

# INSPECTION REPORT

## COATES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coates, Peterborough

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110631

Headteacher: Wendy Martin

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill  
19623

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 April 2000

Inspection number: 190532

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Fold Coates Peterborough Cams
Postcode:	PE7 2BP
Telephone number:	01733 840322
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Millson
Date of previous inspection:	18 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Michael J Cahill Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Graeme Norval Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Barbara Darley Team inspector	Under-fives English Art Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Margaret Owen Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Information and communication technology Religious education Geography History	Attitudes, values and personal development How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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Inspection Quality Division  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 184 pupils on roll (87 boys and 97 girls), taught in seven classes. At the time of the inspection there were nine children in the reception class who were under five years of age. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is low. There are 34 pupils on the school's register of special educational need, including five with full statements (a figure which is well above the national average). The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is close to the national average. Twenty-one pupils are entitled to free school meals.

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

This is a good and improving school that already has many very good features. A considerable strength of the school is pupils' personal development and relationships. The high quality of teaching and the very good relationships between adults and pupils contribute greatly to this success. The quality both of teaching and of pupils' learning is improving. The school is particularly successful at providing a broad and balanced curriculum, comprising good experiences and opportunities for all pupils. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The overall quality of lesson planning and teaching is high.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership directed towards raising levels of achievement.
- The school teaches a rich and balanced curriculum, including very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- There are good standards throughout the school in art, design and technology and music, and in English, information technology, geography, history and physical education in Key Stage 2.
- The school is very successful in promoting good behaviour, positive attitudes to school and very good relationships and personal development.

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

**Within the context of its many strengths, the school should address the following areas:**

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Expectations of potentially higher-achieving pupils in Key Stage 1.
- The use of pupils' skills in information and communications technology to support and extend their learning across the curriculum.
- The use of financial reserves.

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

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

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then, there has been considerable improvement in respect of the key issues identified at that time – especially curriculum planning, assessment, the monitoring of teaching and learning and of pupils' academic and personal development. Standards in English have improved in both key stages. In mathematics, standards have improved considerably in Key Stage 1 and have been maintained in Key Stage 2. Standards in science have been maintained across the school. However, the school's recent and successful initiative to develop the investigative aspect of science is leading to further improvement. Standards of attainment in the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education have at least been maintained and, for the most part, have been improved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	E	B	B
Mathematics	A	E	D	E
Science	C	E	C	C

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average    E

Schools are described as similar when they have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, in this case between eight and 20 per cent (the school's actual figure is 11.4 per cent). The trend in the school's test results over a four-year period was broadly in line with the national trend.

Inspection findings show that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are around the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are above average, with standards in mathematics and science in line with the national average.

By the end of both key stages, attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In art, design and technology, and music, standards throughout the school are good and pupils achieve at levels that exceed expectations for their age. In geography, history, physical education and information technology, pupils in Key Stage 1 meet expectations for their age, while in Key Stage 2 they exceed them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to take part in the range of activities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are well behaved. There is a calm, purposeful, happy "buzz" about the school.
Personal development and relationships	This is a strength of the school. Pupils work and play together well and relish taking responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance has fallen to just below the national average. This is due to a small number of pupils who make a significant difference in a small school.

Relationships at all levels are a considerable strength of the school. Pupils relate very well to each other and to their teachers and other adults with whom they come into contact.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In total, 98 per cent of lessons were at least satisfactory. Two per cent were unsatisfactory. Twenty-eight per cent of lessons were judged to be very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is always at least satisfactory. All lessons in mathematics and 80 per cent of those in English are good or very good. Particular strengths of the best teaching are the thorough planning, good management of pupils and good questioning. Teachers also adopt an appropriate balance of whole class, group and individual work.

The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met. The needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language are satisfactorily met except that the school does not have sufficient resources to deal with pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; pupils' learning is enriched by good provision across the curriculum, particularly in art, music and sport.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; there is good identification of need, very well considered individual education plans and very good, well-planned support provided.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Sound overall but the school finds it difficult to meet the needs of pupils at early stages of English language learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; a consistent application of the school's behaviour code and many opportunities for developing social responsibility are strong features.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well, with particular strengths in eliminating oppressive behaviour.

The school has a good partnership with the vast majority of its parents and with the community it serves.

The school has very good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, supported by her deputy and other key staff, provides strong leadership directed at improving standards of achievement. The regular checking of planning, teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators and senior staff is a strong feature.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed and very supportive of the school. The statutory responsibilities of governing bodies are responsibly discharged and governors have a clear role in shaping the future of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; the school is very good at checking how well the pupils are doing. Appropriate targets for improvement are set.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall although there is currently an above-average amount of money held in reserve in order to maintain staffing levels.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. However, there is not enough learning support in the lower part of the school and insufficient up-to-date computers in classrooms. The school understands and applies the principles of getting the best value for money in its decision making.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The good behaviour of the children.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• The good progress that children make.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer co-operation between parents and the school.</li> <li>• Better information about children's progress.</li> <li>• More extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Better leadership and management.</li> </ul>

Seven parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector and 51 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings support the very positive views of parents. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is very well led and managed and that all members of the teaching staff run at least one extra-curricular activity. Parent governors are aware that parents whose children travel to and from school by bus do not have as ready access to teachers as others. The school is considering organising an extra consultation evening to meet this need.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children are assessed on entry to school using the local education authority's scheme, and the results show attainment to be, on average, in line with national expectations. As under fives in the reception class they make satisfactory progress. By the time they are five years of age, most of the children are close to the expected standards in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development, personal and social development. For more details of their achievements see the section on the Foundation Stage (paragraphs 73 to 85).
2. The school's 1999 national test results show that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment was above in mathematics, in line in writing and below in reading. Teacher assessments of pupils' work in science were in line with expectations. When compared to that of pupils at similar schools the performance of the Coates' pupils was average in writing and mathematics and below average in reading.
3. Since the previous inspection in November 1996 performance in reading and writing has fluctuated, due largely to variations in the proportions of pupils with special educational needs in small year groups, but is now well above where it was then. Performance in mathematics has consistently improved. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls. Inspection evidence indicates that levels of attainment in the present Year 2 are around national expectations.
4. The school's national test results show that, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was below the national average in mathematics, in line with it in science and above it in English. Over the four years 1996 to 1999, results fluctuated for the same reason as in Key Stage 1. Results are better than they were in English and science and a little worse in mathematics. When compared with pupils at similar schools nationally the results at Coates are above average in English, average in science and well below average in mathematics.
5. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national expectation in English and in line with it in mathematics and science. For further details see paragraphs 86 to 119. The improvement in mathematics, compared with the 1999 test results, is due partly to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and partly to the effective monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school by the co-ordinator and the headteacher.
6. At the end of both key stages pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art, design and technology and music throughout the school standards are good and pupils achieve at levels that exceed expectations for their age. In geography, history, physical education and information technology pupils in Key Stage 1 meet expectations for their age. In Key Stage 2, pupils build successfully on this foundation, making good progress, and their achievements exceed expectations. For further details of pupils' progress and achievements in these subjects see paragraphs 120 to 164.
7. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans. They benefit from good planning and support by teachers and learning support assistants.

8. The school has set realistic and achievable targets for groups of pupils, based on good and comprehensive assessment procedures. However, teacher assessments in 1999 were lower in several cases than the national test results recorded and the school is conscious of the need to maintain high expectations of progress for pupils of all abilities.

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

9. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to take part in their lessons and the range of activities provided. The staff work hard to plan lessons and experiences that are interesting and challenging, and pupils respond well. Attendance has declined over the last three years and is now fractionally under the national average for similar schools. Unauthorised absence is slightly greater than the national average. In a relatively small school such as this, pupils with poor attendance records have a disproportionate effect upon the school's overall attendance and unauthorised absence. The main reason for lateness is the late arrival of the school bus bringing pupils from outlying areas.
10. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 have positive attitudes to their learning and are enthusiastic when considering ways to improve the school environment. After comparing the amount of rubbish in the playground bins they conclude that one bin needs re-siting. They also identify the need for an additional bin near to their mobile classroom. This work involves weighing waste materials, using maps of the area and creating graphs, as well as much lively discussion. Pupils eagerly compare the different litterbins available in various catalogues and favour those shaped like animals. When they see the cost involved they decide to write a persuasive letter to the headteacher, setting out their case.
11. Older pupils have a very good attitude to debates in lessons and eagerly participate. When studying tourism in the Lake District, pupils thoughtfully explore the different points of view and conflicting interests of elderly residents, farmers, cyclists, shopkeepers and coach-drivers. They understand the value of preserving the environment for the future and the meaning of 'heritage'.
12. There is a calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere within the school and pupils are very well behaved both in lesson time and outside the classroom. They are friendly, considerate of other people's feelings, and particularly courteous in the dining hall where they help one another. It was noticeable that pupils play well together during wet play-times and are encouraged by the examples set by those in Years 5 and 6. There are many examples of older pupils helping younger ones and staff, for example in the dining hall.
13. Pupils are encouraged to understand other people's values and beliefs and they handle artefacts, from religions other than their own, with care and respect. They work and play well together.
14. Throughout the school pupils have good knowledge of the behaviour code. Pupils value the awards, usually stickers in lower Key Stage 1 and house points for older pupils. During a lesson in the new computer suite two pupils were awarded 10 house points each for a display of spectacular initiative in problem solving. Their own personal reaction was subordinate to their recognition that by chance, they both belong to the same house and that their house was almost certain to come top in the current competition.
15. Conversations with pupils indicate that they have no concerns about bullying. The rare cases of name-calling are dealt with promptly. Pupils know they can rely on staff for help. This supports the views expressed by the majority of parents at the meeting and through the questionnaire. Inspection evidence also supports these views.

16. There has been a rise in fixed-term exclusions since last year. The school does everything possible in these circumstances to support the pupil and the family involved. The school makes satisfactory provision for work during exclusion.
17. Relationships are very good and are a real strength of the school. Pupils enjoy good friendships and work well together in lessons. Teachers build good opportunities for group work into their lessons. The adults in the school community provide good role models for the pupils.

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

18. The overall quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons observed 28 per cent were judged to be very good, a further 44 per cent were good, 26 per cent were satisfactory and only two per cent were unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection when 11 per cent of lessons were judged to be very good and a little over one-third were good.
19. Some of the improvement can be attributed to the successful implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The main reason is the systematic monitoring of planning, teaching and learning by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.
20. Examples of very good teaching were observed on more than one occasion in English, geography, mathematics and science. In the early years Foundation Stage around one-third of teaching was at least good and in Key Stage 1 more than half of the lessons observed were good or better. In Key Stage 2 an exceptional figure of 86 per cent of good or better teaching, including 43 per cent judged to be very good, was observed. This overall high quality of teaching is making a major contribution to raising pupils' levels of achievements and the quality of their learning.
21. The teaching of the Literacy Hour is never less than satisfactory and 80 per cent of the lessons are good or very good. The teaching of mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, is always good or very good. Opportunities for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well taken in other subject areas. For more details on this see paragraphs 120 to 164.
22. The school has devised a very good planning framework and in the vast majority of cases teachers sharply identify exactly what the pupils are to learn in a given period time. In many of the best lessons seen, teachers prominently displayed the learning targets and discussed them with the pupils. This is very good practice.
23. Another strong feature of the good and very good teaching observed was the teachers' skilful use of questions to help pupils to revise what they already knew and to challenge them and extend their learning further. In many lessons teachers use the introductory part well to assess pupils' learning and to consolidate this. At the end of lessons teachers assessed to what extent pupils had achieved the learning targets that had been set and by doing so helped pupils to consolidate this learning as well.
24. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and teachers have established very good classroom routines that enable them to manage the pupils and their learning very well. Because of this, teachers are able to give good individual support without the rest of the class becoming inattentive or misbehaving. Learning support assistants make a substantial contribution to the achievements of the pupils and to the good working atmosphere in classrooms. The work of volunteer parents is also important and appreciated by pupils and teachers alike. Pupils with special educational needs and,

occasionally, pupils who are learning English as an additional language benefit from this extra support and make good progress.

25. Teachers use time and other resources well. Lessons are well paced with a well-judged mixture of whole class, group and individual work. Teachers adopt a practical approach when this is appropriate and offer many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Some classrooms lend themselves to furniture moving and different arrangements for practical work in science, individual work in mathematics and discussion in geography are well matched to the learning targets of these lessons with pupils in Year 4.
26. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is at least satisfactory and often good. Marking is conscientiously carried out. There are some very good examples of extended written comments that help pupils to recognise the good points of their work and to see how they can improve further. Extensive records are kept of pupils' achievements and progress and this helps teachers to set appropriately challenging work for all pupils.
27. Almost all parents are pleased with the quality of teaching in the school and most are happy with the work that their children are set to do at home. The inspection confirms the high overall quality of the teaching and concludes that where appropriate homework is regularly set it is making a useful contribution to raising levels of achievements. Further information about teaching and the learning and progress of pupils can be found in each of the subject sections (paragraphs 73 to 164).

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

28. The overall curriculum for children under five is planned with regard to the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes<sup>1</sup> and this is an improvement since the last inspection. It provides a sound start for children under five, but the lack of appropriate trained support limits opportunities for these children in some lessons.
29. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. Religious education is taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus. There is appropriate provision for teaching personal, social and health education, which includes drugs awareness and sex education for older pupils. A significant feature of the curriculum is the strong place art, music and design and technology have within it. These are strengths of the school, and standards in these subjects are above expectations. Provision for information technology has been improved recently due to the development of an information technology suite for specific skills teaching to whole classes.
30. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in the development of policies and supporting documents. These are appropriate in range and quality, fully addressing the urgent key issue in the last inspection report. There is a regular review and monitoring cycle and the school makes good use of national and commercial resources to support the curriculum. It also makes good use of local advisory support in the continued development of the curriculum. The success of this in extending opportunities for pupils is clearly demonstrated by the inclusion of more sculpture in the art curriculum following recent training for teachers.
31. The curriculum provides appropriately for equal opportunities and access with the exception of some pupils timetabled for 'booster classes' in literacy and numeracy. As

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<sup>1</sup> [Desirable Learning Outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.](#)

these are timetabled for the same session each week for two half terms these pupils miss some lessons such as art regularly.

32. The school does all it can to meet the needs of a small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, but there are no extra personnel allocated to the school to assist with this.
33. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The deputy headteacher oversees the care provided and the curriculum available for them. Their progress is carefully monitored and the pupils are aware of their own targets and what they need to do to achieve them. There are good records of their individual education plans, and the school works well with parents to ensure that the pupils' needs are met. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and, where additional staff are employed to assist them, they often make very good progress in individual lessons.
34. Long-term and medium-term planning is clear, following national frameworks for literacy and numeracy and Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five. Planning for the foundation subjects is well thought out and the inclusion of regular checks on how pupils are getting on at the end of each half term are a significant strength. Short-term planning does not always draw well enough on available data to ensure the needs of all pupils are met, for example those of the youngest under-fives and more able pupils in Key Stage 1, particularly in literacy. Teachers set appropriate targets for pupils based on their half termly assessments.
35. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully. The school has bought appropriate quality resources, and the teaching of literacy and numeracy is planned effectively throughout the school. The school library has been refurbished and restocked and is an attractive and welcoming resource.
36. Twenty-one per cent of parents answering the questionnaire expressed concern regarding the range of extra-curricular clubs. In fact, the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities at different times of the year. These include recorders, an art club, a pond club, netball, football and choir. There are also clubs run by outside providers from time to time. All staff voluntarily run a club, thereby demonstrating their commitment to the school. Inspection evidence does not support the concerns of some parents.
37. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of local interest and by visitors. The school forms appropriate links with the local community, and these make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. These include links with a local care home, senior citizen groups, a local fishing club and the local police. There is close contact with the local church, and some school events are held there. Visitors, such as the local clergy, come into school to take assemblies.

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

38. The high standards of health and personal care are a feature of the school, and this judgement echoes that of the last inspection team.
39. The deputy headteacher is the person designated for child protection. There is an effective policy that follows the guidelines of the local area protection committee. Staff are made aware of the procedures for child protection. The procedures are also printed in the staff handbook and were included in the supply teachers' handbook during the inspection.

40. The governing body is closely involved with health and safety matters. There is close liaison between the governing body and the health and safety co-ordinator. Risk assessment is carried out every three months and the results of the checks are analysed and prioritised. They are appropriately linked to the school development plan so that the governing body can assess their implications on expenditure. Fire exit signs and procedures have been updated and a number of minor matters were dealt with promptly during the course of inspection.
41. Registration procedures are effective and efficiently carried out. The school is wisely considering methods to distinguish more clearly between authorised and unauthorised absence. There are good links with the education welfare officer and social services. There are good procedures to monitor and improve attendance for the small number of families where attendance remains a challenge. Class teachers maintain the registers accurately and inform the headteacher of any concerns.
42. The good behaviour is supported by procedures known and understood by pupils and their families. Children under five and pupils in the reception class quickly learn to distinguish right from wrong. This knowledge increases as they progress through school. Pupils value the stickers and house points given for good behaviour, effort or achievement. They also understand that there is a range of sanctions that may be applied. Pupils in Year 6 have developed their own class rules, including the necessity for self-control.
43. On the rare occasions when there is any misbehaviour in lessons, this is usually due to the lack of trained support staff in Key Stage 1. There is a larger than expected budget under-spend and the school is examining ways in which it could meet the needs of pupils whose behaviour development requires additional support.
44. There has been significant progress since the last inspection in using their knowledge of what pupils know, understand and can do to plan the next stage in their learning. The governing body and teaching staff have worked hard to implement a very effective system for checking up on what pupils have learnt and are keeping records of this. The assessment co-ordinator who has received appropriate training has a good overview of how assessment procedures are working throughout the school.
45. Assessment is built into teachers' medium- and long-term planning and cost implications are built into the school development plan. Monitoring of assessment and test results are used to further progress. However, there is a need to develop further teachers' skills of analysis to focus short-term planning for the benefit of individual pupils.
46. Pupils have personal portfolios. They are up to date and detailed, containing information of academic progress and personal development from reception to Year 6. Copies of year-end reports are filed together with samples of pupils' moderated work. They provide a clear record for successive class teachers to continue the development work of previous years.
47. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by well developed, individual education plans from an early stage. The plans are available to class teachers and are used to prepare and support appropriate classroom activities. Pupils at an early stage of developing English as an additional language and those with special educational needs in Key Stage 1 do not receive sufficient support from trained staff. The majority of parents support the efforts of the school and staff in the guidance and welfare of their children. Inspection evidence strongly supports their views.

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

48. A significant majority of parents appreciate the hard work of the teachers and support staff to establish a good working relationship with parents. Most parents responding to the questionnaire believe that their children make appropriate progress, because of good teaching. They recognise that pupils are well behaved and are aware that their children enjoy coming to school. Inspection evidence supports these views. There is some evidence to support the view of a small minority of parents that information about their children's progress could be improved. This applies particularly to parents living at distance from the school whose children travel by bus.
49. The parent governors play a vital role in providing a link between the school and parents. They recognise the need for more formal meetings between teachers and parents and are planning ways in which this area of communication will be improved.
50. There are regular and informative newsletters. The school has a notice board outside the main entrance, which is kept up to date. The headteacher and staff are always available to answer parents' concerns or to arrange meetings should a longer discussion be necessary. The prospectus, governors' annual report to parents, and children's reports are comprehensive. There is an effective home-school agreement in place.
51. There are a significant number of parents who can be relied upon to work regularly in school. Others help with visits when required. The school values their time and effort. The parents in turn recognise that they are valued and feel that they are being used effectively to support pupils' learning. Inspection evidence supports their opinion. There is an established homework policy and evidence from home reading diaries that many parents support their children's learning at home.
52. The Parent Teacher Association provides strong financial support to the school under very effective leadership. It also provides a vital link in furthering communication and the development of social links between the school and parents. The Parent Teacher Association provided the carpeting and fixed furniture of the new computer suite. They also have an undertaking to provide one new computer each year.
53. A small minority of parents felt that the range of extra-curricular activities and the management of the school could be improved. There is no inspection evidence to support these views. During inspection there were many examples of extra curricular activities, including dance, football and music.

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

54. At the last inspection in November 1996, several areas for improvement were identified. All of these have been rigorously addressed and curriculum development and planning have been a high priority for improvement. This is already having an impact on the teaching provided and the standards achieved in the school.
55. The headteacher, with the support of her deputy, provides strong, effective leadership, with clear direction for the work and development of the school. They promote a happy and caring environment, and create an ethos that supports pupils' learning. Important parts of the school's overall ethos of support are the specific aims and values directed to giving equal access to the curriculum to all pupils. This also applies to their personal development.
56. Since the last inspection, considerable effort has been given to writing high quality guidance and policy documents to support staff in the development of the curriculum. There are new, comprehensive schemes of work for each subject.

57. The headteacher has introduced a systematic and rigorous programme of checking teaching quality throughout the school, in all subjects. The headteacher, her deputy and the curriculum co-ordinators effectively carry out this work. Lesson plans are carefully evaluated, teaching is observed and there are checks on what the pupils have learned. The results of any tests are carefully analysed so that the standards that pupils achieve can be improved. Pupils are given targets to improve their work and they are eager to talk about these.
58. The deputy headteacher is also the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs. Some classes have a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the co-ordinator ensures that there is as good provision as possible for all of them. This area of work is very well administered, with careful records kept of pupils' progress and some extra staff employed to provide additional support. The school recognises the importance of this work and there are plans to allocate extra time on a regular basis for all aspects of the deputy headteacher's role.
59. The number, qualifications and experience of teaching staff are adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum. All staff have comprehensive job descriptions and the role of curriculum co-ordinator has recently been extended to give teachers who have particular talents and expertise, the opportunity to lead colleagues in their subject. The amount of money allocated for co-ordinators to manage is small in some subjects although the school does target a different area each year for extra financial resources.
60. The professional development of staff is closely linked to their personal needs and to the school development plan. There is a detailed list of in-service training that has taken place during the last 12 months. Future training needs are carefully co-ordinated. For example, the deputy headteacher is shortly going to receive training in the financial aspects of school management.
61. Staff who are new to the school receive good induction training. There is a detailed staff handbook and a handbook for supply and student teachers. During the inspection there were three student teachers undergoing initial teacher training in school. Their opinion is that they were receiving strong support for professional development from all members of staff. Inspection evidence supports this view. There is a teacher-training co-ordinator and each student has an individual mentor. The school is judged to be a very effective provider of initial teacher training.
62. The appraisal system, which is under review, has been replaced by professional development interviews. These are up to date, constructive and carefully planned. Teaching staff regard them as an aid to their professional development.
63. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties and is well informed about what is going on in the school. Governors are involved in the construction of the school development plan and items to be included are discussed at length in committee meetings. The governors also monitor the school's financial position with regular monthly checks.
64. The school makes satisfactory use of its existing resources. However, there are deficiencies in trained support for children under five. The school recognises that it should assess whether or not money held in reserve could be used to improve the staffing provision for these youngest children and thereby raise the standards they achieve even further.
65. The modest amount of money received recently by the school for the development of information technology has been used well. Other grants for specific purposes, including special educational needs, are also used appropriately.

66. There has been no audit of the school's financial procedures by the local education authority since 1996. The headteacher and school administrator have carried out a review of the recommendations of that audit. There are clear limits of expenditure and controls for the school fund and other accounts. Administration procedures are good.
67. The principles of best value follow a combination of using suppliers known to the local authority and competitive quotations from other suppliers. Significant expenditure is recorded within the school development plan and there are good procedures to monitor the targets and objectives used to justify purchases.
68. The accommodation is spacious and well maintained. Classrooms are light and attractive and a number have adjoining areas for the development of subjects, including art and design and technology. A substantial amount of money has been set aside in this year's budget for essential repairs, including refurbishment of the temporary classroom. There is a fenced-off wild area with a pond and a large green area sufficient for football and athletics. There is some early indication of the break up of playground surfaces and playground markings are beginning to wear. There is a small, hard-working, cleaning team; they and the caretaker maintain a high level of cleanliness.
69. Overall, the school has adequate resources to support learning. The resources for physical and religious education are good. There is a lack of construction kits for design and technology. The school has recently completed a new computer suite with reasonably modern computers. It is used effectively for the teaching of computer skills. However, there is a lack of hardware and software in some classrooms. This prevents pupils putting into practice the technical skills learnt in the computer suite. For example, pupils cannot readily access CD-ROM discs to support classroom learning in subjects such as art, history or geography.

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

70. To further improve the quality of education and raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
  - clearly identify the early years as the Foundation Stage of education in the school and make sure that staffing, planning and assessment procedures are fully appropriate to meeting the needs of all the children;
  - raise levels of expectation of more able pupils in Key Stage 1 and provide sufficiently challenging work for them;
  - improve classroom computer provision and its use in supporting and extending learning across the curriculum.
71. In addition the governing body, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of contingency funding, should direct some of the money currently held in reserve towards meeting the needs identified above and elsewhere in this report.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	28	44	26	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	184
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	21
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	34
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	17
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	23	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	77 (50)	87 (56)	97 (88)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	10	13	16
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	21	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	70 (50)	77 (50)	90 (76)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	5	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	11
	Girls	3	2	3
	Total	13	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (28)	61 (34)	78 (48)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	3	2	3
	Total	12	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (30)	61 (35)	78 (45)
	National	68 (65)	69 (55)	75 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	153
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	3	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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26.3

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	306,665
Total expenditure	317,821
Expenditure per pupil	1,682
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,013
Balance carried forward to next year	18,857

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate 34%

Number of questionnaires sent out	150
Number of questionnaires returned	51

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	39	8	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	57	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	55	10	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	42	2	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	43	14	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	35	10	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	43	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	37	20	10	2
The school is well led and managed.	27	45	8	16	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	50	4	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	56	18	2	0

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents appreciated the significant improvement in extra-curricular sport. They also commented favourably on the consultation meetings and reports.

## **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**

72. The school, through its reception class, gives children a sound start to their education. Most children transfer from the playgroup on the school site and appropriate liaison ensures that children feel at home in the school. For example, playgroup children join Key Stage 1 assemblies on a weekly basis. All children start school in the September term and, at the time of the inspection, nine children were still under five.
73. The school uses the local education authority's baseline scheme to assess children's knowledge and skills when they enter school. Most children start school with abilities and skills in line with expectations for their age. The children are reassessed at the end of the year and they make sound progress, with most achieving the nationally expected standards by the age of five. The system does not assess whereabouts more able children who have achieved these outcomes are working within the National Curriculum. The school record systems do not show children's achievement against the nationally recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes.
74. In the reception class, children experience a wide range of activities, including appropriate introductory experiences of the literacy and numeracy hours. All children, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress over time. However, the needs of the youngest children are not always met due to lack of additional trained support staff to work with them in group work. More able children are not significantly more advanced than other children since there is an insufficient focus on their needs in the school's standard planning format.

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

75. The children make sound progress and develop an understanding of belonging to a larger group. They settle to tasks willingly and more able children work well without direct adult assistance. Most children behave well and readily join in activities with other children. They behave well, take turns willingly and share equipment sensibly. They form good relationships with adults and other children. Children are very responsible with equipment, for example their outdoor toys.

#### **Language and Literacy**

76. Children's language and literacy skills are developed appropriately through all lessons. They are encouraged to listen carefully and suggest ideas. By the age of five, most children achieve in line with expectations for their age in speaking, writing and reading. In role-play they use a range of vocabulary associated with playing shops, and work well together.
77. Children of all abilities take a keen interest in books and naturally choose them as a source of entertainment. Their particular favourites are a range of different-sized books about the 'Mr Men'. They know the stories well and eagerly tell of the adventures of 'Mr Tickle' as they look at the pictures. By the age of five most children know several words and are reading simple books. There are good opportunities for children to practise writing and they make good progress in this area. By the age of five most write their name legibly and are beginning to copy the teacher's writing accurately and use letters to make their own writing.

#### **Mathematics**

78. Over time children make sound progress and meet expectations for their age by the time they are five. Children learn to recognise numerals and what they stand for. By the age of five children write numerals correctly and learn the basic ideas related to simple

addition, size and recognising shapes. In some lessons, they do not make sufficient progress in their learning, as the level of work is too simple for most of them. For example, they sort 1p, 2p and 5p coins, but have good recognition of coins up to and including a pound. During role-play in the florist's shop, they use a range of vocabulary such as *cost* and *change*. By the age of five, children work out the total cost of three tulips at 3p each.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

79. Children make sound progress over time in learning about their world through a number of themes. For example, they use a sequence of pictures to record the melting of an ice cube. They learn about the weather, recognising the differences between wet and windy days and between winter and summer. They successfully match an animal to the right home and draw the rooms in their houses, clearly showing different furniture in each room. They learn about material and machines through using a laminator to cover a drawing that they then make into a jigsaw. Children's learning is developed, for example when they are asked to look at a range of materials, explain what they notice and identify which have shiny surfaces

### **Creative development**

80. In creative development children make good progress. They carefully draw and cut out an egg-shaped card for Easter. All children concentrate well, designing intricate patterns and colouring them carefully. They use a range of materials to make items such as carrier bags and purses for use in the role-play. They know how to use material and manage sticky tape well to seal the edges of their bags and hold the handles on. Children draw simple shapes well, trace them onto felt and stick them to a simple purse. They understand the importance of being very sensible when using needles for sewing. Children enjoy singing and readily join in songs from memory in assembly.

### **Physical development**

81. Children have satisfactory physical skills. Most follow the instructions from a tape recording when moving like a spider during a movement lesson in the hall. Children make good use of the rather limited space in the outdoor area. They control a plastic car and scooter well. They have good cutting skills and over time develop good pencil control when writing, drawing and colouring

### **Teaching and provision**

82. The quality of teaching is sound overall. The teaching of creative, personal and social development is good. There is effective introduction to the theme of Easter and a clear purpose for designing cards to hang on the Easter tree. The atmosphere is relaxed and the availability of a knowledgeable general assistant aids the organisation of the lesson and ensures that there is good support for all activities, and for a particular focus on language development with the youngest children. In the one lesson when teaching was unsatisfactory the lack of trained assistance was a significant feature. There was insufficient support for the youngest children working in the outdoor area and this meant they gained too little from the experience.
83. Planning for the school year is appropriate and clearly matches the Desirable Learning Outcomes. However, the school's standard format for daily planning does not help the teacher enough. It does not show exactly what children are expected to learn in each available activity. Neither does it show how the teacher will cater for the needs of the more able pupils or the youngest children under five. The use of assessment in comparison with the Desirable Learning Outcomes is unclear and is not used as a tool to identify which children need to work towards the National Curriculum and, in the case of more able pupils, towards Level 1.

84. The classroom is very well organised to assist children in becoming responsible and independent. The florist shop role-play area is particularly attractive and well laid out and contributes significantly to children's pleasure and learning through role-play.

## ENGLISH

85. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 reading standards were below the national average and the scores of similar schools. In writing, the pupils' test results were in line with national results and those of similar schools. There has been significant improvement in standards since the last inspection and much of this related to improved performance of boys. A similar improvement in standards is seen over time in Key Stage 2. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national averages but they are now above national standards and those in similar schools. Performance at the higher Level 5 is well above national averages.
86. The trend of school improvement has been fairly consistent but was particularly good in 1999 in both key stages and represents considerable improvement since the last inspection. Improvements in the quality of teaching and assessment and the introduction of the literacy strategy have all played an important role in raising standards.
87. During the inspection, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are judged to be in line with national expectations, due to good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve in line with their abilities. Teacher assessments from the previous year show an underestimation of more able pupils. In the literacy lessons there is planning and organisation which sets different work for ability groups. However, the level of the work set is not sufficiently challenging to ensure that more able pupils make greater progress.
88. Lessons are planned for the majority of pupils in line with the expectations and structure of the National Literacy Strategy. A well maintained pace to the lessons ensures pupils concentrate well and complete their work. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations so that pupils know what they are to do. Consequently they work well without adult support if required.
89. Pupils in Year 2 know the importance of alphabetical order and use it effectively to find words in a range of dictionaries. They order words using alphabetical order to the third letter. The weakness relating to handwriting, identified in the last inspection, has been addressed. Pupils in Year 2 learn to join letters correctly and all pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work. The pupils currently in Year 2 had lower than average attainment on entry to reception and are making good progress over time.
90. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards seen during the inspection are above expectations overall, and pupils are making good progress in their learning. The current Year 6 has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but good support from the class teacher and other staff ensures they achieve as much as they can. Lower attaining pupils receive good support in lessons, which helps their understanding and is raising their attainment.
91. Standards in speaking and listening are above expectations. Pupils understand what they have to do because they listen carefully. They articulate their ideas and feelings well and carefully explain the reasons for judgements they make about pieces of text. Pupils' reading and writing skills are in line with national expectations. The school has an appropriate strategy for ensuring that the knowledge and skills learnt during literacy lessons are applied to pupils' writing, by focussing one lesson a week purely on writing. This is having a beneficial effect on standards. For example, pupils in Year 6 study two

different texts about mysterious happenings such as the *Marie Celeste* and *Flight 19* to the Bermuda Triangle. They make good progress in defining whether statements are fact, opinion or fiction. During another lesson, they plan their narrative account of *Flight 19* to prepare for a timed writing session the next day. Their progress in lessons is aided by very clear explanations and challenging questions, which pick up misunderstandings and ensure they fully understand their work. Pupils enjoy their lessons, work hard and are always eager to complete the task given. They take a pride in their work and have a joined and legible style of handwriting.

92. The school promotes literacy well through other subjects. For example, in Year 2 there are good reminders about expectations of writing when pupils in science record their work on sounds. Pupils in Year 6 use their skills in expressing ideas to good effect when recording and evaluating their making of wall hangings in design and technology. No use of information technology was observed during literacy lessons largely due to the development of the information technology suite where specific skills are taught as a separate lesson.
93. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good overall in Key Stage 2. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. They understand the National Literacy Strategy requirements well and implement them effectively. There is a clear focus on teaching to ability groups in order to meet the needs of most pupils. In Key Stage 1 teachers do not always make pupils aware of how much time they have for a job and how much work they need to complete. However, this is a strong feature of the teaching in Key Stage 2. All teachers make good use of the time at the end of the session to reinforce the teaching points of the lessons. They manage their classes very well and have very good relationships with pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work, and the pupils respond well to these.
94. What pupils will learn in lessons is clearly stated in teachers' planning. Marking is used effectively and is consistent throughout the school. Teachers make appropriate use of the reading diaries and these build useful links between home and school. Teachers have very good ways of checking on how their pupils are doing but not all of them interpret the data and use the information to aid their planning and drive expectations of different ability groups. In most cases, test results and teachers' knowledge of pupils' attainment from marking their work lead to targets for improvement that the pupils themselves understand.
95. Teachers are well supported by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who checks pupils' work and lessons giving appropriate feedback to staff. There has been a clear focus on improvement in English and the school has recently achieved the Quality Mark for Basic Skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

96. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment was above the national average for all schools and in line with the national average for similar schools. Over the time since the last inspection in 1996 results have shown a consistent improvement from a position of well below the national average to one which was a little above it in 1999.
97. The national test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that attainment was below the national average for all schools and well below the national average for schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. Results have fluctuated over the period since the last inspection, but overall have fallen slightly. Much of the variation can be attributed to the relatively small size of the year groups and to the different proportions from year to year of pupils with special educational needs.

98. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment were judged to be below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Currently there are examples of good attainment in the numerical aspects of mathematics and in work in shape. Overall, standards of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and the school expects that this year's national test results will reflect this. The issue of progression in learning through Key Stage 2 has been successfully addressed through improved monitoring and the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy.
99. Pupils, including the very small number for whom English is an additional language, make progress which is satisfactory overall as they move through the school. Their quality of learning in individual lessons was good in all of the lessons observed during the inspection. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good, as a result of the particularly well-planned and focused work of the learning support assistants.
100. When pupils reach the age of five their attainment is broadly in line with what is expected for their age (see paragraph 79). An examination of pupils' books indicates that pupils are making satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 1, for example, make good progress when working directly with the teacher or student teacher on telling the time. In whole-class oral work at the end of the lesson most pupils correctly tell times which include 'half-past' the hour. Pupils of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress as a result of the work set being appropriate to their stage of learning.
101. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy the mental challenge of counting on or back from given two-digit numbers and their learning benefits from the teacher relating the oral questions to the number square. In the main part of the lesson pupils make good progress in drawing individual pictograms, having previously contributed to a group effort. The teacher's thorough preparation and very good use of questions to re-visit previous work contribute significantly to the pupils' good learning. The task set is given extra meaning and purpose as it is presented as an investigation. This is very good practice as is the very clear display of what the learning targets for the lesson are. An examination of pupils' earlier work shows that they have made satisfactory progress across the mathematics curriculum.
102. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in developing their understanding and use of place value through having to think about which numbers can be placed between the pairs of three-digit numbers which they create through rolling dice. The task is graded in difficulty for pupils of different abilities and learning is enhanced by the teacher's good preparation and sharp focus, as well as by the help of the learning support assistant, a student teacher and a volunteer parent.
103. Pupils in Year 4, in a very thoroughly planned and well-taught lesson, make good progress in their understanding and use of vertical recording of multiplication sums. Less able pupils make particularly good progress because the teacher's very good class management skills and relationship with pupils allow her to spend significant time with individuals while the rest of the class work independently. Tasks are well graded so that higher attaining pupils have sufficiently demanding work.
104. Pupils in the mixed-age Years 4 and 5 class gain useful experience of applying their knowledge in the real life context of spending within a budget. The teacher has gone to a lot of trouble to make the task interesting and her teaching is thorough, with good use of questions and examples worked with the class and recorded on the whiteboard. The overall quality of learning in consolidating and in extending understanding is good.

105. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of finding areas by square counting and this is extended to breaking shapes up into rectangles. Most pupils understand the method although some revert to square counting for speed, as they are working on squared paper. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to place value activities as a result of well prepared and focused work with learning support staff. An examination of the earlier work of pupils in Year 6 shows sound development across the mathematics curriculum, including the properties of three-dimensional shapes, symmetry and co-ordinates.
106. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their mathematics lessons, responding well to the challenge of mental arithmetic and to opportunities for practical work. Because lessons are well planned and presented, pupils' behaviour is good and they work together well when required to do so.
107. All of the mathematics teaching observed was of at least a good standard and one lesson in each of Key Stages 1 and 2 was judged to be very good. Important features of the teaching, which lead to pupils making good progress in lessons, include:
- prominent display of what pupils are intended to learn and frequent reference to this during the lesson;
  - good questioning to find out what pupils already know and to consolidate and extend their learning;
  - good management of pupils and the provision of interesting work so that behaviour is good;
  - setting work which is suitable for pupils of differing abilities in the classes;
  - relating the work to practical problems and real-life situations.
108. The checking of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and the headteacher makes an important contribution to improving pupils' achievements.

## **SCIENCE**

109. The results of the 1999 national teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment was in line with the national expectation for all schools and also for schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. However, too few pupils achieved the higher Level 3, except in respect of their knowledge of life and living processes.
110. The national test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that attainment was in line with the national average both for all schools and for similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the high Level 5 was above the national average. Results have fluctuated over the last three years, but the 1999 results are broadly similar to those achieved in 1996.
111. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be about average in both key stages. On the evidence of the lessons observed, examination of pupils' work and discussions with them, it is judged that attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. However, the school's recent efforts to improve the range and quality of investigative work have been successful and there is now a sound foundation for further improvement in national test results over the next few years.
112. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the very small proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language, make progress which is satisfactory overall as they move through the school. In all the lessons that were observed during the inspection the quality of learning was at least good and in most cases it was very good.
113. Pupils in Year 2 quickly grasp the idea that sound travels in all directions from its source

and explain why hearing is important. In doing this they demonstrate the teacher's success in achieving the two learning objectives which he set for the lesson. His teaching was thorough and pupils were given a good framework for recording their findings. An examination of work in their books shows that the pupils' learning covers the appropriate programme of study and they are developing good skills of writing up what they have done. The development and use of the skills of literacy and numeracy are positively encouraged in science lessons.

114. Pupils in Year 4 enjoy an afternoon of exciting investigations into electrical circuitry. The tasks set are appropriate and challenging for pupils of all abilities; there is a high level of enquiry and experimentation. Pupils are very effectively taught how to form and test their hypotheses. The teacher's own subject knowledge is very good and she skilfully challenges and extends learning through sharply focused individual or group questions. Learning is of high quality; pupils use scientific language correctly and reason very well.
115. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a sound knowledge of habitats, adaptation and the classification of plants and animals. They are helped to consolidate and extend their learning through well-chosen tasks. The teacher effectively confirms their learning in the final part of the lesson by challenging them to assess what they have learned on that day.
116. An examination of the earlier work of pupils in Year 6 and conversations with them show that they have developed a sound base of scientific knowledge and a good understanding of the scientific method. Higher attaining pupils use scientific language very accurately and there is clear evidence of their good learning, both in the amount and quality of investigative work that they carry out and in their own written comments.
117. The school appropriately identified the area of investigative work as needing development and has successfully taken steps to achieve this. These measures and the science co-ordinator's sharp analysis of where pupil's knowledge has been insecure in the national tests are contributing substantially to raising overall levels of attainment.
118. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their science lessons, responding particularly well to the opportunities for practical and experimental work. In the Year 4 lesson mentioned above there is a high level of interest, animated discussion and good collaborative work. This is a direct response to the teacher's own enthusiasm and stimulation of a spirit of enquiry.

## **ART**

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards of attainment are above expectations for their age. In Year 2 pupils confidently carve faces from apples, adding facial details. They eagerly explain how the apple will dry out and shrink, thereby adding texture and making the faces become crinkled and aged. They are particularly sensible and sustain a high level of interest and concentration throughout the session. Pupils have a good understanding of colour and make skilful choices of complementary colours when weaving. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in developing their drawing skills.
120. Pupils' standards of attainment are above those normally seen throughout Key Stage 2. Over time pupils make good progress, particularly in their drawing and observational skills. They refine their skills through practice and build up their knowledge of materials and techniques. This development is most clearly demonstrated by the work in their sketchbooks and a portfolio of printed work kept by the co-ordinator. In some lessons, attainment is only in line with expectations because a too restrictive approach using collage ideas from a book limits the development of pupils' ideas.

121. The quality of teaching is good overall. Staff are knowledgeable about the materials they use. They willingly allow pupils the freedom to explore a wide range of techniques without being overly concerned about the potential mess material such as plaster and clay can create. Pupils respond well to teachers, are very sensible and willingly accept responsibility for maintaining a clean working environment. They clearly enjoy their lessons and particularly like using a whole range of materials such as collage and modelling materials. They respond well to the clear directions and expectations of staff. They are keen, sustain interest in their work and take pride in the finished article. They experiment with ideas and confidently explain what they are doing and why. Teachers manage pupils, resources and time well.
122. A key feature of the successful development of the subject is the staff's willingness to learn new ideas. The success of a recent training session looking at sculpture is clearly evident in the work they are doing with pupils. Teachers' interest and enthusiasm create a good climate for experimentation and learning. They are well supported by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has a very clear understanding of how the subject should develop and has put into place some very good systems, such as using sketchbooks to record pupils' developing drawing skills.
123. At present, there is too little formal marking of the pupils' work with the result that they are not helped to develop the art-specific vocabulary to analyse their work and that of others. The co-ordinator is very aware of where the school needs to develop further and uses a good range of strategies to build appropriately from teachers' experience. For example, she is preparing to use a range of paintings from across all the year groups to explore with colleagues why there is too little development of skills and techniques in this aspect of art. The school has an appropriate range and sufficient, satisfactory quality resources although it lacks a kiln. Good displays are a feature of the school and make the environment very bright and attractive.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

124. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Consequently it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in this key stage, other than to note that the work which pupils produce demonstrates good progress.
125. Throughout the school, pupils reach standards of attainment that are above expectations for their age. The curriculum is well planned and organised to ensure there is a good balance of activities which clearly develops pupils' skills and knowledge. This promotes effective learning in lessons and over time. Pupils in Year 2 produce clear designs for a playground for small toys called 'Compare bears'. They explain what they want to make and think carefully about how they will construct their piece of playground equipment. They make good use of the teachers' well-prepared examples of structures and fixing techniques that aid their understanding. For example, by looking at a simple ladder construction they develop ideas for making a slide. They handle tools carefully and understand the need for accurate measurement. A well-planned programme of tasks ensures that pupils learn about a variety of materials and mechanisms.
126. Year 1 pupils design and make simple pop-up cards and, by Year 6, pupils design for a specific purpose, recording their thoughts well in writing and making clear evaluations of the quality of their work and how it could be improved. For example, in designing and making a wall hanging they select appropriate designs and materials to suit the place or persons the hanging is designed for. Pupils enjoy the subject, work hard in lessons and take pride in the quality of the finished object. The subject makes a strong contribution to the development and use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

127. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. Teachers are knowledgeable and well supported by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, and a clear policy and scheme of work. They give clear explanations of the task and encourage pupils to ask sensible and relevant questions which help to strengthen their understanding of what they are trying to achieve. There is effective teaching of techniques. Well-prepared examples are available for pupils to look at and refer to later in the lesson if necessary. A strong feature of the lessons is the focus on pupils' responsibility for the sensible use of materials and efficient packing away at the end of the lessons. There is an appropriate emphasis in lessons on referring back to original ideas and plans, and seeing what has been changed or could be improved.
128. There is a clear process for assessment at the end of each section of work to find out what pupils have learnt. This helps teachers to look carefully at the next task to ensure that it builds upon existing skills and reinforces areas where pupils' understanding was weaker. Resources are generally good, but there are insufficient construction kits available for a whole class to explore building the same item with different materials and comparing the strengths and limitations of particular kits.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

129. Judgements are based on a small number of lessons observed during the inspection, the evidence in teachers' plans, discussions with the co-ordinator and examples of work completed by the pupils earlier in the year. The standard of attainment achieved by pupils in Key Stage 1 is in line with the national expectation and in Key Stage 2 the standard is above that expected for their age.
130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and lessons are carefully planned. Teachers pose open-ended questions to encourage all pupils to take part in discussions. Pupils compare the flat landscape surrounding their school with a mountain village in Greece. The lesson moves at a steady pace and pupils learn that grapes and oranges grow near the Greek village. They are surprised to hear that school assemblies take place outside the village school in the sunshine. In the final part of the lesson, the teacher checks pupils' new knowledge by careful questioning.
131. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is very good. Lesson plans are precise and pupils understand the purpose of the lesson and the teacher's expectations. Pupils find the content challenging and they clearly extend their knowledge of the subject. By leading skilful question and answer sessions, teachers check pupils' understanding and encourage them to express their opinions. During a debate related to 'living in an area which relies on tourism for its income' pupils gain in confidence as the lesson progresses. They enjoy the lively discussion and can see the different points of view held by various interest groups.
132. Pupils are keen; they sustain concentration and behaviour is good. They work together well on group tasks and support each other on an individual basis. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
133. The co-ordinator's role is well developed and she checks the quality of teaching and learning in geography throughout the school. Good records are kept of what different groups of children can do and plans are modified accordingly. Information technology is used well to support and extend the activities undertaken.
134. Resources for the subject are just about adequate. However, the school intends to upgrade them and the school improvement plan identifies geography as a focus for development next year.

## HISTORY

135. Only one history lesson was observed during the inspection. From the evidence of teachers' long-term plans, the scrutiny of previous work and discussions with staff and pupils, attainment and progress for pupils in both key stages are judged to be in line with national expectations.
136. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed, early in Key Stage 2, was good. The lesson was well planned and very good use was made of a 'Zig Zag' video clip about life in a monastery in Anglo-Saxon times. Pupils made good progress and learned about 'illuminated writing'. They were fascinated to see how a quill pen was made from a feather and that soot, honey and egg white were used to make ink. They understood that the monks used wax tablets for writing practice because vellum was too precious. Pupils wanted to know where the monks slept and they were impressed by the size and weight of the handwritten books. Their behaviour was very good and they were able to remember from previous lessons that the monks used Latin when writing the Bible. They enjoyed trying 'illuminated writing' themselves.
137. The schemes of work for each year group indicate that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and there are suitable links with other subjects. In Year 5, for example, a CD-ROM is used to investigate the influence the work of Lord Shaftesbury had on the lives of children in early Victorian times. Resources for the subject are good and the co-ordinator effectively checks the teachers' plans and the teaching of the subject.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. With financial assistance from the Parent Teacher Association, the school has recently converted a room into a comfortable information technology suite. This contains 19 computers and enables staff to teach skills to the whole class at the same time. Although most of the computers are second-hand from a local secondary school, pupils are making good use of this new facility, and standards of attainment in both key stages are rising rapidly. The computers are presently stand-alone machines but the school soon expects to use the network facilities which have already been provided. Each class has timetabled use of the suite for approximately one hour each week and all pupils have access regardless of age, gender or ability.
139. The standards pupils achieve at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations. They show confidence and skill when using the mouse and click and drag when creating individual graphs. Using pictograms they are able to extend the surveys they have done in numeracy lessons to show their findings in pictorial form. They know how to add numbers and text to their graph and understand that a pictogram can be changed into a bar chart on the computer. They work well with a partner and understand that they have to take turns. All the pupils are interested in the work and pay careful attention when the teacher demonstrates a new technique.
140. The standards achieved by most pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations. A small number of more able pupils and those with access to a computer at home attain higher levels. Using *Logo*, pupils are able to create separate rectangles and squares. Some can create instructions for a five-pointed star. Pupils in Year 4 create and edit documents using the computer. They can open a new document, underline the title, use the spell check, change the font size, style and colour and use a floppy disc to save their work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are interested and concentrate well in their lessons. They make very good progress.

141. The standard of teaching is good throughout the school. Staff plan their lessons well and have quickly adapted to whole-class teaching of the subject. All pupils have individual assessment booklets, which accompany them as they progress through the school. The subject co-ordinator intends to update these to take into account the latest program developments. The staff's good knowledge and understanding of the subject are regularly enhanced through training and there are plans to take advantage of government funding to develop this further.
142. However, the good progress pupils make and the use made of information technology across the curriculum are limited because some multi-media computers were moved from classrooms to the new computer suite. Pupils in classrooms with no computers cannot practise their new skills or use information technology for easy access to information. Previously, computers with CD-ROM were available for class lessons such as history and geography, and the schemes of work for these subjects include such resources. The school recognises that it needs additional hardware to meet this requirement.

## MUSIC

143. Throughout the school standards of attainment are above those normally seen for pupils of this age. The strong support given to music from the co-ordinator, headteacher and deputy headteacher is responsible for good standards of singing, percussion and recorder playing. Pupils sing with clear enjoyment and confidence in lessons and assemblies. All pupils, including the very youngest, sing songs from memory. Throughout the school pupils have a keen sense of rhythm. This is clearly demonstrated when they accompany their singing with rhythmic clapping in assembly. They eagerly explore different types of music and rhythms. For example, pupils in Year 5 compose some very interesting musical patterns using the principles of Indian music to help them. Pupils listen attentively to music in lessons and assembly.
144. A strength of the school's provision is the concentration on introducing pupils to a wide range of music from different times and cultures. For example, pupils in Year 6 listen carefully to a Sixties pop song and analyse the mood it creates. They have a good knowledge of musical vocabulary and apply this to rewriting the lyrics of the song.
145. The focus in assemblies during the inspection week was African choral music. This was very well supported by a most attractive display showing paintings of Africa and pictures of musicians and instruments from several countries in Africa. Very good questioning and discussion during some assemblies expand pupils' understanding of the music, making them aware that rain is a joyous occasion in Africa and prompts the recurring lyric 'Rain, rain, beautiful rain'.
146. All teachers display a willingness to teach music. Those with specialist skills draw well on their own enthusiasm to give pupils the confidence to try new ideas. Very effective teaching in Year 5 captures and sustains pupils' interest through a wide variety of techniques, for example using a range of sounds and movement to warm up their vocal chords, and timed periods of experimentation to explore scale sound patterns and rhythms. All teachers challenge pupils to give their best efforts.
147. The co-ordinator supports all teachers well by setting a clear pattern for their work through planned six-week sections of work from a commercial scheme. A particular strength of the school is the natural inclusion of assessment tasks to identify what pupils have learnt. For example, pupils in Year 4 identify and record the types of music and instruments being played on a tape and link these to countries in the British Isles, correctly recalling that bagpipes are most commonly played in Scotland.

148. The school is justly proud of the high standards of playing from a number of talented pupils. Several recorder players recently achieved success in a local music festival; their success is celebrated and shared with the school and parents through displays and photographs. A significant strength of the school is its regular use of talented pupils to support others in lessons and during assemblies. For example, in Year 6, musicians who read musical scores join different groups to help and support their classmates reading the music on song sheets. In Year 5, pupils are encouraged to use their instruments to add to the percussion when composing a rhythm.
149. Very effective use of musicians to support singing in assemblies adds to the quality of the experience for all, whilst giving them good opportunities to practise accompaniment. Staff work very hard supporting musicians through a good range of school clubs or practice sessions. The school also makes good use of peripatetic teachers to teach the flute, clarinet and violin.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. Five lessons based on dance were observed during the course of the inspection. Judgements are based on these, on an examination of teachers' planning and conversations with pupils and teachers. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their skills in more than half of the lessons seen in both key stages. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 and their attainment is in line with what is expected of their age group.
151. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and benefit from the range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities provided by staff and parents. They often show a level of attainment that is above that expected for their age. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment were judged to be about average in both key stages.
152. Most pupils in the reception class can follow instructions from the movement tape that their teacher uses in their lesson. They show a lot of enthusiasm and put a lot of effort into their responses. Overall they work at a level that is typical of their age group.
153. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 demonstrate a good level of expressive, controlled and sequenced movements. The teacher effectively gives pointers as to how pupils' performances can be improved. Pupils make good progress in responding to music and sequencing movements.
154. Pupils in Year 3 achieve a more sophisticated response to music and maintain sequences of movement over a longer time span. They are confident about choosing their own movements in response to music of different types that has been well selected by the teacher. Pupils show a good sense of rhythm and some choreograph sequences which are both aesthetically pleasing and technically good.
155. Pupils in Year 4 take this work a stage further and show a good response to the *Pink Panther* theme and an improved level of control in their movements. Warm up and stretching routines are very well done in this lesson, with good reference by the teacher to the effect on muscles and lungs, for example. Movement sequences include creeping, turning, retreating and being still. Pupils' ability to make evaluative comments about each other's performance is developing well. One boy, for example, has noticed that two girls have spontaneously responded to each other's movements.
156. The scheme of work provides good guidance to teachers in terms of planning for this progression in learning. Its adoption, and the monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and the headteacher, make major contributions to the standards achieved.

157. Pupils experience a full physical education curriculum, with regular opportunities for swimming. Most pupils in Year 6 have achieved the national target of being able to swim 25 metres unaided and a sizeable minority are well beyond this level.
158. Pupils clearly enjoy their physical education lessons and behave well. The overall quality of teaching is good and physical education has a secure place in the school's curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

159. Religious education now has a much higher profile in the school than at the time of the last inspection. The new and enthusiastic subject co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that the subject has higher status and is included on the timetable for each class. The school has adopted the local education authority's agreed syllabus and the county's non-statutory guidance, which leads to religious education being taught as a broad and balanced curriculum subject.
160. Attainment is in line with the standard expected in the agreed syllabus at both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and older pupils with special educational needs make good progress. At morning assembly, all pupils are familiar with the facts of the Easter story and they are encouraged to extend their understanding by discussing the meaning of words in the hymns they sing. They are able to consider the appropriate mood, reflecting that some verses might be sung quietly and sadly whilst others are happy and joyful. Pupils are interested in the subject and behave well both at assembly time and in their lessons.
161. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are familiar with several Bible stories and talk enthusiastically about some of the customs and traditions celebrated by Christians. They know why there is a cross on a hot cross bun and have made stained glass windows showing the symbols of the cross and the fish. They are aware that people of different faiths celebrate different things at different times.
162. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 show respect for other people's beliefs and learn about the sacred symbols used in Hindu worship. They enjoy seeing a diya lamp lit and know about the thick oil that is used in it. They handle artefacts such as the Aum symbol carefully and with respect, and enjoy drawing the swastika and lotus flower. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 study the lives of people with faith, courage and commitment, such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa and Saint Francis of Assisi. They learn about The Five Ks of the Sikh religion and the different customs of Buddhism, Judaism, and other faiths.
163. Pupils' understanding of moral issues is evident when they join in group discussions and they appreciate the importance of religion in the lives of many people.
164. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of very good teaching at the beginning of Key Stage 2. Staff have recently attended courses to increase their knowledge and understanding of other faiths. The local vicar takes a school assembly once a fortnight and the whole school visits the church once a term. The school has access to a wonderful range of multi-cultural and religious artefacts, which are attractively displayed around the school. These resources improve the teaching of religious education. The teaching of religious education gives good support to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.