

INSPECTION REPORT

IRON ACTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Iron Acton, Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109162

Headteacher: Mr K Joyce

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham R Sims
28899

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th July 2000

Inspection number: 190014

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Iron Acton Church of England (VC) Primary School Wotton Road Iron Acton BRISTOL
Postcode:	BS37 9UZ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Lloyd
Date of previous inspection:	7 th October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G R Sims Registered Inspector	Mathematics Science Information technology Music Physical education Areas of learning for children under five	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Equal opportunities
Mrs D Thomas Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs S Russam Team Inspector	English Art Design and technology Geography History Religious education	Curricular and other opportunities for learning Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Iron Acton to the north of the city of Bristol. It is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. At present, there are 60 boys and girls on roll between the ages of 4 and 11. The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from the village of Iron Acton and the surrounding rural areas, and their socio-economic backgrounds are generally average. No pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds or from homes where English is not the main spoken language. This is below the national average. Only two pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Sixteen per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is broadly average. No pupils have statements of special educational need. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children in the Reception year, two of whom were under the age of five. The attainment of children when they start school is generally average. Since the last inspection, the former headteacher's house has been refurbished, providing a small teaching room, library, staff room and resources area. The current headteacher took up his post in January 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school offers pupils a sound education. The pupils achieve appropriate standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in religious education and information technology are below the expected level. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory, although there is a significant proportion of good teaching. The new headteacher has analysed the school's strengths and weaknesses well and provided a good impetus to the school's development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The new headteacher is providing good leadership and clear direction for the future development of the school.
- The pupils achieve above average standards in mathematics, science and some aspects of English by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school has good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance in English, mathematics and science.
- The pupils have positive attitudes to their work. Their behaviour and the quality of relationships within the school are very good.
- The staff know the pupils very well and make very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development.
- The school has good links with parents, who are active in their support of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology and the use of computers
- Standards in religious education
- The quality and range of pupils' writing
- Opportunities for pupils to exercise greater independent in their learning

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

Overall, the school has made a satisfactory range of improvements since the last inspection which took place in October 1996. Since the arrival of the new headteacher in January 2000, fresh impetus has been given to improving many aspects of the school and further significant changes have been planned for the new school year. Although the school drew up satisfactory action plans to deal with the key issues arising from the last inspection, little progress was made in devising procedures to monitor the progress of individual pupils. The specific learning needs of pupils in Year 2 at the time of the inspection were not identified at an early enough stage and this partially explains why standards in reading and writing are much lower than those previously achieved at the end of Key Stage 1. The school now has a system which enables staff to track the progress of individual pupils and identify when they are not making sufficient progress. Although there has been some improvement, the provision for information technology remains unsatisfactory and standards are below the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages. The school has started to establish a separate computer suite and further funding will enable this to be fully functioning in the near future. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating curriculum development have recently been formalised. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in improvements in the teaching of mathematics and pupils' attitudes to the subject. Refurbishment of the former headteacher's house has enabled the school to improve its library facilities, although these are not used frequently enough by the pupils. Weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work remain.

The small number of pupils in each cohort leads to substantial fluctuations in the school's results. The overall trend, however, is one of improvement, and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. There has also been some improvement in the quality of teaching. Teaching groups have been re-organised for the coming year, thus dealing effectively with many of the difficulties encountered with the present structure. With the clear direction being provided by the new headteacher and the enthusiasm of the staff for the changes which are about to take place, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

STANDARDS

The table showing standards achieved by 11-year-olds has been omitted from this report because of the very small number of pupils in each year group, which can make comparisons with national figures and similar schools very misleading. In 1999, for example, only six pupils took the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2. Aggregated over the last four years, however, the school's results have been above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Over the same period, results at the end of Key Stage 1 have also been above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection evidence shows that the small cohort of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 achieve standards which are above average in mathematics and science, and in most aspects of English. In English, standards are much better in reading than in writing. In science, the pupils have good factual knowledge and understanding, but their investigative skills are less well developed. Standards in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information technology are below the national expectations throughout the school.

By the age of five, most children achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning. There is a marked contrast between the standards achieved by pupils in Year 3 and those in Year 2, all of whom are taught in the same class. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 last year were well above average. This year, they are well below average, as are standards in writing. This reflects the much larger percentage of pupils with special educational needs currently at the end of Key Stage 1 and the fact that their needs were not identified early enough. It is not a reflection of the teaching they have received this year.

The school's targets for pupils' achievements for the next few years are little more than predictions of the levels they are likely to achieve. The school has not used the target-setting process to set itself challenging targets or to identify areas of need and actions which they should take to rectify the needs. The new headteacher is aware of the weaknesses in the school's current procedures.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils of all ages and abilities have developed positive attitudes to learning, even when they find some of the work not particularly enjoyable. They approach their work with commitment and are eager to participate in all aspects of their education. Pupils do not always present their work well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are very good. Pupils are keenly aware of the school's high expectations. They are courteous, helpful and friendly. They are aware of how their behaviour affects others, understand the consequences of their actions and try hard to conform to the school rules and code of conduct. They behave very well during breaktimes, at lunch and when moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils of all ages work and play cooperatively. Older pupils take responsibility for the younger ones, for example, helping them during the lunchtime or keeping an eye on them in the playground. They carry out responsibilities and duties sensibly and well. The pupils do not have enough opportunity to acquire independent learning skills.
Attendance	The level of attendance is satisfactory. It is just above the national average. Pupils arrive promptly at the start of the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

During the inspection, the teaching was good in 52 per cent of the lessons seen, and satisfactory in the remaining 48 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, although standards of work observed in religious education and information technology indicate that teaching in these subjects is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory and in mathematics it is good. Since the last inspection, the quality of the teaching has become more consistent and there is now a greater proportion of well-taught lessons. Implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on some aspects of English. However, too much use is made of uninspiring worksheets, and not enough attention is given to the development of pupils' writing skills within the literacy hour or through work undertaken in other subjects. Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved the quality of teaching in mathematics, resulting in more positive attitudes to the subject. Greater attention needs to be given to developing a wider variety of strategies for carrying out mental calculations and to exploring ways of developing pupils' numeracy skills through other subjects. The current allocation of year groups to classes causes difficulties when planning lessons, and work is not always sufficiently demanding for the more able pupils. This is particularly the case for the more able pupils in

Year 1. The re-organisation of classes and staff in September should help to overcome these difficulties.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school generally provides a broad and balanced curriculum. However, the time allocated to some subjects is over-generous which results in too little time being dedicated to others, for example, physical education and science at Key Stage 1, and information technology throughout the school. There have been some good recent initiatives to supplement weaker areas of the curriculum, such as music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those of above average ability in the Reception and Year 1 is unsatisfactory. Pupils needs are not identified early enough. Provision throughout the rest of the school has improved recently and caters satisfactorily for the pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, the provision for the pupils' personal development is good. The provision for their moral and social development is very good. More could be done to promote the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Pupils are taught in a caring, happy environment where they can develop confidence and self-esteem and where they are respected and valued as individuals. The school now has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school keeps parents fully informed about their children's progress and all aspects of the life and work of the school. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the daily life of the school. Staff are available to talk to parents if they have any immediate concerns or worries. Parents of pre-school children are given helpful information regarding school routines and procedures. Homework and reading diaries enable parents to have an insight and input into their children's work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is providing the school with good leadership and has taken decisive action over a number of issues. He has improved various procedures and is keen to move the school forward. Subject coordinators now have a clearer understanding of their role and most are working to improve areas which have been identified as priorities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Apart from the provision for information technology, the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and take their duties seriously. They are well informed and are starting to hold the school to account for its plans and proposals more effectively than in the past. A number of governors give a significant amount of time to helping the school.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has analysed the school's needs well and has devised appropriate courses of action to bring about further improvement. Coordinators in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are monitoring provision in these areas more effectively, but more needs to be done to develop other areas of the curriculum.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its teaching resources, with the exception of its computers which are under-used. Support staff are well deployed. The short-term support grant to provide additional staffing has been used effectively. The school applies the principles of best value when acquiring services or purchasing resources. Finances are managed efficiently.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school is well staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Although some of the teaching areas are rather small, the school's accommodation is generally good; the refurbished headteacher's house provides useful additional facilities. Learning resources are adequate in all subjects, although there is a lack of large play equipment for children under five.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment of the staff, who always find time to talk to them. • The high standards of behaviour. • The regular information which they receive regarding forthcoming events. • Their suggestions and ideas are well received. • The attitudes and values promoted by the school. • The way older pupils help the younger ones. • Their children enjoy school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children receive. • Information about the progress their children are making. • The variety and amount of extra-curricular activities • A few parents feel their children are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given.

Inspectors endorse all of the positive views held by parents about the school. Homework provision has not been carefully regulated in the past. However, the school has recently produced a new homework policy, which is to be implemented in September. This should address parents' concerns over this issue.

Inspectors feel that the school does much to keep parents informed about their children's progress. There is a meeting once a term for parents to discuss their children's progress with teachers; there is the opportunity for regular communication between home and school through pupils' reading diaries, and the staff and headteacher are always available for informal consultation with parents.

Inspectors agree that the provision for extra-curricular activities is somewhat limited, although the school does provide some good additional opportunities, such as visits to places of interest and visitors to the school, all of which enhance pupils' learning. Some pupils, especially the younger, more able pupils, are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The number of pupils in each cohort in this school is very small. In 1999, for example, only six pupils took the National Curriculum assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 2, although 11 pupils took the tests at the end of Key Stage 1. For this reason, tables showing the school's National Curriculum results and the national comparative figures for Key Stage 2 have been omitted from this report.
2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' results were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools¹ in reading, but were similar to the national average and the average for similar schools in writing and mathematics. Most pupils reached the national expectation of Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Whilst a high proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading, no pupils achieved this level in writing. The results for reading are now higher than at the time of the last inspection, but standards in writing have fallen slightly, and in mathematics they have fallen significantly. Early indications from the National Curriculum tests for the Year 2000 indicate that standards have been maintained in mathematics, but have fallen considerably in reading and writing. This is partially explained by the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs currently in Year 2, but also by the fact that the needs of these pupils were not identified at an early enough stage.
3. The small number of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 can make comparisons with national figures misleading. The aggregated results of the last four years, however, were above the national average in English, mathematics and science. In all three subjects, standards are now higher than at the time of the last inspection and the trend in improvement has been slightly better than the national trend. Over these four years, most pupils have achieved the national expectation of Level 4 in all three subjects, and a varying proportion of pupils have achieved the higher Level 5.
4. Although girls have performed slightly better than boys over the last four years at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics, the small number of pupils in each cohort distorts the significance of this difference. During the inspection, staff were observed to give boys and girls equal consideration, and there was no discernible difference in the responses of boys and girls during lessons, or in the standard of work in their books. The current structure of the classes does, however, lead to differences in the performance and progress of different year groups. In the youngest class, for example, pupils in Year 1 do not make as much progress as those in the Reception year. The grouping of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 in one class also lead to differences in the rate of progress, adversely affecting, at times, those pupils in Year 4. The school has identified these problems, which it intends to rectify in September by restructuring the composition of each class.
5. The school achieved its targets for pupils' attainment in 1999 in English and mathematics. The targets for pupils' achievements for the next few years are little

¹ 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 Stage 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).

more than predictions of the levels they are likely to achieve and, in some year groups, are considerably lower than the standards achieved over the last few years. The school has not used the target-setting process to set itself challenging targets or to identify areas of need and actions which they should take to rectify the needs. The new headteacher is aware of the weaknesses in the school's current procedures, and action is to be taken in the new school year to look again at the targets which have been set.

6. The initial assessments undertaken when children start school in the Reception class indicate that their achievements are similar to the national average. The children make satisfactory progress overall and, by the time they are five, they achieve the expectations which are outlined in the Desirable Learning Outcomes² in most aspects of their learning. Most children settle quickly into school life and learn to relate confidently and well with adults and other children. In language and literacy, they acquire most of the basic elements of reading, writing, speaking and listening. They know letter shapes and some are able to read simple words. The children make sound progress in mathematics. They know their numbers to ten, and are starting to use mathematical terms. The children make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. They make satisfactory progress in learning to handle tools, objects and construction materials safely and with control, but they do not have enough opportunity for more vigorous physical activity.
7. Inspection findings are broadly consistent with the picture given by the school's National Curriculum assessment test results over the last four years at Key Stage 2, but reflect lower standards in English at Key Stage 1 than the previous year. This is largely due to the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs currently in Year 2.
8. In English, standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils respond eagerly and are confident in speaking aloud. By the end of Key Stage 2, they have a good range of vocabulary. In discussions, they listen with concentration and question others' ideas and opinions well. Standards in reading are generally good and, by the end of Key Stage 2, they are very good. The pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 are an exception to the rest of the school, as standards in reading in this year group are below average. Although these pupils are developing strategies to help them to read unfamiliar texts, a number of pupils lack confidence in reading and still resort to looking at pictures to help them elicit the meaning, rather than using the reading skills they have been taught. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' reading skills are very well developed. They read with fluency and confidence, and express their enjoyment of reading. Standards in writing are lower than those in reading, and are not as high as they should be. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standard of pupils' writing is well below average. Their writing for different purposes is very limited and lacks imaginative ideas and interesting vocabulary. The teachers place too much reliance on the completion of short, worksheet-based activities and too little emphasis on developing pupils' thoughts and ideas through creative writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are almost one level lower than in reading. The pupils have too few regular opportunities to develop their writing and literacy skills are not developed sufficiently through other subjects.

² The nationally agreed goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory schooling at the age of five. The skills, knowledge and understanding which are deemed to provide a suitable foundation for young children are described in the Government's guidance document *Desirable Learning Outcomes for Pupils entering Compulsory Education*.

9. Despite the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2, pupils achieve appropriate standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. Their progress through Key Stage 1, however, is erratic, as pupils in Year 1 are not given enough challenge. Most pupils handle numbers confidently and have a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction facts using numbers to 20. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average. The pupils have good computational skills and a good understanding of the four rules of number. They approach problems expressed as words methodically, although they do not always use the quickest or easiest method for performing their calculations. By the time they leave school, they have good numeracy skills, although they do not have a great deal of opportunity to use these in the context of other subjects or to tackle investigative work in mathematics.
10. The pupils achieve an appropriate standard in science by the end of Key Stage 1 and, because all of the work they have covered is thoroughly revised, they have a good knowledge and understanding of the science curriculum by the end of Key Stage 2. Insufficient attention is given to the importance of scientific enquiry throughout the school, with the result that pupils do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the concept of fair testing or the ability to devise and carry out their own investigations. In terms of their factual knowledge and understanding, overall progress through the school is good.
11. Although the school's provision for information technology has improved since the last inspection, standards of attainment are still below the national expectations at the end of both key stages, and the pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils know how to use the mouse to select items on the screen or the keyboard to enter text, but they do not have enough opportunity to learn new skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are competent in using a limited range of software, but they have large gaps in their knowledge of much of the information technology curriculum because of unsatisfactory provision for this subject over the past few years. The pupils do not have enough opportunity to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects.
12. In relation to the locally agreed syllabus, the standards pupils attain in religious education are satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. They make little progress in gaining any knowledge and understanding of other world faiths. Opportunities for learning are restricted by the nature of the religious education syllabus offered and the unimaginative use of broadcast material which results in superficial responses from the pupils. The school has produced a new scheme of work which is to be introduced in September.
13. Pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining skills and developing their knowledge and understanding of art and design and technology throughout the school, although the range of experiences offered is limited.
14. The pupils do not attain satisfactory standards in geography as too little emphasis is placed upon the geographical content within the topic approach to teaching history and geography. The work pupils produce in their history lessons is of a standard appropriate for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have developed an understanding of chronology through studying the changes which have occurred in their own school since it opened in 1874. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show keen interest and good recall of work they have undertaken when studying the Victorians and life in Ancient Egypt. They are much less confident in sharing their geographical knowledge and understanding, struggling to recall well-known rivers, capital cities and weather features.

15. In music, the pupils achieve satisfactory standards in both key stages. The pupils sing confidently and enthusiastically, particularly when they are given a good vocal lead by one of the teachers or are accompanied on the piano or guitar. The use of outside expertise helps to widen the pupils' range of experience in music. In physical education, the pupils achieve good standards in swimming. Most pupils are able to swim 25 metres unaided and know the principles and skills of water safety and survival well before the end of Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school, many pupils have progressed well beyond the nationally expected standards in swimming. There was little opportunity to observe other aspects of physical education during the inspection, but pupils in Key Stage 2 receive a balanced programme of gymnastics, dance and games during the course of the year. The youngest pupils, however, make unsatisfactory progress because of the small amount of time devoted to physical education during the week.
16. The school is beginning to place a high priority on its programme of support for pupils with special educational needs. However, in the past, too little importance has been placed upon the early identification of individuals who need extra help. This has resulted in a significant number of pupils currently in Year 2 not attaining their full potential, as their additional needs have only relatively recently been addressed. Targets in pupils' individual education plans lack sufficient detail to enable them to make rapid progress. The work provided for the more able pupils in Key Stage 1 is not adequately challenging; therefore, they make unsatisfactory progress in relation to their prior achievements.
17. Whilst the teachers are generally conscious of the widely differing needs of the pupils in their classes, the current arrangements for teaching pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 in one class and pupils spanning the two key stages in another class has an adverse effect on the progress of both higher and lower-attaining pupils. The former do not always find the work sufficiently challenging, the latter sometimes find it hard to cope when the work is pitched at a higher level than they can understand. The school has identified the problems inherent in these arrangements and has made sensible plans to restructure the classes in September and to provide teachers with more easily manageable teaching groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Pupils of all ages and abilities show an eagerness to learn and to participate in all aspects of their education. They listen attentively when the teachers give them explanations and instructions and they are able to sustain good levels of concentration when engaged in tasks and activities. Pupils in the Reception class thoroughly enjoy listening to stories and poems and, when working in groups, are willing to share and to exchange ideas. The vast majority of pupils are eager to please their teachers and approach their work with a sense of commitment. They display determination and perseverance when tackling new areas of learning. Although they are generally proud of their work and their achievements, they do not always take sufficient care over the way they present it.
19. Pupils are keenly aware of the school's high expectations, and the standard of their behaviour is very good. They are courteous and friendly to visitors, showing them around the school, opening doors for them without prompting and generally answering questions regarding aspects of their work in a pleasant, sensible and mature manner. They are fully aware of how their behaviour affects others and understand the consequences of their actions. Pupils try hard to conform to the school rules and code of conduct. Lunchtimes and playtimes are pleasant, social occasions, enabling pupils of all ages to feel confident and comfortable in school. Most pupils sustain very good levels of self-discipline when moving around the school, which does much to maintain

the calm working atmosphere which pervades the school. Pupils are trustworthy, and teachers can rely on them to carry on working when they are not being directly supervised. No pupils have been excluded from the school for a good number of years.

20. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils of all ages work and play cooperatively, supporting one another in small, but significant ways. For example, the older pupils help the younger ones in the dining hall and in the playground by generally keeping an eye on them. The older pupils take part enthusiastically in class discussions in a mature manner, listening patiently to what others have to say and understanding the need to be tolerant of others who may not share their views or beliefs. Most pupils are willing to take on any responsibilities they are given and carry out their various monitorial duties promptly and efficiently. When provided with the opportunity, they are able to set their own targets for personal development. Pupils who serve on the school council take the job of representing their classmates very seriously and put forward their various ideas and suggestions in a mature and sensible manner. Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to use their initiative and to accept responsibilities for aspects of their learning in subjects requiring practical and investigative work.
21. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to their lessons and demonstrate a positive attitude to learning alongside their classmates. Pupils who have low self-esteem or lack confidence respond well to the help the school provides in enabling them to come to terms with their feelings. They build meaningful relationships with adults and their classmates, and this helps them to develop a more positive self-image.
22. The attendance level is satisfactory. It is just above the national average. There are very few instances of lateness and the vast majority of pupils arrive in good time for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory, although the teaching in a significant number of lessons is good. During the inspection, the teaching was good in 52 per cent of the lessons seen, and satisfactory in the remaining 48 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, although standards of work in religious education and information technology indicate that teaching in these subjects is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory and in mathematics it is good. Since the last inspection, the quality of the teaching has become more consistent and there is now a greater proportion of well-taught lessons. There has, however, been little improvement in the quality of teachers' marking, with the result that pupils do not always learn from the mistakes they have made in their written work.
24. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory. Regular routines and the additional support provided by the teaching assistant help children to feel secure as they are taught alongside the older Year 1 pupils. The teacher provides an appropriate range of activities for most areas of learning, and regular teaching and practice during the literacy hour and numeracy session help the children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Not enough opportunity is provided for the children's physical development, and this results in a somewhat immature approach when children have outdoor physical education lessons. In many lessons, the division of teaching responsibilities between the class teacher and the teaching assistant ensures that the youngest children receive good personal attention, and this is instrumental in helping them to make progress.

25. The teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of most subjects of the National Curriculum. However, there are weaknesses in the teachers' knowledge of some aspects of the curriculum for information technology in Key Stage 2, and religious education is not well taught in Key Stage 2. Staff do not feel particularly confident in teaching art and music. Whilst this restricts the variety of work offered to the pupils, it does not detract significantly from the quality of the work produced. Indeed, the very confident lead given by one of the teachers on the piano and guitar and when singing has a noticeable effect on the confidence and enthusiasm with which pupils take part in singing and in music lessons. The teachers are committed, hard working and willing to take on board new initiatives. Most of them have, for example, responded positively to the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and feel that these have brought improvements to their teaching. In English, the teachers help pupils to acquire good skills in reading, speaking and listening. However, they rely too heavily on the use of uninspiring, commercially produced worksheets, and do not give enough attention to the development of pupils' writing skills within the literacy hour or through work undertaken in other subjects. Training undertaken in connection with the National Numeracy Strategy has improved teachers' confidence in teaching mathematics, and has led to both pupils and teachers having more positive attitudes to the subject and a consequent improvement in standards. The teachers provide clear instructions, and help pupils to learn new concepts. However, greater attention needs to be given to helping pupils to develop a wider variety of strategies for carrying out mental calculations and to exploring ways of developing pupils' numeracy skills through other subjects.
26. Improvements to the schemes of work in some subjects, such as science, have helped teachers to improve their termly and daily lesson planning. Where clear guidance has not been produced by the coordinator as, for example, in religious education, lesson planning is weak, and this adversely affects pupils' progress. The current allocation of year groups to classes causes difficulties when planning lessons, and work is not always sufficiently demanding for the more able pupils. This is particularly the case for the more able pupils in Year 1. The re-organisation of classes and staff in September should help to overcome these difficulties. Generally, however, the teachers cope well with the widely differing needs of pupils within each class. The planning for information technology is weak, and the teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to gain new skills or to use information and communication technology as a tool for learning in other subjects.
27. The teachers generally use an appropriate variety of teaching methods and styles and, in most lessons, strike the right balance between whole-class teaching, group-work and individual tasks. In some lessons for the youngest pupils, however, there is insufficient teaching input and lessons do not always conclude in the most appropriate way to reinforce what has been learnt. In contrast, other lessons are well structured, with the teachers giving a very clear introduction to the lesson and providing sufficient time at the end to draw conclusions from the work covered during the lesson. Mental mathematics sessions are having a positive impact on pupils' ability to use numbers, but are not always sufficiently varied. The staff help pupils to acquire a good knowledge and understanding of science, but place insufficient opportunities for pupils to acquire skills of scientific enquiry or to devise and carry out their own investigations. Good use is made of the locality and external expertise to enrich the curriculum in some subjects, for example in music and history.
28. The teachers' classroom management skills are good. As a result, lessons are orderly, and the teachers establish an appropriate climate for learning. Relationships between most staff and pupils are very good, and encourage the pupils to participate in lessons and learn. Minor misdemeanours are corrected quickly, unobtrusively and in a

pleasant manner, without squashing pupils' enthusiasm. Most lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace, with all pupils actively involved throughout the lesson. In the best lessons, the teachers make their expectations very clear to the pupils. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, the teacher told the pupils how long they had to complete their tasks, how many questions she expected them to complete and what they would be expected to do during the plenary session. Resources are prepared before the lesson, thus maximising the use of the available time. The use of broadcast material in religious education lessons at Key Stage 2, however, is unimaginative and uninspiring. In English, too much reliance is placed on the use of commercially produced worksheets.

29. The teachers' daily interaction with the pupils in lessons is good. Most teachers are skilled at asking appropriate questions to ensure that pupils understand their work. Some lessons start with an effective review of previous work in order to ensure that the pupils understand what has gone before. When pupils are working on their own or in groups, most teachers use their time profitably to assess what pupils are doing and to provide appropriate help and feedback. The closing sessions of most lessons in Key Stage 2 are used well to assess what pupils have learnt and to clear up any misconceptions. The weakness in the day-to-day assessment of pupils' work lies in the marking of written work. Most books are marked regularly and, occasionally, in some detail. However, the pupils are not given a clear enough indication as to how they might improve their work. Although sometimes asked to do so, the pupils rarely revisit their work to correct or improve it, in order to learn from their mistakes. In English, a lack of rigorous marking is an important reason why the standard of pupils' writing is not as high as in other aspects of English. In written work produced for other subjects, the teachers do not correct English mistakes or give any indication as to how the quality of their writing can be improved.
30. The examples of work set for homework observed during the inspection were entirely appropriate. Some parents, however, feel that insufficient work is given for their children to complete at home. The school has responded to these concerns by producing a clear and appropriate policy for homework which is to be introduced in the new school year. Once fully implemented, the policy should address parents' concerns and provide an appropriate balance of activities to supplement pupils' learning in school.
31. The school endeavours to include all pupils with special needs in all lessons across the whole curriculum. This ensures they receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and equality of opportunity for learning. However, class teachers do not make satisfactory use of the targets in pupils' individual education plans to inform their planning or to track progress in learning through the work they provide for meeting pupils' needs. Insufficient use is made of learning targets across all subjects of the curriculum.

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

32. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the provision it makes for the moral and social development of the pupils and maintained the standard of its provision in other aspects of the curriculum.
33. The quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school for all of its pupils, including those under five, is generally satisfactory. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, except for the coverage of some aspects of information technology. The religious education curriculum is unsatisfactory, particularly in Key Stage 2, but a new curriculum has been drawn up in conjunction with the diocesan adviser and this

is to be introduced in September. Within some subjects, such as art and music, learning opportunities are limited by the teachers' own lack of expertise in the subjects. In others, such as history, geography and religious education, teaching methods and organisation are, at times, restrictive. The school has identified these weaknesses. A new staff appointment for September will strengthen expertise in art and music, and the school development plan identifies history, geography and religious education as areas for development. Although the pupils acquire a good understanding of all aspects of the curriculum for science, there are insufficient opportunities for investigative work and not enough is done to encourage independent learning in other subjects. The school pays due regard to the national initiatives to promote literacy and numeracy. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented more effectively than the National Literacy Strategy. In literacy, insufficient emphasis is placed on extended writing and the development of writing for a range of purposes across the curriculum.

34. The provision for pupils with special educational needs who are under five or in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. The curriculum provided for these pupils does not offer them sufficient challenge and, therefore, they do not make enough progress in their learning. In Key Stage 2, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and is appropriately organised to ensure work provided for all pupils matches their age and ability. However, targets in pupils' individual education plans need to be more precise and reviewed more frequently to ensure pupils make maximum progress.
35. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of health issues and are aware of how their life-style affects their wellbeing. The school has developed policies for sex education and drugs awareness, both of which are taught during a range of lessons. Pupils in the transition class have a regular circle time³, which provides good opportunities for their personal development and for pupils to talk about issues of concern. Although there is much good informal interaction with pupils in Key Stage 2, there is no formal planning for personal and social education.
36. The school provides an adequate range of extra-curricular activities to support learning in the classroom and the wider personal development of the pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to benefit from local and residential field trips which use a range of environments as a rich source of knowledge and information beyond pupils' day-to-day experiences. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the opportunities they are given to participate in local inter-school sporting events and gain much from being part of the team.
37. The local community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. History is brought to life through the involvement of a local resident, and pupils develop a greater understanding of the significance of the impact of Christian values on everyday life through regular contact with the clergy from the local church. The school has established good relationships with other schools, particularly the local secondary school. The transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education is planned well, and the pupils feel confident and secure in a new learning environment.
38. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Stories are chosen to illustrate themes in lessons. Pupils talk about how they are cared for and how they

³ Circle time is an activity where pupils are able to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

also care for people who are an important part of their lives. Visitors to the school contribute meaningfully to the development of pupils' wider understanding of caring within society. As part of this, they recently collected money for Barnardos' charity. They sit quietly and reflect on what they have learned whilst listening to a range of modern, contemporary or classical music, which during the inspection included the theme from 'Chariots of Fire' and Mozart's 'Eine kleine Nachtmusik'.

39. The school is effective in cultivating the pupils' personal development through the good opportunities it provides for raising their awareness of social and moral issues. Adults who work within the school provide good role models for the pupils and are consistent in their approach to reinforcing the difference between right and wrong. Discussions during circle time in Years 2 and 3 are particularly effective in prompting pupils to reflect upon how their actions may affect others and that they have choices about how to behave. The pupils talk with maturity about the need to be honest and fair and to tell the truth, and they know that justice involves being even-handed and unbiased. The newly-formed school council is intending to ensure these principles are promoted through its activities. During the inspection, first-hand experience confirms the value of these initiatives in developing pupils' social competence and their skills in initiating and sustaining interesting dialogue with adults. Through their participation in school sports events and competitive games, pupils learn the value of developing a team identity and the need for dependence upon their team-mates in order to be successful participants in school-based and regional events.
40. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school enhances pupils' awareness of their own culture through several areas of the curriculum, visits and field trips. During their history lessons, pupils learn how British culture, including the role of women in society, has changed since World War II. By studying the lives of famous people, they know the impact that individuals, such as the Victorian inventors Stephenson and Brunel, have had upon society. Through their art and music lessons, pupils find out about the work of famous artists and composers and develop an understanding of the intended effect created by a particular piece of music or work of art. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop a clear understanding of living in a multi-cultural society. Whilst effective use is made of visits to the local church, opportunities are not regularly included for visiting non-Christian places of worship. Too little focus is placed upon the study of non-European cultures and the richness of their heritage. Resources for this aspect of the school's work, including books, artefacts, musical instruments and examples of art work are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school has maintained a good standard of care for its pupils since the last inspection. Pupils are taught in a caring, happy environment where they develop confidence and self-esteem and are valued and respected as individuals. They are secure in the knowledge that any concerns or worries they may have will be dealt with sensitively and tactfully by staff who are aware of the needs of individuals. There are well-established links with the support services, and cases of a worrying nature are appropriately referred and effectively dealt with. Child protection procedures are good and the member of staff with responsibility for dealing with child protection issues has received recent relevant training. All staff take care to ensure that they adhere to the guidelines and procedures in the health and safety policy. However, the school is not currently carrying out formal risk assessments. The school uses the expertise of outside professional bodies effectively to assist in the teaching of health and sex education, and this enables pupils in Year 6 to move on confidently and well informed to the next stage in their education.

42. The staff know the pupils well and are fully aware of the pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses. In lessons, pupils are provided with good levels of constructive educational advice and positive guidance which enables them to know what they need to do to improve and to make progress. They are praised for effort as well as achievement and encouraged to persevere when they encounter difficulties. Teachers comment on pupils' work in a positive manner, correcting errors without lowering their levels of confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' achievements are recognised and celebrated in weekly assemblies. However, the school does not currently keep formal records of pupils' personal development and achievements. The headteacher has been instrumental in developing discussion and self-evaluation groups, which are having an impact on the way in which pupils are able to communicate their thoughts and ideas. The improvement in pupils' communication skills has been recognised and commented on favourably by parents.
43. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are good. Registers are analysed weekly for emerging patterns of absence, and cases of persistent absenteeism are referred to the educational welfare services. Registration is carried out promptly, and pupils benefit from an immediate start to lessons. The school uses effective strategies which encourage high standards of behaviour throughout the school, and the behaviour policy contains clear guidelines to ensure that all forms of oppressive behaviour, including bullying, are prevented.
44. The school maintains good links with a range of other agencies involved in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The special needs coordinator is responsible for liaising with other professionals, parents, carers and schools. The school has satisfactory procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs, but these have not been used effectively in the Reception and Year 1. This has resulted in the late identification of needs and a very high percentage of pupils in Year 2 being placed on the register. The coordinator is aware of the difficulties this has created and has worked diligently with the class teacher to ensure these pupils have been given maximum support and help to remedy their difficulties.
45. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the achievements of children under the age of five. The school completes initial assessments of children's learning in Reception. This information is used to enable staff to plan for the next step in children's learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, assessment procedures and the use teachers make of them to inform the next step in pupils' learning are satisfactory. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has made progress in developing this aspect of its work. Procedures have been introduced sensitively and systematically. Emphasis has been placed upon developing methods of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy. Assessment procedures in science are satisfactory. The school has identified a need to develop these further to replicate the higher quality of literacy and numeracy assessments. Assessment in religious education and information technology is unsatisfactory. Coordinators responsible for the foundation subjects have yet to initiate and implement more consistent procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements, such as portfolios of samples of pupils' work to provide teachers with information about standards throughout the school.
46. The school perceives the inclusion of pupils in setting targets for themselves as an important tool to help raise standards. Pupils have responded positively to this very recent development and enjoy the opportunity it gives them to take some responsibility for the direction of their own learning.
47. The school has begun to use the results of a range of assessment information to analyse and evaluate areas of weakness within teaching and learning and to target

the use of support staff to where the need is greatest. This has been effective in Key Stage 2 in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Targets in pupils individual education plans are regularly reviewed, but do not yet feature in teachers' planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The parents have a positive view of the school and the quality of education their children are receiving. They appreciate the commitment of the staff and the fact that staff are always prepared to find the time to talk to them. Any suggestions or ideas which they may wish to make are well received. Most parents are very pleased with the regular information which the school provides them about forthcoming events and their children's progress, although a few parents feel they do not have enough information about how their children are doing. Inspectors feel that there are few grounds for concern in this respect, as the school provides termly meetings for parents, there is opportunity for two-way communication through the pupils' home-school diaries, and staff are always willing to talk to parents. Some parents are disappointed with the variety and amount of extra-curricular activities provided. Although the range of activities offered is limited because of the size of the school and the number of staff, the formal curriculum is supplemented in other ways through visits to places of interest and visitors to the school.
49. Parents are generally pleased with standards within the school. They feel that the school promotes the right attitudes and values, and that standards of behaviour are high as a result. They like the way older pupils help the younger ones. Nearly all parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. Most parents feel that their children are making good progress academically. However, some parents are concerned that their children are not given enough homework and a few parents say that their children are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given. Observations made during the inspection would endorse these views.
50. The school's very good partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection. Much is done by the headteacher and staff to ensure that parents and carers are kept fully informed about all aspects of their children's education and the life and work of the school. The annual reports to parents on pupils' progress are informative, although they do not meet requirements because they do not report separately on information technology and design and technology. The prospectus clearly conveys the school's aims and is a good guide to the school's routines and procedures. Parents find the pre-school booklet they are given when their children enter the Reception class is very helpful. The school's informal links with parents are very good and enable a regular exchange of information to take place between home and school. Parents meet with staff during parents' evenings and have commented on the way that the staff are always available to talk to them at the end of the school day if they have any immediate concerns or worries.
51. The school warmly welcomes parents and encourages them to take an active part in the daily life of the school. Parents make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning by helping in classes with various activities, and they work very hard to support the school financially by organising fund-raising and social events. Their excellent support in organising the school discos and fairs, and practical help in re-decorating the school is very much appreciated by the headteacher and staff and also helps pupils to develop positive attitudes to the school and their learning.
52. The school ensures that parents are given an informed insight into areas of the curriculum by organising various workshops. The drugs' awareness workshop, in particular, was found by parents to be both helpful and informative. Parents are

encouraged to help with homework, which enables them to gain information on the work that their children do and also supports their children's learning at home

53. The school has worked very hard to consult and inform all parents of pupils with special educational needs about their concerns and ways in which their difficulties can be alleviated. The school encourages parents to contribute to their children's learning at home and regularly makes opportunities available for parents to come into school to discuss their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute to setting targets in their children's individual education plans and work to achieve these both at home and at school. Pupils are not currently involved in contributing to setting and evaluating their targets for learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The previous headteacher, who was well respected by staff, pupils and parents, and who was providing effective leadership at the time of the last inspection, left the school in December and a new headteacher took up the post in January.
55. The school has maintained the positive aspects which were noted at the time of the last inspection and, overall, has made a satisfactory range of improvements, even though progress has been slow in some areas which were identified as weaknesses. The arrival of the new headteacher in January of this year has given fresh impetus to improving many aspects of the school. Although the school drew up satisfactory action plans to deal with the previous key issues, little progress was made in devising procedures to monitor the progress of individual pupils or in monitoring and evaluating curriculum development. Although there has been some improvement, the provision for information technology remains unsatisfactory and standards are below the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages. Weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work remain. Nevertheless, over this period, there has been a steady improvement in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, and standards are now higher than they were. This is not the case at Key Stage 1, where standards in reading and writing are currently lower than they were at the time of the last inspection.
56. In a short space of time, the new headteacher has analysed the needs of the school well, identifying areas which need to be improved and setting a clear agenda for the future development of the school. He is providing the school with good leadership and clear educational direction. Teaching groups have been re-organised for the coming year, thus dealing effectively with many of the difficulties encountered with the present structure. He has given staff new job descriptions which give a clearer indication of their roles and responsibilities. The role of subject coordinators has been enhanced, and there are now clearer expectations that coordinators should monitor their own subjects. A termly rota has been established, so that the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are monitored each year. Other subjects are to be monitored on a regular, but less frequent basis. Most of the staff have been motivated by the changes, are supportive of the new direction for the school and have set about their tasks with energy and enthusiasm. In mathematics, for example, the coordinator has observed other members of staff teaching, provided critical feedback for teachers, presented training sessions, and arranged for staff to see mathematics being taught in other schools. These initiatives are helping to improve the quality of the teaching and raise standards. The coordination of history, geography and religious education has not been as effective. At present, the headteacher is carrying the responsibility for coordinating too many subjects. Expertise is currently lacking in subjects such as music and art, but the problem has been addressed through the appointment of a new member of staff who will be starting in September. With the clear direction being provided by the new headteacher, the enthusiasm of the staff with major

responsibilities and the support of the governors, together with their willingness to embrace change, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

57. Apart from the provision for information technology, the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and take their duties seriously. The governors are well informed about school issues and have a good understanding of the needs and difficulties of a small school. The chair meets regularly with the headteacher, and exercises the role of critical friend well, helping to clarify issues and providing support to the headteacher. The governors hold the headteacher to account for new proposals. For example, the governors questioned the proposed reorganisation of classes very carefully before agreeing to the restructure. Their annual report to parents is informative. Meetings are carefully minuted and cover a broad range of topics of importance and relevance. A number of governors give a significant amount of time to helping the school.
58. Procedures for the monitoring and support of teaching, learning and curriculum development have improved since the last inspection. They are good in English, mathematics and science, although more needs to be done to develop the monitoring and evaluation of other areas of the curriculum. Additional funds have been used effectively to provide coordinators with the time to carry out their monitoring roles. Most staff have found the monitoring and evaluation process to be helpful in identifying issues and raising standards. The headteacher has analysed the school's needs well and has devised appropriate courses of action to bring about further improvement. The school has an annual cycle for reviewing its work. The headteacher and staff have been involved in various in-service training initiatives. These have covered a wide variety of topics and have helped to raise the teachers' awareness of new developments and to improve teaching practice. Procedures for appraisal have lapsed, but staff have undergone recent training with regard to performance management.
59. Work still needs to be undertaken on the current school development plan, but the outlined proposals demonstrate a strong commitment to improvement and a good understanding of which aspects of the school need to be developed. Past action plans have not been fully implemented, and the school will need to establish its main priorities carefully in order to ensure this does not happen in the future. The school also needs to revise the targets which were set some while ago for pupils' attainment over the next few years and to identify strategies which will help to raise attainment in year groups where the predicted achievements are low. The current development plan for mathematics has been implemented well, and there are good and detailed proposals to improve the provision for information technology.
60. The school's finances are managed efficiently and the most recent audit commented favourably on the school's procedures for financial management. The school satisfactorily applies principles of providing best value for money to all areas of its performance. As a small school, costs per pupil are relatively high, but spending is carefully targeted and a good analysis of various options is made before making final decisions on purchases. The school makes good use of new technology to support day-to-day administration and the management of school accounts. However, new technology is not used enough to help the pupils develop learning across the curriculum. In other areas, the school makes satisfactory use of its teaching resources and deploys its support staff well. The short-term support grant to provide additional staffing has been used effectively. Off-setting the high cost per pupil, and weaknesses in the school's provision for information technology and religious education against the good standards achieved in most aspects of English, mathematics and science, and the positive quality of education and care provided by the staff, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

61. The special needs coordinator is an experienced teacher who has worked diligently to ensure pupils with special needs are provided with the help they require. A good policy has been devised to inform and guide teachers about how to identify pupils experiencing problems. The school is aware that the role of the coordinator requires further development to encompass monitoring and evaluating the work of colleagues and the use they make of targets in pupils' individual education plans to inform their planning in every subject. The role of the governor with responsibility for special needs is effective, but under-developed in terms of being more evaluative of this aspect of the school's work.
62. The school has a good number of teachers for the size of the school. They are suitably qualified to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, including the provision for pupils with special educational needs and children under the age of five. Relationships are very good, and a strong sense of teamwork exists throughout the school. Support staff work closely with teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, the standards they achieve and the progress they make. The school has a structured programme for staff development which is closely matched to the prioritised targets in the school development plan, and teachers take part in training courses to ensure that their expertise is well maintained. However, the programme for staff development is not yet closely matched to teachers' individual needs. The clerical staff work hard to ensure that the daily administrative procedures are carried out efficiently, and the other non-teaching staff, such as the midday supervisors, those who prepare the school meals and the caretaker, make a significant contribution to the life of the school.
63. The standard of accommodation is good. Classrooms are well organised to make the best possible use of available space and to ensure that pupils are able to undertake practical activities. The building is in good decorative order and all internal areas of the school are significantly enhanced by bright, colourful displays of pupils' work, which stimulate learning and create a pleasant environment. The refurbishment of the former headteacher's house since the last inspection has added significantly to the school's facilities. One room is currently being refurbished to provide a computer suite which will alleviate some of the difficulties in making appropriate provision for information technology. The school has an appropriate range of resources to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, although it lacks large play equipment for children under five. Resources in classrooms are generally neatly stored, clearly labelled and easily accessible to pupils. Adult helpers are used effectively in classrooms. Educational visits to places of interest, linked to class themes and topics, enhance and enrich the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve, the governors, headteacher and staff should work together to:
- 1) Raise the standard of attainment in information technology [paragraphs 11, 26, 33, 45, 55, 118 - 125]. In particular, they should ensure that:**
 - all aspects of the information technology curriculum are covered, and teachers are given clear guidance as to what they are expected to teach and the standards pupils are expected to achieve [*paragraph 26, 124*]
 - further training is provided in aspects of the curriculum in which teachers' knowledge and understanding is weak [*paragraph 24, 123*];
 - more time is devoted to teaching information technology skills and that existing and new equipment is used more efficiently [*paragraph 26, 123*];

- information and communication technology is used more widely as a tool to promote learning in other subjects [*paragraphs 11, 26, 86, 96, 108, 122, 125, 129, 131*]
- 2) Raise the standard of attainment in religious education [paragraphs 12, 34, 45, 136 - 140]. In particular, they should ensure that:**
- all teachers understand the new syllabus for religious education and that it is implemented with immediate effect [*paragraphs 12, 25, 26, 33, 139*]
 - less reliance is placed on the use of taped broadcasts [*paragraphs 12, 28, 137*]
 - pupils acquire better knowledge and understanding of other world faiths [*paragraphs 12, 136*]
- 3) Raise the standard of writing in English [paragraphs 8, 25, 33, 80, 83, 84]. In particular, they should ensure that:**
- teachers provide a wider range and make better use of opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills through written work produced for other subjects [*paragraphs 8, 25, 83, 84, 102, 138, 139*];
 - teachers are more discriminating in the use of worksheets [*paragraphs 8, 25, 28, 83, 117*];
 - teachers pay greater attention to the way pupils' work is marked and ensure that pupils learn from the mistakes they have made [*paragraphs 23, 29, 55, 86, 102*].
- 4) Provide more opportunities for pupils to acquire independent learning skills, particularly in subjects which require investigative and practical work [paragraphs 9, 10, 20, 27, 34, 87, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100].**

[The school has already identified these key issues as areas for development within the school development plan]

65. In addition to the key issues for improvement, the school should consider the following areas for improvement:
- Providing greater challenge for more able pupils [*paragraphs 9, 16, 26, 49, 86, 93, 94, 121*]
 - Standards of attainment in geography [*paragraphs 14, 33, 112*]
 - The way pupils present their work [*paragraphs 18, 84, 91*]
 - Earlier identification of pupils with special educational needs and the formulation of targets within pupils' individual education plans [*paragraphs 2, 16, 31, 34, 44, 47, 80*]
 - The provision for physical development for children under five and more opportunities for physical education for the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 [*paragraphs 15, 24, 66, 68, 79, 133*]
 - The breadth and range of work in art and design and technology [*paragraphs 13, 105, 111*]
 - Arrangements for carrying out risk assessments [*paragraph 41*]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of formal discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils [In addition to this figure, there were many informal discussions with staff, other adults and pupils]	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	52	48	0	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.7	School data	0.8
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91	91	91
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91	91	91
	National	82	86	87

Comparisons are not provided for the previous year, as fewer than 10 pupils took the Key Stage 1 tests in 1998

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

This table has been omitted because fewer than 10 pupils took the Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 and 1998

Ethnic background of pupils

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

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)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.1
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	165,937
Total expenditure	166,035
Expenditure per pupil	2,678
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,437
Balance carried forward to next year	4,339

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	60
Number of questionnaires returned	22

Percentage of responses in each category⁴

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	65	30	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	48	48	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good	35	61	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	26	35	35	4	0
The teaching is good	48	44	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	35	44	17	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	70	26	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	46	36	14	0	5
The school works closely with parents	48	35	13	4	0
The school is well led and managed	35	52	9	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	44	44	0	0	13
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	13	17	39	30	0

⁴ Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

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

66. Children under five are taught in a class of mixed Reception and Year 1 pupils. Assessments undertaken when the children enter the school show that attainment on entry is average, although a few children already have well-developed skills in literacy and numeracy. The children make sound progress in most areas of learning, achieving or exceeding most of the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five. The planned curriculum is generally broad and balanced and relevant to the children's needs, although insufficient time is devoted to the children's physical development. The school has maintained a satisfactory level of provision for children under five since the last inspection.

Personal and social development

67. Children make satisfactory progress in their personal and social development and nearly all of the children reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five. Whilst a few of the youngest children are occasionally somewhat timid when asked to participate with the rest of the class, most children are willing to participate and are confident with the daily routines. They help to tidy away after an activity. They cooperate well with their teacher and adult helpers and collaborate with one another. They learn to take turns and to share, and also to work independently. They take care with equipment and resources.
68. The quality of the teaching in this area is satisfactory. The children relate better to some adults than others, but relationships are generally positive. The staff give clear instructions and have well-established daily routines which help the children to feel settled within the school environment. Rules for behaviour are clearly established, resulting in a good standard of behaviour. Insufficient time is given to physical activities, with the result that children find it somewhat hard to cope appropriately with lessons which are taken outdoors. Some children still take a long time to get themselves dressed and undressed for physical education lessons.

Language and literacy

69. The quality of teaching for language and literacy is satisfactory and the children make sound progress in developing skills of language and communication. By the time they are five, they have acquired most of the basic elements of reading, writing, speaking and listening and are attaining good standards for their age.
70. Children are given good encouragement in the development of their speaking and listening skills through the use of storybooks and sharing picture books with parent helpers. They listen attentively and respond positively to questions and instructions. Most children communicate their wishes and suggestions clearly. Children are provided with too few opportunities, through planned, purposeful play, to develop their language skills, but through self-initiated activities they sustain conversation and use extended sentences in discussion with adults.
71. Independent writing skills are promoted effectively and, by the time they are five, most children have an understanding of the sequence of events in simple stories. They try hard to present their work neatly, and are proud of what they produce. Too few opportunities are provided for the growth of emergent writing skills to help children gain an appreciation of the purpose of writing in a range of contexts. They enjoy

tracing and copying letters and words and drawing pictures to illustrate their work. They are especially enthusiastic when the work involves the characters from their reading books. Play activities are not adequately planned, incorporated and implemented to improve children's development of language. Too few purposeful role-play situations are provided for children to use vocabulary for their own self-expression, or when playing with a range of play equipment.

Mathematics

72. Children under five make satisfactory progress in developing their mathematical skills and understanding. By the age of five, they comfortably achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes for mathematics and some children exceed them. They know their numbers up to 10, and some children happily count beyond this. They count the number of objects in a group, matching objects one to one, and are beginning to recognise and write numbers. They are beginning to understand mathematical terms and concepts, such as 'more' and 'less', 'holds the same as', and 'holds more than'.
73. The quality of the teaching is generally satisfactory. The children listen to instructions well, are well behaved and cooperate with one another. Although the whole-class sessions when the Reception children are taught together with Year 1 are short, the teacher endeavours to include the youngest children by asking them appropriate questions and building their confidence. However, there is not enough teaching input during these short sessions and more opportunities could be taken on other occasions to reinforce children's numeracy skills. In most lessons, the children benefit from the class being split into two year groups, with the Reception children frequently being supervised by the teaching assistant. In these sessions, the children receive good individual attention and well-focused questions help them to develop understanding of new concepts.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. The children make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world, and the teaching in this area is satisfactory. Effective use is made of children's own experience and awareness. In talking about their homes, children distinguish between one room and another, naming them and describing the things in them. They talk about events important to them, including birthday parties and who they will invite to share in their celebrations.
75. They show an interest in animals and pets which is reinforced through stories such as 'The Owl Babies,' and their general knowledge and understanding about living things are good. They are familiar with basic differences between animals, birds, insects and water creatures and recognise plants as living things. They know that plants grow, and understand that some occur naturally whilst others are cultivated.
76. They are familiar with a range of objects in their daily lives, and they know that some, such as the cooker, iron and cars, are dangerous. They can name differences between natural and man-made objects and know, for example, that a door is a piece of wood which was once a tree. They have some opportunity to explore and select materials and equipment for various tasks. However, these opportunities are not sufficiently well planned to develop children's understanding of why materials are appropriate for an activity. Too little time is provided for children to explore water, dough, mud, paint, jigsaws and other equipment to develop more refined skills in cutting, joining, folding and building. Insufficient experiences are provided for children to become competent in the use of technology. However, they do know that switches control the television, video recorder and washing machine at home. They talk

confidently about making the television work and being able to select and play their favourite videos.

Creative development

77. By the time they are five, the children attain satisfactory standards in terms of their creative development. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. The children use a range of materials and media for drawing, painting and making collages. They handle tools and malleable materials well. The children demonstrate their own ideas and compare the outcomes with the work of their classmates. They discuss their models of owls with flapping wings and houses with doors which open. Some express their views confidently about whose is the best and why.
78. All children enjoy singing and musical activities; they know a range of songs, rhymes and hymns including 'The Water of Life' and 'Morning Has Broken'. These are used as a sound base to develop children's appreciation of music. They are developing some appreciation of rhythm and recognise faster and slower tempos. They sing in tune and perform action songs with enthusiasm and accuracy. However, too few opportunities are provided for children to explore art, music and dance imaginatively within purposeful, structured play activities.

Physical development

79. Based on the very limited evidence available during the inspection, most children achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes for physical development by the age of five, although the range of opportunities provided for them to make progress in the more physical activities is unsatisfactory. Within the classroom, they show an appropriate awareness of space, moving confidently, with good physical control and coordination. There was no opportunity to observe the children using apparatus within the hall or to demonstrate their ability to jump or balance. Because they only have one lesson a week devoted to physical activity, some children still find it hard to get changed quickly without additional help from an adult. The children are provided with an appropriate range of activities which help them to develop their fine motor skills. They handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials with appropriate control. They handle paintbrushes and scissors carefully and safely. Most children are learning to use a pencil to form letters and shapes accurately.

ENGLISH

80. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are currently much lower in both reading and writing than the previous year's National Curriculum results. This is largely due to the fact that the current Year 2 contains a high proportion of pupils whose special educational needs were not identified at an early enough stage. Early indications from the Year 2000 tests show that results in both reading and writing are likely to be well below the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve high standards in reading. The pupils do not show the same degree of achievement in writing.
81. Pupils' listening skills have improved since the time of the last inspection. Although pupils show varying degrees of confidence in talking about and listening to topics of interest, their speaking and listening skills are generally well developed by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils respond eagerly to questions, but a minority have difficulty in taking turns to answer and do not listen carefully to their class teacher or their classmates. With encouragement, they are beginning to extend their range and use of vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' ability to listen with concentration in discussions and to question others' ideas and opinions is good. Not all pupils, however, respond confidently or enthusiastically to questions. Most pupils have a

good range of vocabulary and discuss their reading and writing confidently. Overall, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening.

82. Standards in reading are generally good throughout the school, and in some year groups, such as in Year 3 and at the end of Key Stage 2, they are very good. At the end of Key Stage 1, however, standards in reading are below average. Most pupils use phonic skills successfully to build unfamiliar words, but some still resort to using the pictures in their books to help them to read new words. A number of pupils lack the confidence seen in other year groups, where pupils show that they use a wide range of strategies in their reading to establish meaning and are very confident to express opinions and discuss their books. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read with enjoyment, confidence and good expression. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to respond to a range of texts, and understand the main ideas linked to the characters or plot of a story. They can anticipate what might happen next in the story and offer alternative scenarios and, overall, most pupils explain their views about a text clearly. They demonstrate considerable confidence about how to locate books in their school library, and are knowledgeable about how they would find a book in a public library without the help of the library staff. The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2 is good. Progress is even better where pupils have opportunities to practise their reading skills by researching information and analysing and discussing their findings. Pupils have a good knowledge of a range of authors and the books they have written. In discussion, pupils talked with animation about their personal preferences for non-fiction and a range of children's classics, but expressed their preference for locating information using a CD-ROM.
83. Standards in writing are below those in reading throughout the school. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, they are not achieving as well as in other aspects of English or subjects such as mathematics and science. Standards of writing observed during the inspection at the end of Key Stage 1 are currently well below average, although in other years, standards are not as low. Pupils sequence sentences correctly and use a range of punctuation appropriately, but their writing for different purposes is very limited and lacks imaginative ideas and interesting vocabulary. The pupils are developing consistency in the accuracy and size of their handwriting which, overall, is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to use simple punctuation accurately and recognise speech marks, exclamation marks and question marks in a range of texts. The teachers place too much reliance on the completion of short, worksheet-based activities and too little emphasis on developing pupils' thoughts and ideas through creative writing. There are some indications that this is improving with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.
84. Although standards are similar to the national average by the end of Key Stage 2, they are almost one level lower than in reading. The pupils have too few regular opportunities to develop their writing or to produce pieces of extended writing. They do not confidently modify the style of their writing to suit different purposes, such as a newspaper article, for example. Their handwriting is not well organised, in spite of spellings and grammar being reasonably accurate. A significant number of pupils use a limited range of vocabulary. Most pupils can write in a fluent and legible style, but the presentation of their work is not always of a high quality. They write in paragraphs and use basic punctuation accurately. Standards in spelling are satisfactory, although insufficient use is made of dictionaries to help develop this aspect of their work.
85. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has yet to have a really positive impact upon raising standards in writing throughout the curriculum. In some cases, it is having a negative impact on pupils' attitudes, as pupils complain that they cannot enjoy the story content, because they always have to analyse the text they are studying. Nevertheless, throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to their lessons are

good and often very good. Pupils have a positive approach to their learning and behave well in lessons. When teachers' expectations are too low and the work they provide is not well matched to the age and ability of the pupils, attitudes are less positive, but the pupils still comply with what is required of them and show respect for their teachers. Most pupils listen well and participate actively in lessons. They settle quickly to group tasks and work well collaboratively, supporting each other when needed. In the best lessons, they are confident when responding to questions and are eager to be chosen to share their work with the rest of the class.

86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Some good teaching was observed during the inspection. When the teaching is good, the work is well planned and good use is made of the literacy structure to develop pupils' learning. The teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attainment and maintain a brisk pace in lessons. Resources are well prepared and used effectively. Tasks are interesting, well matched to pupils' abilities and stimulate in-depth discussion and better quality written work. On occasions when teaching is less effective, the teachers fail to establish and maintain pupils' enthusiasm for their work. On these occasions, teachers' implementation of the National Literacy Strategy lacks commitment and the purpose of the lesson is not made clear to the pupils. Over time, the quality of teaching in English is satisfactory. However, opportunities for the use of information and communication technology in lessons and promoting literacy across the whole curriculum are under-developed and more able pupils are not always adequately challenged by the work they are given to complete. Insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' writing skills through constructive and helpful marking, especially when written work is produced in subjects other than English.
87. The school has yet to develop a comprehensive portfolio of pupils' work, levelled according to national criteria. The coordinator is aware of the need to develop systems to monitor standards and the consistency of pupils' progress. Resources for the literacy strategy are satisfactory, but the quantity and quality of poetry materials are not adequate. The recently refurbished library provides a pleasant environment in which to work. However, it is under-used by pupils for independent study and research purposes.
88. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has made progress in raising the standard of pupils' listening skills. It is aware of the need to improve standards in writing. This target already features in the school development plan and the school is well placed to develop this aspect of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

89. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are not as high now as they were at the time of the last inspection. At Key Stage 2, however, there have been some significant improvements and standards are higher than they were. The National Numeracy Strategy has, for the most part, been implemented successfully, and its utilisation has helped to raise standards at Key Stage 2. Some of the teachers are now more confident in teaching the subject, and the pupils' attitudes to the subject have also become more positive.
90. Despite the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs currently in Year 2, the pupils generally achieve appropriate standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. Their progress through the key stage, however, is erratic. By the age of five, many children already have a very secure grasp of the mathematical skills expected of their age and their progress during the Reception year is satisfactory. Progress in Year 1 is unsatisfactory because the work provided does not build substantially on this solid foundation. The progress made by pupils in Year 2 is good.

By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have developed sound number concepts and, in most areas of mathematics, they are working at the level expected for seven-year-olds. For example, they are very confident counting in fives to 100 and back to zero, and work out doubles of multiples of five quickly. Some of the pupils with special educational needs still have a poor knowledge of two-dimensional shapes, whilst others are quite confident in identifying their different properties. The more able pupils are confident with their 2, 3, 4 and 5 times tables and are beginning to spot patterns in number sequences and different ways of performing addition and subtraction.

91. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average. Nearly all pupils achieve the nationally expected Level 4 and a few achieve the higher Level 5. The pupils have good computational skills and well-established concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They solve problems expressed as words in a methodical way, analysing the important information and then applying the correct operations to produce a result. They understand different strategies for carrying out mental calculations, but tend to stick to one tried and tested method, rather than using different methods which may be quicker and easier in some situations. They have a sound grasp of mathematical vocabulary. Their written work shows good understanding of how to interpret data and draw conclusions from tables and charts. The pupils do not always present their work well.
92. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have developed good numeracy skills. They have a good sense of the size of a number, know number facts by heart and calculate accurately. They use their ability to estimate and approximate in order to recognise whether their answers are reasonable. Although numeracy skills are developed incidentally in other areas of the curriculum, such as science and geography, not enough attention has been given to ways in which work in these and other subjects can help to develop the pupils' numeracy skills. Very little use is made of information and communication technology as a tool to develop mathematical skills.
93. The overall quality of teaching in mathematics is good, although it varies between classes. During the inspection, the lessons observed in the transition class and in Key Stage 2 were good; those for the youngest pupils were satisfactory. The school has endeavoured to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection, and the implementation of teaching methods advocated in the National Numeracy Strategy has helped some teachers to become more confident in the way they handle the subject. In two of the classes, the teachers provide very clear explanations which help pupils understand how to tackle new problems. In the class for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, for example, it was evident that pupils had been given some very good teaching on how to solve mathematical problems expressed in words. The pupils' skills in solving such problems were reinforced through tasks which had been carefully chosen for different groups of pupils and two useful sessions in which the teacher worked through examples with the whole class, making good use of pupils' responses and suggestions. Basic skills are taught well and there is good emphasis on the acquisition and use of mathematical vocabulary. The school has an agreed format for planning the week's mathematics lessons, although this is not always followed. The planning in some classes does not always give a clear enough indication as to how the lesson will meet the differing needs of pupils. This is particularly the case for the youngest pupils.
94. The work provided for the youngest pupils does not offer sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able pupils who cope quickly and easily with the tasks they are given. The recorded work in the books and files of pupils in Year 1 is only marginally more advanced than the work produced by pupils in the Reception. The pace of one of the short mental mathematics sessions which was observed was very slow, contained little challenge for the older pupils and made poor use of time,

involving only one pupil at a time. Whilst ensuring that each pupil is asked a question individually during such sessions ensures parity in the way pupils are treated, it also allows pupils to lose concentration quickly once they have been asked their question. Not enough emphasis is given to teaching. The major part of one of the observed lessons was given to a potentially worthwhile activity in which pupils explored the capacity of differently shaped containers. However, there was not enough preparatory exploration of the topic before the practical activity, and there was no time at the end of the lesson to draw conclusions from what the pupils had discovered. The quality of support provided by the teaching assistant in this class is good and significantly enhances the quality of pupils' learning through well-timed intervention and the good use of questions.

95. Lessons in the top two classes are well structured, and provide an appropriate balance between whole-class, small-group and individual activities. The teachers are starting to use the mental-mathematics sessions effectively, and it is evident that the pupils' confidence in handling numbers has increased as a result. However, some of the activities provided for the older pupils are repeated too frequently and do not offer sufficient opportunity for pupils to explore different methods of calculation or explain the reasoning for their methods. Overall, thorough coverage of all aspects of the curriculum, an appropriate balance of different activities, clear explanations and well-structured lessons ensure that pupils are well taught and are making good progress in these two classes. The pupils' positive attitudes to mathematics and good behaviour also help to ensure that the quality of learning is good. The pupils generally apply themselves well to their tasks, are responsive during mental mathematics sessions and complete their written work conscientiously.
96. The subject receives good leadership. The coordinator's own expertise has improved as a result of attending a long course of professional development, and this has given her greater confidence in developing the subject. The pupils generally receive a balanced curriculum, although there is little evidence of investigative work in the pupils' books. Assessment procedures are improving. The coordinator has provided training for staff, has taken an active part in monitoring the quality of teaching, and has provided opportunities for other staff to observe mathematics lessons both within the school and in other schools. These initiatives have helped to raise teachers' confidence and awareness and have led to improvements in the quality of teaching. Although there are still a few gaps, the quantity and quality of resources have improved and are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum and to enable teachers to present activities in new and stimulating ways.

SCIENCE

97. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection, and this is borne out by the National Curriculum results achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. The overall level of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly typical for seven-year-olds and pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of science. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments are above average in terms of their factual knowledge and understanding and they make good progress in this aspect of their work. However, their attainment within experimental and investigative science is below the level expected.
98. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have a sound understanding of each area of the science curriculum. They understand what conditions plants need in order to grow. They identify the main parts of the body and are beginning to develop an understanding of how to live healthily. They know the meaning of terms such as 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque'. They identify different materials used for building and give reasons as to why they are suitable. Their experience of

investigative work is limited, and they have yet to develop the concept of a fair test. During the inspection, the pupils approached an investigation into the porosity of different types of soil with great enthusiasm. Although they learnt much from the investigation, it was evident that they have not had regular opportunities for this type of work, and found it hard to follow instructions and ensure that they kept the conditions for testing the different types of soil the same.

99. The revision which pupils undertake in preparation for their National Curriculum tests ensures that, by the end of Key Stage 2, they have a clear and detailed understanding of all aspects of the National Curriculum for science. They have a detailed knowledge of the human body and the functions of the main organs. They classify animals and can give a clear explanation of the process of photosynthesis. They have a sound understanding of how animals and plants adapt to their environments; a number of pupils illustrated this knowledge well during the inspection through posters which they made on animal and plant habitats during a lesson. In work on materials and their properties, they have a sound understanding of solids, liquids and gases and of reversible and irreversible changes. Within the area of physical processes, they have a good understanding of forces. Although some of the work undertaken is of a practical nature, the pupils have not fully understood the importance of fair testing and their recording of investigations is not particularly well developed. They have yet to develop sufficient independence to devise and carry out their own investigative work.
100. The overall quality of teaching in science is satisfactory, with some good aspects to the teaching, but also some weaknesses. The teachers enable the pupils to acquire a good breadth of scientific knowledge and understanding. The revision sessions, provided separately for pupils in Year 6 prior to their National Curriculum tests, were particularly thorough, and ensured that pupils were fully conversant with all aspects of the curriculum. Generally, however, there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and helping pupils to develop their understanding through investigative and experimental work. The pupils have very little opportunity to devise and carry out their own investigations.
101. Both of the lessons observed during the inspection were good and were rooted in the teachers' own secure knowledge and understanding of the material to be covered. In a lesson with pupils in Years 2 and 3, for example, the teacher's knowledge of rocks, soil and conditions for plant growth enabled her to ask pertinent questions, guide the pupils' thinking and make relevant links to work covered earlier in the year. Both lessons were appropriately structured, with the teachers giving a very clear introduction to the lesson and providing sufficient time at the end to draw conclusions from the work covered during the lesson. Resources were prepared beforehand and used effectively. The teachers make good use of guidance provided by the coordinator when planning lessons. They are aware of health and safety considerations in the teaching of science.
102. A good feature of the science teaching is the way pupils are expected to record work in their own way, without relying on the restrictive format of worksheets. However, some of the pupils' written accounts of practical work are not particularly thorough and miss out important elements of the investigative process, for example, an initial hypothesis or an overall conclusion about what has been discovered. The written work undertaken in science offers a good opportunity for pupils to develop their literacy skills. However, the teachers do not exploit these opportunities, and the pupils' writing is frequently careless and inaccurate. Little indication is given, when work is marked, as to how pupils can improve the quality of their writing. Little attention is given to correcting spellings, with the result that mistakes in the spelling of scientific words are repeated throughout the year. Numeracy skills are promoted through the collection

and handling of data and activities which involve measurement. Although information and communication technology is used occasionally for research purposes, the pupils do not have the opportunity to use control technology, such as the use of sensing equipment to monitor sound or light. Apart from a small amount of incidental use, the pupils do not use computers to present the results of their investigative work.

103. Links with the local secondary school provide fruitful opportunities for pupils to extend their attainment in science. Recently, for example, a group of pupils experienced working in a proper science laboratory. Other visits, such as one for the younger pupils to the local garden centre in connection with their study of plants, also make useful contributions to the pupils' learning in science.
104. The overall structure of the curriculum for science is improving. In the short time he has been coordinating the subject, the headteacher has tackled the most important issues quickly and effectively. The teachers receive good guidance as to the school's expectations through a clearly worded and manageable science policy. Curricular planning is now undertaken using the government's exemplar scheme of work. The coordinator has observed the teaching of science lessons and produced detailed pointers for teachers to consider to improve the quality of their teaching. A thorough analysis of pupils' work has yet to be undertaken, but this has been included in future development plans. The level of resources is good, and teachers have sufficient resources to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum effectively.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining skills and developing their knowledge and understanding of art and design and technology, although the range of experiences offered is limited. Pupils' efforts are of a standard expected in relation to their prior achievement.
106. In art, pupils in Key Stage 1 use paint to produce portraits and pictures of historical figures, such as Queen Victoria. They regularly illustrate work they have completed in other subjects using pencil drawings, crayons and felt pens for colouring. Samples of pupils' work are kept in their sketch folders. These show how pupils try to replicate the level of detail found in commercially produced pictures of cultivated and wild flowers. They use colour-mixing, blending and washes to create pictures of landscapes seen from the classroom window. They develop their skills in creating collages when recording their observations of flowers and their fine-art skills using pencils to record their observational drawings of a bird table.
107. In Key Stage 2, pupils extend their knowledge of well-known artists, including Kurt Jackson and William Morris. They also study Indian art and produce their own Rangoli patterns. Work is frequently linked to other subjects, such as history, where pupils use their skills to illustrate their topics about the Ancient Egyptians, the Victorians and, currently, a project linked to the Millennium. A museum visit enabled pupils to make observational drawings of Victorian artefacts, including oil lamps and inventions of the era and kitchen appliances.
108. In design and technology, pupils in Key Stage 1 combine some work in food technology with literacy when writing an account of how they made a banana milkshake. Other pupils have made owls with movable wings and houses with doors that open and close, using thick paper and split pins. They have constructed puppets and designed costumes for them. In work linked to religious education, they designed and made miniature coats of many colours for Joseph.

109. In Key Stage 2, pupils have used art straws to construct three-dimensional models linked to their numeracy work about shape, which included cubes, cylinders and cuboids. In work linked to science, they have constructed models employing the use of switches and circuits and controllable models. Other pupils have used construction kits to build bridges which they have tested for durability and weight bearing.
110. The teaching is satisfactory for both subjects. Staff have a positive rapport with pupils which encourages them to try to do their best. Pupils like to please their teachers and work hard to gain their approval. Staff prepare resources well prior to lessons. They ensure there is an adequate range of materials for each pupil or for the group to share. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' capabilities and are sensitive to the level of support and help each pupil needs in order to achieve success. Staff regularly discuss work in progress which maintains pupils' interest in their task and reinforces the good relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers plan their lessons effectively, but they lack confidence in their own ability and knowledge and understanding of the subjects. This results in the opportunities provided for the pupils being limited and somewhat unimaginative. Pupils, nevertheless, enjoy their lessons and demonstrate a positive attitude to learning. They behave well and are careful with their own work and that of others, making sure none is accidentally damaged. They readily accept help and critical appraisal from adults and classmates.
111. No member of staff is a subject specialist, and this has a negative impact upon the breadth and balance of the curriculum offered to the pupils, as there is no scope for providing more specialised learning opportunities such as silk-screen printing, three-dimensional work, batik, quilting or weaving. The school has identified the need to improve the level of teachers' expertise and has recently appointed another teacher with these skills. The school is, therefore, now well placed to improve the quality of the curriculum within the near future.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Pupils make insufficient progress in geography and attain standards which are lower than those normally found as too little emphasis is placed upon the geographical content within the topic approach to teaching history and geography. In Key Stage 1, the pupils study the local environment and compare different types of housing or features about dwellings, such as the number of windows they each have. They group together features which are the same or different when examining photographs they have taken of various buildings in the village. Following a visit to Weston, they compare and contrast the features of their own countryside location with that of the seaside. At Key Stage 2, the pupils lack confidence in sharing their geographical knowledge and understanding. During the inspection, they struggled to recall well-known rivers, capital cities and weather features, but did demonstrate some knowledge and understanding about plans and maps linked to their millennium project. Although they are provided with opportunities to study geography from first-hand experiences on regular day and residential field trips, they have acquired insufficient basic knowledge and understanding of rivers, the environment and a range of localities, settlements, weather conditions and world geography.
113. Although the teaching in the lesson observed during the inspection was good, the overall quality of teaching in geography is unsatisfactory because insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to acquire the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills. Too much reliance is placed upon worksheet-based activities and too little on encouraging pupils to write personal accounts of their work. On occasions, teachers fail to challenge the more able pupils by providing adequately testing activities. Procedures for assessment are yet to be developed. The use of

information and communication technology within the geography curriculum is unsatisfactory. Effective use is made of visits to enrich the curriculum.

114. Since the last inspection, the development of geography has not been a priority for the school. The production of a new policy and the implementation of governmental guidance are planned for next term. This should ensure that better provision is made for the teaching of geography and that all of the programmes of study are taught with equal balance and depth in order to raise pupils' attainment.

HISTORY

115. The work pupils produce in their history lessons is of a standard appropriate for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in acquiring historical knowledge and understanding. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed an understanding of chronology through studying the changes which have occurred in their own school since it opened in 1874. Many have discussed these with their parents and grandparents who have also attended the school. They use pictures and artefacts to compare houses of long ago. They know that if they had lived one hundred years ago they would not have had kitchen appliances such as microwaves, toasters and electric kettles.
116. As part of their topic work, pupils in Key Stage 2 study other regions of the world, such as Kenya, and modern British history, including World War II, together with more recent events which have occurred in the post-war period. The oldest pupils recall other aspects they have studied in their history lessons, including the Romans, Vikings and Victorians. They had particularly vivid memories of a museum visit they made when studying the Victorians and spoke enthusiastically about their topic on Ancient Egypt. Over time, pupils study a range of periods in history, and their knowledge and understanding of the era and culture are satisfactory. They enjoy good relationships with their teachers and classmates. They are very keen to answer questions and are confident to talk about their work. When given the opportunity, they work very well cooperatively, offering and receiving help from each other willingly and enthusiastically.
117. The quality of history teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject. Documents indicate lessons are adequately planned, using time and resources to best effect. Behaviour management strategies are consistently implemented by all staff, and pupils are provided with clear guidance about standards expected of them. However, too much reliance is placed upon worksheet-based activities and too little on encouraging pupils to write personal accounts of their work. The use of information and communication technology within the history curriculum is unsatisfactory. Effective use is made of visitors to enrich the curriculum.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

118. The school's provision for information technology has improved since the last inspection, but still provides inadequate coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study for this subject. Thanks largely to the efforts of the Parents' Association, the school now has better equipment with which to teach the subject. There is more evidence of pupils using information and communication technology in connection with their work in other subjects, although the range of this type of work is still very limited. The school still does not devote enough time to teaching the subject or to using computers as tools for learning, and overall planning for the subject is weak. As a result, the pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and standards of attainment are still below the national expectations at the end of both key stages.

119. The pupils' attainment is below the nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 1. The pupils recognise that everyday devices, such as a television and video recorder, respond to remote control signals. They produce very short pieces of writing using a word processor. However, they do not yet have sufficient familiarity with the keyboard to locate letters quickly and cannot yet use the word processor as a tool to produce draft writing which they then correct and amend. They know how to use the mouse or the keyboard to select different options when using a program and are quite confident using programs which require them to press a key or click the mouse in order to progress to a new screen. The pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to learn new skills and have not covered all elements of the programmes of study in sufficient depth.
120. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils know how to use a word processor to enter text and alter some aspects of the layout, such as the font, colour or the size of the text. Pupils in Year 3 have been taught how to cut and paste text and to alter the characteristics of the text, for example, from normal type to italics. By Year 6, they have greater control when setting out their text, and some pupils are able to select pictures from other sources and incorporate them into their writing. Most pupils know how to search for information on a CD-ROM. They can save their file onto disc and know how to print their work. However, the pupils have had very little opportunity to gain skills in other aspects of the subject, and their understanding of handling data using a database, setting out text and graphics for a specific audience using a page-layout program, modelling using a spreadsheet, or the use of control technology, is well below the level expected for 11-year-old pupils.
121. Quite a number of pupils have access to computers at home. Some of the more able pupils have learnt how to use features such as 'Word Art' to produce attractive lettering for displays, and were using this skill to produce effective headings for a display they were compiling in a science lesson. However, these pupils make very little progress in acquiring new skills in school. There is no assessment of pupils' levels of attainment within information technology, and teachers are, therefore, unaware of where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge or of what work should be planned in order to provide these pupils with a greater challenge. Not enough is done to extend their capabilities.
122. The overall quality of the teaching is unsatisfactory, because the teachers' planning for the subject is poor and they provide too few opportunities for the pupils to develop information technology skills. However, on the few occasions that information technology lessons are provided, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In the transition class, for example, the teacher provides a regular teaching slot for information technology, and classroom displays show that these have been effective in helping pupils to learn new skills. Much of the use of computers in other classes, however, is not planned. Some pupils have the opportunity to use the computer if they have finished other work, and sometimes they are asked to type up work which they have already written in order for it to be displayed. These arrangements neither make appropriate use of the computers, nor do they provide regular opportunities for all pupils to improve their attainment in the subject.
123. Since the last inspection, there has been some improvement in the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject, although the coordinator's audit of staff skills shows that further training in a number of aspects are still required. In response to this audit, the school has scheduled further training opportunities for the new school year. At present, the teachers do not have a sufficient understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and, beyond the use of word-processing and CD-ROMs for research purposes, are unclear about how to use information and communication technology to best effect in other subjects. A few good examples,

however, were observed during the inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 2 had produced an effective display of factual information on animals in which they had combined the use of word-processing skills and the ability to extract pictures from reference CD-ROMs. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 had produced different type of charts to represent data they had collected in a mathematics lesson.

124. The school does not yet have its own scheme of work for information technology, although staff are expected to use the government's exemplar scheme. In practice, this is not happening. Some of the material which the scheme suggests for older pupils is inappropriate, because the pupils have not acquired earlier more fundamental skills. Little reference is made to the teaching of information technology in the teachers' weekly planning and, apart from one class, there is very little direct teaching of the subject. However, the pupils are keen to use new technology. Pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, were much more enthusiastic about researching their science topic through the use of a CD-ROM than using reference books.
125. At present, the curriculum offered by the school does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school does not have any assessment procedures to provide a clear picture of pupils' capabilities or to help teachers with their future planning. The school realises that its provision for this subject needs to improve and has made good strides in recent months in identifying what needs to be done and taking appropriate action. The coordinator has worked closely with the headteacher to draw up a new policy for the subject which provides clear and helpful outline guidance as to the school's expectations. The subject has been included as the major initiative for the new school development plan, and there are detailed and appropriate plans which show how the school intends to develop the subject. A room has been set aside for use as a computer suite, and additional equipment has been ordered. Arrangements have been made for further staff training, and the coordinator has started work on improving the guidance given to staff on how to plan effectively. The school has produced good action plans for the subject in the past, but the planned improvements have not been fully realised. If the efforts which have been made so far are to bear fruit, teachers will need to ensure that the existing and new equipment is used more efficiently, much more time is devoted to teaching pupils the necessary skills, and that information and communication technology is used as a tool to assist pupils' learning in other subjects.

MUSIC

126. The school has maintained the positive aspects in music which were noted in the school's previous inspection. The pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards which are appropriate for their age by the end of both key stages.
127. The pupils demonstrate a good deal of enthusiasm for singing. They sing well-known hymns and songs, such as 'Lord of the Dance' and 'He's got the whole world in his hands', tunefully and with vigour. In one lesson, pupils in Years 4 to 6 coped well with a two-part African song and made a good attempt at singing in three parts. Although some pupils were a little hesitant, most started singing confidently at the right time and maintained their own part and rhythm. In the same lesson, the pupils showed a good sense of rhythm and dynamics when clapping or using body percussion to play a rhythm from musical notation.
128. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory. Of the two lessons observed, one was satisfactory and the other was good. Although the teachers profess to lacking confidence in teaching music, one of the teachers has good musical expertise. Her accompaniments on the piano and the guitar and a very good singing voice not only convey enjoyment and enthusiasm for music, but give the pupils a very clear lead.

This, in turn, elicits a very positive response from the pupils, gives them the confidence to perform and results in a good standard of singing. This expertise is not used in assemblies, where the pupils' response to the taped accompaniment for hymns is not as positive. The school compensates well for lack of expertise in other classes by bringing in outside experts. The pupils recently participated with energy and great enjoyment in a samba workshop, and were keen to recount their experiences of the occasion. Support from the county's music service and visits to music workshops and concerts also significantly enhance the music curriculum.

129. The school has identified weaknesses in its overall planning for music, and these are to be addressed by the adoption of a new scheme of work. The two lessons observed were, however, well planned, although a lack of pace in one lesson restricted the pupils' opportunities to make progress and resulted in some pupils losing concentration. In contrast, the pupils made good progress in the other lesson because the teacher explained very clearly what pupils were to achieve and maintained a good pace throughout the lesson. She helped them to perform well by building up the practice session systematically and ensuring that all pupils were comfortable with their individual parts before putting them together for a final performance. During the school hymn practice, the pupils demonstrated their ability to sing well but, because there was little teaching input, made little progress in improving their singing or learning new songs.
130. Pupils are given the opportunity to listen to music when they enter and leave assembly. Although different pieces of music are played, the choice of music is somewhat haphazard and little is done to teach the pupils about the music played or to develop their ability to appraise the music. There are limited opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular music activities. A number of pupils learn to play the guitar, but there is no choir and there are no other opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Apart from a swimming lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3, only one physical education lesson took place during the period of the inspection. There was, therefore, very little evidence on which to base secure judgements about pupils' attainment and progress or to make comparisons with the previous inspection's findings.
132. Because of the small number of pupils in each year, the school continues to place a strong emphasis on swimming. All pupils from Year 2 upwards have a period of swimming every week during alternate half-terms. The school's records show that pupils make good progress, and most reach the standard expected of eleven-year-olds well before the end of the key stage. Before they leave school, a number of pupils gain certificates for swimming distances of 400 metres and more, and the overall performance in swimming is better than that normally found. Apart from swimming, the school offers a balanced curriculum at Key Stage 2, offering pupils opportunities for gymnastics, dance and games during the course of the year. Termly planning is, appropriately, related to the government's exemplar scheme of work.
133. Because the school has received extra funding this term, lessons for pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class have been taught by a regular supply teacher. The lesson observed was well planned and well structured. Pupils were given opportunities to develop ball control skills on their own and working with a partner. There was some good teaching input, as the teacher showed pupils what to do, asked various pairs to demonstrate and drew attention to good features of their performance. The effectiveness of the lesson, however, was reduced because the pupils lacked concentration and were easily distracted because they had not yet got used to the

novelty of having a physical education lesson outside. This reflects the fact that the overall provision for the youngest pupils is unsatisfactory. They only have one session of physical education per week, resulting in a narrow curriculum and little opportunity to develop skills in the three main areas of physical activity. More frequent lessons of shorter duration would provide a richer and more balanced programme to help them develop physical skills and to acquire the ability to concentrate in active lessons held outside the familiar context of the classroom. During this lesson, a few pupils showed a good ability to follow instructions, controlled a ball well when working on their own and collaborated well with their partner. Whilst showing a great deal of enthusiasm, most pupils did not listen carefully enough to instructions and, as a result, made little progress.

134. The provision for extra-curricular sporting activities is adequate and pupils have the opportunity to participate in cricket, netball and football at various times in the year. Changes in staffing and the different talents which staff have to offer have led to the demise of a flourishing gym club which was greatly appreciated by parents and pupils. Sporting activities are offered after school on two nights a week, supervised by the headteacher and another class teacher, and with occasional assistance from a parent. However, in-service training in response to national initiatives and other immovable commitments have severely curtailed the number of occasions on which the headteacher has been able to run his sports activities. Despite the size of the school and the small number of pupils from whom the school can choose its teams, the school participates successfully in sporting competitions along with other small schools. Pupils have participated in cricket and netball tournaments, and the school hosted a football tournament on its own field.
135. The school has a large playing field which offers good facilities for physical education under favourable weather conditions. At other times, the accommodation is adequate. The sloping outdoor hard-surface area is rather small for ball games. The hall is of an adequate size, and a retractable climbing frame and other resources offer appropriate opportunities for gymnastic activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. In relation to the locally agreed syllabus, the standards pupils attain in religious education are satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 they are unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing a knowledge and understanding of Christianity, but this is not maintained in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their classmates. Throughout the school, pupils have made little progress in gaining any knowledge and understanding of other world faiths.
137. Pupils study Christianity in each year group. The younger children develop their knowledge and understanding of Bible stories, such as Jonah and the whale, Noah, and Adam and Eve. They relate the events in the stories to happenings in their own lives, and readily share their personal experiences, such as what happens if they are always groaning about things at home. They know the Bible is split into the Old and New Testaments and that the stories in the Old Testament refer to the times before the birth of Christ and those in the New Testament relate to the time of Christ. In Key Stage 2, all pupils are taught religious education together. They listen to story tapes from radio broadcasts. Over a long period of time, pupils currently in Year 5 have written some superficial accounts about the Hindu celebration of Diwali, the Chinese New Year and the Jewish festival of Purim. Pupils have occasionally created their own prayers, written personal accounts of experiences relating to helping and listening to others, trust and how to deal with bullies. They have been taught about symbolism, including the relevance of the Easter celebration for Christians representing the

bringing of new life. The life and work of Martin Luther King provided the subject for another lesson. However, in discussion with a group of pupils they could recall little of what they had been taught.

138. Overall, pupils make unsatisfactory progress in religious education. Inadequate emphasis is being given to the subject as a core element of the curriculum. Teachers are still reticent to offer pupils adequate opportunities to explore the subject in sufficient depth. In discussion, pupils demonstrate little ability to use appropriate terminology to explain matters of belief, concepts or symbolism, and they have a poor knowledge of the richness and diversity of other religions. Throughout the school, detailed recording and written accounts of work studied are weak. Recording, in many classes, relies too heavily on completing superficial colouring tasks or worksheets. Evidence indicates that religious education is not taught regularly in every class, although it is planned as part of the timetable for every class. Opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to make progress are further restricted by the content and organisation of lessons.
139. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2 where teachers have an inadequate knowledge and understanding of the subject. They do not plan and organise the lessons to make satisfactory use of the time and resources they have at their disposal. Where teachers are more secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject, lessons are better. However, throughout the school too few lessons include meaningful written tasks. As a positive element within the curriculum, teachers have recently planned to place greater emphasis and importance on studying other major world faiths. Religious education does not yet make a sufficient contribution to the development of literacy skills, and is not having an adequate impact upon the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are satisfactory and they behave appropriately in lessons. They are respectful of views other than their own. They absorb information quickly when they find it interesting and informative, but they are given too little exposure to interesting factual information to stimulate their thirst for knowledge. The pupils' capacity to reflect on what is taught in lessons is satisfactory.
140. Little has been done since the last inspection to maintain or improve the quality of the religious education curriculum. Assessment procedures have not yet been implemented, although the school is preparing to introduce strategies in the very near future. There is an adequate policy, but the present scheme of work in place to guide teachers' planning is inadequate. The school has produced a new scheme of work which is to be introduced in September. The school is aware of the urgent need to address weaknesses in this subject and has already made preparations to remedy the shortcomings identified; it is well placed to do so, with the allocation of responsibility for the subject being assumed by the headteacher on retirement of the current postholder.