discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers with curriculum responsibilities, ancillary staff and members of the governing body.

167. The inspection included:

- inspection of pupils' written and practical work in all classes, representing low, average and high attaining pupils;
- scrutiny of subject work books;
- listening to the reading of a sample of pupils, selected as representative of the range of attainment in each class;
- tracking of progress of pupils with special educational needs;
- monitoring of pupils' behaviour in and around the school;
- analysis of records, individual education plans, statements and reports of pupils' progress;
- inspection of registers and attendance at assemblies;
- scrutiny of the school development plan, curricular and other policies, minutes of governing body meetings and details of the budget;

and analysis of the 105 responses (57.4 per cent) made by parents to the questionnaire. These, together with the views expressed by 18 parents at the pre-inspection meeting were taken into account.

• **DATA AND INDICATORS**

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	257	18	86	74
Nursery	38	0	4	9
Unit/School				

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

• **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	160

• **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	38

• **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	33
Average class size:	29

· **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998
	£
Total Income	510181
Total Expenditure	503314
Expenditure per pupil	1973.78
Balance brought forward from previous year	18127
Balance carried forward to next year	24994

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 183
 Number of questionnaires returned: 105

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	26	67	5	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	38	55	4	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	57	18	1	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	23	66	7	4	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	29	61	7	3	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	40	52	6	1	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	35	48	12	4	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	24	60	6	6	5
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	36	51	10	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	39	50	10	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	50	44	4	0	1