

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Wodensfield Primary School**

Wednesfield

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104345

Headteacher: Mrs Joan Harriman

Reporting inspector: Dr Colin Lee

21854

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2001

Inspection number: 189726

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Woden Avenue  
Wednesfield  
Wolverhampton

Postcode: WV11 1PW

Telephone number: 01902 556350

Fax number: 01902 556351

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Andrew Jewkes

Date of previous inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21854	Dr C Lee	Registered inspector	History Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
8989	Mr M Romano	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils The school's partnership with parents
20230	Mrs J Clayphan	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
22841	Miss P Jackson	Team inspector	Religious education Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language	
27369	Mrs C Powell	Team inspector	Science Art and design	Special educational needs
25771	Mr P Sandall	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
25775	Mrs V Wilson	Team inspector	English Music	Equal opportunities

The inspection contractor was:

*Criterion School Inspections*

*Juniper House  
23 Abbots View  
Abbotswood  
Cinderford  
Gloucestershire  
GL14 3EG*

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	6-9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	10-12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	12-14
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	14-16
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	16-17
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	17-18
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	18-20
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	20
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	21-24
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	25-40

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wodensfield Primary School is a larger than average primary school. In reception to Year 6 there are 448 pupils on roll; 231 boys and 217 girls who are taught in 14 single-age classes, two for each year group. At the time of the last inspection there were 408 pupils at the school and the increased numbers reflect the school's increased popularity in the locality. There is nursery provision for 80 children who attend part-time. In addition to the children in the nursery, 55 pupils are under six years of age. Pupils are from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds that are average overall. The percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language, at 3.6 per cent, is higher than in most schools and the main languages spoken by these pupils are either Punjabi, Urdu or Chinese. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is broadly in line with the national average. However, the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, at 0.7 per cent, is below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, currently 9 per cent, is below average. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery indicates average attainment overall but below average speaking skills. The same overall level of attainment is evident when children transfer to a reception class.

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

Wodensfield Primary School is a good school where pupils' standards are generally in line with their abilities. These standards, as seen during the inspection and in the results of the National Curriculum tests, match national averages in mathematics and science but are slightly below average in English due to weaknesses in pupils' writing. Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology, art and design, and religious education are above expectations. All pupils have very good attitudes to school and are very eager to learn. Pupils' sound achievements and progress are the result of good teaching and the good leadership and management. The school has achieved satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and is providing good value for money.

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

- Pupils' standards in information technology, art and design, and religious education throughout the school exceed expectations.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the school, their work and to each other.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables these pupils to make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- A good range of learning opportunities is provided for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2.

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

- The standard of pupils' writing is not high enough throughout the school.
- The quality of learning at the Foundation Stage is not matched specifically enough to children's needs.
- Opportunities for pupils to work independently are limited.
- More able pupils require more challenge in their work.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.*

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

The school has achieved satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in October 1996. Most key issues arising from that inspection have been rectified successfully. There has been good improvement in the monitoring of budgetary decisions, and satisfactory improvement in the provision of opportunities for investigative mathematics. Pupils have also improved satisfactorily in the presentation of their work. However, insufficient improvement has occurred in pupils' imaginative and descriptive writing. Pupils are now taught appropriate research skills, which was a previous weakness but they still do not have sufficient opportunities to work from their own initiative. Beyond the key issues from the last inspection, other aspects of the school's work show improvement. The quality of teaching, pupils' attitudes, their behaviour and the provision for pupils' personal development have all improved. Additionally, several aspects of leadership and management have also improved, notably the monitoring of teaching and other aspects of the school's performance, and the strategic use of resources. Finally, pupils' standards are better in information and communication technology, art and design, and religious education throughout the school.

The school has developed thorough procedures for self-evaluation that enable it to identify its weaknesses and the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	D	D	E
Mathematics	C	B	C	C
Science	C	B	C	B

  

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Results in English stayed at the same level between 1996 and 1999 and showed a slight improvement in 2000. In both mathematics and science, the test results have followed the same pattern of a rise one year followed by a fall the next. However, the overall trend is one of rising standards that have kept pace with the rise that has occurred nationally. The school sets realistically challenging targets for pupils to achieve in the national tests taken at the age of eleven and the standards of work seen indicate that pupils currently in Year 6 are on line to achieve the targets set for them in English and mathematics. Their work is average in English, mathematics and science although, overall, standards of writing are below average. Standards are above expectations in information and communication technology, art and design, and religious education.

The pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving satisfactorily. These pupils, who are approaching the end of Key Stage 1, are achieving average standards in reading, mathematics and science but writing standards are below average. Standards are above expectations in information and communication technology, art and design, history, and religious education. By the time children reach the end of the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>, they are meeting expectations for their age in all areas of learning except communication skills, which are below expectation, and personal and social skills, which are above.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, with complete absence of any oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and staff, contributing to the good overall personal development.
Attendance	Satisfactory. In line with national figures for authorised and unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the lessons seen, 26 per cent of teaching was very good, 37 percent good, 35 per cent satisfactory and two per cent was unsatisfactory. In one lesson teaching was judged to be excellent. The percentage of very good teaching has risen since the last inspection. All teachers manage their classes well. English and mathematics are taught

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

well overall at key Stages 1 and 2 and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consolidated well across the whole curriculum. Teaching is generally well matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities, although there is insufficient challenge in the work set for more able pupils. At the Foundation Stage, there is insufficient assessment of what children have learned on a daily basis and, as a result, not all learning activities are planned with sufficient thought about what precisely children are to learn from them. The very good use of support staff, and the good quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs by these support staff, contributes very significantly to the good progress of these pupils in all aspects of their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language make similarly good progress. At Key Stages 1 and 2, all pupils work hard and make better progress than expected in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding across much of the curriculum.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	At the Foundation Stage there is a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the school provides a good range of learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good overall. There is early identification, good liaison with parents and regular review of pupils' progress towards the good, specific targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision that addresses pupils' individual needs well, with good ongoing support from teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, with strong emphasis and excellent provision for moral development, very good provision for social development and good provision for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school is a caring community, providing good support and guidance and attending well to all aspects of pupils' welfare. Good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are used well to plan their future work.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher leads the school well, with very good support from the deputy headteacher, phase managers and subject co-ordinators. All these key staff fulfil their roles successfully and play a full part in moving the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors ensure good fulfilment of their responsibilities through the provision of constructive, critical guidance and a clear vision of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good self-evaluation procedures enable the school to identify priorities, set itself targets and pursue effective courses of action for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use of physical and human resources and very efficient management of finances.

The pastoral care that is shown for all pupils is a strength of the school with all staff committed to providing a safe environment in which all pupils are valued. The school works hard to develop links with parents and is involving them very well in their children's education.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• Children's good progress.</li><li>• The good behaviour.</li><li>• the good standard of teaching.</li><li>• How the school deals with their questions or problems.</li><li>• The school has high expectations of its' pupils.</li><li>• Good leadership and management.</li><li>• How pupils are helped to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents have no significant concerns about the school.</li></ul>

Inspectors endorse all the positive views of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start in the nursery class in the September or January after their third birthday and transfer to a reception class, at corresponding times, before they reach the age of five. Their attainment is assessed from entry profiles shortly after they start school and by a more formal, baseline assessment when they enter reception. At both times, attainment is shown to be average overall although it is generally below average in speaking skills and above average in personal and social skills. Children are therefore making satisfactory progress overall during their time in the Foundation Stage.
2. The school's results in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds have fluctuated during the past five years. The performance in the reading tests shows a steady rise from the last inspection in 1996 until 2000, when results fell. In writing, apart from a slight rise in 1998, results have gradually fallen. The results in mathematics show an annual rise since 1997. The latest results can be compared with those achieved by schools nationally and by similar schools<sup>2</sup>. Compared with schools nationally, pupils' results were average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. Teachers' assessments of science showed standards to be average. The percentage of pupils who reached a higher level in the tests and in the teachers' assessment of science was average in reading and mathematics, below average in writing and above average in science. Compared with similar schools, pupils' results were average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was average in reading and mathematics, well below average in writing, but above average in science. The school has placed a high priority on improving the percentage of pupils who achieve the expected level in writing.
3. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 2, results in English stayed at the same level between 1996 and 1999 and showed a slight improvement in 2000. In both mathematics and science, the test results follow the same pattern of a rise one year followed by a fall the next year. However, the overall trend is one of rising standards that has kept pace with the rise that has occurred nationally. Compared with the national averages for 2000, the pupils' results were slightly below average in English and average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, results in English were well below average and mathematics and those for science were average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the tests was below average in English, average in mathematics, and above average in science. Compared with similar schools, this percentage was well below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. The English results reflect pupils' weaknesses in writing which, as at Key Stage 1, are being given a high priority by the school as it works towards improve standards.
4. Annual targets are set by the governing body who anticipate the percentages of pupils who are expected to achieve the expected Level 4 or above in the English and mathematics tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In conjunction with the local authority, the school makes predictions based on pupils' performances in tests taken when they are younger. The governing body considers these predictions and then sets the targets. In 2000, the targets were achieved and the pupils currently in Year 6, who will take the tests in 2001, are also in line to achieve the realistic targets that have been set for them.
5. The inspection evidence indicates that children in reception are in line to exceed the standards of personal and social development that are expected by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. Communication skills are below expectations and in all other areas of learning children are

---

<sup>2</sup> The school's results are compared both to the national average (ie the average of the results of all schools in England, where pupils took National Curriculum assessment tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2) and to the average for similar schools (ie the average of the results for all schools whose pupils come from similar socio-economic backgrounds, determined by the eligibility of pupils within the school to receive free school meals).

matching expectations. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 who are approaching the end of their respective key stages are achieving average standards in reading and mathematics, but below average standards in writing. They are also achieving expected standards in science. In Year 6, pupils' writing standards remain below average but are an improvement on those previously achieved by the end of the key stage. Speaking and listening skills show good improvement during Key Stage 1 and this is maintained during Key Stage 2, where drama lessons are having a very positive effect on the development of speaking skills.

6. In the other subjects of the curriculum, all pupils are maintaining satisfactory, and sometimes good levels of achievement, and standards are generally in line with expectations in each subject by the end of each key stage. Throughout the school, pupils show three particular strengths. These are the above-average quality of their work in information and communication technology, art and design, and religious education. There has been good improvement in these subjects since the last inspection. In art and design, and religious education, this improvement has occurred at both key stages while information and communication technology shows improvement by the end of Key Stage 1. History standards have also improved. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are above expectations and, although only matching expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, they are higher earlier in this key stage, most notably in Years 4 and 5. In contrast, when compared with the last inspection, standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 are lower.
7. In relation to their abilities, pupils of all ages are showing satisfactory levels of achievement overall. However, there are variations between different groups. Pupils with special educational needs, for example, achieve particularly well in relation to their abilities. They approach their work with confidence, due to the good levels of support they receive within the school. They progress well towards achieving the targets for learning in their individual educational plans. These targets are clear, appropriate to pupils' needs and are reviewed regularly. Those pupils who have English as an additional language are making quick progress and, in many subjects, are achieving at least average standards. The support provided by a teacher from the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Group, coupled with the ongoing support from class teachers and school support staff, enables pupils to progress well in English and achieve standards in line with their classmates. The relatively small numbers of more able pupils are not always achieving the standards of which they are capable. This is due to an inconsistency between teachers in the extent to which they plan suitably challenging work.

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

8. The school has built well on the good behaviour, attitudes and relationships that existed at the time of the last inspection and they are now of very good quality. Opportunities for initiative and personal responsibility remain satisfactory. Parents agree that their children like coming to school and are very supportive of the school's values and attitudes. They feel that there are excellent standards of behaviour fostered by the teachers.
9. Pupils say they are proud of their school and, in every year group, they show high levels of interest and involvement in all activities. There are very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils listen attentively, are eager to answer questions and concentrate carefully on their tasks. Most work is clearly presented. Pupils handle resources carefully and sensibly, and work together co-operatively when given the opportunity.
10. Pupils' behaviour in the classroom and playground is very good. During the school day pupils move round the school in an orderly way, even when unsupervised. Pupils are aware of the consequences of misconduct, but no bad behaviour was observed during the inspection. They very much appreciate the system of rewards for good behaviour and work. Teachers deal extremely well and positively with the occasional, minor problems where pupils sometimes perceive themselves to be a victim. Pupils, therefore, become well aware of the impact their actions may have on others, and this awareness is heightened through assemblies and during discussions in class. Pupils are very sensitive to the less fortunate members of the school. The wheelchair users are included in all aspects of school life and are always surrounded by friends in

the playground. There are high levels of co-operation between boys and girls, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated.

11. Opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in the life of the school remain satisfactory and there is scope to increase them further. When given the chance pupils are keen to show initiative and to take responsibility.
12. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is good because they are well integrated into classes and participate fully in the learning opportunities.
13. Relationships are very good. Pupils form very good relationships with each other, with teachers, and with other adults. They collaborate well and celebrate each other's successes.
14. Attendance in the school is satisfactory. It was around the national average last year. Pupils generally come to school and lessons on time. The school has maintained a satisfactory level of attendance since the last inspection, with unauthorised absence levels below the national average.

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

15. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. Twenty- six per cent of teaching is very good or better; 37 per cent is good, 35 per cent is satisfactory and two per cent is unsatisfactory. The standards of teaching has improved since that seen at the time of the last inspection. There is now more very good teaching overall and the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching is significantly lower. The standard at Key Stage 1 is consistently good, with no unsatisfactory teaching.
16. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and enables children both in the nursery and reception classes to make satisfactory progress in their learning. There is good management of the children, and the classroom and learning activities are well organised so that no time is lost and children are constantly working and learning. All learning opportunities are prepared thoroughly and presented in a lively, stimulating manner. However, the planning of individual learning activities varies to the extent that the specific learning to be achieved by children is not always identified in sufficient detail. There is insufficient ongoing assessment of individual children's responses or progress in all learning opportunities and this, in turn, leads to individual children's specific needs not always being fully catered for. The teacher and support staff work well together in each class, providing effective teams and ensuring that children develop confidence in a caring and safe learning environment.
17. Teaching is good overall at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Good teaching is particularly evident throughout the school in English, mathematics, science, history, information and communication technology and music. This is contributing well to the good progress that pupils make in their learning, particularly in English at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics and music in all classes. A good rate of learning is also achieved in history and this results from teachers' very thorough planning of lessons.
18. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, creating calm, purposeful working atmospheres in classrooms. Pupils respond well to teachers and other adults and work conscientiously and co-operatively. The relationships between teachers and other adults in the classroom with pupils are good. These have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work. The good quality of behaviour management and relationships are evident in all classrooms.
19. In the best teaching in the school, lessons are carefully prepared and resources are used very well to aid pupils' learning. Teachers question their pupils in a purposeful manner to consolidate pupils' understanding and extend their learning. There is a brisk pace to very good lessons and work is matched carefully to pupils' individual needs and abilities. All these characteristics were evident in the excellent teaching of less able pupils in a Year 3 numeracy lesson on the handling

of data and problem-solving. The teacher provided activities that were carefully matched to levels of prior attainment and communicated high but realistic expectations. Pupils responded very well to the very real intellectual demands made of them. They made good use of the very good resources provided, their learning was firmly established and then extended further by the provision of a suitable homework task designed to extend and consolidate both knowledge and understanding. All pupils were challenged sufficiently by their work and made good progress.

20. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory at the Foundation Stage and good at Key Stages 1 and 2. Good use is made of specialist expertise and, in art and design, information and communication technology, and music where individual teachers have high levels of subject knowledge, and exchanges of classes enable maximum numbers of pupils to benefit. Pupils make good gains in learning in these situations. The very good quality of specialist music teaching was evident in a lesson in Year 6 during which the teacher's guidance significantly improved pupils' compositional and performing skills. Similarly, in information and communication technology lessons related to numeracy in Year 5 and the development of a control program in Year 6, teachers' expertise was very evident in the clarity of explanations and ongoing support that enabled pupils, in both lessons, to make very good progress in the lesson.
21. The teaching of basic literacy skills in both key stages is satisfactory. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively by providing a satisfactory range of activities that are matched well to the needs of groups of pupils of lower and average ability. However, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged by their work. Teachers are successful at using lessons in subjects other than English to develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. This is particularly evident in history and religious education, at Key Stage 1, where pupils' work contributes very well to their progress in the basic skills of English.
22. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Number work is strongly promoted and mental calculation is a feature of all mathematics lessons. This is having a positive effect on standards, most especially those of pupils with lower and average ability.
23. Teachers make good use of support staff to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils. Support staff are briefed thoroughly and the quality of their guidance to pupils is good. A classroom assistant and parent volunteer were used very effectively in a Year 5 mathematics lesson with average-ability pupils, where they monitored pupils' responses and involvement in whole-class discussion. This information enabled constructive assessment of pupils' learning that served as the foundation of provision in subsequent lessons. However, such use of support personnel is less evident in most lessons.
24. Children are achieving satisfactory progress in their learning at the Foundation Stage and pupils are making good progress at Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall but the more able pupils are capable of better progress than they are currently achieving. All pupils' learning is positively influenced by the intellectual and physical effort that they put into achieving as well as they can from the experiences that are provided for them. At Key Stage 1, pupils show particularly good levels of interest in all their learning activities and, by maintaining good levels of concentration, they make good progress in lessons, as well as over time. When encouraged to work independently, without constant attention and guidance from the teacher, pupils respond well. This is evident in Year 3 history lessons and in the regular opportunities that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have for short discussions with partners or in small groups. These, however, are exceptions and there are generally insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop this sort of independence.
25. Teachers vary in their expectations of pupils. While a common feature of all very good teaching is high expectations, as were particularly evident in the teaching of religious education, and in mathematics with less able pupils, expectations are otherwise lower. At Key Stage 2, insufficient challenge is provided for the most able pupils, although others are suitably stretched by their work as a result of generally good use of assessment of pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of more able pupils are generally not high enough and, consequently, the needs of the small numbers of more able pupils are not identified precisely enough. There is insufficient planning and provision of learning activities that will extend their learning beyond the basic learning

intentions of a lesson that are to be achieved by all pupils. Pupils are generally helped well by teachers' marking. This is detailed and provides pupils not only with confirmation of good features of their work but also indicates what should be worked on for further improvement. Pupils' learning is assisted well by the help that this form of assessment provides.

26. The quality of teaching and support given to pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Teaching and non-teaching staff know the needs of pupils well. Teachers and support staff identify clear, achievable targets for their pupils and focus work specifically to meet their individual needs which results in good learning. Pupils with English as an additional language progress similarly well in their learning. The guidance provided by the specialist support teacher enables teachers to address pupils' individual needs and ensure that problems with vocabulary are anticipated and support can be directed in order that pupils' understanding is established quickly at the start of and during learning activities. As a result of school's guidance to the specialist support worker, the quality of this provision, and the progress made by pupils have improved since the last inspection.
27. The use of homework at Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. All pupils are given regular practice in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy that consolidates their learning in lessons well. The projects set for older pupils in Key Stage 2 challenge them to produce significant pieces of work in a variety of subjects. Pupils' research skills are positively enhanced by these opportunities.

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

28. The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils, which is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. It is particularly successful in maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum, in which all subjects are given due weight, while at the same time successfully introducing the new strategies for literacy and numeracy. While satisfactory in all areas, curriculum provision is particularly strong in information and communication technology, history and religious education and this is part of the reason for standards being better than expected. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for sex and drugs education. Religious education conforms to the locally agreed syllabus.
29. Planning the teaching programme is a strength of the school. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and offer suitable support and advice. The detail of the medium term plans ensures that there is consistency within year groups and continuity in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding in most subjects. The setting of pupils into ability groups for numeracy and literacy, from Year 2, upwards makes a positive contribution, enabling the curriculum to be more closely matched to most pupils' learning needs. However, this is more successful with average and less able pupils and there is less evidence of consideration being given to the needs of the more able pupils.
30. The organisation of pupils into 'social groups' also has a positive impact on the curriculum. The smaller numbers of pupils in each group means that teachers are able to give pupils more individual attention. The curriculum for these groups is also carefully planned into five-week blocks with a specific focus, and makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic as well as social progress.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is well organised and successful in all key stages including the Foundation Stage. The pupils receive a broad curriculum and individual action plans contain specific short term targets for pupils to achieve. The school's very strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils, and their equality of access to the full curriculum, is evident in the arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. These arrangements ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. In physical education, for example, pupils with physical disabilities are provided with programmes specific to individual needs that enable them to participate fully in lessons. Pupils receive good support in the classrooms through setting arrangements or through classroom assistants. Support assistants assigned to pupils with a physical disability also give

support to other groups of pupils and in reading sessions. The headteacher and special needs co-ordinator, together with class teachers and support assistants, ensure that all pupils receive the right levels of support. As the co-ordinator is a full-time class teacher, the teachers play a very important role in the identification, provision and monitoring of these pupils.

#### *Extra-curricular provision*

32. There is a very good programme of extra-curricular activity across the school, in a wide range of subjects. Every member of staff makes a contribution and there is a spread of sporting and non-sporting activity. The range of non-sporting clubs includes chess, drama, various choirs and singers, French, guitar club, keyboard, homework and country dancing. The sports provided include netball, rounders, football, and cross-country running and the school participates in inter-school competition. There is also a before- and after-school club attached to the school. Parents remain pleased with the level of extra-curricular provision, as they were at the time of the last inspection.

#### *The school's links with the community*

33. The links the school has forged with its immediate and wider community make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Such links are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection.
34. On entry to the school, the parents of children in the nursery are encouraged to stay with them as long as necessary to help them settle. On transfer to secondary school, there is a good induction programme with the two main receiving schools, including planned visits and regular meetings between staff. The school nurse is a regular visitor to the school together with the Police, the Fire Service and various artists in residence. Pupils visit the local library, St. Thomas' Church and a local elderly persons' home. In addition, there are residential visits to the Kingswood Centre and to Barmouth. A theatre group visited the school recently to discuss bullying with the pupils and adults, playing the roles of Tudors, Anglo Saxons, and Vikings have visited the school to enhance the curriculum for history.
35. Whilst all these visits and visitors are adding a great deal to the curriculum, there are few links with industry, although visits to the Post Office are taking place through the links made by the headteacher.

#### *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*

36. There is very good provision overall for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils. Within this positive picture, the school ensures that there are very good opportunities for pupils to make progress in their social development and ensures excellent provision in the area of moral development. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is good.
37. In both religious education lessons and acts of corporate worship opportunities are offered for reflection and many involve stories containing moral issues. The themes of collective worship are well-planned, with music carefully selected to create a spiritual atmosphere. Moments of spirituality occur incidentally in lessons. However, the school's planning across the curriculum does not identify likely opportunities, which may arise in other subjects, for example, for pupils to reflect on the values and beliefs of themselves and others.
38. The school's code of conduct is clearly displayed in all areas of the school, including every classroom. Teachers use it as their first point of reference to encourage the very good behaviour. The school is very clear about the values it promotes and the high expectations it has of its pupils. Pupils strive to achieve house points which results in the awarding of a house cup at the weekly assembly. The school fosters a very caring attitude particularly for those with difficulties and works hard to raise the self-esteem of all pupils.
39. There is a strong emphasis on the school as a community, and pupils are encouraged to contribute to this as they get older, benefiting everyone. The main feature of the social aspect of

the school is the overall caring ethos which pervades the school in all its aspects. The 'social groups' which are organised for furthering certain areas of the curriculum, enable pupils to work with others within their year group. Regular residential visits add to pupils' social development.

40. The school actively encourages its pupils to appreciate the cultural diversity of the world around them. Visits are made to different places of worship and all pupils study world religions. Artists and actors come into the school, as well as dancers and musicians. Local museums are used to support work in history, and there are good links with the Post Office. Music and art and design are used within other subjects and provide a good cultural element to the curriculum.

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

41. The school provides a good standard of personal support for its pupils. Pupils say they feel secure, and are confident in approaching any member of staff when they have concerns.
42. Procedures for child protection are good, and follow the guidelines set by the local area child protection committee. The headteacher is the designated person for this aspect, and she has very good contact with the relevant statutory agencies, including social services and the education social worker. All staff have a good awareness of these procedures.
43. There is a clear health and safety policy, with all necessary arrangements in place. The deputy headteacher is the designated person for overall responsibility in this area, and there are appropriate procedures for fire, medicines, first-aid and accidents. Risk assessment procedures are carried out informally but these require documenting on a regular basis. Safety is taught well in lessons, for example, in a Year 4 art lesson, the hazards inherent in handling clay, and the need for protective clothing were taught well. Health and safety are effectively monitored by the deputy headteacher, governor, and the caretaker, who report to the premises sub-committee.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good, with a consistent application of a well-structured rewards and sanctions system. Stickers and house points are awarded for good behaviour, and loss of playtime and the sending of pupils to the headteacher, are the most commonly used sanctions, although they are rarely needed. Any bullying, racist and sexist behaviour are also dealt with very well through a very well structured personal, social and health education programme. All aspects of behaviour are dealt with on the weekly 'social time' and also in assemblies, where pupils' achievements, within and outside school, are praised. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the subject of stealing was handled very well and the possible reasons for stealing were explored. Behaviour is also monitored well by midday supervisors who, like all staff, have a very good relationship with pupils.
45. Attendance is monitored very well. The secretary organises a 'first day calling' system, to ensure that pupils' parents are contacted on the first day of absence and, because most parents contact the school as requested, these calls are few. The deputy headteacher ensures that any pupil's absence for three days is followed up and after one week's absence, without notification, he calls in the education social worker, with whom the school works well. Since absence is around the national average, there are very few problems. The school has an attendance policy and actively promotes the value of good attendance by rewarding 100 per cent attendance, both termly and annually with a certificate. Registration procedures are very good.
46. Health, drugs, and sex education are taught appropriately, within the science and personal, social and health education curriculum; often using outside speakers such as the school nurse and the dental hygienist to support the teaching.
47. Personal support for pupils is good; all teachers know their pupils well and they are approachable at any time. An overwhelming majority of parents said their child liked school, and a similar number stated that the school helps its pupils become 'mature and responsible'.
48. The care of pupils with special educational needs is good. Special arrangements for pupils with physical disabilities are part of the daily routine and good attention is given to pupils on-going progress in relation to their specific action plans.

49. The overall provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare continues to be a strength of the school, as it was at the last inspection.
50. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress are good, as was noted at the time of the last inspection. Senior managers provide a detailed analysis of pupils' performance in the tests at both key stages, through analysing results and trends over time, as well as differences in the performance of boys and girls. Where weaknesses are identified, as in writing at both key stages, positive measures are put in place and their success evaluated regularly.
51. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science individual pupils are regularly assessed to judge their understanding and the progress they are making. Units of work are also assessed in history and geography, as are sketchbooks in art. Other subjects have less formal assessments, apart from through the annual report to parents, although new assessment systems are being tried out in subjects such as information and communication technology, and design and technology.
52. The school is in its second year of setting targets for individual pupils; a process which is still being reviewed and improved. Pupils, from Year 1 upwards, have targets in their books each term in reading, writing and mathematics, which are reviewed at the end of the term. There are also individual targets for science, mathematics and English in the annual reports to parents. Parents are made aware of their child's targets at parents' evenings.
53. On-going assessment is also evident in the work of teachers, for example in written evaluations on lesson plans which are used well for the planning of the next stage in pupils' learning. The specific learning to be achieved in a lesson is usually shared with pupils at the beginning and then re-visited at the end of the lesson in order to provide an effective check on pupils' understanding. This is good practice.

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

54. Parents are generally very pleased with the education and care provided for their children and are very pleased with the support given for pupils who need additional help, for example, the early learning club, pupils with physical disabilities, and pupils with special educational needs. A very large majority of parents say they are well informed about their child's progress, that they are comfortable when approaching the school with questions or problems and that the school works closely with parents.
55. The school's links with parents make a good contribution to pupils' progress. Parents do play a part in their child's education. They come into class to listen to pupils reading. They make resources for lessons, and many parents have progressed to become trained classroom assistants. There is an active Parent-Teacher Association, which meets regularly to plan fund-raising and social events.
56. Most teachers are involved with the Parent-Teacher Association. There are regular curriculum meetings, for example about literacy, numeracy, science, and the new computer suite. Teachers are very responsive to parents' needs, and will see parents at almost any time, including the formal parents' evenings in April and October. Following the receipt of their child's annual report, a further parents' meeting is held in July when the pupils show parents their work and teachers are available for consultation. Annual reports are of good quality, containing targets for pupils as well as a section for parents' comments. Generally, the information received by parents is good, and includes their child's annual report, regular newsletters about school events, and letters each term giving details of projects to be covered in the coming term. This enables parents to be well informed about the next stages in their child's learning. Homework is also given on a progressive basis, throughout the school, ranging from spellings and words for children in reception to a full range of subjects for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' homework diary ensures good communication between school and home. The contribution of parents make in school and at home is satisfactory.

57. Overall, parents' views of the school are very positive; they come into school to assemblies and are very supportive of the school. The pre-inspection questionnaire completed by parents raised no areas of concern.
58. The strong partnership identified in the last inspection has continued and remains a feature of the school.

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

59. Leadership and management of the school is good was found at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher provides very effective, purposeful leadership. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the phase co-ordinators. Together, they share a clear sense of educational direction for the school's progress. The headteacher's awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses has led to clear priorities for the school's development and thorough planning of the initiatives necessary for school improvement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher's good management skills, and very effective day-to-day management of the school, contribute significantly to the generally good quality of relationships at all levels and the development of a shared sense of purpose amongst most teaching and all non-teaching staff. Particular emphasis has been given to the delegation of responsibility and the development of corporate objectives and decision making. The role played by subject co-ordinators was judged good at the last inspection, and co-ordinators continue to monitor and evaluate very successfully the provision and standards in their subjects.
60. The school's aims and values are integrated well in all its work and, following the example set by the headteacher and her deputy, all staff show high levels of concern for pupils' welfare. There is thus a very positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to creating a caring environment for all pupils in which they are helped to achieve improving standards in their academic and personal development.
61. The school implements its equal opportunities policy very thoroughly. The governor responsible monitors the school's arrangements for equal opportunities annually. All pupils have the same opportunities for each area of learning and for out-of-school activities. Pupils with physical disabilities are catered for well in terms of staff support and access to all areas of the building.
62. The school has good systems for monitoring and evaluating its own performance as a result of the headteacher's successful introduction of a range of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, the quality of teaching, and the standards of pupils' work. The strength of these arrangements is the ongoing review of the curriculum that enables new initiatives, including national initiatives and subject guidelines, to be incorporated into what is taught. Pupils' standards are also monitored effectively through thorough analysis of National Curriculum assessment test papers each year, including the optional tests taken by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Whole-school strengths and weaknesses are identified and appropriate attention is given to identified weaknesses, such as below-average standards in writing and the overall attainment levels of boys. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very successful due to the focusing on specific skills with teachers being set clear targets for their professional development. At present, there are still some weaknesses to be overcome. There are insufficient opportunities for good practice to be shared due to co-ordinators carrying out their responsibilities outside lesson time. The hour per week when pupils in Years 2 to 6 are organised into social groups does enable some teachers to use their specialist expertise with pupils of different age groups. This is very successful in art and design and information and communication technology and has good impact on pupils' learning in these subjects. However, opportunities for teachers with particular skills to work alongside colleagues or demonstrate specific strengths in their teaching are very limited.
63. The management of the provision for special educational needs within the school is very good. There is accurate identification of pupils' needs and monitoring of progress is very conscientiously carried out by the co-ordinator. The programme of work is very effectively delivered by good quality support staff.

64. Management of provision for the early years is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has developed efficient procedures that ensure continuity between the nursery and reception, such as joint planning, the sharing of topics and the movement of support staff when children transfer from nursery to reception. The co-ordinator recognises the need for further refinement of methods of planning to ensure that the demands of the new Foundation Stage are met while, at the same time, enabling a smooth transition for children from reception to Year 1. This latter progression has had insufficient discussion and staff in reception are currently attempting to rationalise the differences between what the school would like to achieve and the advice being given to schools locally.
65. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. It is led very well by a chairperson with a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's overall management is strengthened by the very good working relationship between the headteacher and the chair of governors. The governing body provides good support for the work of the school and individual members visit the school to assist in a variety of ways. Through their visits and liaison with co-ordinators, governors are very familiar with the school's working methods. There is systematic monitoring of the school's developments by the governing body through direct observation and the reports received from teaching staff. The school development plan provides a sound framework for school improvement and combines review of what has been achieved in the previous year with appropriate detail of prioritised targets for the current year. The financial and resource implications, including the demands on personnel, are identified and detailed costings and success criteria are included. The governing body has carefully monitored the action plan that followed the last inspection and parents have been regularly informed of progress with that action plan.
66. Educational priorities are very well supported through careful financial planning and the very good use of resources available. This is now even better than the last inspection, which reported good financial control. Effective systems are in place for staff to be involved in decision making and the headteacher and governing body carefully consider suggestions put forward by co-ordinators. Administrative procedures are carried out very effectively, without impinging on teaching or learning time. The headteacher and governors are well aware of the need to spend available funds to the best effect and carefully weigh and compare the possible advantages of spending options. This was evident in the decision to improve the outdoor play area ensuring satisfactory provision was made for children in reception, as part of the new Foundation Stage.
67. The school receives a number of specific grants and uses these appropriately for their intended purposes. For example this year, for the first time, money has been granted for supporting pupils from ethnic minorities and is being used to fund the salary of a part-time bilingual nursery nurse. Her role and responsibilities have been carefully planned and the support she provides is having a positive effect on the children involved. The school has responded very well to the auditor's recent report and all the issues have been fully addressed.
68. Given the context of the school, the satisfactory progress which has been made since the last inspection, the good quality of teaching and the good leadership and management, the school gives good value for money.
69. The school has a good balance of teachers who are suitably trained and qualified to meet the needs of pupils and ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively to all pupils. Good use is made of teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. Classes are large, but the number and qualifications of non-teaching staff are good and their expertise enables teachers to work effectively. There is good provision for special educational needs.
70. The school considers the professional development of all staff members as important, and of benefit both to them and the school. It encourages teachers to develop their skills and is appreciative of the independent development initiatives undertaken by non-teaching staff. There are good arrangements in place for the support of newly qualified teachers and recently appointed members of staff.

71. The accommodation is extensive and is satisfactory overall. The playing areas are satisfactory in size and have been embellished with trees and sculptures. The two halls provide good space for physical education, music, and activities that require large group work. There are a number of features, however, which have an impact on the delivery of the curriculum. Some of the classrooms are cramped for the numbers of pupils who use them. One very small room in reception has an adverse effect on children's learning. There is no space for an infant reference library, and placing the junior library in the information and communication technology suite limits pupils' access for independent research. The site manager and his staff ensure that the buildings are kept very clean and, with the pupils' help, free from litter.
72. Resources are satisfactory for all subjects and for many they are good, although there is insufficient gymnastic apparatus for Key Stage 1 pupils. The school makes good use of its site as a teaching resource. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of educational visits, including residential trips and visitors to school.

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

73. In order to improve the standards of work and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- Raise levels of pupils' achievement in writing by:\*
    - increasing learning opportunities by planning for systematic development of their writing skills in all the relevant subjects of the curriculum;
    - improving opportunities for pupils to complete extended pieces of writing.  
(Paragraphs 3, 99)
  - Revise lesson planning procedures at the Foundation Stage in order that:\*
    - the specific learning to be gained by children from each learning activity is identified clearly;
    - a smooth transition occurs between children leaving the Foundation Stage and moving on to Key Stage 1. (Paragraphs 16, 64, 76)
  - Raise the levels of achievement of all more able pupils by planning additional learning activities that will extend their knowledge and understanding in all subjects. (Paragraphs 7, 25, 29, 95, 102, 109)
  - Increase the opportunities for pupils to learn independently by planning learning activities that encourage pupils to take greater responsibility for organisation of their work.  
(Paragraphs 24, 128, 133, 146)

Issues marked \* are already identified as priorities in the school's development plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	25	37	35	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	448
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	111

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.4

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	32	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	29	32
	Girls	26	24	26
	Total	54	53	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (97)	87 (85)	95 (87)
	National	84(82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	31	32
	Girls	25	23	25
	Total	51	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (88)	89 (84)	93 (81)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	31	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	25
	Girls	30	32	34
	Total	46	49	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (68)	72 (79)	87 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	25	24	31
	Total	39	39	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (87)	57 (71)	69 (79)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	9
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	23
Indian	13
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	329
Any other minority ethnic group	13

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

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.95
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	32

#### **Education support staff: YR - Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	241

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
--------------------------------	----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	793,703
Total expenditure	808,703
Expenditure per pupil	1,605
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,811
Balance carried forward to next year	-4,189

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	488
Number of questionnaires returned	128
Percentage of questionnaires returned	26

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	26	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	40	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	40	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	43	6	3	13
The teaching is good.	60	36	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	37	9	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	19	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	47	41	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	68	25	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	31	5	1	17

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

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

74. Most children begin nursery, around the age of three years, with appropriate skills in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative ability and physical development. Their language and communication skills are under developed for their age, but their personal, social and emotional skills are mostly well developed. This is confirmed by initial assessments of the children carried out in the nursery and at again at the age of five. By the time they start Year 1, the children have made satisfactory progress in all areas and the majority reach the Early Learning Goals<sup>3</sup> in most aspects. Speaking skills are still the weakest area and social skills are good.
75. After attending either a morning or an afternoon session in the nursery, about 70 of the 80 children transfer to the school's reception classes for the start of their full-time education. This is within six months of their fifth birthday.
76. The school has made satisfactory progress in implementing the new Foundation Stage curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes. Satisfactory standards of teaching in all areas of learning have continued since the last inspection although continuous assessment of children's learning in different activities is under developed. This results in a failure to identify precisely what children are to learn from each learning experience.

#### *Personal, social and emotional development*

77. Most of the children enter the nursery with good skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception class, they are exceeding the Early Learning Goals in this area. This shows satisfactory achievement and reflects the teaching both in the nursery and reception classes. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children play and work well together as seen in the nursery's 'health centre' and a reception class 'cave'. They share equipment happily and the oldest children instinctively show genuine care for each other if they are hurt or upset. By the age of five, most children are able to take turns and concentrate satisfactorily when the activities are suitably challenging.
78. The adults provide good role models for the children, treating each other and the children with respect and courtesy. This helps the children to listen to each other and to their teachers and develop trusting relationships. At times, in the nursery, the children are over directed and insufficient time and opportunities are planned to allow for the development of independence.

#### *Communication, language and literacy*

79. In the nursery and reception classes, the children enjoy listening to stories, but lack the enthusiasm for sharing books with adults and each other which is expected at this age.
80. At times, adults interact well with the children to stimulate and improve communication skills but this is inconsistent and, frequently, children are given insufficient opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations. One good example of an adult engaging in stimulating conversation with the children was seen in the nursery when the children were encouraged to describe and comment on what was happening when water, with and without bubble-bath, was stirred and whisked. The adult's skilful questioning and interaction held the children's concentration and motivated them to extend their communication skills. Opportunities, are however, frequently missed by teachers and support staff to guide the children to clarify their thinking and explain why things are as they are. Many of the activities both in the nursery and reception classes are over directed. Planning does not ensure that adults have sufficient time and opportunity to interact with the children in their activities and secure improvement in language development.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

81. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy framework are used well by teachers in both the reception classes. Most of the children are beginning to acquire satisfactory knowledge of letter sounds and are able to recognise a number of common words. These skills are reinforced through a variety of practical activities, stories and shared text work. There is a good balance of whole class and individual work. Most children can form recognisable letter shapes and over half write their names by copying. Several write their names unaided. Some opportunities are provided for the children to become confident writers, but these are limited. In the nursery each time a child uses the computer they 'write' their names on a list, and in one reception class the writing area encourages the children to write shopping lists and leave messages for other people. A particularly good feature of this provision is the tri-lingual heading on the shopping lists.
82. Parents are encouraged to read with their children at home, and children in reception take home words to learn, as well as reading-scheme books, on a daily basis. Parents can also borrow other books each week from the nursery and reception classes.

### *Mathematical development*

83. By the end of the reception year most children are reaching the Early Learning Goals. They can count at least to ten and many to 20. A few are already beginning to understand about one 'more than'. They have a sound understanding of basic shapes, such as circle, triangle and rectangle. In the nursery, children reinforce their counting skills through a good range of number rhymes and are guided to sort objects by 'big' and 'small'. However, many opportunities to use and reinforce mathematical language in incidental conversation are missed, for instance, counting, and looking for shapes, whatever the activity.
84. Through a good variety of activities, the older children in reception reinforce their understanding of heavy, light, heavier, and lighter, though a number of them are still struggling to use the correct mathematical language. By the time they move into Year 1, the highest-attaining pupils understand numbers to 20 and beyond, and are able to add numbers to at least ten. The less able children are still learning to recognise and count numbers to five. This is within the range expected for their age.

### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

85. Children enter the nursery with a basic general knowledge, typical of three-year-olds. They build on this knowledge in the nursery to help them understand more about the world around them, for example, when they made chocolate crispy cakes they talked about what happened when chocolate gets warm and then cools again. In reception, children learn about different types of bread and are encouraged to observe the changes in the dough when left in a warm place. In another aspect of their project on food, they have looked at and tasted a variety of different foods, including those originating from other countries, such as pizza and curry, as well as learning about all the different ways in which potatoes can be cooked.
86. In reception, children begin to learn about the past by looking at what has happened to them since they were born. They are becoming confident in their use of the computer. In the nursery, most children still need the support of an adult when using the computer, but by the time they are in reception they use the mouse with confidence to control the cursor and a number of them are skilled at using the arrow keys. Children attain standards in line with those expected for their age.

### *Physical development*

87. The majority of children reach the expectations of the Early Learning Goals, and many exceed them in the area of using and controlling their arms, legs and bodies, particularly when moving at different speeds and in response to music. This is because they are given plenty of opportunities, both in the nursery and in the reception classes, to work in a large space and respond to a variety of stimuli. In the nursery, children show a mature awareness of others in the space around them whilst in reception children show a good variety of movements and interpret ideas well in dance lessons. The recent extension to the nursery outdoor play area, linking it with the reception

classes, has improved the provision for children to use wheeled toys and other large play equipment.

88. In the more formal sessions in the hall, teachers help the children understand the need for physical exercise and how to warm up. They also sensitively use children to demonstrate good quality movements to help others improve. However the teachers do not consistently insist on instructions being followed which detracts from children's learning. For example, the stimuli used for the younger children, 'swinging through trees like monkeys', was extremely challenging and many found it difficult to interpret though they tried hard. Generally, the children just copied the teacher rather than understood what they were doing.
89. Good routines for changing for indoor physical education are begun in the nursery, for example, by removing shoes and socks, and these good changing habits are well established by the time they leave reception. Most children show a good level of independence.
90. Children have satisfactory opportunities to develop their dexterity through using pencils, crayons, and scissors, and, in a reception class, were safely, and successfully, learning to use knives to spread butter, cheese and chocolate spread on bread.

### *Creative development*

91. This is another area where satisfactory progress is made and children mostly meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they move into Year 1. In the nursery, children use a wide range of resources to paint, create patterns and make three-dimensional models. They are encouraged to experiment with different size paintbrushes and decorate their work using materials such as glitter, straws and fabrics.
92. In reception, having looked at paintings of faces by Picasso, the children were inspired to create some very colourful faces of their own. Pizza collages, created by children in reception, show they are able to select from a variety of small materials, such as pasta spirals and buttons. The children's ability to build bridges and buildings also shows an appropriate awareness of applying knowledge and understanding when creating using construction toys.
93. The 'health centre' in the nursery, and the 'café' and 'cave' in one of the reception classes, offer good opportunities for the children to act out different roles, though these could be enhanced with more realistic props. However, there is insufficient interaction with adults for the children to develop these roles as fully as they might and to extend their learning. In musical activities, the children sing with enjoyment and are given opportunities to select from a variety of percussion instruments. They are beginning to know the names of a number of instruments as expected for their ages.

## **ENGLISH**

94. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, standards in reading were similar to the national average. Standards in writing were below average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in reading was in line with national averages and average when compared with similar schools. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was below average and well below average when compared with similar schools. Following a steady annual rise between 1996 and 1999, the Key Stage 1 test results, both in reading and writing, dropped in 2000. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well below average nationally and when compared with similar schools. The overall trend of falling standards in Key Stage 2 was reversed by an improvement in 2000. Staff have identified some of the reasons for this overall drop in standards since the time of the last inspection and have developed sound strategies to improve pupils' learning.
95. Standards seen during this inspection show some improvement. By the end of both key stages standards are average overall. The difference in standards between reading and writing reflects the test results. Pupils of average ability are working at levels similar to those expected for their

age. Staff have decided not to provide extra time in English lessons to help pupils to improve their imaginative writing. However, in other lessons such as history, geography and religious education, teachers offer good opportunities for pupils to write accounts of factual knowledge. Although correct spellings are taught and tested, pupils' standards of spelling in their written work are weak. Few examples of work are planned to improve the learning of pupils with higher ability. This indicates that teachers are not identifying such pupils and, therefore, not expecting them to reach the higher levels of attainment.

96. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs, whose attainment in reading and writing is well below that expected for their age, make good progress. This is as a result of work that is matched well to targets in their individual educational plans and the additional help they get individually and in small groups. Well-informed support staff contribute particularly well to these pupils' learning achievements.
97. Pupils' speaking skills are at the level that would be expected for their age and their listening skills are well developed. Most listen very attentively to teachers and to each other. They benefit from the well-planned opportunities provided in most lessons for offering opinions or explanations. Teachers allow pupils time to express their thoughts and encourage them to ask questions about their work. This helps pupils to gain confidence in speaking and to express themselves clearly. The class assistant's recording of which pupils answer questions is particularly helpful in identifying those who need more help in speaking before a larger audience. Well-organised drama sessions provide very good opportunities for pupils to improvise speech in response to different roles and situations. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked together very well, displaying confidence and imagination as they made a farewell speech, or talked through their difficulties in building some apparatus without instructions.
98. Pupils of average and above-average ability attain satisfactory standards in reading by the age of 11. They build on a very good understanding of letter sounds and patterns learned in Key Stage 1. Pupils' interest in reading has been stimulated by a varied range of literacy hour activities and the introduction of a new reading scheme and library area in Key Stage 1. Teachers present a suitable range of reading analysis activities in the literacy hour. This has helped pupils to learn about different forms of writing as well as the spelling and meaning of words. A feeling of real enjoyment is evident as some pupils talk about the kind of books they like reading. Recent efforts to improve the attainment of boys in reading, by providing books and activities likely to interest boys and girls equally seems to be showing positive results. A group of boys in Year 6 enthusiastically described the plots of their stories 'Chilly Tales of Long Ago' and 'Spaceboy'. Favourite authors include Dick King-Smith, Roald Dahl and Jacqueline Wilson. Some pupils enjoy Dickens and classics such as 'Black Beauty'. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils use a dictionary and a reference book index effectively. They make sound use of these skills when seeking information in other subjects. Pupils are less confident in locating books in the library, however, as teachers bring reference books into the classroom. The area's dual role as library and computer suite means that access for each class is limited to the weeks timetabled for their computer use. Older pupils who find reading more difficult have good opportunities for extra reading practice in the 'booster' classes held before school.
99. Standards in writing are below average overall in both key stages. However, efforts towards improvement are beginning to show positive results. Setting specific targets for individual pupils and groups, topics to interest both girls and boys and teaching pupils in groups of similar ability have helped staff to plan work at the appropriate level. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils write simple accounts and stories. The more interesting examples show descriptive details such as a story's setting 'on the other side of the world' or 'fireworks screaming like a girl' in a Bonfire Night poem. In Key Stage 2, pupils' factual writing has improved because of the extra practice given in writing in other subject lessons. The weakness in descriptive writing remains, despite efforts to extend pupils' use of interesting words to enliven their work. Pupils have ample opportunities in lessons to suggest ways of improving their writing. The following good example of a pupil's work made a very effective beginning to a Year 6 lesson on complex sentences. His classmates were very proud of his description of 'The old and mean fox who waits for a certain prey licks his teeth, for his days have come....He is feared all around the city, with his fiery flame like fur which warns the people who tend to walk around who is boss of the street.' Whereas pupils are taught how to

write, they are not given long enough to put into practice what they have learned. They do not have sufficient opportunities to write independently and at length. Long introductory sessions result in teachers leaving too little time for pupils to consider, to write, to check for mistakes, or to edit for interest. Lack of time to check writing contributes to the poor spelling and incorrect grammar such as 'caught', 'keeped', 'goodest', 'you was' seen throughout the school. Despite weekly spelling practice of words suitable for different levels of ability, pupils consistently mis-spell words that they know or copy given words incorrectly.

100. Pupils' presentation of their work is improving. They learn how to join letters correctly in a neat style and most writing is of a satisfactory standard. Pupils also have satisfactory opportunities to use the computer to record their ideas or to use a range of tools to edit and improve what they have written.
101. Teaching is good overall. In Key Stage 1 three quarters of the lessons were judged to be good and a quarter very good. The majority of lessons in Key Stage 2 were good and a fifth very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The pupils' good behaviour and obvious interest in their English lessons show how effectively teachers use the literacy hour to help the pupils to want to learn. This is particularly noticeable in the way teachers value pupils' suggestions. Their searching questions encourage pupils' confidence in expressing and developing their ideas. Teachers plan and organise the different elements of a lesson well, planning very suitable learning activities to engage pupils' interest. In Year 1, pupils were asked to tell their neighbour quickly what might happen next in 'The Flying Turtle' story. This was very effective in involving the whole class simultaneously. Teachers' very clear examples for average and below average groups help each pupil to understand exactly what is expected. Support staff are very well briefed and play an effective role in supporting the teaching of different groups.
102. Whereas teachers help pupils to understand *how* to develop and improve their descriptive writing they do not set up conditions for them to *use* what they have learned. Pupils have insufficient time for reflection; to learn to consider, compare and change their ideas. Similarly, pupils do not have sufficient extended time to write, but rather squeeze a limited amount in between the introductory activity and the feedback session. More able pupils do not make enough progress in their learning. Teachers do not always identify those needing more challenging work. Consequently, their achievements are no higher than those of pupils with average ability.
103. the leadership of the subject is good and clear in both key stages. The co-ordinators and the headteacher are aware of the need to improve standards. They monitor lessons and test results to see where improvements are needed. It is clear that this has led to some measures being introduced to improve the quality of English, but further changes are needed to raise standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

104. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Since the last inspection in 1996, pupils' standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been maintained with the exception of a dip in 1997, and are close to the national average. Results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were very low just prior to the last inspection but rose dramatically in 1997. Since then, they have fluctuated a little from year to year. In 1999, they were above the national average and in 2000 they were close to the national average. At both key stages, the results in 2000 match those for similar schools, and the trend of results since the last inspection has broadly kept pace with the national trend.
105. The school gives two reasons to explain the improvement in results at Key Stage 2. It implemented recommendations in the last inspection report to ensure better opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge effectively. It also adopted the National Numeracy Strategy two years ago. There is some concern in the school that, while the latter brings many benefits, the present time allocation to the subject does not leave sufficient time for pupils to develop the skill of applying what they know to a variety of problems. Plans are in hand to reinstate as many opportunities as possible for pupils to improve their skill in this important area.

106. The standards of attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 are average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in number work. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to understand how to break numbers beyond 20 into smaller parts so that they are easier to add to larger numbers. Most have some knowledge of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils are beginning to talk about what they are doing using mathematical terms, for example 'partition' when adding large numbers together, or 'line of symmetry'. Pupils' attainment in Year 1 is average, with evidence of some pupils working at a slightly higher level than average.
107. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is average, with limited evidence of work at a higher level. The results of the pupils currently in Year 6, when they took the tests at the end of Key Stage 1, were below average. A significant minority of pupils have special educational needs. These pupils, in particular, make good progress in relation to their abilities. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are using their skills and understanding well in all aspects of mathematics. They develop their data-handling skills well in information and communication technology sessions. They solve straightforward problems efficiently, but are sometimes slow to apply their learning in puzzle-solving situations. Pupils make sound progress in Years 3 and 4, and often good progress in Year 5. Lower sets in most years make good progress for their abilities. Pupils enjoy the mental start to lessons and show satisfactory speed in recalling number facts and using them mentally to work out solutions. They are not always so fast at explaining their thinking. In Year 6, most pupils use mathematical terms such as 'factors' confidently, and the higher-ability pupils use 'probability' and 'proportion' accurately. Pupils present their work clearly, although much of it is on worksheets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
108. Teaching is always good at Key Stage 1 and sometimes very good. It is more variable at Key Stage 2 but is good overall and, on occasion, it is very good or excellent. Teaching has been greatly influenced by implementing the daily lesson as part of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers plan in careful detail, annotate their plans and change future teaching in the light of the amount of learning achieved in each lesson. This clear planning allows lessons to proceed at a brisk pace which retains the pupils' interest well. The very good relations between pupils and adults encourage a calm, well-focused atmosphere in which pupils concentrate well.
109. Teachers start lessons confidently by listing the lesson aims to the class, using simple words that ensure that the pupils understand. This gets lessons off to a good start and helps pupils to pay attention and work hard. The mental and oral start to lessons is improving pupils' ability to think quickly and to explain clearly and logically how they find answers. Clear teaching of new points ensures that pupils remain confident. They answer questions enthusiastically and apply a considerable degree of effort in their attempts to understand new ideas and facts. Usually where teaching is good, teachers make provision to challenge pupils at appropriate levels. This is particularly the case in lower ability sets where teachers extend their pupils well but at the same time constantly encourage them and sustain their confidence. Pupils in all classes want to do well and they succeed within the limits set by their teachers. However, there is a tendency not to challenge different abilities systematically in the top mathematics sets in Key Stage 2. Instead the whole group often works at the same level of task with insufficient harder extension work being planned for the small numbers of higher attaining pupils. This limits their experience of work at more advanced levels. Classroom assistants play an important part in helping pupils keep in touch with the lesson. When appropriate, they give another explanation or check quietly that pupils have understood. This helps those pupils who learn more slowly to make good progress, to keep up with the pace of lessons, and to have confidence in their own ability.
110. Whether they work in groups or individually at tasks, pupils work well together. They share resources and discuss ideas sensibly. During this time, the teachers work skilfully with each group and are aware of how well pupils are learning. Teachers have a good grasp of the subject and use simple resources well to make sure that pupils understand, for instance, during a lesson in Year 6 where three pupils were weighed to help everyone improve their ability to estimate accurately. In the best lessons, pupils are enthused and constantly challenged to do well by their teachers who use questions skilfully to extend thinking and understanding. For example, in a Year 2 lesson for slower learners starting with a low level of understanding, all became confident in recognising a line of symmetry. By the end of the lesson all the pupils were able to make simple

symmetrical patterns, while the more able constructed quite complicated patterns with high levels of accuracy.

111. Lessons generally finish well. In good lessons, teachers carefully review what the pupils have learned by asking well targeted questions to assess the levels of understanding. They also reinforce and extend that learning by encouraging pupils to think about more difficult examples.
112. The subject is well managed and the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. Staff are well trained and most are enthusiastic about new developments. The school routinely monitors planning and teaching, and ideas for further improvements are discussed. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and targets for improvement are agreed with pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

113. The teachers' assessments at Key Stage 1 in 2000 indicates that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level is close that found nationally, and the percentage of pupils achieving the a higher level is above the national average. This shows a similar picture to the previous year. Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 were in line with the national average in 2000 and the percentage of pupils reaching a higher level was above average. Whilst results over time are uneven, due to groups of pupils of differing abilities taking the tests, the trend at Key Stage 2 is one of continuous improvement.
114. Inspection evidence suggests that present standards are broadly in line at the end of both key stages. This means that pupils are achieving standards similar to those seen in other schools. The improvement in the percentage of pupils reaching a higher level at Key Stage 1 is attributed to the increase in teachers' confidence in the subject and the good quality of teaching. This, together with the good leadership, revised curriculum and good assessment procedures for these pupils, is significantly raising standards. At Key Stage 2, inspection evidence supports the most recent tests, including the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level. The revision soon to be undertaken by Year 6 pupils is likely to accelerate their progress.
115. Standards at Key Stage 1 are below the findings of the previous inspection, when attainment was found to be above the national average at the end of the key stage. However, evidence from tests taken at that time shows that it was a particularly able group of pupils who, again, performed well in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, and reached standards above the national average. There is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls in science.
116. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy and numeracy, which can be found in written scientific recording and the use of graphs and tables in recording the results of investigations. There has been an improvement since the previous inspection in the way pupils take responsibility for their own learning and work on their own initiative. The school has focused on pupil investigations as an aspect for development.

### *Investigative science*

117. At the end of Key Stage 1, the development of pupils' investigative and experimental knowledge is good as a result of focused teaching. Pupils understand how to find things out and record their conclusions in a variety of ways. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils collate information to identify the best insulator. They record their work well with written observations, tables, diagrams and graphs. At the end of both key stages, pupils give clear explanations of a fair test and those in Key Stage 2 understand that only one variable can be changed. Pupils are encouraged to make suggestions and all contributions are respected.

### *Life process and living things*

118. This aspect of science is good. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify differences and similarities and make comparisons when looking at living things. They know that seeds are produced as a means of making more plants, providing a full explanation of the 'life cycle of a sunflower' in

conversation! By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils enthusiastically discuss a 'habitat' in relation to living things and the effects of changes in weather and temperature on the environment. Pupils do not know that micro-organisms cause bacteria to grow.

### *Materials and their properties*

119. This aspect of science is sound. All pupils talk about different materials and their properties, providing brief explanations of how they can be changed through heating and bending. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are less confident in their knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties, but name ice and chocolate as materials that will change when heated.

### *Physical processes*

120. This area of science is good. There has been a significant improvement in Key Stage 1. In Year 2, pupils are confident in their knowledge of sources of light, sound, and movement. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 display a breadth of knowledge in this area, using a good range of scientific terminology in their explanations of physical phenomena.
121. The use of information and communication technology in science is good and is increasingly planned for in the science curriculum. Links with numeracy make a good contribution in both key stages, extending pupils' expertise in investigative and observational science. Good links with literacy are made when pupils record results at the close of an investigation.
122. Pupils throughout both key stages, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. The revised scheme of work and assessment of pupils' learning at Key Stage 1, together with the close monitoring by the co-ordinator, has improved progress in science for the younger pupils. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on previous knowledge, consistently, through units of work.
123. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages with some very good teaching throughout. Where teaching is good, lessons are planned well with clear objectives to focus pupils' learning. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements and challenge the them to think and try things out for themselves. This promotes a good level of intellectual effort and pupils build on their basic skills year on year. In lessons that are less successful, teachers do not allow sufficient time for pupils to come together at the end of a lesson in order to consolidate what they have learnt. Since the implementation of the newly integrated scheme of work there has been an improvement in teacher confidence and a subsequent improvement in standards, particularly in the knowledge of physical processes at Key Stage 1. Teachers use scientific vocabulary well throughout both key stages. At Key Stage 1, assessment has improved and teachers assess pupils knowledge and understanding at the end of each unit of work. They mark pupils' work purposefully. At Key Stage 2, the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding, both in units and end of year tests, provide helpful information for teachers in planning for the future needs of pupils.
124. Both co-ordinators provide a good overall level of support in science although they differ in their leadership styles. In both key stages there is informed leadership, with Key Stage 1 placing particular emphasis on discussing and developing professional expertise of the teachers at this key stage. At Key Stage 2, there is more direction and less consultation in the approach. However, they share a desire to move their subject forward and raise standards, providing their pupils with a good range of scientific knowledge on which to build their next stage of education. Since the previous inspection, the co-ordinators have introduced a blend of schemes of work, using the new national guidelines, together with the existing scheme of work, which has provided a sound structure to the overall curriculum. This is being closely monitored, within each unit, and strengths and weaknesses identified. Resources are good and well organised, providing teachers with quality scientific apparatus. There were no specific parents' views concerning science. Science evenings are arranged for parents and are well attended.
125. The amount of time for science at Key Stage 1 is less than at Key Stage 2 and time has to be sought from other subjects in order to complete science activities. This is unsatisfactory. Pupils

experience a good range of visits and visitors to extend their scientific knowledge in both key stages.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

126. Art and design has been maintained as a focused subject since the previous inspection and this has resulted in an improvement. Standards in art are above expectations at the end of both key stages, although there are inconsistencies between some classes particularly in Key Stage 2. Inspection judgements are made as a result of observing lessons, looking at pupils' work and displays, and talking to pupils and teachers. The progress pupils make, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good, although progress dips for some younger pupils in Key Stage 2.
127. The good standards in art and design are apparent in most classes. In Key Stage 1, pupils use a range of media to experience colour and shape involving various techniques. In Year 2, pupils work in the style of Jackson Pollock, producing a colourful display. In upper Key Stage 2, most pupils benefit from informed and imaginative teaching which provides opportunities for them to develop an idea creatively over a period of time. Most pupils evaluate their own and others' work, improve it where appropriate, and develop this skill through the use of sketchbooks. Since the previous inspection there has been some improvement in the use of sketchbooks to record and develop ideas. Links with other subjects, such as history and English, provide good opportunities to practise learned techniques. Music is used imaginatively to create a 'period' atmosphere in which to paint, draw and complete a historical group collage. The work of pupils in their 'social groups' provides opportunities for them to develop their imagination and creativity over a longer period of time.
128. The teaching of art and design is mostly good and sometimes very good in both key stages, resulting in good progress in learning by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. However, where teaching is only satisfactory, pupils are over directed and provided with unimaginative tasks, involving very little creative effort in order to reproduce examples of 'one prepared earlier'. Opportunities for pupils to initiate their own work and develop ideas are very limited. This was stated in the previous inspection and there has, therefore, been no improvement. This is unsatisfactory. In contrast, the good lessons allow pupils to make choices of media and methods, enabling them to express their feelings through good planning and a range of imaginative resources. The very good teaching reflects the teachers' very good subject knowledge, their enthusiasm and their high expectations of pupils' achievements. The whole-class session at the end of the lesson is used well to evaluate each others' ideas and techniques. Older pupils are encouraged to complete 'home' projects which include some aspects of art and design.
129. A visiting artist has carved an impressive totem pole which has been positioned in the school grounds and forms a focal point for the school's Millennium forest. However, there is less evidence of the effective use of sculpture in art lessons.
130. The co-ordinator has led the subject diligently since the previous inspection and has applied many strategies in order to raise standards and to work towards consistent practice, in developing pupils' independence and creativity in lessons throughout the school. The new national guidelines for art and design are being integrated gradually into the established art and design curriculum, with the intention of involving the whole school by the summer term.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

131. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is judged to match expectations, and is particularly high in Key Stage 1. No lessons were seen in design and technology at Key Stage 1 during the inspection, and only one at Key Stage 2. Opportunities were taken to talk to pupils at the end of both key stages and to teachers, as well as to examine pupils' work and records and displays around the school, and inspection judgements are based on this evidence. While the previous report found standards above expectations at Key Stage 1, there is no evidence of them dropping in the intervening time.

132. Pupils follow a well-planned curriculum which leads to good coverage of the subject. Pupils' written work shows that appropriate consideration is given to both the design and making stages of each project, and older pupils, in particular, evaluate what they have done with a degree of insight. The use of a focused design and technology week, for each class every term, helps to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the different aspects of the subject and retain this knowledge.
133. The tasks set are generally appropriate and lead to all pupils making sound progress. This is particularly true where use is being made of the latest national guidelines. However, insufficient attention is paid to the development of pupils' skills, as at present they use a limited range of tools and materials. There is also some over direction by teachers, which is particularly noticeable in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils' 'Egyptian Sarcophagae' are all identical in shape and size, and models of Tudor houses are all made to a plan provided by the teacher. As a result, pupils miss the opportunity to experiment, and to learn through experience about what makes a practical and successful design.
134. Although only one lesson was seen, the evidence of planning and pupils' work suggests that teaching and learning overall are at least satisfactory. Pupils at the end of both key stages talk with interest and enthusiasm about the models they have made and are keen to show them to visitors, indicating that their attitudes to the subject are good.
135. The school makes good use of the newly-developed cookery area, which is continuously used by 'social' groups of pupils on a five-week rolling programme. The work carried out by these small groups, often with additional adult support, mean that pupils cover all aspects of food technology. Teachers pay good attention to issues of hygiene and health and safety.
136. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and works hard to develop her own knowledge and to use this to raise the quality of pupils' tasks. Where possible, these are linked to other subjects or areas of learning, making them more meaningful for the pupils. No assessment is made of pupils' progress at present other than in the annual report to parents, but the school is trying out a method of assessing each activity to indicate where pupils have performed above or below expectations. This will help teachers ensure that the level of the next task will lead to progress for all pupils. Material resources are satisfactory but there are no work-benches, which limits the development of skills, particularly in Key Stage 2.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

137. The last inspection found standards in geography to be satisfactory. The school has worked hard to maintain these standards and pupils attain the expected levels by the end of both key stages. This is because teachers offer a wide range of learning opportunities that build progressively on pupils' geographical skills and knowledge. There are, generally, good links with literacy as teachers encourage pupils to develop their skills of description and reporting. Mathematical skills are practised in the form of graphs and learning about co-ordinates. Regular time is given to using information and communication technology to develop pupils' research skills.
138. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound range of basic geographical skills. Pupils extend their knowledge of the weather and weather maps to learn through personal experiments the advantage of using standard symbols on maps. They are familiar with the idea of pollution in the oceans caused by manmade rubbish, have a basic familiarity with maps and start to understand what a plan is. Pupils will visit a rural area later this term and have opportunities to contrast it with their own town. They start to use specialised vocabulary such as 'standard symbols' with good understanding.
139. These skills are developed well at Key Stage 2 and increasing use is made of broader sources of evidence, such as pictures, photographs, artefacts and CR-ROMs. In Year 3, pupils develop their concept of weather by studying extremes such as drought, hurricanes and floods which they describe clearly. They continue to consider the effect man has on the world by looking at tropical rainforests and the need to conserve them. Pupils in Year 4 study plans, maps and aerial

photographs in order to follow routes and identify specific features. They read local area maps with increasing ease and make considerable progress in their ability to distinguish features. In Year 5, pupils advance from studying specific places to making generalisations about towns and villages. They consider a range of statements and start to draw conclusions about the advantages and disadvantages to living in both environments with a good degree of common sense and understanding. Later this term they will have opportunities to extend their knowledge of how man affects his environment by studying quarrying. In Year 6, pupils make a detailed study of France and for their own interest, research and write about another country. They use a range of sources of evidence, and the majority of pupils write clearly and use appropriate geographical vocabulary. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their field skills during two residential visits.

140. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, and they, together with evidence of pupils' work, indicate that teaching and learning in geography is satisfactory and often good. Teachers usually plan carefully to make the topics interesting so that pupils are eager to learn. In the lessons observed, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language made satisfactory progress and were well integrated in mixed-ability groups while performing tasks. There are activities planned at different levels to cater for pupils of differing abilities, but there is insufficient evidence of their use to judge their effectiveness. Teachers make good opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills through discussions, and there was an instance of good independent learning where pupils were encouraged to have a discussion about their views on the differences between town and country life. Very good relationships between teachers and their pupils ensure an atmosphere conducive to reflection and concentration.
141. There is strong, clear leadership of geography. The scheme of work is clear, detailed and encourages the systematic building of geographical skills. Plans, teaching and pupils' work are monitored regularly in order to enhance teaching and learning. There is no system in place yet for assessing pupils' attainment. Good use is made of resources.

## **HISTORY**

142. At the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of both key stages were in line with expectations. There has been an improvement at Key Stage 1 where standards by the end of the key stage now exceed expectations as a result of improved planning by teachers. During the inspection, no lessons were seen at Key Stage 1. Judgements are based, therefore, on discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work. Given their average knowledge of the world when they enter the key stage, pupils are achieving well in Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are currently in line with expectations and this is satisfactory achievement by the pupils concerned. In other year groups at Key Stage 2, notably Years 4 and 5, pupils are achieving well and standards are above expectations for their ages.
143. At Key Stage 1, pupils know appropriate information about the past. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of past and present and use words such as 'now' and 'a long time ago' when explaining historical events. They make constructive comparisons between the Great Hall in a castle and their own living rooms. Their good understanding of change that occurs with time is evident in their accounts of key events and people in the development of the postal service. More able pupils are starting to recognise the differences between fact and opinion and the potential value of different sources of evidence that provide knowledge about the past. This examination of a variety of sources of information develops well during Key Stage 2.
144. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the sequence of different historical periods. This is helped by the completion of a time line at the start of each history topic. This recording of dates, covered by each period, consolidates pupils' knowledge of when events and different periods occurred well. In addition to acquiring knowledge, pupils have sound understanding of the relationship of the present with the past. They successfully complete a regular summary of aspects of life today that have their origins in different historical periods, for example, by writing about 'The Legacy of the Romans' in Year 3 and 'The Legacy of the Egyptians' in Year 5. By Year 6, pupils distinguish confidently between facts and opinions by establishing what life in Victorian Britain was like, according to popular

opinion, and contrasting this with the results of detailed research. They use sources such as books, CD-ROMs, and objects from the past, selectively and successfully, as well as using their first-hand experience of a visit to an historical site well when they imagine themselves in different situations, such as when pupils wrote about 'being' William Shakespeare, or put themselves in the position of an advisor to King Philip of Spain.

145. The quality of teaching is good overall at Key Stage 2 and learning is good in both key stages. Teachers, including those at Key Stage 1, plan lessons well, using appropriate resources, such as photographs, videos and household artefacts and providing opportunities for pupils to undertake simple research, to foster pupils' interest. Learning activities are imaginative, requiring pupils to analyse information and use it creatively rather than simply learn basic facts. Pupils, in response, enjoy the subject, settle well to the variety of tasks provided, concentrate well and they make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of history.
146. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they make appropriate use of dates, events, visits, visitors and artefacts to help develop pupils' understanding of the past. Where teaching was very good, for example, in a Year 3 lesson about Anglo-Saxons, the teacher's inclusion of a visitor dressed in clothing of the period was an excellent stimulus for pupils' learning. A significant feature of the lesson was the way in which pupils, in small groups, interviewed the visitor by asking their own pre-prepared questions and discussed the clothing and artefacts that the visitor demonstrated. This took place quite independently of the teacher, who concentrated on the rest of the class. Such opportunities for independent learning, however, are not planned sufficiently in other classes. A further feature of this lesson which, again, is not present in other teaching, was the matching of different tasks to the different abilities of pupils. This enabled all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, to make very good progress in the lesson by working towards the specific targets that the teacher had set. Pupils generally take care with the presentation of their work and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers' marking is generally good. The quality of marking is very high in Year 2 where teachers use marking very effectively to indicate the good features of pupils' work and provide detailed, very useful comment to help pupils to develop their work further. Teachers take the opportunity to further encourage pupils by providing colourful displays of their work.
147. The leadership of the subject is good overall. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, based on the new national guidelines. All the required areas of work are suitably covered. Very good use is made of visits to historical sites, such as Oak House, Wroxeter and Tamworth Castle, as well as visits to RAF Cosford for World War 2 related studies. Such first-hand experiences generate high levels of interest in pupils and provide a strong foundation to their learning. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and she supports her colleagues well. She monitors work in the classrooms regularly, to check that all requirements are being covered and to evaluate the standard of pupils' work. There are satisfactory assessment procedures and information is recorded to help identify pupils' current knowledge and understanding. This information is used constructively to evaluate any weaknesses in pupils' learning and to adjust future planning if necessary. The co-ordinator has produced good guidelines for the development of literacy skills, through writing activities undertaken in the subject. However, these make only a limited contribution towards the development of pupils' literacy skills because they are not planned for systematically by all teachers. The work undertaken in history also makes a significant impact on pupils' cultural development, through the study of aspects of both their own and other cultures.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

148. Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 are above expectations, which is the picture found by the previous inspection. Only one lesson was observed containing direct teaching, but the work being undertaken by individual pupils, planning for the subject and especially the knowledge and understanding shown by pupils in Year 2 support this judgement. Pupils in Year 1 work independently with a mathematics program and use the mouse confidently, and those in Year 2 use the mouse to place weather symbols on a map before printing their work without help. For example, in conversation, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated their full understanding of how to name and save their work. They know how to

program a robot to draw a square or turn through 180 degrees, and have used computers successfully to draw graphs and charts. Their use of language shows familiarity with both hardware and software.

149. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are also above expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils engage in all aspects of the subject with confidence and good understanding. Information and communication technology is linked very effectively with other subjects so that pupils' work is made more meaningful. Their work shows that they understand how computers can be used to communicate information, as a research tool and to control and monitor events. They use the language of computing naturally and in general demonstrate good skills, particularly in use of the mouse and in the operation of different programs. However many lack keyboard skills, with even pupils in upper Key Stage 2 hunting for letters or using inappropriate keys. This limits the amount of work they can produce and sometimes leads to frustration. A planned programme to teach these skills, starting at an early age, would give clear benefits throughout the school.
150. The school continues to extend learning in the subject. There are Internet links with schools in France and America, and a school web page is being developed. In Year 6, pupils use desktop publishing software to produce a school newspaper two or three times each term. In Year 5, pupils are being taught skills that will allow them, when in Year 6, to give a multi-media presentation to their parents, linked to their visit to Barmouth.
151. Seven lessons were observed, six of them at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with no unsatisfactory lessons observed and two judged as very good. Planning is a strength, both for the subject overall and for individual lessons. Teachers have a sound and sometimes good knowledge of the programs they are teaching, showing confidence and some expertise. Lessons are well prepared and teachers make good use of the facilities offered by the new computer suite. The positive relationships they have with their pupils helps to ensure that pupils pay close attention to instructions and as a result lessons have a good pace. The organisation, whereby classes are timetabled into the suite for a week at a time, gives the subject a strong focus. At the same time, 'social' groups from Years 2 to 6 also have time there, and all classes have access to stand-alone computers. Pupils have sufficient skill and confidence to use these independently, with little need for help from their class teacher.
152. All pupils have very good attitudes to the subject at both key stages and are highly motivated to learn. For example, in conversation, they spoke positively and with enthusiasm about the programs they have used and what they discovered. Behaviour is very good and pupils treat the equipment sensibly and with care. Many of the lessons involve pupils working in pairs at the same computer, sharing both physical control and ideas. They do this very well, without argument and fairly, and as they progress through the school their discussions are often of a high standard. They are willing to accept the ideas of others providing they can justify them. The great majority of pupils work with sustained concentration.
153. At present there is an assessment of pupils' abilities in the summer term at Key Stage 2, in word-processing and desk-top publishing, as well as for all pupils in their annual report to parents. There are also selected pieces of pupils' work in their individual record folders. The school plans to introduce individual assessment books to monitor pupils' achievement, giving a more helpful picture of progress over time.
154. The quality of leadership in the subject is very good, and the school makes very good use of the computer suite. Planning is closely monitored; indeed, the co-ordinator has produced many of the lesson plans herself. In a recent initiative, she has produced a document detailing ways in which information and communication technology can be linked with other subjects. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Money has been invested well, for example, in the employment of a technician to ensure lessons are not lost through the failure of equipment. The co-ordinator is hard working, confident and leads by example. As a result, positive messages are sent out and the subject has a high profile in the school.

## MUSIC

155. By the end of both key stages pupils achieve standards which match expectations. Pupils of all abilities really enjoy their music making and make good progress within lessons. The school is very fortunate in having the support of a talented piano accompanist and several enthusiastic teachers with a good level of musical expertise. The use of the Infant hall as a music studio, with a very good range of instruments set out ready for use, means that no lesson time is wasted in preparation.
156. The quality of teaching is good overall, with three-quarters of the lessons judged to be very good. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly to include interesting starting points and a good balance of singing, playing and listening activities. Suitable voice exercises help pupils to sing tunefully with pleasing voice quality. They learn to vary the volume and tempo of their singing and to perform songs such as 'O sinner man' very well in two-part harmony. Some pupils are enthusiastic enough to continue their musical experience by joining instrumental groups out of lesson time. A very competent ensemble of pupils in Key Stage 2 playing guitars, violins, recorders and tuned percussion provides harmonious accompaniment to the singing in assembly. Teachers make good links with literacy where possible, encouraging reading and understanding of the words to songs.
157. A strong feature of lessons is the helpful amount of time teachers allow for pupils to experiment with sounds and to develop their composing skills in small groups. This presents very good opportunities for pupils to work together and share their ideas. Teachers' high expectations of pupils lead to the marked improvement heard in the end of lesson performances. Learning to evaluate each other's work encourages pupils to appreciate effort and to take pride in their achievements. They are very keen to practise and improve their compositions and accompaniments in response to interesting starting points. Inspiration comes from space or animal themes in lessons in Key Stage 1, and from studying a picture or Grainger's 'English Country Garden' music in Key Stage 2. Listening skills are well developed by focusing on musical patterns and instruments used by well-known composers. In Year 3, for example, pupils took delight in recognising the opening bars of Haydn's 'Clock' and 'Surprise' symphonies and concentrated very well on the instrumental playing in a trumpet concerto.
158. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The organisation of the music curriculum makes good use of other teachers with a strong interest in music. This leads to individual lessons being taught very well. However, standards of attainment are not as high as they could be at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievements are not systematically built upon as they progress through the school. Their levels of ability and progress are not assessed consistently. The combined expertise of musical staff would be even more effective if they were implementing a scheme of work designed to develop each stage of pupils' learning. Although the co-ordinator has plans for a new programme of learning, and means of assessing the pupils' progress, not enough improvement has taken place since the last inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. Gymnastics and dance lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and games and dance lessons were observed at Key Stage 2. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are achieving standards that match expectations of their age group in gymnastics. Younger pupils, in Year 1, are achieving standards in dance that exceed expectations and this is also the case in Year 3. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in games generally exceed expectations. This maintains the standards evident at the last inspection in gymnastics and games while dance standards have improved. Gymnastics skills are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils are developing sound technique when performing short sequences on low level apparatus. They show satisfactory control and co-ordination when practising the separate actions, such as travelling, jumping and balancing and then link successfully combinations of these actions into their sequences. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good technique in football skills, performing passing, dribbling and shooting skills with accuracy. Good tactical awareness is evident when they play small-side team games.

160. Pupils' levels of co-operation are high. Records show that swimming standards are satisfactory and meet the national expectation. Pupils have a year of weekly swimming lessons that is spread over Years 3 and 4. By the end of this period, most pupils are confident swimmers who perform a variety of strokes efficiently.
161. Teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Teachers' careful attention to safety factors ensures that pupils use space and equipment sensibly. In Year 6, pupils are given good levels of responsibility for organising themselves in appropriate spaces for practices and games. These pupils respond well to the high expectations that their teacher has of them. Teachers achieve a smooth transition from the one activity to the next, without interrupting the brisk overall pace of the lesson. In the one good lesson seen, in Year 1, the teacher combined obvious enjoyment of the quality of pupils' dance work with appropriate guidance to help pupils to improve. Although using a pre-recorded tape of a broadcast lesson, the teacher stopped the tape very frequently in order to select demonstrators or repeat activities. This ensured that pupils made good progress in their learning. Teaching was satisfactory in all other lessons, largely as a result of good planning, good organisation, pupils' positive attitudes and the good progress that pupils made in learning within these lessons. Good progress is achieved by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers are very strongly committed to inclusion of all pupils in physical education lessons. Pupils with specific physical disabilities are totally involved in lessons and, where necessary, follow individual exercise programmes devised by physiotherapists and delivered well by support staff. Regular assessments by physiotherapists enable exercises to be changed as necessary according to pupils' needs.
162. A weakness in all the lessons observed was the lack of emphasis on the health-related aspects of physical education. While pupils were provided with some form of appropriate warm-up activities, the reasons why preparation for exercise is important were not discussed and pupils were given no opportunities to acquire knowledge about the effect of exercise on the body. Not all teachers change into appropriate clothing to teach physical education, leaving pupils uncertain about the actual value that a teacher in everyday clothes places on either the subject or the work that pupils do.
163. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well. She has a very good awareness of strengths and weaknesses in provision, teaching and standards of pupils' work. This knowledge comes from regular scrutiny of teachers' planning and teaching several year groups either in lessons by swapping classes with other teachers or in extra-curricular activities. The full programme of extra-curricular activities is extensive, covering country dancing, netball, football, athletics, rounders and cross country running. Pupils' attendance is good, being typically around twenty boys and girls at most clubs. Where the school is involved in league competitions in netball and rounders in which single-sex teams participate, school clubs are similarly run for single-sex groups. The good levels of attendance enable the school to achieve close to the government requirement for two hours of physical education and sport per week for all pupils.
164. The co-ordinator's good subject knowledge has contributed to the successful development of the curriculum to address new areas of work in games, and to review and improve teaching and learning in dance. The success of the latter is evident in the good standards now being achieved by pupils. Resources are good for most areas of activity but there is a shortage of suitable gymnastic apparatus for pupils at Key Stage 1.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

165. The standards achieved in religious education are good throughout the school and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain levels above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. There has been good improvement since the last inspection when sound progress was made by all the pupils.
166. In Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and other religions such as Sikhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. They understand basic beliefs of the different faiths and can describe links between the Christian Bible's Old Testament stories and similar ones in the Islamic Qu'ran and the Jewish Scriptures. Right from Year 1, connections are made between different

religions and the pupils systematically build up their understanding and knowledge of how a person's faith and beliefs affect the way they live their lives and behave towards other people. For example, in Year 1, through a series of lessons on 'Friendship', pupils listened to stories of Jesus as a friend and how he needed his friends. They considered stories of Guru Nanak, thought about what makes a good friend and discussed how to be a real friend to others.

167. The quality of teaching and learning is never less than good, and very good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident, planning lessons carefully to develop and build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. Pupils are made aware of what they will be learning at the start of each lesson and teachers skilfully check at the end to assess the extent to which this has been achieved. In most lessons seen, the teacher enthusiastically motivated the pupils by the imaginative use of different methods and resources. For example, in a lesson in Year 5, about the plagues in Egypt, pupils followed the Biblical text whilst listening to a dramatically read tape-recording. This fully captivated the pupils' attention and made it really exciting. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils took on the roles of television interviewers, putting carefully-prepared questions to a visiting clergyman about his job. In framing their questions, the teacher expected the pupils to apply their already good knowledge of the church, its function and customs.
168. A strong feature of religious education lessons is the attention to reinforcing literacy skills. Key words are emphasised and, particularly with the older pupils, texts are shared and read together. In Year 5, for example, before starting their writing, pupils were reminded of their English work on clauses and sentence connectors and skilfully motivated to use creative language in their opening sentences. Lessons are lively and, in most of them, pupils are encouraged to ask questions. In Year 6, pupils also extend their geography knowledge as they identify the main areas of Hinduism on a world map and locate the river Indus.
169. The subject is strongly led and the co-ordinators have worked hard to ensure knowledge and understanding are taught systematically throughout the school. A good range of books has been built up, but the use of CD-ROM for individual research is still in its infancy. Very good use is made of visitors to the school and visits to local places of worship. Religious education is reinforced through assemblies and plays a significant part in pupils' moral and cultural development.