

INSPECTION REPORT

**Astley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary
School**

Stourport on Severn

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116864

Headteacher: Mr G Campbell

Reporting inspector: Mr G Bassett
21500

Dates of inspection: 31st January – 3rd February 2000

Inspection number: 190871

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Church of England Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Astley Stourport on Severn Worcestershire
Postcode:	DY13 0RH
Telephone number:	01299 822002
Fax number:	01299 822002
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Lovett
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G Bassett	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information technology Music Physical education Special educational needs	How high are standards? How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led?
Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for the pupils? Partnership with parents
Mrs B Rimmer	Team inspector	English Science History Geography Art Design and technology Under fives Equal opportunities	Curricular opportunities

The inspection contractor was:

Hugh Protherough
PO Box 396
Banbury SO
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 5XJ

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Astley Primary School is a small, rural Church of England Voluntary Aided school with 81 pupils on roll. There are 42 boys and 39 girls of white ethnicity divided amongst four classes. Although the school is isolated, it is popular with children travelling some distance each day. For instance, many pupils come from Stourport on Severn. The number of pupils joining the school over the past year is 9, which represents an eighth of the whole school roll. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is below the national average and the percentage of statemented pupils is broadly in line with national average. At the time of the inspection, there were two pupils under the age of five in the reception class of 10 children. Four children in this class attend school part time. The ability of the pupils on entry to the school is clustered around the average. The percentage of pupils registered as eligible for free school meals is well below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has many strengths and its overall effectiveness is good. The headteacher, governors and all staff are dedicated to raising standards and to making further improvements to the quality of education provided. The quality of teaching is good overall, and the pupils' make good progress to attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are above the national average by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven. The headteacher gives a firm educational direction to the developments of the school. The governing body provides effective support to the school, and the manner in which they fulfil their responsibilities is very good. The cost of educating pupils at the school is very high when compared with schools nationally, but nevertheless it gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of the teaching is a strength of the school; during the inspection four out of every five lessons seen were of a good or better quality.
- The leadership and management of the school are good and clear priorities have been set by the headteacher and governing body to promote further improvements.
- The pupils attain standards that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of both key stages. The behaviour of the pupils in and around the school is very good.
- The school makes good provision for the pupils with special educational needs, and this has a good impact upon the quality of work throughout the school.
- The provision made for the pupils' moral and social development is very good. This brings about a helpful calm environment and the pupils come readily to school.

What could be improved

- The quality of the pupils' work in information technology needs to be improved as it is below the levels expected.
- The school needs to agree a whole school common format for the teachers' plans and for the recording of the pupils' progress in the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The pupils' annual reports to parents are not consistent and do not meet the statutory requirements by identifying all subjects separately.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in November 1996 when the pupils' attainment was below the national average, it is clear from their work that the pupils' standards have improved at the end of Key Stage 2 particularly in mathematics and science where they are now above average. The school development plan has been improved

significantly with the governing body sharing in the preparation of priorities. New co-ordinators have been appointed for English and mathematics because of staffing changes, and they are aware of their roles in the development of their subjects. They have begun to monitor the quality of teaching and of the pupils' work. The quality of teaching has improved substantially and this has raised standards and improved the pupils' attitudes to their learning. The assessment data from the national tests is now used well to help the teachers to target areas of weakness that need to be improved.

The school is well placed to continue to make further improvements.

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	C	B	D
mathematics	B	A	C	E
science	B	C	C	E

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

In the table above it can be seen that last year the results in the national tests are portrayed as above the national average for English and in mathematics and science they are broadly in line with the national average for eleven-year-olds. When comparisons are made with schools of a similar type, the results suggest that standards are very low. However, the cohorts of pupils that take the national tests each year are so very small that the percentage calculations are not a fair reflection. Likewise, as the school does not serve school meals there are no accurate figures for free school meals that are used to make comparisons with similar schools. The cohort in question here comprised two pupils who were on the school's register for special educational needs which makes the interpretation of these results even more unreliable.

Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the overall trend shows that the standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average in mathematics and close to the average in English and science. In the work seen during the inspection, the standards at the end of both key stages were above average in English, mathematics and science. The targets set for English and mathematics by the time the pupils are eleven are realistic. However, the quality of the pupils' work in information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 is not high enough and does not match the expected levels for their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to their learning are consistently good. They are confident and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour is very good and they act in a mature manner at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Most pupils relate well to the adults and to each other, but there are a few boys who dominate lessons too much.
Attendance	The pupils' level of attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average.

The pupils' attitudes to their work and to school are consistently good. Overall, the behaviour in and around the school is very good. The pupils' personal development and the relationships between pupils and adults are generally very good. The levels of attendance are broadly in line with the national average; nearly all the pupils arrive at school punctually and are keen to start.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of the teaching is a strength of the school. During the inspection, four out of every five lessons seen were at least good and a third of these were very good or outstanding. Only one lesson that concentrated too much upon the activity and not the skills that needed to be taught was unsatisfactory. Overall, this is teaching of a high quality. The needs of all pupils are met effectively and the provision and the quality of support and teaching for those with special educational needs are very good.

The quality of the teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good and all teachers give these subjects a high priority. The teachers have developed strong questioning strategies that deepen the pupils' understanding and extend their skills. Their expectations are high, and this has a good impact upon the pupils' attitudes and the standards of their work. They all employ on-going informal assessment strategies very well, and they use the information they gain to strengthen the pupils' knowledge and understanding during the lessons. However, the recording of the pupils' achievements is not uniform across the school and consequently the passing on of information about each pupil's progress in subjects across the curriculum can not be done effectively. Consequently, the teachers rely too much upon their memories to recall what each pupil can do and this can prove to be unreliable over a whole school year.

The planning of the lessons is good and the teachers set out clearly what they expect the pupils to learn. These objectives are shared with the pupils and this generates a positive attitude to learning. At the end of lessons, the teachers confirm what has been learned and questions are answered confidently by the pupils. During the lessons observed in Key Stage 2, it became apparent that a few boys dominate discussions and one or two do not willingly co-operate to work and sit alongside girls.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and of a satisfactory quality. The correct emphasis is placed upon the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is a strength of the school and the provision is very good. The identification of higher attaining pupils for additional help is also very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' social and moral development is very good. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good and for their spiritual development it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The educational and personal support and guidance given to all pupils is very good. The school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare.

The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. The curriculum for information technology is now satisfactory. Recent in-service training for the teachers and the introduction of new equipment have led to improvements in the quality of the teaching. The school 's curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and appropriate time is spent on the teaching of each subject. The school cares very effectively for all the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a good educational direction to the work of the school. The curriculum co-ordinators are satisfactorily developing their role of monitoring and evaluating the quality of the teaching, the teachers' plans and the pupils' work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides very good support to the staff and the pupils. They fulfil their responsibilities very effectively and have set meaningful targets for the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The target setting for the pupils' performance and the evaluation of the standards reached in English, mathematics and science are very good.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory and effective use of the available resources. The use of additional staff to support the pupils with special educational needs and those higher attaining pupils is of significant benefit.

The headteacher records and evaluates the standards that each pupil reaches in the end of key stage and in the intermediate national tests, very effectively. He uses tracking charts for each one and working closely with the teachers a realistic prediction is made for the future achievements each pupil. This has a good impact upon the quality of provision for each pupil, for example pupils are given additional reading support or mathematical work to raise their standards to match the forecast. The monitoring of the teaching and the analysis of statutory and intermediate optional national tests provides reliable information and a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses throughout the school. The information gained from the monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and subject leaders for mathematics and English has been used effectively to improve standards. The learning resources have been increased for mathematics and information technology and are now adequate. The lack of a school hall necessitates the school having to use the village hall. Although the arrangement is well managed, it not only causes inconvenience, but also restricts the development of the pupils' physical education. The time constraints severely limit the regularity of indoor lessons of dance and gymnastics.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly all questionnaires returned were very positive and supported the school fully. The parents particularly appreciate the way that the teachers expect their children to work hard and achieve their best. They praise the manner in which the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the meeting a small group of parents expressed a wish that there was more structure to the setting of homework in Key Stage 2.

The relationships between the school and the parents are very good. There is an active Parents and Friends of the School Association which organises events and raises funds for the school. Nearly all parents give the school their full support and are most positive in all remarks made in the completed questionnaires. The inspectors support the parents' views that the teachers have good expectations and that they expect all the pupils to work hard. They also agree that the school encourages the pupils to become more responsible and

mature. However, the use of homework is inadequately structured at Key Stage 2. For instance, the homework diaries need to be reviewed so that there is a clear understanding of when homework is set and what the children are expected to achieve in the time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in the pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, science and particularly mathematics.
2. The results of 1999 national tests in English at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the overall performance of the pupils was above the national average. At the time of the last inspection, the pupils' standards in mathematics were below the national average. However, in the 1999 tests the proportion of the pupils that reached level 4 was above the national average and the proportion that reached level 5 was close to the average. However, the proportion reaching only level 3 or below was above the national average and this has a significant impact upon the performance of the school. Consequently, the standards in mathematics are close to the national average overall. In science, the overall performance is also close to the national average. Taking the average of the results over the four years 1996 to 1999, the overall long-term trend shows the standards at the end of Key Stage 2 to be above the national average in mathematics and close to the average in English and science.
3. At the time of the last inspection, the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were reported to show that standards were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, show that the overall performance of the pupils was above the national average in writing and well above in reading. It was close to the national average in mathematics. This is because few pupils reached level 3 and a significant proportion only reached the lower level 2C, which is judged to be below the national average. Taking the results of the national tests over the four years 1996 to 1999, the overall trend shows that the standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average in reading and writing and close to the average in mathematics.
4. If comparisons are made with schools of a similar type, then the standards reached in the national tests 1999 were well below the average at the end of both key stages. However, it is unwise to attribute too much significance to the statistical data produced by the very small cohorts of recent years. The cohorts of pupils that took the national tests last year were so small that the percentage calculations are very unreliable. The school does not serve school meals so there are no accurate figures for free school meals that are used to make such comparisons.
5. The assessments of the children entering the school at the age of four years show that the levels of attainment vary from year to year. An analysis of the recent assessments carried out by the headteacher shows that attainment is clustered around average. The range includes a few children who are above average in reading and writing and some who are below the levels in these skills that could be expected for their age.
6. At the time of the inspection there were only two children who were under five years old. By the time the children are five, most reach the nationally recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning and a few achieve standards beyond. These children are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum programmes of study. They all make good progress in personal and social development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children make satisfactory progress in language and literacy, and in their mathematical, creative and physical development.

Standards and progress at Key Stage 1

7. From the scrutiny of the work during the inspection, it is clear that by the time they are seven all pupils including those with special educational needs are achieving standards that show they are

making good progress. The proportion on course to reach the expected level 2 or above in English, mathematics and science is above average by the end of Key Stage 1.

English

8. The pupils read competently from suitably challenging texts that are well matched to their ability. They have a secure knowledge of initial sounds, blends and letter patterns, which helps them decipher unfamiliar words. They can recognise and understand punctuation and can identify variations in text effectively. They know how books are organised and are beginning to understand terms such as author and illustrator. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reach above the expected levels in writing. They write independently and confidently about their own experiences. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to use interesting descriptive vocabulary and a wide range of punctuation. Very few pupils however, can write complex sentences that are appropriate for this age group and many pupils still confuse the use of small and capital letters. Their handwriting is inconsistent but it is generally joined and legible.

Mathematics

9. The pupils' standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average and all the pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress. The pupils can carry out number investigations with confidence. They have secure knowledge and understanding of the uses of addition, subtraction when calculating in their heads. They can recognise the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes accurately.

Science

10. In science, they can carry out experiments through a suitably wide range of scientific topics. They have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. They have developed a good awareness of the importance of caring for living things, knowing that they need light and water for survival. Nearly all pupils can sort, classify and compare a variety of materials. Although they are beginning to understand the principles of fair testing, the routines for investigation and experimental work are rather haphazard in some lessons.

Standards and progress at Key Stage 2

11. From the scrutiny of the pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science, it is clear that the proportion of pupils on course to reach the expected level 4 and above, is above the national average. In literacy and numeracy, the pupils' standards are above the national average and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the use of these skills in the enhancement of other subjects such as history and geography. From the scrutiny of the pupils' work and from lesson observations it is clear that there is no significant difference in the attainment of the boys and girls throughout the school.

English

12. The pupils make good progress by the end of this key stage. They write freely in a variety of styles and formats and for real purposes, such as biographies, book reviews and letters. They plan and draft their work to a limited extent. Their construction of sentences becomes increasingly more complex and most pupils show a sound understanding of punctuation and the parts of speech. Most of them have a sound knowledge of phonic patterns and their spelling is reasonably accurate. Their standards of handwriting and presentation are variable but generally satisfactory. By the time they are eleven, they are independent readers, enjoying an increasing range of stories, poems and books for information. They read with accuracy and reasonable fluency, showing understanding and enjoyment of reading. Most pupils are able to discuss the plots and characters in their books with appropriate reference to the text.

Mathematics

13. In mathematics, the pupils attain above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Most of the pupils can calculate effectively in their heads. They are able to use place values up to a thousand and in many instances beyond. They can measure accurately in mass, length and capacity.

Science

14. In science, the pupils carry out investigations in a systematic way. Most understand the principles of fair testing and confidently explain the need to maintain controls. They record their conclusions well in a variety of ways, such as charts, diagrams, pictures and extended writing.

Information technology and all other subjects

15. The quality of the pupils' work and the progress they make at the end of Key Stage 1 in information technology, and in all other subject, is satisfactory by the time they are seven. At the end of Key Stage 2, the quality of the pupils' work in non-core subjects is in line with expected levels and the progress they make is satisfactory. However, the quality of their work in information technology has still some way to go to be broadly in line with the expected levels for their age but there are significant indications that the pupils are now making better progress. The pupils at the end of the key stage are already making substantial improvements in developing their skills. Nevertheless, their standards are still below the expected levels for their age by the end of Key Stage 2. **(This is a key issue for action)**.
16. The school has set realistic targets for the next two years for English and mathematics, and the pupils' work indicates that it is a reasonable assumption that the goals will be reached. The needs of the gifted and talented pupils in the school are well catered for and their standards are significantly above the national average for their ages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The pupils' attitudes to the school are consistently good. Their behaviour, relationships and personal development are very good. The teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and the pupils themselves have high expectations of the standards of behaviour that are acceptable in the school. The majority of parents are happy with the high standards of behaviour consistently achieved by the school.
18. Most pupils consistently demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. They are confident, enthusiastic and keen to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers, ask and answer questions, and willingly offer their own ideas and suggestions. Children of all ages quickly settle down diligently in class, are capable of maintaining sustained periods of concentration and stay on task. They enjoy their lessons and a large number of them take an active part in the wide range of extracurricular activities that the school offers.
19. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is very good. They act in a mature and responsible manner at all times. The behaviour in the classrooms is consistently very good and there is little or no disruption to lessons. However, a small but significant number of boys dominate the answering of questions and there are some who do not willingly work alongside girls in classroom activities. On the whole the pupils move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner. Their behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is very good. There were no signs of any bullying or isolation of individual children. The pupils' behaviour when they are out of school, for example, walking back from a physical education lesson in the village hall, is excellent. There were no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection or during the current academic year to date.

20. The relationships in the school are very good. The pupils relate well to their teachers, to other adults with whom they come into contact, and in the main also to one another. The pupils of all ages are polite, courteous and welcoming to visitors. Nearly all collaborate well, sharing resources, taking turns and listening to each other. All pupils consistently show respect for their teachers, adult helpers and the environment. During the assemblies, the pupils show appropriate respect for the occasion, for example, bowing their heads during prayers and willingly joining in hymn singing. There is no deliberate damage to resources or school property and a remarkably low incidence of litter around the school site.
21. The pupils' personal development is very good. They are learning a good range of social skills, which is helping them to develop into well-rounded individuals. The children respond well when given responsibility for their own work in the classrooms. In many lessons, when not subject to direct teaching, the pupils were observed working independently, undertaking their own research and staying on task. Older pupils willingly take responsibility for helping younger ones, for example, Year 5 and 6 pupils were observed caring for the reception children on a trip for swimming lessons at a local pool. Where opportunities for the pupils to take on formal responsibilities around the school are offered, they respond in a mature and sensible manner. However, such opportunities are restricted to a relatively limited number of mainly older pupils. The children support local and national charities and make appropriate visits into the community.
22. The pupils' levels of attendance are satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Their parents are very supportive, and there is a low level of unauthorised absence. The pupils enjoy coming to school. They arrive on time and the lessons, assemblies, breaks and other activities start and finish promptly.
23. The high standards maintained in behaviour, attendance and punctuality have a very positive impact on standards achieved in the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. Throughout the school, the quality of the teaching is good overall. During the inspection, four out of every five lessons seen were of at least good quality and a third were either very good or outstanding. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. In this lesson, organisation was inadequate for the teaching of the scientific skills of investigation and the recording of results. All the remaining lessons were satisfactory.
25. This is a high proportion of good and better quality teaching and is a strength of the school. It has a good impact upon the quality of the pupils' learning, enabling nearly all of them to make good progress especially in English, mathematics and science. The planning of the lessons during the inspection was good and clear learning objectives were identified. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is particularly strong. The planning for these two subjects has the clearest learning objectives for the skills, knowledge and understanding the pupils are to acquire. Assessment criteria are also identified very well in the lesson plans for these subjects and because of the effective structure of the lessons, the standard of the pupils' work has improved significantly since the last inspection. In the numeracy lessons for instance, the teachers ask probing questions that help to clarify the pupils' thinking. Good use is made of the replies to help the others to understand. All pupils are encouraged to explain what they are thinking or to show how they calculate answers on the board. For instance, when one pupil was measuring the weight of some objects, the others were asked to explain a different method of measuring and estimating the weight. This gives the pupils a clearer understanding of their methods for working out problems and gives them confidence to raise questions or to make suggestions.
26. The teachers have secure knowledge of all the subjects for the age range of pupils they teach with the exception of information technology. This is improving as they attend a two term in-service course for the uses of information communications technology under the New Opportunities Funding. As

they move towards the implementation of the Curriculum 2000, they need to identify what skills, knowledge and understanding are required in each subject and of each year group in the school. **(This is a matter for further consideration)**

27. Where the teaching is strongest, the teachers inform the pupils about the aims for each lesson and explain the tasks clearly. They write the aims of the lesson on the board and refer to these targets as the lesson proceeds. The weekly planning of the lessons during the inspection was good and reflected the understanding that the teachers have of the pupils' prior learning. The tasks are organised efficiently and they match the needs of the higher attaining pupils as well as those with special educational needs. All pupils are challenged appropriately and extension tasks are devised well. In literacy and numeracy lessons, the teachers quickly assess the achievements of the pupils and intervene appropriately to secure their understanding and to extend and widen their knowledge and skills. This has a good impact upon the quality of the pupils' work and upon their very good attitudes and behaviour.
28. The teachers communicate their high expectations effectively and the pupils respond well. Because of the good management skills of the teachers and the learning support assistants, the pupils are keen and willing to take part in all activities and they make good progress. This is particularly so in the numeracy lessons when all pupils show great enthusiasm for number work and try to find as many ways as possible to calculate an answer. Many leave the classroom talking about different methods of making mathematical calculations. Nearly all pupils respond well to the challenges set by the teachers and during almost all lessons observed the amount of work completed was substantial. The pupils are encouraged to sustain concentration and this is achieved successfully in all classes. They have a clear understanding of what they have done and can explain how they still have to improve.
29. On the very few occasions when the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory during the inspection, the teachers paid insufficient attention to the teaching of the skills, knowledge and understanding that the pupils needed to acquire, and they focussed too much upon the activity. For example, in one science lesson the pupils were not given sufficient guidance about recording their results. The activity to taste different foods was not well organised and the opportunity for teaching the correct methods of scientific investigations and recording discoveries was missed. During the inspection, there were one or two instances at the end of a day when time was not used profitably by the class teacher. The learning objectives were not planned sufficiently well and there was no rigour to the activities.
30. The teaching of information technology has not been given sufficient priority in the past and the lack of equipment, until recently, restricted the growth of the pupils' skills and knowledge. There are significant signs of improvement and the quality of the teaching is now satisfactory in all aspects of the curriculum for information technology. For example, the tasks that the teachers set in using word processing and searching for information on CD-ROM ensure that the pupils master skills that build appropriately upon their prior learning in these areas. However, because of the slow progress made previously, it is right and proper that the teachers adjust the curriculum planned to ensure that the pupils are taught relevant skills based upon their previous learning. Consequently, most pupils are at the same stage of development in their skills, knowledge and understanding of information technology throughout Key Stage 2. This means that the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are not yet reaching the quality of work expected for their age. **(This is a key issue for action)**.
31. The quality of the teaching of physical education, including swimming, is good. The reception children are all taught the skills and are encouraged to travel with aids across the swimming pool. In games lessons observed, the teachers encouraged and challenged all pupils effectively to improve their skills. For instance, the Year 1 and 2 pupils were taught how to weave and dodge by using different speeds and changes of direction.

32. The use of homework to support the learning in school is not sufficiently structured. The pupils in Key Stage 2 are not set sufficient and regular work to match the recommendations made nationally for their ages. The use of the homework diary in some classes is not clear and the parents often sign blank pages with no instructions from the teachers to show what the pupils are expected to do. **(This is a matter for further consideration).**

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

33. The school provides a curriculum of satisfactory quality, based on a two-year topic cycle that successfully stimulates the pupils' interest and enjoyment of learning. It is sufficiently broad and incorporates all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. In the reception class, there is good provision for the children under five, with an appropriate balance between teacher directed and child initiated activities. The curriculum is based upon the recommended areas of learning for this age group. It contributes well to their overall development and prepares them effectively for the subjects of the National Curriculum.
34. At an early stage, the school identifies the pupils who need support, including those with exceptional ability. The booster classes in reading, for those with special educational needs, make an effective contribution to their progress in learning basic skills. Very good support is given to individuals with both severe physical disability and emotional problems. The teachers and adults know the pupils very well and help them to become fully integrated into the daily life of the school and to gain independence and self-esteem.
35. The introduction and successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are strong features of the curriculum, and are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. They provide for the learning of skills in a systematic, clear progression, resulting in an improvement in standards, particularly in mathematics, since the last inspection. The allocation of time given to subjects has been considered carefully and priority is appropriately given, to the core subjects of English and mathematics. A 'Writing Week' for Key Stage 2 provides additional opportunities for learning a variety of skills in English and in personal development. It is clear that such focussed work raises standards. The pupils in years 3 and 4, for example, learn to co-operate in the production of a school magazine. The school has valued and maintained an appropriately balanced curriculum, alongside the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The curriculum for information technology is now satisfactory and all aspects of the subject are planned appropriately across the two key stages.
36. The pupils' personal and social education is an integral part of the timetable. The school is committed to the development of all aspects of the individual pupil. The curriculum includes sex education and attention to drugs misuse. These are taught both formally as part of a personal and social development programme and in science in years 5 and 6. Good relationships and frequent opportunities for the pupils to speak their views and opinions build confidence to enable them to ask questions. Drama is a significant part of the curriculum leading to successful presentations, such as 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor™ Dream Coat,' involving the whole school.
37. There is a good range of popular, extra-curricular activities, including drama, music, maths, football and netball. Among the most notable are the opportunities provided for the pupils to participate in a variety of boating activities on the River Severn, inspired by the personal interest, aptitude and enthusiasm of the headteacher.
38. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and a strength of the school. The teachers and other adults have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and manners and provide very good role models through their good relationships all round. The example set by adults successfully promotes the pupils' understanding of right and wrong. The pupils contribute thoughtfully to the class rules.

39. The pupils are given many varied opportunities to interact with one another in the classroom, at play and during out of school activities, including residential visits to France and to an outdoor centre in The Malverns. An exchange visit with a Worcestershire school makes another good contribution to pupils' social understanding and awareness. They are encouraged to show initiative and take responsibility for themselves and for others in a variety of jobs in and around school, including caring for animals. The way the older pupils take care of younger ones during visits to the swimming baths is particularly impressive. They also generate ideas for fund raising and raise money for various charities further extending their awareness of social responsibility. However, during the lessons observed in Key Stage 2 and in one assembly it became apparent that a few boys dominate discussions and some do not willingly co-operate to work or sit alongside girls **(This is a matter for further consideration)**.
40. There is satisfactory provision within the school for the pupils' spiritual development. Residential visits also provide them valuable opportunities for quiet, reflective times away from their everyday activities. The reading of well-chosen stories during assemblies makes another appropriate contribution. The pupils are encouraged to reflect upon the power of God, for example, in a class assembly at the beginning of Key Stage 2, and the whole school considers the importance of being true to themselves.
41. The school makes good provision for the pupils' cultural development through many subjects of the curriculum, including art, music and history. They learn to appreciate and value their own country traditions, such as fete days and maypole dancing and gain understanding of British culture through visits to museums and places of interest. There is a rich and varied programme of visits, and by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, they have had valuable first hand learning experiences. The reception children, for example, enjoyed a visit from a fireman, adding to their knowledge and understanding of the world and older pupils spoke with enthusiasm about a past visit to a Victorian classroom. They were looking forward to a visit from a 'Viking' theatre group.
42. There is a suitable multicultural element to the curriculum through religious education lessons and a multicultural week during which pupils experience activities such as Caribbean art and music, Asian cooking and Mendhi hand painting.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school supports the pupils effectively and continually strives to promote their welfare. The headteacher provides strong pastoral leadership and the teaching staff are very caring, approachable and supportive. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a very good understanding of the school's pastoral and welfare procedures, which they implement consistently and conscientiously. Their teachers and support assistants supervise the pupils well at break times. The lunchtime supervision is carried out well by experienced supervisors, who are also the school secretary and a classroom assistant, and the standard is very good. The supervision on out of school trips, for example to the local swimming pool, is excellent. There are appropriate measures for dealing with minor injuries and first aid.
44. The school makes very good use of appropriate external agencies, non-teaching assistants and parent helpers in a support role. The school's non-teaching staff are totally dedicated to the children they support, are well deployed and provide very good support to the teachers and pupils alike. The support for children with special educational needs is very good and has a positive impact on their academic achievement and progress. The procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. The school has positive behaviour and anti-bullying policies supplemented by school and class rules, which include input from the pupils themselves. All staff implement the agreed behaviour strategies rigorously and consistently, and this brings about a well-ordered behaviour from all pupils. Good attendance is actively promoted and carefully monitored. The pupils' absences are correctly recorded, conscientiously followed up and appropriate action taken is to ensure that high levels of attendance are maintained.

45. All staff know the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils in all classes very well. The headteacher and class teachers have a very good understanding of the personal and individual needs of the pupils in their care. The procedures for promoting and monitoring the pupils' personal development are very good. However, although the teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses well, there is no common format for assessing, recording and monitoring the pupils' academic attainment and progress. There is a lack of structure and rigour in the maintenance of pupils' records; for example, reading records are not maintained effectively in one class and in another they are too brief to provide reliable information. Consequently, the pupils' progress in developing their reading skills is uncertain. Some read books that are too simple and a few others are bored by reading. The accuracy and purpose of the assessment would benefit from a more formal approach consistently implemented by all staff. **(This is a key issue for action).**
46. The child protection procedures are well in place and there is a sound awareness throughout the school. The procedures for promoting health and safety are good. They are well known and understood by all staff who demonstrate safe working practice in lessons and around the school. All the required health and safety inspections and checks, including formal risk assessments of the premises and grounds, are regularly carried out and properly recorded. However, risk assessments by subject areas, for example physical education, have not yet been undertaken. There are some health and safety concerns and these were brought to the headteacher's attention during and after the inspection. **(This is a further matter for consideration).**

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The relationships between the school and the parents are very good. The school enjoys the active support of the vast majority of parents who consistently express a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school. The headteacher and the staff are very approachable. Many parents were observed regularly talking to class teachers and support assistants at the start and close of the school day. There is a good number of committed parents and grandparents who regularly help in the classrooms and accompany the children on out of school trips. The parental involvement in their children's work at home is very good, and there is strong support for home reading and homework. There is an active parents and friends association that organises events and raises funds for the school. A large number of parents willingly gave up time to help the staff work on improving the school grounds. Most parents agree that the school works closely with them and that they would be comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.
48. The communications between the school and home are good. There are weekly informative newsletters and frequent communications to parents about specific events and activities. There have also been information presentations for parents, for example on numeracy, and they were consulted about the proposed home school agreement. The response to questionnaires on the home school agreements and the school inspection were very good. The school publishes a comprehensive and informative prospectus, and the governors hold an annual meeting with parents and publish an annual report. The prospectus and the governors' annual report contain all the statutorily required information. The annual progress reports written by the teachers are variable. The best ones indicate what the pupils can and cannot do and the progress being made. They indicate where the pupils are finding difficulties and set targets for improvement. Others tend to be brief, over descriptive and lacking in subject specific information. Some reports do not comply with the requirement to report design and technology and information technology separately. **(This is a key issue for action).** The parents are offered appropriate opportunities to attend meetings to discuss their children's work and progress with their teachers. The parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed and fully involved in their children's education.
49. Overall the school's links with parents considerably enrich its work and have a positive impact on pupils' academic achievement and personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

How well is the school led and managed?

50. The headteacher has been in post since September 1999. During this short time, he has secured the support of the staff and governing body in setting a clear direction to the educational developments for the school. He has overseen the extension of the building to secure an administration area at the front of the school and has ensured appropriate facilities for pupils with special educational needs. He has also given good leadership in the development of the curriculum.
51. There are new co-ordinators responsible for English and mathematics. Although they have had little time to develop their subject responsibilities, they are beginning to monitor the quality of the teaching in each classroom. Under the guidance of the headteacher, they have established the strategies for literacy and numeracy and engaged the full co-operation of the whole staff. The numeracy strategy is the foremost priority in the school development plan. Accordingly, the co-ordinator for mathematics has organised in-service training for all staff and there is now a more effective structure to the planning of the mathematics lessons. The introductory sessions for mental calculations have been the focus for the teachers' training. They have been successful and have had a good impact upon raising the pupils' standards.
52. As yet, the co-ordinators do not have a written job description, but they are aware of the need to improve their management skills to develop and monitor the curriculum. The co-ordinators have organised evening sessions on numeracy and literacy for parents and governors to demonstrate the procedures used to teach the pupils how to make mental calculations and how reading skills are developed in lessons. Both of the co-ordinators are supportive of all staff and are raising an awareness of the issues that need to be faced such as a common format for plans. **(This is a key issue for action)**. For example, they are both aware of the need to monitor the teachers' plans and the pupils' work to ensure that there are no gaps in the National Curriculum and that the pupils continue to make good progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
53. The leadership makes effective use of the results of national tests and other assessments to check the pupils' progress. The well considered recording system shows details of the analysis of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and other intermediate tests taken during Years 3, 4 and 5. This analysis enables the teachers to make informed predictions about the standards that each pupil should reach at the end of Key Stage 2. The teachers and the headteacher use the records of test results effectively to track the progress made by each pupil towards their individual targets. For example, the predictions made by the teachers for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were very close to the actual results in the 1999 national tests.
54. The governing body has become more fully involved in the management of the school since the last inspection. The headteacher works closely with the governors to draw up a new draft school development plan. They now express positive views about the process that involves them in monitoring the monthly expenditure. The consultation process gives them accurate and reliable data and information upon which they can make informed decisions about the setting of the annual budget. They have established committees for curriculum, finance and the development of the premises. These are effective and efficient. It is clear that the development and the monitoring of the aims and objectives of the school plan have been thoroughly discussed. For example, the governors scrutinise the monthly expenditure thoroughly. All large amounts of expenditure are carefully considered to ensure that the best value and effective use is made of the money made available to the school. They have put by an appropriate amount of the budget to pay the school's proportion of the costs of the recent extensions. The governing body is fulfilling its full responsibilities effectively.

55. The governing body has agreed some performance criteria for the headteacher. They include the establishment of a shared and agreed school development plan and the preparation of procedures for recording individual pupil's progress throughout the time they are in the school. This is a right and correct course for them to take to ensure that standards continue to rise.
56. The management of the education of the pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their individual programmes of learning are monitored well and checked regularly. The parents are involved effectively with the reviewing of education and social targets for their child.
57. The qualifications and experience of the teachers and the learning assistants are satisfactory. The number of assistants is well above average for a school of this size and this has a good impact upon the raising of standards and the maintenance of positive attitudes. The learning resources for each subject are satisfactory, but the accommodation lacks adequate satisfactory space for physical education as there is no hall, and the library is in a busy corridor. The school makes good use of the village hall, but this is a considerable distance away. The lack of immediate facilities restricts the development of physical education activities such as gymnastics and dance. It also adversely affects the provision of drama lessons, which would benefit all pupils and especially the reception children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. **In order to continue the high standards achieved throughout the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:-**
- a. improve the quality of the pupils' work across all elements of information technology by the time they are eleven years. (Paragraph 15, 30)
 - b. agree whole school common formats for:
 - i) the teachers' plans; (Paragraph 52).
 - ii) the recording of the pupils' progress in the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding. (Paragraph 45).
 - c. ensure that the pupils' annual reports meet the statutory requirements. (Paragraph 48).

Further matters for consideration by the headteacher, staff and governors:-

- ◆ In order to raise further the standards achieved by the pupils in the rest of the curriculum, the leadership should consider ensuring that there is full guidance for each subject about what is taught to each year group, as part of the school's preparation for Curriculum 2000; (Paragraph 26).
- ◆ give more emphasis to the social and academic integration of the boys and the girls; (Paragraph 39).
- ◆ improve the structure for setting homework; (Paragraph 32).
- ◆ consider the health and safety issues brought to the attention of the headteacher and governors. (Paragraph 46).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7.4	25.9	48.1	14.8	3.7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	81
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	13

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.2
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92	92	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92	92	92
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	99	7	6	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	11	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85	77	85
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	4
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	11	11	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85	85	82
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	81
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	19.5

Education support staff: YR – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82

FTE means full-time equivalent

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	166581
Total expenditure	163261
Expenditure per pupil	2015
Balance brought forward from previous year	12551
Balance carried forward to next year	15871

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	81
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	44	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	35	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	47	4	4	2
The teaching is good.	63	35	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	30	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	12	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	70	25	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	53	39	0	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	26	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	44	2	0	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Areas of learning for children under five

59. The children join the reception class in the term during which they are five years of age. At the time of the inspection there are ten children in the class, of whom only two were four-year-olds. All have had some pre-school experience in a variety of nursery settings. Using the county's procedures, the school makes baseline assessments during the first few weeks of school. The recent results show attainment for this group of children to be about average.
60. By the time they are five, most children reach the nationally recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning. A minority achieve standards beyond these and are already working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

61. The provision and teaching of personal and social development is very good. The pupils soon learn new routines and most adapt their behaviour appropriately to different situations, such as class assemblies and the literacy hour. They manage their coats and personal belongings with increasing independence and responsibility. A most able learning support assistant works closely with the teacher, and between them they create a warm, secure and friendly atmosphere where the children are happy and willing to learn. There are very good relationships and the children enjoy coming to school. They relate very well to familiar adults and to one another, co-operating happily in their work and play activities. When they include a wheelchair bound pupil in their role-play; they show a well-developed awareness and understanding of the needs of others. They mostly respond well to rules and expectations and are generally polite and considerate towards others. Only a small minority of pupils is still dependent upon adult support and can be demanding of the teacher's attention. The teacher and the support assistant handle this lack of confidence effectively, with considerable understanding and sensitivity. Frequent use of praise and encouragement develops the confidence of most pupils. There is very good support and provision for children with special educational needs.
62. When given the opportunity, the children enjoy choosing their own activities and play amicably with one another, learning to make allowances for one another's differences. The majority shows a high degree of concentration and perseverance for their age during directed activities. They listen to the teacher attentively and follow instructions well. The children make very good gains in their personal and social development and their achievements exceed the expected levels.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

63. Effective use is made of a skilled learning support assistant who uses questioning skills well and makes appropriate interventions to develop the children's vocabulary and their speaking and listening to a good extent. Because of this good teamwork between the teacher and the learning support assistants, the pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. The teacher encourages the enjoyment of books and stories through good story telling skills. The children listen intently to stories and instructions from adults and some are confident speakers, expressing themselves clearly with spontaneous remarks and questions relevant to their learning. Their command of language to express their wishes is generally above expectations of this age group, although a few still use immature patterns of speech. They listen carefully to instructions and follow directions well. They handle books appropriately and talk about pictures and stories with enjoyment. They show interest during literacy sessions and enjoy talking about the pictures in the big book and joining in with a 'spooky' rhyming poem. They contribute rhyming words for 'ghost'

with great enthusiasm and understanding. They particularly enjoy listening to stories such as 'Hansel and Gretel', which forms the basis for a range of activities in the planned curriculum. The literacy hour is now well established with a good overall structure. However, the group activities are not always matched appropriately to the needs of each pupil. For example, there is a limited range of reading and writing activities available on a regular, ongoing basis. There is a suitable range of books and writing equipment, but the practical areas are not sufficiently defined to encourage the children to make purposeful use of them during play activities. Almost all of the children can recognise and write their own names independently and most know a growing number of initial sounds. A small number of children are able to recognise many keywords and have made a good start on reading. The children develop good pencil control by drawing, tracing round shapes and copying adults' writing. They begin to use writing to communicate meaning to others, with an adult acting as scribe.

Mathematics

64. In the area of mathematical development, the quality of the teaching is good and enables most children to use number language appropriately. They make good progress to achieve an appropriate use of comparative words, such as 'long' and 'short'. The teacher succeeds in capturing the children's interest with good use of resources to generate interest and enthusiasm. The adults develop number vocabulary effectively and this helps the pupils to recognise well the number symbols to five. They are also beginning to count and match accurately. They participate in number rhymes with enthusiasm and some are beginning to have an awareness of number operations such as addition and subtraction. Most children are beginning to write and record numbers appropriately. In all of the above areas of learning, the teacher makes detailed and accurate assessments of the children's progress and sound procedures are in place. During construction play, most recognise basic shapes and colours and have a good sense of pattern making when they use computer programmes. They can recognise spiral shapes in their baking activities. All pupils made satisfactory progress in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding

65. The children enter the school with a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the world and with encouragement, talk about their homes and families and matters of interest to them. They relate these experiences successfully to imaginative role-play situations in the 'house.' The quality of the teaching is good. There is a wide range of activities provided to give a broad and balanced curriculum for this age group. The teachers make learning relevant through well-chosen topics that incorporate science, history and geography effectively. When the pupils ask questions, they show a lively curiosity in the world around them. They know how old they are, but are unsure when their birthdays will be. They can recognise and name colours accurately. They enjoy cooking activities and examine how materials change with mixing, heating and cooling. The higher attaining children are learning to master the control of the Pixie programmable toy effectively, and they use the computer to select and move objects on a screen. They can follow a route in the school grounds and most know the directions 'left' and 'right'. They make good progress in this area of learning.

Physical

66. The quality of teaching is excellent in swimming lessons and good overall in other areas of physical education. The children can handle small tools and equipment carefully and accurately. They have developed satisfactory pencil control and dexterity through writing, colouring and drawing activities. During outdoor play, they move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination. Some children show considerable imagination, skill and agility when they confidently move along and around the climbing apparatus in the playground. They are developing a good range of skills through regular physical education lessons and they make exceptional progress in swimming. They soon gain confidence to swim independently at a young age. Although the children benefit from a good range of opportunities in their immediate environment, there is a limited access to the large wheeled toys and larger apparatus. This together with the lack of immediate access to a

school hall for physical education activities and drama restricts their physical development.

Creative

67. The children make satisfactory progress and can paint, colour and stick cut out shapes using an interesting and colourful range of materials. They experiment with mixing colours to good effect. They respond positively to music and rhymes with enthusiasm and enjoy putting actions to familiar songs in lessons and in assembly. They recognise and clap rhythms and enjoy using percussion instruments, which they play with a good degree of control. The children have suitable opportunities to participate imaginatively in role-play activities. During a topic about the fireman, the children who had enjoyed a visit from a fire officer became involved in putting out an imaginary fire in their playhouse. This became a burning building to be saved by the local 'firemen' during the inspection.
68. The teaching is satisfactory in this area. The children's creative development is well fostered through example, enthusiasm and commitment to giving children a wide range of experiences. There are suitable areas for role-play, which become shops, houses and hospitals at various times. The children have reasonable opportunities to experiment, although they lack regular access to painting materials. They make satisfactory progress in their creative development. The adults are supportive and encouraging and make good use of praise.
69. Overall, the school has recognised the specific needs of younger children by reference to the areas of learning and has planned a suitable balance of directed and child initiated activities. The provision gives the children a good start to their formal schooling. Good induction procedures ensure a smooth transition between nursery or playgroup and school. Very good support is given to individual pupils in this caring environment, particularly those with special educational needs, who are fully integrated and accepted in the routines and activities.

ENGLISH

70. Since the last inspection, the pupils' standards at the end of both key stages have improved to be above average. The results of the 1999 statutory tests show that pupils reached standards of attainment well above the national average at the end of both key stages. Although there were above average numbers of pupils reaching the expected levels for their age, the proportion exceeding these levels, particularly at Key Stage 2, was below the national average. The results show that there was no significant difference between girls and boys in the standards reached at Key Stage 1. However, the boys at Key Stage 2 attained better standards than the girls. In comparison with schools with similar characteristics, the pupils at Key Stage 1 attained similar standards in both reading and writing, but standards in English are below those of similar schools at Key Stage 2.
71. The evidence from this inspection indicates that the proportion of pupils likely to attain the expected levels in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average, although fewer than average are likely to attain the higher levels. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are attaining above average standards, including the proportion of pupils likely to reach higher grades.
72. Although it is difficult to make reliable conclusions from statistics drawn from such a small cohort of pupils, the evidence shows a clear improvement in standards overall, in spite of a dip in reading last year at Key Stage 1. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is now leading to a marked improvement in the development of reading and writing skills.
73. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are mostly confident and they eagerly take advantage of the good opportunities given to them to express their views and ideas. They readily answer questions and volunteer information about the chosen text in the literacy hour. For example, in a lesson comparing two poems, one particularly able pupil expounded her knowledge of shadows with clarity. The pupils listen attentively to the teachers reading stories and poems or giving instructions, but are less skilled at listening to one another. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, most

pupils are articulate speakers, willing and able to take part in conversation, discussions and expressing their ideas in more formal situations in small and large groups. Most pupils have a good command of spoken English, although at times, misconceptions of vocabulary, such as 'might of', for example, are frequently repeated without appropriate correction, leading to errors in writing. The use of drama, both in lessons and as an extra curricular activity provides further opportunities for speaking and listening, contributing to good standards by the end of Key Stage 2.

74. The pupils' standards in reading are above average at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils read competently from suitably challenging texts well matched to their ability. They have a secure knowledge of initial sounds, blends and letter patterns, which helps them decipher unfamiliar words. Their work in literacy sessions has developed useful skills, such as the ability to recognise rhyming words in poetry. When they read together as a class, they show great enthusiasm and expression, spontaneously joining in with rhyming words. Most pupils recognise and understand punctuation and variations in text to a good extent. They know how books are organised and are beginning to understand terms such as author and illustrator. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are independent readers, enjoying an increasing range of stories, poems and books for information. They read with accuracy and reasonable fluency, showing an understanding and an enjoyment of reading. The pupils are able to discuss the plots and characters by making an appropriate reference to the text. They readily carry out independent research to find information for their topic work by visiting the local library. A small minority of children sometimes chooses books that are too easy. The teachers, whilst being sensitive to the needs of pupils who might want to re-read old favourites, should also devise systems to check that there is sufficient regular challenge in their reading.
75. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reach above the expected levels in writing. They write independently and confidently about their own experiences. They use their knowledge of sounds and letter patterns to rewrite stories in their own words. When they write instructions for making a sandwich, for example, the pupils produce a logical sequence of simple sentences, usually spelt accurately. Most of the pupils are developing their comprehension skills well and know how to plan their stories appropriately. They copy notes and label diagrams accurately, and can write for a suitable range of purposes. The most able are beginning to use interesting descriptive vocabulary and a wide range of punctuation. This was evident, for instance in writing of a good standard about 'Elmer the Elephant'.
76. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils write freely in a variety of styles and formats for genuine purposes, such as biographies, book reviews and letters. They plan and draft their work to a limited extent. They copy corrected work, but rarely make improvements to either the content or style of their writing when doing so. Their sentence construction becomes increasingly more complex and most pupils show a sound understanding of punctuation and the parts of speech. Their spelling is reasonably accurate and most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of phonic patterns for their ages. They have confidence to attempt unfamiliar words phonetically and make good use of dictionaries. The pupils' standards of handwriting and the presentation of their work are variable, but generally of a satisfactory standard. When the pupils produce topic books and work for displays, their best work is of a good standard. However, they do not always take the same care in their writing books.
77. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. They gain in confidence and self-esteem and receive good support from the teachers and skilled support staff. There is no evidence of any significant variations in the attainment and progress of pupils of different gender throughout the school. The teachers identify higher attaining pupils and the school makes available appropriate support to extend their knowledge and skills.
78. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages, and during the inspection there was an example of excellent practice in Key Stage 1. All the teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy. The successful implementation of the literacy hour is having a positive impact on the pupils' progress in reading and writing. It is one of the strengths of the curriculum. The teachers establish very good relationships with their pupils and give them encouragement and the confidence

to speak and write freely, developing creativity and imagination well. They provide frequent opportunities for the pupils to speak in front of the class, although they do not always make sure that they listen to each other sufficiently. In the best lessons, the teachers have very high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour, and as a result, the pupils apply themselves well and try their best. The lessons are very well structured and purposeful. Consequently, the pupils of all abilities are beginning to build systematically on their knowledge of sounds to improve their skills in recognising reading and spelling patterns. The pupils in reception begin to learn initial sounds and take delight in recognising names and familiar words, such as 'house.' They make increasing use of dictionaries and wordbooks in Years 1 and 2. Lively and interesting introductions capture pupils' imaginations and lead to enthusiasm for reading. This was evident, for example in a lesson at the end of Key Stage 1 where pupils explored rhymes in the poem 'Shadows'. The teachers maintain the pupils' attention well through a variety of activities and challenging, open questions that promote thinking and develop self-esteem. More effective use could be made of the pupils' reading diaries in Key Stage 2 to record progress, identify reading patterns and act upon their likes and dislikes. At present insufficient attention is paid to the pupils' brief comments, and sometimes opportunities to develop a successful dialogue between home and school are missed.

79. Where assessment procedures are incorporated successfully into the planning, such as in Key Stage 2, then the planning is of a high standard. Group activities are matched appropriately to their abilities and interest. This ensures that the pupils make good progress by adding significantly to their skills of reading, writing and comprehension. The plenary sessions are used effectively to reinforce these learning objectives. This is exemplified in the good lesson observed in Year 3/4 when the introduction of sub-headings and reinforcement of the skills of note taking were undertaken effectively.
80. The teachers provide much encouragement through very positive marking, but in some classes the pupils do not learn sufficiently from their mistakes and continue to make the same errors in spelling, punctuation and letter formation.
81. Since the last inspection, the role of the co-ordinator has been developed to include the monitoring of lessons. The process focussed on the use of assessment procedures in planning of learning objectives for group activities. This is a good start and has improved the teachers' knowledge and the communications across the key stages. The subject needs to have a consistent system for assessment based on what pupils actually know and understand rather than what has been covered in the curriculum, in order to raise standards even further.

MATHEMATICS

82. In the 1999 national test, the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attained standards that were close to the national average overall. The proportion of the pupils that reached level 2 or above was very high but the proportion reaching level 3 was well below average. Consequently, the overall score in these tests was close to the average for schools nationally, but were well below the average score of similar schools.
83. At the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils attained standards in the 1999 national tests that were close to the national average overall. The proportion that reached level 4 or above was above the national average but the proportion that reached the higher level 5 was close to the average for all schools. Consequently, the overall results were greatly influenced by the small proportion of the pupils that reached level 5 and the score overall is close to the national average for all schools but well below the average scored by similar schools.
84. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the overall trend shows that the standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are close to the national average whereas at the end of Key Stage 2 they are above average.
85. Since the last inspection, the standards at the end of both key stages have improved significantly.

This is most noticeable at the end of Key Stage 2 where the previous inspection reported that the pupils were achieving significantly below the national average. From the scrutiny of the pupils' work, it is clear that the proportion of pupils on course to reach the expected levels at the ends of both key stages is above the national average. There is good evidence to show that the number of pupils at present on course to exceed the expected levels for their ages is close to the national average.

86. There is no significant difference between the attainments of the boys and girls throughout the school.
87. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is very good, and this has raised the standards of the pupils' work. The numeracy strategies are firmly established and this additional structure to the lesson planning has provided a firm basis upon which the teachers have developed their strong teaching skills. All teachers ask probing questions that help to deepen the pupils' understanding. They give the pupils good opportunities to explain their calculations and this has a good impact upon deepening the pupils' understanding of their work. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 respond well to this quality of teaching because of the effective structure to the lessons. They can successfully sequence, add and subtract numbers to one hundred, and they understand the place values of numbers in tens and units. Most can identify the properties of simple two and three-dimensional shapes and can interpret data when presented in block graphs.
88. The teachers value each pupil's answer. For example, By the end of Key Stage 2 during the mental calculation periods observed in each lesson the pupils were encouraged to explain how they reached their answer. This helps the pupils to understand that there are many different ways of working out calculation in their heads. For instance, in Years 5/6 the teacher challenged the pupils to find different ways to express 7 times 8. Many accepted the challenge with enthusiasm and tried to find different methods to explain their reasoning to the others including $(5 * 7) + 21 = 56$ and $7 \text{ squared} + 8 = 56$. Most pupils at the end of this key stage can use the four rules of calculation when using thousands hundreds, tens and units and when solving problems with money and measurements. The majority of pupils can use metric measurements for weight, capacity and length with confidence and can recognise the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes accurately.
89. The teachers have very secure knowledge and understanding of the mathematics they teach. They explain clearly the aims for the lesson and communicate their high expectations of each pupil. The tasks are matched appropriately to the needs of each individual. The activities are extended appropriately to challenge the higher attaining pupils and good support is also provided for the pupils with special educational needs. The teachers make very good on going informal assessments of each pupil's knowledge and understanding to help them during the lessons. However, they do not record sufficiently well what each pupil has achieved and consequently they rely upon their memories too much when trying to recall the progress that has been made. This is evident in the question and answer sessions in each class where the teachers pose searching questions to challenge effectively all pupils of different abilities. This very good rapport with the pupils establishes, for example, a deeper understanding of the various solutions to number problems and sequences. The pupils sustain concentration and their learning is purposeful and productive. The pupils have confidence in their ability to calculate accurately in their heads, and they work with a brisk pace. Consequently, the amount of work completed by the pupils during the lessons observed was very good. Almost all present their working out neatly. At the end of the lessons, each teacher refers effectively to the aims for learning and the pupils are encouraged to give an account of their work and discoveries. The teachers use the time available very purposefully and are supported well by the learning support assistants.
90. The co-ordinator for mathematics has recently been appointed, but has already successfully established the numeracy strategy throughout the school. All staff have received training. The monitoring of the quality of the teaching in each classroom has begun, but as yet, it is not rigorous enough to ensure that there are no gaps in the National Curriculum. However, it is clear that the school has a strength in the monitoring of the pupils' results in the national tests. The results have

been analysed and realistic targets are set for each pupil.

SCIENCE

91. Since the last inspection, the pupils' standards in science have significantly improved at the end of both key stages.
92. The most recent teacher assessments indicate that the pupils' standards of attainment are above average at Key Stage 1. The test results in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly in line with the national average. However, standards were below those for similar schools. With such a small cohort of pupils, it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions from these results. Nevertheless, they show a steady improvement over the last three years with an increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in both key stages.
93. The inspection evidence shows that the pupils attain above average standards at both key stages, with particularly good progress shown in Key Stage 2 where the teaching is good.
94. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils carry out a number of investigations and experiments on a suitably wide range of scientific topics. They gain knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things when they explore the school grounds to observe small creatures in their own environment. They develop a good awareness of the importance of caring for living things, knowing they need light and water for survival. The pupils sort, classify and compare a variety of materials. From a project on healthy living, for instance, the pupils understand the effects of exercise on their bodies and have a satisfactory knowledge of physical processes. When they explore their senses they experiment with different foods to compare sweet and sour tastes. From a topic about transport, the pupils know the effects that forces, such as pushes and pulls, have on various objects. They examine the use of electricity in everyday appliances in the home and understand that it can be dangerous. Although they are beginning to understand the principles of fair testing, experimentation is rather haphazard in some lessons because of a lack of guidance given to the pupils to improve their recording skills.
95. The same topics are repeated in Key Stage 2, but pupils carry out investigations in a more systematic way, in greater depth. Since the last inspection, the pupils' ability to carry out investigations has improved, and they are now reaching a good standard. This is due to the higher expectations of the teachers who have raised the level of challenge. During their work on electricity, the pupils make predictions, select the appropriate equipment and test their hypotheses by exploring circuits and batteries. They make new discoveries about the strength of various power sources and understand terms such as 'positive' and 'negative.' Most pupils understand the principles of fair testing and confidently explain the need to maintain controls for the results to be accurate. The pupils record their conclusions well in a variety of ways, such as charts, diagrams, pictures and extended writing. They show pride in their finished work, which is well organised, carefully presented and illustrated in a vibrant manner. Most pupils have a good knowledge of scientific principles.
96. In this key stage, the pupils add significantly to their scientific understanding. The emphasis on developing vocabulary and the wide range of methods of recording make a good contribution to the development of pupils' literary skills. They make limited use of information technology, however.
97. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, evaluated the subject's strengths and weaknesses and accurately highlighted the teaching of experimental work for improvement. As a result, the school has made good progress in improving the quality of teaching for investigational work. In both key stages, the teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to carry out investigations through experimentation and direct observation. This is now a notable strength of the teaching. The pupils are interested and enthusiastic in lessons because of the well-structured and well-planned lessons. They come to independent conclusions as a result of their investigations. In Year 1 and 2, for example, they enjoy experimenting with their senses as they confidently explore taste.

98. Very good relationships throughout the school, give the pupils the confidence to make contributions they know will be valued. The teachers make the most of opportunities to reinforce the learning objectives and to develop the pupils' use of scientific vocabulary. In the best examples, in Key Stage 2, the teachers have high expectations and give clear instructions. They provide a rich variety of interesting, challenging activities to promote the pupils' scientific enquiry and to stimulate their thoughts. Scientific principles are reinforced by well-judged and pertinent interventions during investigative work and good use of thought provoking questions. For instance, the teacher at the beginning of Key Stage 2 reinforced the need for the pupils to measure carefully, during a comparison of liquids and solids. As a result, the pupils' are developing a good understanding of a fair test. The pupils co-operate well when they work in small groups. They benefit from a wide range of visits to places of scientific interest, such as an environmental centre, West Malvern to study rocks and minerals, a Science Park and Cardiff Beach.

ART

99. The evidence, from a small number of lessons, displayed work, photographs, samples of work, scrutiny of the teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff, shows that the quality of the pupils' work in art is satisfactory.
100. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils can use effectively a suitable variety of materials, tools and techniques and have regular opportunities to express their ideas through drawing, painting, printing, collage in two and three-dimensional form. When they print with different shapes, they show an appropriate awareness of pattern and colour. They use basic collage techniques to produce displays of their favourite stories.
101. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are painting less often but they develop their drawing skills appropriately for their ages. The teachers not only seek to develop the pupils' skills, but also motivate them to investigate and use different media and materials imaginatively. The pupils' self-portraits and observational drawings show increasing confidence and appropriate use of line, shape and shading techniques. The pupils develop an appropriate visual awareness and use pastels well to create imaginative drawings of cars, with good use of colour and form. They develop new techniques effectively, for instance, when they learn about perspective and make charcoal drawings of houses and streets. Most pupils combine art and design and making skills to good effect when they make swords, shields and helmets to support their topic about Vikings. In a good lesson observed in Year 6, the pupils were engrossed in a variety of interesting art and design activities. The teacher's planning identifies clear learning objectives and the tasks are matched well to the pupils' interest and aptitudes and the teacher successfully creates a positive working atmosphere. A group of Year 6 pupils show a developing knowledge and understanding of the styles of various artists when they link 'dotty' pictures with their recent studies of the work of Seurat. Some are also able to describe the style of William Morris with a clear understanding.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. The standards of the pupils' work in design technology are better than the expected levels for their ages, and they all make good progress.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1, the teachers organise a suitable range of focused, practical tasks, including cookery, in which the pupils can mix, assemble and join materials to develop their knowledge of making techniques to a good level. Other opportunities encourage the pupils to use their imagination to create original designs for a boat or a 'plane in connection with a topic on transport. They can select appropriate materials from a wide range and can use tools safely to bend, fold, cut and join paper, card, plastic and wood to create models based on their drawings. The pupils are encouraged to experiment and to learn by trial and error what does and does not work. They evaluate their progress through lively discussion as they work. The boys and girls work side

by side and make helpful suggestions to carry out their plans. Other work seen is more prescriptive, such as penguin models, which give opportunities for developing the pupils' making skills, but have neither a design or nor an evaluation element.

104. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils successfully develop their skills to produce more complex models incorporating scientific and mathematical knowledge of shape and measurement. Their models of a room in a shoebox, based on a painting by David Hockney, successfully combine art and design technology. The teachers organise the activities and resources well and with careful regard for safety. The pupils respond with enthusiasm and persevere to improve and finish their work. They are purposefully engaged in their tasks and concentrate well. When they are encouraged to think through ideas and solve problems for themselves, they produce high quality solutions and make good progress. The work, completed by the pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 is of a high standard. Older pupils design for a specific purpose and make working models of items of transport with moving parts such a helicopter blades and wheels. In the past the pupils have created masks with noses that light up. The most able pupils evaluate their designs well and make appropriate changes to improve the design. However, they do not use information technology sufficiently well to control simple mechanisms and there are too few planned occasions to disassemble products to evaluate their design and purpose.
105. The subject contributes effectively to the pupils' literacy skills when they read instructions and make notes about their designs.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Since the last inspection, the subject has taken a low priority because of other national initiatives. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Therefore, the judgements are made from discussions with the pupils and the teachers and from the examination of the teachers' planning and the pupils' work. Overall, the pupils make good progress.
107. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make a good start in the reception class when they follow a route such as the one Hansel might have taken to the Gingerbread House. By the end of the key stage, they reach standards above those expected for the age group when they learn about islands. They know that islands are surrounded by water and are able to use compass directions to identify their position. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of the British Isles and can identify countries and their capital cities accurately. When they learn about the South Pole and Antarctica, the pupils develop a growing awareness of a wider world and some of its features.
108. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have had numerous opportunities to use their immediate environment and to take part in visits to develop their knowledge and understanding of contrasting areas to a good extent. There are good examples in the teachers' planning of the identification of the main learning objectives which are linked appropriately to the National Curriculum programmes of study and other subjects of the curriculum, such as science and mathematics. The teachers make good use of their interests in canoeing and pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 carry out a river survey. Their mapping skills are suitably extended when they create their own maps using symbols and keys appropriately. In a description of a journey from Astley to Birmingham, they use map references suitably and show sound understanding of co-ordinates. The pupils keep weather records to observe patterns. They develop environmental awareness effectively when they consider the reasons why rainforests are dying out and pupils talk thoughtfully about man's effect on the environment. They research facts and reproduce them in carefully presented books. All of these activities combine well with the very good range of visits to places of geographical interest to make learning relevant and interesting for the pupils.

HISTORY

109. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Consequently, the judgements are made from discussions with the pupils and teachers, the examination of the teachers' planning and the

pupils' previous work.

110. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have sequenced objects and events in their own lives to begin to develop a suitable sense of chronology. They gain a basic knowledge and understanding of aspects of past times through a variety of sources including videos, photographs, books and interesting visits to castles and museums. The pupils make reasoned deductions from portraits about the life of people such as Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary. They appreciate why people acted as they did when they consider the feelings of Guy Fawkes and other protagonists during the Gunpowder Plot. There is little written recording of history in this key stage. However, from discussions with the pupils it is clear that they have covered an appropriate amount of the curriculum and their historical knowledge and understanding are in line with the expected levels for their age.
111. The pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 ask and answer questions about Greek festivals, legends and gods and present their information well. By the time they are eleven years of age, most pupils have accumulated a secure knowledge and understanding of a good range of historical periods and overall, they make good progress. In describing past times, the pupils use historical terms such as century and decade accurately and know the meaning of BC and AD. They can accurately sequence the Egyptians, Vikings, Tudors, Victorians and World War 2 in chronological order and speak confidently about the main features and personalities of these times. A visit to Worcester Cathedral enhanced their work on the Tudors and the pupils' knowledge of and interest in Henry the Eighth and his wives is impressive. The pupils also enjoyed a visit to a Victorian school and talk with enthusiasm about their memorable firsthand experiences. In preparation for a presentation on Vikings by a visiting theatre group, the pupils at the end of the key stage collaborate effectively in pairs and groups to pose well considered questions. This promotes historical enquiry very effectively. They carry out their own independent research into the various topics and produce well-presented booklets of a good standard. The subject makes a good contribution to their literacy skills.
112. The subject is carefully planned around a two-year topic to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is based on interesting visits or events that successfully motivate the pupils' interest in the subject.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

113. The quality of the pupils' work in information technology is below the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2. **(This is a key issue for action)**. This is because until quite recently the quality and reliability of the computers in the school made it difficult for the teachers to provide adequately for this age group. As a result, pupils throughout the school are all working at very similar levels to develop their basic skills. From samples of work, it is clear that the pupils in the early part of Key Stage 2 are now making satisfactory progress, especially in word processing, and their standards are improving to be close to the expected levels for their ages. The older pupils are making good progress catching up with their learning of skills and understanding across the full curriculum for information technology. However, there are elements of the curriculum such as data handling and control where the quality of the work is below the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and the teachers' plans identify how they adjust the curriculum to match the needs of the pupils so that they build upon their previous learning. This is an appropriate action to take to improve the information technology skills of each pupil. Nevertheless, the teachers do not emphasise sufficiently well the use of computer programs in their planning and teaching of the other subjects.
114. The pupils work in Key Stage 2 is mainly within the areas of word processing, but other areas of the curriculum are included at regular intervals. All the pupils cover relevant and appropriate parts of the curriculum even though the standards they achieve are below the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2. For example, in Key Stage 2 the pupils use word processing to copy work they have already written and completed by hand. Consequently, opportunities to use a word processor to draft, edit, cut and paste writing are missed and the quality of the pupils' written work is not enhanced by the information technology. The pupils in Key Stage 1 use the control of programmable

toys with confidence and can steer it around a course. Most of these pupils have developed good skills in controlling a mouse and can drag and drop symbols to create maps of islands and to solve simple mathematical problems.

115. The school has few programs that the teachers can use to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematical ideas, but this is a priority for the coming months. However, the teachers make good use CD-ROMS that contain historical information. For instance the older pupils were observed researching information about the Vikings. This they did competently and with satisfactory levels of skills. There is no significant difference either in the provision made for boys and girls or in the quality of their work. The Internet has recently been installed and the pupils are in the early stages of gaining skills and understanding of the procedures. A few pupils have sent letters to other children in the UK and in Africa and this has raised their interest levels.
116. With the new software and computers in place, the school is making good improvements to the coverage of the information technology curriculum. However, areas such as control and monitoring are better developed in Key Stage 1 with the use of controlled toys than in Key Stage 2 where, for instance, they use a screen logo but do not have the facilities to use sensors and controls. The school is steadily building up its equipment and software for control and monitoring and all teachers and learning support assistants are following an information technology course over the next twelve months to improve their own skills and knowledge.

MUSIC

117. Only one music lesson was seen during the inspection and this was at the end of Key Stage 2. At the time of the last report, the pupils' standards in music were seen as a strength of the school. With the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, the school has decided to spend less time on music. The standards are now in line with the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2.
118. In the lesson observed, the pupils made good progress in the development of the use of various tuned and non-tuned percussion instruments. They explore effectively the range of sounds that can be made with beaters and sticks on non-tuned percussion instruments such as drums, cymbals and tambourines. They can keep a constant beat even when playing against a counter rhythm created by a partner. They can repeat their compositions and can use notation to record what they have composed. They are developing a sense of audience and they willingly perform to others. Many pupils can play the recorder and they accompany hymns in assemblies. Others are learning to play orchestral instruments and are developing a competency with flutes and clarinets.
119. The lesson was successful because the learning objectives were clear and precise. Good intervention and questioning by the teacher ensures that the pupils stay on task and they develop their listening and playing skills. All pupils carry out their tasks willingly and sustain their concentration very well. The school has yet to agree a list of musical skills that become more demanding as the pupils progress and that will enable the teachers to build systematically on prior learning. For example, the pupils in years 5 and 6 do not have a sufficient understanding of the use of dynamics, timbre and structure in their compositions. This will improve the musical knowledge and understanding of all pupils.
120. The pupils' singing in assemblies, and that of the younger pupils who sing many songs from memory to help them with number and with sequencing of stories, is full of enthusiasm. The school makes good use of musical concerts, and the pupils are very willing to take part in these productions which are held in the village hall for the whole community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. The quality of the pupils' work in physical education throughout the school is in line with the expectations for their ages. They enjoy their lessons, especially swimming and games. The school organises the physical education lessons so that swimming, gymnastics and dance alternate each

term. This makes the best use of the time available to the school. Swimming is taught at a public pool in the neighbouring town and the physical education lessons are held either outside on the playground and grass area or in the local village hall some distance away from the school. The pupils are taken to the hall by their parents where the morning register is taken before the lessons start. At the end of the lesson the Key Stage 1 pupils are taken back to the school by car by the parents. The Key Stage 2 pupils walk back to school up a narrow lane. Considering the inconvenience of these arrangements, the teachers make the best possible use of the facilities in the village hall and the school grounds.

122. Swimming is a strength of the school and the pupils' achieve very good standards. They begin swimming early and during the inspection, the reception children were observed crossing the pool wearing various swimming aids, growing in confidence in their developing skills and achieving good standards for their ages. The quality of teaching of swimming is very good. The teachers quickly assess the pupils and set individual targets for each one. Their achievements are recorded effectively and by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven they all exceed the standards expected for the end of Key Stage 2.
123. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress in the development of their skills and understanding of small-sided competitive games. Nearly all are developing good skills of changing speed and direction in dodging and chasing activities with a partner. They enjoy small-sided invading games and most pupils are gaining a satisfactory sense of fair play. They participate energetically and share responsibilities for storage of the equipment after the lesson very well.
124. The lesson observed in the village hall for Years 3 and 4 pupils was well organised and the tasks were well structured. The class assistant was familiar with proposed activities and gave the pupils and the teacher good support. These pupils were also seen preparing for a hockey lesson on the small grass area at the rear of the school. The warm-up skills were satisfactory and the pupils showed great enthusiasm before the lesson was abandoned because it rained. The school has no hall and unfortunately when the weather is unsuitable, the pupils are prevented from carrying out any physical activities on the school site.
125. The teaching is generally successful because in all the lessons observed, the teachers had secure subject knowledge. This has a good impact upon the quality of the pupils' work. The challenge of the tasks is appropriate and develops levels of skills expected for the pupils' ages. They respond well and display very good attitudes and behaviour. They are keen and willing to take part in all activities and through the good management skills of the teachers make good progress throughout these lessons. The teachers' expectations are high and this has a good influence upon the pupils' efforts and enthusiasm for physical education.
126. The school provides a variety of after school activities that involve many pupils. They include netball, football, summer sports and the canoe club. The canoe club on the River Severn is a strength of the school and is well supported by pupils. Many parents give help with the organisation of this club twice a week and have raised money for boats.