

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CLYST ST MARY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Clyst St Mary, Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113066

Headteacher: Mr Mark Lovett

Reporting inspector: Stephanie Denovan  
17718

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 3 March 2000

Inspection number: 191695

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Clyst St Mary Primary School Clyst St Mary Exeter Devon
Postcode:	EX5 1BG
Telephone number:	01392 874583
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Nicholas Tripp
Date of previous inspection:	4 February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Stephanie Denovan, Registered Inspector	Mathematics Religious education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mike Rawlinson, Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Chris Bolton, Team Member	English Geography History Under-fives	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Karen Davies, Team Member	Science Information technology Design and technology	
Lyn Paine, Team Member	Art Music Physical education	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Clyst St Mary Primary is smaller than an average primary school; it has 150 pupils on roll between four and eleven years of age. There are 88 girls and 62 boys and the gender imbalance is most noticeable in Year 2 with six boys and 17 girls. The size of the school has grown by a whole class over the last few years and is now oversubscribed. Almost half the pupils are from outside the immediate area served by the school. The nature of pupils' attainment has changed over those years and attainment on entry now generally exceeds that found nationally. Twenty-two pupils have special educational needs, a figure lower than the national average and a small minority have statements. The large majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties and only a small proportion have physical, specific learning or behaviour difficulties. Five pupils have English as an additional language; this is a bit higher than in most schools. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals in 1999 (7.74) is below the national average of 20.3 per cent.

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

Overall the effectiveness of Clyst St Mary Primary School is satisfactory. Standards are mainly average. However, the achievement of higher attaining pupils is not as good as it should be given their prior attainment. Good quality teaching is beginning to raise standards particularly in English at Key Stage 2. Provision for children in their early years is very good. Overall leadership and management are satisfactory with some good features. The headteacher, staff and governors work as an effective team. Relationships are good and communications effective. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Almost half the teaching and learning is good or better, particularly in Reception and at the top of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is consistently good in English at Key Stage 2.
- The standards of religious education at Key Stage 2 are very high and the quality of teaching is excellent.
- It provides a rich curriculum and consistently high quality teaching and learning for the youngest children.
- The links with parents are excellent and their support is invaluable.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good; cultural development is good.
- The standard of relationships and pupils' personal development are very good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and good standards of behaviour.
- Extensive extra-curricular activities provide enriching learning opportunities.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress when supported well by classroom assistants.
- The governors fulfil their responsibilities well.

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

- Standards compared with similar schools in English, mathematics and science.
- Raising standards further in mathematics and science at both key stages.
- The achievement of higher attaining pupils.
- School improvement planning, particularly the links between monitoring teaching, learning, curriculum provision, and action planning to raise standards.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since it was last inspected in February 1997. There has been considerable improvement in the areas of learning for children under five, in the teaching of English, most notably in the teaching of reading for younger pupils and in religious education at Key Stage 2. Since this time, attainment in mathematics, art, geography, history, music and physical education have remained the same. There have been good improvements in the making element of design and technology across the school and in information technology at Key Stage 1. Relationships and communication with parents and within the school are now very good. Requirements of the National Curriculum are met fully and the schemes and policies in use support improved planning. Overall satisfactory progress has been made with assessment and the effectiveness of monitoring. However, meeting the needs of higher attainers remains a key issue for action.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	B	D
mathematics	C	B	E	E*
science	C	A	C	E

**Key**

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

\* lowest 5% nationally

The table reflects a fluctuation in results over three years with better standards in English at eleven than in mathematics and science. Last year the school's performance in mathematics was in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. This was due to a number of reasons:

- the year group contained a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs;
- pupils did not have a firm grasp of basic skills;
- there was a lack of targeted support for pupils with below average attainment in mathematics;
- the school did not track pupils' progress sufficiently.

Inspection findings show that by the age of eleven, standards in English are above average. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is having a significant impact

upon improving performance, particularly in writing. In mathematics and science standards are broadly in line with the national average but pupils achieve less well against schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. This is because not all teachers expect enough from pupils in science and higher attainers are not challenged sufficiently. Standards in English, mathematics and science compared to similar schools could be higher. Pupils in the Foundation Stage receive a good start to their education and attain higher standards than expected for children of this age. At Key Stage 2, standards exceed expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The whole-school target set for English in 1999 was exceeded and the school is on track to achieve it this year. Attainment in mathematics in 1999 fell far short of the target set because of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The booster sessions after school with Year 6 involving three teachers are aimed at ensuring the school meets this year's challenging target in mathematics.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to learning and the school are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall pupils' behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	The provision to promote pupils' personal development through group work is very good. Relationships in the school are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	very good	satisfactory	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 teaching and learning of children under five are very effective. The teaching of English is good at Key Stage 2 and there is excellent teaching of religious education at this key stage. Good quality teaching or better in almost half the lessons enables pupils to develop and consolidate knowledge and skills and increase their understanding. The teaching of mathematics at both key stages and of English at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. The skills of literacy are taught well and those of numeracy mainly satisfactorily although not all skills are in place securely across the school, such as strategies for working mentally. Teaching meets the needs of average attainers satisfactorily and below average attainers well. It does not yet meet the needs of higher attainers sufficiently. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-targeted support to meet their literacy targets, their numeracy targets less so. Pupils with English as an additional language do well. The school has identified pupils that are gifted and talented but does not track their progress fully. In the lessons observed 17 per cent of teaching was very good or better, 96 per cent was satisfactory or

better and 4 per cent was less than satisfactory. Overall there was 48 per cent of good quality teaching across the school. The large majority of good quality lessons were with the youngest children and at the top of Key Stage 2. The main strength of pupils' learning is the effort they apply to their tasks.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a rich and varied curriculum in Reception, it is of a good quality at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall with the exception of mathematics for below average attaining pupils. Classroom assistants provide well-targeted support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for these pupils is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is also very good and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils.

Relationships with parents are exemplary. Parents think highly of the school and contribute well to their children's learning at home. There are strengths in the curriculum for the youngest children and in the literacy hour and religious education programmes at Key Stage 2. Provision for extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum for those who attend. The weakness in curricular provision is the lack of challenge to higher attainers. The effectiveness of monitoring pupils' academic and personal development is satisfactory overall although there is a weakness in tracking the progress of higher attaining pupils. Annual reports give a good evaluation of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is satisfactory overall; the headteacher and other staff lead appropriately. School improvement planning, measuring and evaluation of progress are not fully effective yet.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring standards and the quality of education is in its infancy. Evaluation of the information gained through monitoring is insufficient to raise attainment in line with similar schools and bring improvements at classroom level.
The strategic use of resources	There is good use of financial resources.

The school has adequate teaching staff and good support staff to match the demands of the curriculum. The quality, range and amount of resources are good. The accommodation is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum although, as the school is oversubscribed, classroom space is extremely limited, particularly for the youngest children. The overall leadership and management of the school is satisfactory with some good features, such as very good relationships and communication, the effectiveness of the governing body and good financial control. There is a weakness in evaluating the school's progress by tracking test results. The school appropriately applies the principles of best value to its management of resources.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is welcoming and the staff are approachable.</li> <li>• The staff work well as a team and are very committed to the school.</li> <li>• Improvements have been made in the school since the last inspection.</li> <li>• Children are well supported.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety at the school gate as the road outside school is so busy.</li> <li>• Able children challenged more in mathematics.</li> <li>• Choir and recorder clubs on different evenings to enable pupils to attend both.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings are consistent with the views expressed by parents. Safety at the school gates at the front and back of the school has been discussed with both the headteacher and chairman of governors during the week of inspection. Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged at both key stages. Pupils wishing to attend both choir and recorder clubs are unable to under the present arrangements; separating the evenings would enable them to attend both.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards at five exceed those expected nationally of the age group. On entry, children have good speaking and listening, reading and writing skills, and are well adjusted socially. A small proportion of children enter able to read and many can write their own name. All but one or two children attend pre-school provision, which is now on site. Children perform well in relation to a national sample when using baseline tests. Children make very good progress in line with their prior attainment in all areas of learning. They receive a flying start to their school life in the Reception class and most are well launched into the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

2. By the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, National Curriculum test results in reading and writing were well above the national average, close to the national average in mathematics and above the national average in science at level 2+. The percentage of pupils attaining higher levels however was below the national averages for all these subjects. When comparing attainment at seven in comparison with schools in similar contexts based on average National Curriculum points, pupils' performance in reading and mathematics is below average and writing is average. The reasons for this are that 19 per cent of pupils were below the average level 2B in reading, 37 per cent below 2B in writing and 27 per cent below 2B in mathematics, with few pupils attaining at the higher level 3. Standards are too low when compared to similar schools given pupils' prior attainment. Over the last three years attainment has ranged from well above the national average in reading to broadly in line with the national average; writing has fluctuated from well below the national average to above it and in mathematics from below to above the national average. With such a variety of results, where the cohort size remains around 20, it is difficult to state the overall trends in performance and see real improvement as expected. Inspection findings show attainment in English at Key Stage 1 is above average in speaking, listening and reading and in line with average standards in writing. The reason for this not being as high as the National Curriculum results compared with all schools in 1999 is the lack of challenge to higher attaining pupils. Inspection findings show attainment in science and mathematics is in line with national expectations. The school has not targeted the performance of underachieving groups of pupils as they move from Key Stage 1 to 2 sufficiently. The expectations of what pupils of higher prior attainment can do are not always high enough, particularly in mathematics and science. As the National Curriculum data from 1995 is unavailable the school has not plotted the added value they provide between the key stages, this is a weakness. During the inspection, higher attaining pupils underachieved in mathematics and science because teaching is not sufficiently focused on teaching to small groups of similar attainment and their needs are not met fully.

3. By the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, National Curriculum test results in English were above the national average at both levels 4+ and 5+. In mathematics they were well below the national averages at both levels 4+ and 5+ and in science, above the national average at level 4+ but well below the national average at level 5+. When comparing attainment at eleven in comparison with schools in similar contexts based on average National Curriculum points, pupils' performance in English and science is below average and performance in mathematics is in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The reasons for this are that 18 per cent of pupils were below the average level 4 in English, 41 per cent were below the average level 4 in mathematics with few pupils achieving at the higher level 5 in science or mathematics. Standards are too low when compared to similar schools given

pupils' prior attainment. Over the last three years attainment in English has slightly dropped although standards have remained at above or well above the national average. In mathematics standards have declined and in science they fluctuate between well above average to average. Inspection findings show attainment in English at Key Stage 2 is above average in all aspects; it is average in mathematics and science. At both key stages pupils with special educational needs largely achieve in line with targets on their individual education plans although not all needs of lower attainers have been identified in mathematics. Below average attainers are achieving well in English. Pupils achieve well when supported by classroom assistants both in class and when withdrawn. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with physical difficulties make good progress because they are fully integrated into lessons and receive a curriculum geared specifically to meet their needs. Higher attaining pupils often receive tasks, which repeat skills they are already confident with, and their achievement suffers as a result, except in English at Key Stage 2, where they do well. Higher attainers in English at Key Stage 1, mathematics and science at both key stages underachieve in relation to their prior attainment. The school has identified its pupils that are gifted and talented but does not yet track their progress fully. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.

4. Standards in other subjects are largely in line with national expectations except in religious education where they are well above at Key Stage 2; pupils make good progress and their performance is good. Standards in religious education at Key Stage 1 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, at Key Stage 2 they exceed these. The sensitivity and development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in this subject is excellent.

5. The school has set challenging whole school targets in English and mathematics. It exceeded the English target last year but fell far short of achieving the target in mathematics. This was due to a number of reasons including the proportion of pupils in that cohort with special educational needs, insufficient support for pupils who struggled with the work, not tracking pupils' progress sufficiently and pupils did not have a firm grasp of numeracy skills, particularly mental calculation ones. Targets set this year are equally challenging and support for Year 6 pupils in the form of booster clubs is aimed at ensuring they are better met.

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

6. Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are very good; they enjoy attending school. The rate of attendance at 95.1 per cent is satisfactory and slightly above the national average for 1998/9. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time. Pupils under five settle very well into the school and to classroom routines and they quickly gain the confidence in their own ability to learn well. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are very good in Reception, often good at Key Stage 1 and mainly good at Key Stage 2. Pupils are alert and attentive, the majority is eager to answer teachers' questions and by their willingness show enjoyment in their work. Many pupils speak of enjoying reading at home and were keen to show the number of books read in their record book. In class, pupils collaborate and work effectively in pairs and groups. Many pupils are able to concentrate and persevere including pupils with learning difficulties. The majority of pupils work on the tasks set conscientiously with minimal supervision. Higher attaining pupils generally have good attitudes to learning although they are challenged insufficiently.

7. Pupils' behaviour is good. They respond well to school rules displayed in classrooms and around the school. Pupils enjoy their free time during break periods.

Younger pupils involve themselves in positive play with the excellent range of resources provided and the older pupils in active group games. All pupils respond appropriately to the need for more orderly behaviour at other times, for example, on returning to classrooms, at assembly and in the dining hall. At these times the majority act sensibly and with maturity. The incidence of inappropriate behaviour is low; parents comment that any such behaviour is dealt with quickly and appropriately by the school. There were no exclusions from the school in the last year.

8. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is very good. While showing appropriate respect, pupils engage positively with their teachers, showing assured self-confidence in speaking up and expressing their views well. This was seen during circle time, in many lessons and in conversation with adults. Pupils work in an atmosphere free from oppressive behaviour, such as bullying. The curriculum provides good opportunities for them to reflect on the way they behave, such as, in religious education. The use of group work in many lessons has a significant impact on pupils' good attitudes towards each other. Pupils are polite and courteous. They readily help each other in the classroom and at play, showing a responsible attitude to the needs of younger pupils. Many pupils show initiative and respond well to the opportunities to take responsibilities, for example, returning registers, cleaning the board, tidying up, as gymnastics monitors and helping at assembly.

9. Approximately three-quarters of pupils attend the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Pupils speak positively of their involvement in the school council, the school's Christmas drama production, and their concerns for those less fortunate than themselves. In conversation with a group of children it was clear that they were very aware of the flood disaster in Mozambique and spoke with feeling and concern about the plight of the children. Pupils' positive attitudes to their schooling, their good behaviour and their very good personal development is a strength of the school and a positive contribution to their learning.

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

10. Overall teaching and learning are good; they are very good in Reception, satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. In the lessons observed 17 per cent of teaching was very good or better, 96 per cent was at least satisfactory and 4 per cent less than satisfactory. The quality of teaching in English at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at both key stages is satisfactory. The teaching of English at Key Stage 2 is consistently good and religious education teaching at Key Stage 2 is excellent. Teachers are competent when teaching phonics and the basic skills of reading, writing, spelling, information technology and mathematics. Teaching in science is broadly satisfactory at both key stages.

11. Teaching at Reception is very good because the teacher assesses children well and knows the next small steps they need to build on their rapidly developing skills. The expectations on these young children are high, well-organised group work encourages personal development. Very good questioning raises attainment and ensures learning develops at the rate needed for success. The range of activities and methods used to make effective progress ensures learning is enjoyable. This was seen in a lesson where pupils played a game well together with dice, others threaded and counted up to 20 rings on string, while others sequenced numbers and played dominoes. All children play an active part in lessons, which ensures their interest and concentration is held. Lessons are socially inclusive for all pupils; they are supported well by teachers and classroom assistants. Activities are appropriately matched to pupils' attainment, which allows them to

work independently. Lessons begin with a summary of prior learning to build progressively on the new skills to be introduced. The good relationships developed with the youngest children ensures they try very hard and put creative effort into their work. They are well motivated, sustain concentration and are developing confidence with learning to think for themselves.

12. At Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are largely satisfactory although at times not enough is demanded of pupils to apply themselves to learning and occasionally there are weaknesses in controlling the class. This happens when lessons or whole-class introductions are too long. Pupils fidget and the pace of their learning slows. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows they are not covering the amount, range and quality of work they should. The activities to meet learning objectives are planned effectively for average and below average attainers but the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met sufficiently. There is a lack of challenge for these pupils. A wide range of methods is used to develop pupils' learning. There is a lack of teaching to small groups of pupils with similar attainment, particularly in mathematics, which is not enabling the accelerated progress that higher attaining pupils need. There is good use of information and communications technology at this key stage to extend learning.

13. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good or better in almost half the lessons and pupils' learn well. The pace of learning and progress quickens as pupils move through this key stage. Particularly good features of teaching are the management of pupils, expectations of the amount and quality of work produced, and the use of resources and homework to reinforce and extend learning. Pupils are interested in their work and learning is enjoyable and fun because of the variety of teaching methods in use. In a religious education lesson, listening to a tape recording of the call to prayer, handling artefacts, and questioning a visitor about her beliefs inspired pupils. These methods enabled pupils to be touched by a sense of imaginative speculation. Planning effectively shows the match of work intended for pupils throughout the attainment range but there is a lack of challenge to higher attainers at this key stage too.

14. The quality of teaching in literacy is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, teachers provide a good balance to word, sentence and text level work, which enables pupils to acquire skills needed and develops their ideas. In a very good lesson seen on comparative and superlative adjectives open-ended questions ensured all pupils contributed at their own level and applied creative thinking to their work. The emphasis given to working in groups has a significant impact on pupils' personal development as they can plan and organise their work well. The wide range of texts used makes learning come alive for pupils. Phonics is taught appropriately. The quality of teaching in numeracy is largely satisfactory at both key stages although the lack of focused teaching in attainment groups and skilfully framed questions to target the needs of all pupils throughout lessons are weaknesses. Pupils with higher attainment are losing out when whole-class introductions cover work they are already competent in. The school has identified its pupils that are gifted and talented but does not track their progress fully. Where planning clearly identifies what is to be taught and learned and this is shared well with pupils it allows them to make progress. Opportunities for quick recall skills are good. At Key Stage 1 some pupils struggle with the mathematical vocabulary needed. With the exception of the Reception class, there is nothing on display to help them with this. Opportunities for developing pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum are not as frequent as they could be.

15. Overall teaching helps pupils to understand more and make the progress expected

with the exception of the lack of challenge to higher attainers. In excellent lessons seen in religious education at Key Stage 2 methods of teaching such as using role-play, outside visitors and artefacts enable a depth of feeling to be expressed. Overall teachers' subject knowledge is appropriate and planning develops effectively from clear learning intentions that are shared with pupils. This ensures pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding to develop well. There are some good examples in Reception and at Key Stage 2 where teachers assess pupils' progress well although the consistency of tracking pupils' academic attainment is patchy across the school. Each child has a next steps target card containing three targets to be worked on over the term. The quality of these targets, agreed with parents, is variable and ranges from specific to vague. This highlighting of pupils' difficulties is helping pupils to understand how they can improve. A good feature of teaching throughout the school is the opportunity for pupils to reflect on previous learning at the beginning of lessons and to review learning at the end. The teaching of religious education at Key Stage 2 provides very good opportunities for pupils to apply previous learning to new work such as when artefacts symbolising prayer in different religions are compared. The pace of learning is generally satisfactory although where lessons and introductions are too long pupils' progress slows. The learning of lower attainers is often good where there is in-class support from classroom assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language receive a socially inclusive programme that enables their learning to develop well. Resources are well used to develop learning and provision for the use of information and communications technology tools are integrated into subjects appropriately.

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

16. The quality and range of the school's learning opportunities for promoting high achievement for children under five is very good; it is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The procedures for introducing children to school are good and help children and parents to feel part of the school very quickly. This good start is helped by the links with the pre-school group on site. The curriculum overall is appropriately broad and balanced and while meeting the interests of pupils does not meet the needs of higher attainers fully. The organisation of the curriculum promotes pupils' personal development very well, mainly through group work. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The balance of time within some lessons, such as in mathematics, science, religious education and physical education, is not always effective as lessons which are over-long lose their momentum. The timetable allocation for these subjects is too long and at times the introduction to lessons is over-long. Appropriate priority is given to the National Literacy Strategy to raise standards in English. The effectiveness of its strategies for teaching literacy skills is satisfactory overall, and generally good at Key Stage 2. The school has made a start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy but the impact on the standards of achievement of higher attaining pupils is slow and raising standards in mathematics generally not as rapid as it should be.

17. The school's provision for equality of access and opportunity for pupils is generally very good except there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in most subjects, with the exception of English at Key Stage 2. In all other respects it is very good. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs to ensure that they have full access to the curriculum. They are supported well in classrooms and have good additional support outside the classroom as appropriate. Pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated in the school and make good progress.

18. Through its wide range of extra-curricular activities the school provides a very good level of enrichment to its curriculum. Pupils enthusiastically attend drama, netball, football, choir, guitar, puzzles and games, French, skipping, technology and science clubs. 'Booster' clubs for Year 6 pupils provide extra support to raise attainment in mathematics and English and are well attended. Particularly good use is made of resources within the community to provide a wide range of planned activities, all of which contribute positively to pupils' learning. A good range of historical, geographical and scientific visits takes place, including a Year 6 stay at a residential centre. These broaden pupils' experience and bring relevance to the curriculum. Visitors and events in the school are varied and included representatives from the police and lifeboat services and from different religions. These enable pupils to reflect on their experiences to develop spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Provision for sex education and attention to drugs misuse is in place and circle time provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to discuss a range of issues.

19. Constructive relationships are firmly established with partner institutions allowing for satisfactory transfer of pupils and documentation between schools. The school has sound contacts with local businesses, such as the Friend's Provident and is in the process of developing these further. The school is a member of a partnership of schools, but its location makes liaison difficult and curricular links are not developed fully.

20. The positive situation in relation to pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been maintained since the last inspection and overall provision is mainly very good. Pupils' spiritual development is very good and is promoted through the care and concern shown towards all pupils by staff and in some very high quality religious education lessons. Teachers value pupils and the contributions they make and encourage them to explore these ideas and feelings. For example, when learning about the work of Mother Teresa, pupils were encouraged to reflect in some depth on her commitment to supporting under-privileged people. Overall the quality of collective worship is satisfactory and makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

21. Pupils' moral development is very good. They respect and value their own achievements and those of others and act considerately towards each other, their teachers and visitors. Pupils are aware of the high standards of behaviour that are expected and have a clear sense of what is right and what is wrong. Concern for those less fortunate than themselves are achieved through several subjects. For example in history, in their study of Mary Seacole pupils developed empathy with the soldiers wounded in the Crimean War and made comparisons with their own lives.

22. The school has very effective provision for social education. There is a very strong sense of community within the school. Relationships are very good. Adults in the school provide very good role models for the pupils in the way they courteously address each other and pupils. There are many good examples of pupils in lessons working with each other in pairs and groups. Pupils are given a range of responsibilities as helpers and take a pride in the tasks they complete.

23. Cultural development is good. Visits to, for example, London and Caerleon, contribute well to pupils' historical understanding of their culture. Using writers' and artists' work enables pupils to study cultural traditions well. Studying the diversity and richness of other cultures is well planned in religious education and geography.

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

24. The school has a strong ethos of care and consideration and the effectiveness of the school's monitoring of personal development is good. Teachers know their pupils very well. Relationships with pupils, parents and within the staff are very good. There is a 'positive buzz' in the school as described by a parent. The school buildings and classrooms are bright and well presented, the school routines run well, all providing a happy and secure atmosphere for pupils to enjoy their schooling and make progress. The guidance of teachers and the light touch of the school rules encourage pupils to develop good standards of self-discipline and responsibility. Very good guidance and teaching in the Reception class, encourages early self-confidence of pupils, who learn well and make good progress in their personal development.

25. The effectiveness of monitoring pupils' academic progress is satisfactory overall. The introduction of 'next step' cards and agreed target setting for individual pupils encourages them to be self-critical, and understand what they need to do to improve. The provision of after school 'booster' classes for Year 6 provides additional teaching of pupils in smaller groups to improve standards in English and mathematics and raise pupils' overall confidence and achievements. The standard of teachers' records to support an assessment of pupils' attainment is variable; this includes the tracking of pupils' academic progress to inform planning. Tracking the progress of higher attaining pupils is a weakness. The school is not providing adequately for these pupils. The provision for monitoring pupils' personal development is satisfactory, teachers' knowledge of their pupils is very good and is in part reflected in the annual reports to parents. These meet statutory requirements and give a good evaluation of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The monitoring and support for pupils with special needs is good, including the involvement of parents in their individual educational plans.

26. The award system for good work, behaviour and achievement is effective. Pupils receiving award certificates at an assembly during the inspection were clearly proud to celebrate their success with the whole school and in the presence of some parents. The school's ethos and practice encourages good behaviour. In the event of misbehaviour the guidance for staff in the school's sanctions and bullying policies is clear. The staff deal with all incidents quickly and where appropriate the implications of an incident are brought out at circle time as a teaching point for pupils. Parents are consulted quickly if a pupil's behaviour gives cause for more serious concern. The measures to eliminate aggressive behaviour, including bullying are effective.

27. The school governors closely monitor the school's health and safety policy, its implementation, and reports. Guidance to staff in the event of an emergency is displayed throughout the school and exit doors are marked clearly. Parents have raised concerns about safety at the school gates due to the proximity of the busy village road, this matter has been brought to the attention of the headteacher and chairman of governors and the gates need to be fastened securely. A satisfactory number of staff are trained in first aid and appropriate records are kept of accidents. A nominated staff member is trained in child protection procedures and satisfactory links with outside agencies are in place. There is no written guidance to staff on this matter, which is an area for development. Through the curriculum pupils learn about personal health and safety issues as part of the 'ourselves' topic. The school monitors pupils' attendance rates effectively and the need for good attendance is included in the home-school agreement.

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

28. Since the last inspection the partnership between the school and the parents has improved significantly. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is now exceptionally good. The major concern expressed by parents at the last inspection of poor relationships and the inadequate way issues were dealt with has been totally reversed. The views expressed at the well-attended parents meeting were very positive in support of the changes and in the way that the school now fully involves them in the learning of their children. One parent commented 'we are always included'. The analysis of parents replies to the questionnaire reflect these views, all parents responding indicated that the school is very approachable and that the school now works closely with them. There is now a very strong bond of confidence and respect between the school and parents. All parents spoken to expressed their pleasure that their children attend this school and they are happy with provision. Parents value the forums arranged for them by the school. Parents' views were sought on school development, the running of the school and suggested areas for improvement. A meeting held to discuss the introduction of the numeracy hour was much appreciated and those parents who were able to attend a literacy and numeracy lesson valued the opportunity. The satisfactory introduction of a home-school agreement is welcomed by parents along with the parents' handbook, which was prepared in partnership with them. The quality of the routine communication with parents is very good, including the headteacher's newsletter, the 'Friday Flyer', and the large 'latest news board' at the entrance to the school. These provide good and timely information to parents on a range of matters affecting the school, on the celebration of achievement, and more routinely the events of the coming week and current day.

29. The school holds two parents' evenings a year for consultation on children's progress. At the autumn term meeting targets for improvement are set and agreed between child and parent. Reports issued in the spring term are comprehensive and clearly presented. During the summer term's meeting teachers discuss the report with parents and review their child's progress with targets. The school has an open day late in the summer term for parents to see and talk to staff about their children's work and progress. Parents express satisfaction with these arrangements. They are very positive about the value of the meetings and the majority indicated that they were well informed about their children's progress. Parents commented that their children were never bored and often challenged, the numeracy hour is having a positive impact, and that the standard of their children's reading is improving. Parents considered that children with learning difficulties are well supported by the school.

30. The majority of parents expressed satisfaction with the amount of homework their child receives and considered that the homework and the reading record books encouraged parental participation. A regular number of parents accept the school's invitation to help in school, as helpers with reading, during the literacy hour, with design and technology and computer work. A number of parents are involved in the extra-curricular activities and assist with the care of pupils on school visits. The participation of parents through the social and fundraising events of a very proactive Parent Teacher Friends Association supports the strong community atmosphere of the school and provides valued resources to enhance the well-being and learning of pupils. They raise a substantial amount of money annually. The effective home-school link and the very positive and confident views held by parents is now a strength of the school. This strong partnership is providing a very significant contribution to pupils' learning.

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

31. The overall leadership and management of the school is satisfactory with some

good features, notably:

- there are very good relationships and communication;
- a high performing team of staff is developing;
- an effective governing body;
- good financial management and control.

32. The headteacher and key staff lead and manage the school appropriately to promote effective teaching. The monitoring of planning, observing literacy and numeracy lessons, and checking the progress of identified pupils is in place, but evaluation of this information is not yet rigorous enough in having a strong impact on raising standards, particularly for higher attainers. There is a positive commitment to improvement from everyone involved with the school, a good capacity to succeed and a determination to raise standards. Staff with subject leader responsibilities know what is expected of them but there is unevenness in the way they support other staff and the rigour with which they drive developments through. In religious education and information technology the co-ordinators have a clear plan of action to bring about improvements.

33. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. Their committee minutes for curriculum, finance, personnel and pupils, and sites and buildings document their good management of the school. They fulfil the roles of supporting the work of the school as critical friends and joint strategic management well and ask appropriate questions about holding the school to account for standards attained and the quality of education provided. Governors have a well-established programme of visiting the school to see for themselves how the school functions and the strengths and weaknesses it has. They set targets for the headteacher but these are not linked directly enough with raising standards. Appropriate whole school targets for English were set and exceeded last year although those in mathematics fell far short of expectations. Booster classes for Year 6 are appropriately redressing this shortcoming. Governors work closely with the headteacher and finance officer to manage and control financial resources. Governors, headteacher and staff have responded well to making significant improvements to the school since the last inspection. Governors are rigorous in their appointment of staff and their commitment to getting this important task right is impressive. Staff meet with the headteacher on an annual basis to hold a development interview. Although not all staff have been appraised in line with the recognised scheme, classroom observations for literacy and numeracy have fulfilled this aspect in the interim between performance management and appraisal. The headteacher has not yet been appraised.

34. School development planning is extensive and builds on qualitative views from parents, governors and staff of the progress the school makes. As a tool for improvement it lacks precision. It is not sufficiently focused on actions designed to directly raise standards. Too little use is made of information gained from the monitoring of teaching, learning and curriculum provision to inform action planning. This can be seen in mathematics where the headteacher knows exactly where the strengths and weaknesses in the subject are but has not translated findings from the numeracy audit and lesson observations into the improvement plan. The development plan for numeracy focuses more on implementation rather than raising standards. This is because the success criteria to enable progress to be measured and evaluated are not as succinct and sharp as they should be. There is good analysis of data at threshold target levels in Key Stage 2 only. There is insufficient tracking of pupils through Key Stage 1 and targeting of underperforming groups to raise attainment, particularly for higher attainers. Good use is made of baseline assessment to plan work for pupils and although challenging predictions are made for each year group of expected levels attained in the National Curriculum these

are not rigorously evaluated each year. Target setting at classroom level is well established and allows pupils to see the improvements they need to make. Targets are not sufficiently challenging for higher attainers. Monitoring is developing appropriately but there is a lack of evaluation to shape the direction of improvement.

35. The school's spending decisions relate to its priorities well. It appropriately applies the principles of best value to its management of resources by seeking competitive quotes when necessary. Governors challenge and discuss spending fully as they receive detailed monthly financial reports that enable them to manage and control the budget well. Pupils benefit from wisely targeted spending as the quality, range and quantity of learning resources is mainly good. The school does not record its actions systematically to improve recommendations made in the auditor's report although most are now in place. The school makes good use of new technologies such as electronic mail and Internet applications. They do not yet take advantage of a pupil tracking system to aid data analysis. There is an appropriate match of teachers to the curriculum and good use is made of support staff.

36. The aims of the school, shown in the school development plan, are largely realised with the exception of achieving the highest possible standards for the highest attainers. The commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all pupils is reflected throughout its work. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, although only part-time, has improved management of special educational needs significantly from a very low base. Good support is provided for lower attaining pupils to meet the needs identified in their individual educational plans, particularly in literacy. Not all their mathematical needs are identified fully and there are few resources to meet pupils' numeracy needs. Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils enabling them to make the progress required, and the special educational needs assistant supports well both in class and when withdrawing pupils. She has very good communications with the teachers about the pupils she supports through contact books. Classroom assistants understand the role they play in supporting pupils' needs, and liaison with class teachers is also good. Relocating the room for support into the centre of the school was a good move towards social inclusion. The socially inclusive programme for pupils where English is an additional language are good; they are supported well and integrate fully. The needs of higher attaining pupils at both key stages are not met effectively.

37. As the school is oversubscribed space in classrooms and central areas is tight. This is particularly noticeable in the first class where the large equipment so essential in a Foundation Stage classroom is used extensively. The school manages its accommodation well. The grounds are well planned to support learning opportunities such as the wildlife area and adventure playground. The playground outside the Reception class is not fenced solely for their use although in good weather children can work outside. Playground markings provide good opportunities for pupils to play and learn. There are excellent resources available for pupils at lunchtime, such as old sheets for making camps over picnic benches and a wide range of small world toys and games. Pupils use this equipment very well and the quality of their play and relationships with each other is richer as a result. The library is positioned well in the central area of the school and pupils know how to find books using the catalogue system. The use of the library as a resource supports good quality learning. Generally there is a good range, amount and quality of resources for learning, these are used well particularly in English and religious education.

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

The school should now:

**1. Improve the achievement of higher attaining pupils to ensure they meet the**

**standards compared with similar schools they are capable of by:**

- identifying, assessing and meeting their needs;
- targeting and tracking underperforming groups;
- challenging them throughout lessons.

(Paragraphs 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 17, 36, 47, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 68, 70, 72 and 92)

**2. Raise attainment further in mathematics by ensuring:**

- a wide variety of strategies for working mentally are taught well;
- teachers teach directly to groups of pupils of similar attainment within lessons;
- skilfully framed questions target the needs of all pupils throughout lessons;
- there is depth to the work on solving problems, particularly by organising and interpreting data throughout Key Stage 2;
- there is a planned programme of identifying and increasing opportunities for developing pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum;
- targets are identified in individual educational plans for those pupils who struggle and resources are obtained to support their needs.

(Paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 12, 14, 16, 54-60 and 62)

**3. Raise attainment in science further by:**

- providing greater challenge for higher attaining pupils;
- ensuring teachers' planning shows clear learning objectives for pupils of different attainment;
- providing activities to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

(Paragraphs 2, 3, 64-68, 70 and 72)

**4. Improve the precision of school improvement planning by:**

- focusing action on directly raising standards;
- linking monitoring with evaluations to bring improvements at classroom level;
- sharpening success criteria to enable progress to be measured effectively.

(Paragraphs 32 and 34)

**Other issues which should be considered by the school:**

- improving the consistency of assessing and tracking pupils' learning and progress;  
(Paragraphs 2, 5, 14, 15, 25, 34, 47, 63, 78 and 89)
- the length of some lessons and their introductions.  
(Paragraphs 12, 15, 16, 55, 67, 91 and 94)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	13	31	48	4	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)		150
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	13	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	13	13	12
	Total	21	21	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (100)	95 (89)	91 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (95)	95 (91)	95 (95)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	7	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	6	9
	Girls	6	3	6
	Total	14	9	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (92)	53 (85)	88 (100)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	8
	Girls	5	3	6
	Total	13	10	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (85)	59 (69)	82 (77)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	127
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)	5.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	30

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

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	83

*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	98/99
	£
Total income	251088
Total expenditure	256613
Expenditure per pupil	1808
Balance brought forward from previous year	14587
Balance carried forward to next year	9062

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	148
Number of questionnaires returned	75

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	44	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	59	7	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	59	8	3	0
The teaching is good.	60	37	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	48	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	27	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	36	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	31	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	49	0	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	52	1	0	0

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents feel the school is welcoming and the staff work together well as a very committed team. They are approachable and parents feel their children are supported well by the staff. Parents recognise the improvements made since the last inspection. They have concerns about safety at the school gate due to the busy road. They feel that able children are not always challenged fully in mathematics. Parents appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered but problems occur when recorder and choir clubs are held on the same evenings.

## **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**

38. There is a broad range of attainment on entry to Reception but overall the children are entering with an above average level of competence and skills in most areas. On entry to Reception, the children are assessed using material published by the National Foundation for Educational Research and results show that standards are generally above average in all the areas of learning, with particular strengths in personal and social development. Children make very good progress in this class. The majority are well on the way towards exceeding the standards expected for their age in the six areas of learning.

39. The personal and social development of children is very good and standards for the majority are well above the expectations for their age. They enjoy coming to school and settle well into the secure routines established by staff. They relate confidently to a range of adults and ask for help when needed. Children develop confidence, knowledge and independence through a variety of individual, small group and whole class activities. They settle down quietly and listen well in discussion periods. Most children are keen to answer questions and they listen respectfully to the ideas of others. They are attentive, eager to learn, co-operate, take turns and share equipment well. Children behave well and show respect for property and one another. Teaching in this area is very good. The teacher expects children to behave sensibly and this has a positive effect on the atmosphere in the class.

40. Children's language and literacy development is very good and standards are generally above the expectations for this age. Their speaking and listening skills develop well. The teacher encourages them to contribute to discussions and listen to one another. Many opportunities are used to encourage children to extend their vocabulary. This was seen in the music session. Children used the word 'orchestra' and 'solo' and through appropriate activities came to understand the meaning of the words. They extend their knowledge of stories well and make good progress with reading. Many name some initial letter sounds and use these to identify simple commonly used words. They have the confidence to share books with an adult and use all the skills they have learned to make sense of the story. A significant minority can read simple sentences with confidence. Early writing skills develop well. Many use pencils with increasing control and copy letters correctly. Higher attaining pupils can write simple words unaided. The teaching of language and literacy is very good. The teacher has taken care with the introduction of literacy and this is making a significant impact on the quality of learning and children's progress. Frequent, well organised opportunities are given for children to develop these skills.

41. Children's mathematical development is very good and attainment is above the expectation for their age by the time they are five. Many are able to count to twenty and a few children know that if five counters are taken away from fifteen, ten are left. They have a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary such as add, count on, more than and less than. They know several number rhymes and songs. Many children can copy numbers. Children show an interest in their work and behave well. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The teacher plans good opportunities for practical activities to allow children to investigate and record numbers, shapes and measures. Progress in mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills is very good.

42. At an early stage, children are given appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They develop their investigative skills well when finding out about the different ways in which toys move. They gain a deeper understanding of the passage of time by comparing old and new toys. They become more aware of the main features of the locality and make three-dimensional plans of the roads and houses. They learn the safe places to cross the road. Computer skills develop well and they can produce a simple piece of text using 'Pendown'. The majority can delete words and are confident when using the mouse. They develop good skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building to make models, which they plan. Overall by the age of five standards in relation to this area of learning exceed the expectations for their age. Teaching is good. There are systems in place for keeping children on task and encouraging interest during sessions.

43. Progress in physical development is good and children by the age of five are achieving the national expectations for their age. Children demonstrate a good level of manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination in their colouring and cutting out. They develop confidence and co-ordination when moving to music, whilst practising a dance for an assembly. Behaviour is good and children are sensible in large group situations, such as when working in the hall. The quality of teaching of physical development is good. The teacher plans carefully, with due regard to safety. She knows what she expects children to learn by the end of the lesson.

44. Children make good progress in their creative development and their achievements are above expectations for their age. They made the most of opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form through working with a wide range of materials to create a collage related to the story they were reading. They are enthusiastic about listening to music. They enjoy exploring fast and slow sounds using a variety of percussion instruments. The quality of teaching of creative learning is good. The teacher listens carefully to what children have to say and leads them to explore new ideas and express these through a variety of media.

45. The quality of teaching for children under five is very good overall. Relationships between teacher and children are good and the very good management of children produces a stable atmosphere conducive to learning. Higher attaining children receive a good level of challenge and make good progress. There are high expectations of good behaviour and children are encouraged to persevere with activities. Some activities provided are very imaginative, such as the follow-up to the story "We're going on a Bear Hunt" in the school grounds. This captured their interest and imagination and enabled them to learn the key words of the story. There is sensitive support for children with special educational needs. Classroom assistants' support is good, and staff work together well as a team. Planning closely follows national guidance. Learning objectives are clear, and resources appropriately identified and used well. Accommodation is cramped for the numbers of children and necessary equipment but the space is well used. The lack of an outside enclosed area and large toys limits some aspects of physical and creative development.

46. There has been considerable improvement in the areas of learning for children under five since the last inspection report in 1997. The main weaknesses were teacher's planning which lacked structure and detail, insufficient use of assessment to inform teaching and lack of detailed records. Teaching is now very good, as opposed to satisfactory in the last report. Planning is now effective. It is based on nationally recommended areas of learning and dovetails into the early stages of the National Curriculum as appropriate. Assessment procedures and records of progress are now used

well to build on what has already been achieved.

## **ENGLISH**

47. Standards in English are above average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. They are average by the end of Key Stage 1. Across the school pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are achieving well. In the 1997 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were average for reading and above average for writing when compared with all schools. In writing, no pupils achieved the higher level 3. Results in 1999 compared with schools with a similar background show standards are average for writing and below average for reading. National test results at the age of eleven in 1999, show standards, including pupils achieving the higher level 5, are above average. In comparison with similar schools in 1999, their performance was below average. In part these results reflected the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils, the early introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, and insufficient tracking of pupils' progress by the school. However, inspection evidence shows an improvement in standards, particularly in writing at Key Stage 2. The National Literacy Strategy is clearly having an impact on standards now that it is being fully implemented in classrooms. The careful teaching of a range of reading strategies at Key Stage 1 shows that a higher proportion of pupils are on course to achieve the higher level 3. Realistic targets have been set by the school at Key Stage 2 to improve standards further.

48. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of speaking and listening are above average with most pupils able to respond well to questions and ideas in discussions. They are keen to talk about their work at the end of lessons. They listen to each other with care and progressively become confident speakers in a variety of situations. They speak clearly and in an interesting way in Year 2 about the objects they bring into school as part of the show and tell session. They are able to frame sensible questions about these. By the end of their time in school, standards of speaking and listening are above average. In Year 6, pupils understand the meaning of a wide range of words and articulate their ideas well whilst their classmates listen carefully to the points of view put forward. Pupils make good progress in learning the skills of speaking and listening across the school. The youngest pupils read the story of Red Riding Hood with confidence. Older pupils make good use of formal English to explain superlative and comparative adjectives. The oldest pupils talk confidently about a variety of literacy genres. Pupils' ability to listen carefully to the teacher and follow instructions develops well.

49. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and most pupils read simple texts with some confidence and fluency. The majority acquire a good range of strategies, including letter sounds and blends, and use these well to tackle new and unfamiliar words. Pupils begin to show preference for different types of books and most have little difficulty in discussing characters and plots in stories. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are fluent readers and standards are above average. Pupils show a real understanding of a range of literature and have a good understanding of story structure. They begin to develop skills of inference and deduction in their reading. Most pupils know how to use reference systems effectively to gain information they require for their work. The progress pupils make with learning to read is good across both key stages. Year 1 pupils build on previously learned skills to tackle simple texts with increasing confidence and accuracy. By Year 3, pupils use a variety of approaches to interpret new words. Older pupils enjoy reading to others and interpreting clues and evidence in mystery stories they are studying.

50. Standards of writing are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and are not as good as

they should be. There is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. By the age of seven pupils understand the importance of organising their work so that it follows a sequence and many write interesting sentences. They apply their knowledge of word patterns and letter sounds to improve their spelling. Handwriting is not joined but is usually well formed. By the time pupils leave school, standards in writing are above average. Pupils in Year 6 competently structure and revise their work, improving its quality. Through the written word they convey the mood of the beginning of a mystery story. They understand a range of narrative and literacy techniques used by authors. They develop their ability well to identify different genres, such as fairy tales and detective stories, and to use these in their writing. Work is generally well presented, well organised into paragraphs and punctuation is used correctly. The good presentation in English, however, is not applied consistently in other subjects. The progress pupils make with learning to write is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. In Year 1 pupils compose simple and interesting sentences. Handwriting, spelling and punctuation develop appropriately. When writing, pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of how to sequence events in stories. Year 3 pupils develop their knowledge of narrative conventions well and produce some good examples of writing a short scene for a play. Older pupils use words adventurously and to good effect in their writing. Handwriting is usually well formed and joined. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' argument, commentary, narrative and dialogue writing is effective.

51. There has been an improvement in the teaching of English since the last inspection, most notably in the teaching of reading for younger pupils. The main weaknesses were the limited range of strategies that the least confident readers bring to their reading and lack of ability in the phonic blending of sounds to form words. The teaching of letter sounds and blends is now carefully taught and even the youngest pupils have a good range of strategies to interpret new and unfamiliar words, such as sounds, initial letters, picture and context cues as well as breaking down words into parts. The National Literacy Strategy is now firmly in place across the school, which ensures that knowledge and skills build up as pupils move through the school. The absence of a scheme of work at the time of the last inspection did not ensure such progress.

52. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The major reason for this difference in judgement is the lower level of expectation in relation to standards of writing for higher attaining pupils in some lessons. Teachers are working hard but evidence from observations and analysis of work indicates that these pupils have skills that are not being stretched to the full. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of English and use this effectively to produce efficient learning. Teachers expect pupils to concentrate in lessons and this has a positive effect on the quality and quantity of work produced. Pupils are expected to behave well and examples of their teachers' high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are seen in Years 4 and 5. Teachers plan lessons carefully and are clear about what they expect pupils to learn by the end; these are shared with pupils. Lessons are well organised and a variety of appropriate teaching strategies keep pupils interested. Effective use is made of questioning to help pupils clarify ideas and to provide further information, although at times questioning is not adapted to the needs of the higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1. Next step targets are used appropriately to ensure pupils are aware of what they need to do next to improve. Teachers generally manage pupils well. They treat them with respect and value their contribution, as a result pupils pay good attention to the teacher and listen carefully to one another.

53. The literacy co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure the National Literacy Strategy is implemented and has organised useful resources to support this. She has monitored

carefully the implementation of literacy in classrooms and appropriate changes have been made in order to raise standards. There are satisfactory contributions to the development of literacy skills from other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

54. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is in line with the national average although fewer than expected pupils attain at the higher levels. This mirrors exactly the findings of the National Curriculum test results in 1999. When comparing attainment at seven in comparison with schools in similar contexts based on National Curriculum average points scores, pupils' performance is below average. This is because 27 per cent of pupils achieved below the expected 2B level, and few attained the higher level 3. Pupils with average attainment and those with English as an additional language are achieving broadly in line with standards expected but there is underachievement amongst the higher and lower attainers. Pupils are not secure with some of the basic skills of mental calculation work, such as doubling and halving numbers and place value; without these skills it is difficult to raise attainment to above average levels. Where classroom assistants support groups of lower attaining pupils they make good progress. When their needs are not identified sufficiently or form part of their individual education plans progress is very slow. The special needs assistant has few resources to support pupils mathematically when they are withdrawn. The results of National Curriculum tests have fluctuated over time. Over the last three years they have varied from above to below average. This unstable swing in attainment is the result of lack of emphasis given to tracking the progress of pupils. The school has now recognised this. Given pupils' prior attainment and the good start they now receive in the reception class both standards and achievement at this key stage should be higher.

55. Achievement is not as good as it could be at Key Stage 1 because some lessons are as long as 75 minutes. This is too long for pupils to sustain their concentration and leads to a slowing of progress. About half the pupils can count in 20s up to 200 and follow a number sequence. Not all are completely secure with odd and even numbers. Pupils struggle to recall the alternative mathematical vocabulary needed and there is nothing displayed on the walls to help them. Higher attaining pupils are not secure with the strategies needed for quick-fire mental calculation and not confident with solving whole number problems involving multiplication and division. Lessons begin well with pupils listening but concentration wanes over the course of the lesson.

56. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is mainly in line with the national average although higher attaining pupils are not achieving what they are capable of. This is a better result than the findings of the National Curriculum test in 1999 where the school's performance was well below the national average. This was due to a number of factors:

- the year group contained a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs;
- pupils did not have a firm grasp of basic skills;
- there was a lack of targeted support for pupils with below average attainment;
- the school did not track pupils' progress sufficiently.

57. When comparing attainment at eleven in comparison with schools in similar contexts based on National Curriculum average points scores, pupils' performance is very low and in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. This is because 41 per cent of pupils did not reach the expected level 4 and few attained the higher level 5. The National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to raise attainment although it is not yet sufficiently in place to do so with the

rapid speed that is necessary. Achievement for pupils with English as an additional language and those of average attainment is satisfactory but as with Key Stage 1 it is not high enough for those with higher and lower attainment. Over time, attainment is inconsistent and fluctuates too widely from year to year.

58. Achievement is not as good as it should be for higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2. Pupils are not secure when applying mathematics to practical contexts and are very unsure about what sort of mathematical question is asked for. The school has recognised this and pupils are now introduced to problem solving work at the top end of the key stage although this is not yet well-established throughout. Many are not confident with choosing the quick way to add 19 to a number and fail to see that by doubling £4.50 to get £9.00 makes it easier to work mentally with whole numbers. This was seen in a lesson with the oldest pupils when working on problem solving involving money. The precision of the National Numeracy Strategy techniques is absent in the whole class introductory sessions. Giving the same oral work to all levels of attainment is not meeting the needs of pupils. At times the lower attainers struggle to keep up and lose concentration and at others the higher attainers are covering skills they have already mastered. At both key stages there is insufficient direct teaching within the lesson to groups of pupils of different attainment, particularly to higher attainers to lift standards. Teachers act in a supervisory role, which is inefficient in stretching the attainment of pupils. At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good recall of the properties of shapes and understand work on angles well. They enjoy the mental calculation work and strive hard to improve their performance.

59. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that investigative skills are not as well developed as they should be and consequently pupils' attainment is below what is expected. Attainment in number and shape, space and measures is in line with expectations and although attainment in data handling is in line with that expected for pupils' age it is not developed fully across the key stages. Three teachers are involved with the Year 6 booster club to help raise attainment. Remedial work on data handling is occurring effectively at these sessions.

60. The quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory overall although it is not having a significant impact on raising standards yet. At Key Stage 1, lessons are planned effectively for the average and below average attainers but there is insufficient challenge provided for higher attainers. A good range of teaching methods is used to develop the sequencing of numbers although there are lost opportunities for teaching strategies of addition. For example when a pupil added  $8+9 = 17$  the teacher did not ask how the child arrived at the answer, or to give an account of how it was calculated, or to use it to teach doubling - add two eights plus one. The plenary at the end of the lessons is generally used well to consolidate and extend the learning. At Key Stage 2, some of the introductions are too long resulting in a loss of concentration from pupils and noise levels rise. There is a good balance of new work and skills to be consolidated. Generally lessons have a good pace leading to productive work in the time available.

61. Pupils' competence in numeracy is not developed as well as it might be across all subjects. There is no planned programme to implement this. A few examples exist in science at Key Stage 2 of graphs but this is under-developed. Opportunities for developing pupils' information and communications technology skills are appropriately integrated into the work at both key stages. Television programmes are used well to reinforce numeracy facts.

62. Since the last inspection attainment has remained the same although that measured by National Curriculum tests in 1999 has declined. Number work last time and across all

subjects was good, it is now satisfactory. Problem solving skills last time were satisfactory and have now weakened. Lower attaining pupils last time made good progress, this has largely been maintained; higher attainers lacked challenge and reduced opportunities for sustained progress and this remains the same. Pupils' responses last time and their ability to work in groups was often good; these remain good. Last time there was good quality teaching overall and now it is satisfactory. The subject has declined since last inspected.

63. Monitoring has started but it does not yet link auditing the subject with planned actions and evaluations to judge progress and bring change at classroom level. Pupils' work across the school is not monitored sufficiently for inconsistencies. Medium-term planning is monitored and a mental skills programme was introduced as a result of findings. There is a lack of rigour in tracking pupils' progress. The policy is well out of date and due for revision.

## **SCIENCE**

64. At the end of Key Stage 1, in the teacher assessments of 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 was above the national average. The attainment of pupils was particularly high in the areas of 'materials and their properties' and for 'life and living processes'. The number of pupils achieving level 3 or above was below the national average. The analysis of work during inspection and observations in lessons indicates that the reason for this difference is that there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. Learning objectives are not sharply defined for pupils of different abilities and the science activities do not satisfactorily deepen their knowledge and understanding. For example in Year 1, all pupils completed the same task, when looking at how things move in their adventure play area.

65. The results of National Curriculum tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that the number of pupils reaching level 4 or above was higher than the national average but was well below at the higher level 5. When compared with similar schools based on average National Curriculum points, pupils' performance was well below average. The reason for this is that there were few pupils achieving level 5. There is also a significant difference between the test results and the teacher assessment results for pupils attaining at the higher levels. This is because there are inconsistencies in the way in which some teachers assess the higher attaining pupils and activities are often over-directed by teachers.

66. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to raise their own questions and test out their hypotheses. For example in Year 4, the introduction to a topic on the Solar System was the same for all pupils and lacked challenge for higher attainers. This led to some pupils not being fully engaged throughout the lesson. Pupils in Year 2 use equipment selected by the teacher to carry out experiments without thinking for themselves or about the principles of fair testing. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls. In both key stages most pupils develop an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding about life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. In Year 1, they know that plants are living, they observe and compare green plants which grow in light and dark places, realising that a plant needs sunlight and water to grow. In Year 2, they recognise forces as push and pulls and that these cause movement. At Key Stage 2, they use a forcemeter to measure the force to pull a weighted basket across a table. They carry out practical investigations and most understand the principles of experimentation and the need for fair testing.

67. The quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1, 4 and 5. In the best lessons planning is good and appropriate learning objectives are identified. Expectations of the majority of pupils are high, the class is organised effectively and controlled well. The pace of the lesson is brisk and provides appropriate challenge. For example, in Year 1 when looking at movement the learning objectives were clear, which enabled pupils' skills to be built on progressively. In Year 5 appropriate management of pupils ensures that they remain on task throughout the lesson. The teacher draws on prior learning and encourages deeper thinking as the pupils are asked to produce a concept map to record their knowledge of the Solar System. Where teaching requires further improvement is when learning objectives lack precision and do not meet the needs of all pupils. Time spent on introductions is often too long. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson on forces, the introduction took a significant portion of the lesson, leaving an insufficient time for pupils to carry out their investigations.

68. A significant factor of the underachievement in science across the school is that the work set rarely extends the skills, knowledge and understanding of the higher attaining pupils. Much of the work is inadequately marked at Key Stage 2 and at the top of Key Stage 1, so that errors go uncorrected and pupils often do not have a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve. The majority of teachers have effective methods for ensuring that pupils listen and learn. There are some satisfactory approaches to support the development of literacy and numeracy skills during lessons but this is inconsistent across the school. Some teachers, although not all, use questions effectively to promote scientific thought and to expand pupils' spoken language.

69. At Key Stage 1 progress in learning is satisfactory, showing how pupils have developed their ability to record science, moving from simple observation and comparison to brief suggestions about ways of finding things out. For example, in Year 2, when testing how far a toy car would roll down a ramp covered in different materials, they can describe what happens and record results in a table, then use the computer appropriately to display their findings. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are challenged appropriately and are supported well by classroom assistants. Progress in learning at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, including the pupils with special educational needs. When looking at health, diet and exercise, the youngest pupils know the names of basic body parts, can identify which part is exercising and understand that we need food and drink to stay alive. Older pupils use an increasing technical vocabulary, such as "balanced diet", "pulse rate", "artery" and "muscle"; they understand that when we exercise, our muscles work harder and that the body temperature rises.

70. There are a significant number of pupils who make unsatisfactory progress, particularly the higher attaining pupils. For example, much of the work in Year 3 exercise books indicates some regression in learning, particularly for higher attaining pupils. When comparing work at the top of Key Stage 1 on plant growth to later work on forces, pupils' work is not consistent with the standards of presentation in literacy, pupils are no longer raising their own questions or giving their views about why they think various things happen. Instead, their work is often untidy, inaccurate and follows set questions for investigation whatever the ability. These are also unsatisfactory features in Year 6, where the majority of pupils do not have pride in their work. They do not transfer their writing skills to recording work of investigations. Technical vocabulary goes uncorrected, meaning pupils do not learn the correct spellings for scientific words.

71. Across the school pupils are interested and involved in their work. Many enjoy science because the teacher treats them as scientists. This curiosity is encouraged at Key Stage 1 though the development of a science area within each classroom, but this is not

replicated at Key Stage 2. During practical lessons pupils have a good attitude to science, showing interest, with high levels of co-operation and sustained concentration. This enables them to listen carefully to the teacher and each other. Pupils share resources well and use them effectively. They do this with care and lack of fuss.

72. The quality of the documentation for science is satisfactory. It provides the basis for planning across the year groups and helps to raise the quality of teaching, for those with little subject expertise. There is a satisfactory range of resources for science, they are easily accessible from a central area and are stored well. The non-fiction texts for science are satisfactory; they are up-to-date and are appropriate for the areas outlined in the new scheme of work. In the last inspection attainment at both key stages was in line with national expectations and progress was satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching was mainly satisfactory, however, teachers set tasks which were undemanding for the highest attaining pupils. On occasion, the pace of lessons was slow. These areas of practice are still of concern. The capacity for the school to improve the standards in science will be limited without an improved system of monitoring classroom teaching and the analysis of pupils' work. The headteacher, in consultation with the subject co-ordinator has begun to make use of the available assessment data to highlight areas for development.

## **ART**

73. Few lessons were seen during inspection. Evidence from these lessons, the pupils' work, displays and discussion indicates that pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve the expected levels for their age. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' line drawings of local buildings and views show good attention to pattern and texture. Pupils use colour to good effect in a variety of media, including textiles and information and communications technology. They express artistic ideas confidently and respond imaginatively in their lessons. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve satisfactory standards, although there are some weaknesses. Observational drawings show care and attention to detail. Colour mixing with paint and pastels is good, for instance in exploring 'light and dark', but control of tools and techniques and application of skills is not developed fully. Pupils make sound progress overall and good progress towards the end of Key Stage 2 where the volume and pace of work increases as they explore a wide range of media. This is a similar situation to when the school was last inspected in February 1997.

74. Teaching is satisfactory with strengths at Key Stage 2 where teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Pupils' work is attractively and imaginatively displayed with good literacy links, for instance, teacher annotation of pupils' work, drawing attention to technical vocabulary and pupils' poems arising from their colourful pictures of movement and speed. Teachers make effective use of resources and artefacts to stimulate pupils and as a result they develop a good understanding of different artists' styles. In a well planned and challenging Key Stage 2 lesson pupils used computers effectively to design patterns in the style of William Morris. Pupils enjoy art and sustain good concentration in lessons. They enhance their spiritual and cultural understanding in art lessons by responding to the natural environment, reflecting upon expressive qualities of paintings and developing techniques inspired by African art. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating standards in art have begun and a positive start has been made in collecting samples of work for portfolios in each year.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

75. From lesson observations and work seen on display, together with talking to pupils, attainment including that of pupils with special educational needs is in line with national

expectations at both key stages. Attainment across both designing and making is uneven, with higher attainment found in the making of products. At Key Stage 1, pupils produce simple but appropriate diagrams of what they might make. Most label key materials and components. This does not develop adequately at the top of Key Stage 1 through to lower Key Stage 2. Within Key Stage 2, there are some unsatisfactory aspects of pupils' design work. For example, when generating ideas pupils discuss them appropriately but often only record one idea, which fails to be developed in any significant way. The design work in Year 6 does not readily use sketching as a technique for showing how ideas develop. However, many pupils do consider which materials they might use and a few diagrams, including exploded views of various parts of the product are shown. These are of good quality. This was seen in the drawings of a model shelter produced by one group of pupils. In the main, work is rarely marked with comments clearly stating what needs to be done for the pupils to improve. This contributes to the unsatisfactory development of designing skills throughout the school.

76. Progress in pupils' learning at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. A significant majority demonstrates their ability to work with accuracy and precision when making products. For example, in Year 6 when cutting wood to make a frame for their model shelter and in Year 5, when the pupils make a chassis as the basis of a moving model Roman Ballista. The finished articles demonstrate an increasing accuracy in their making skills, with attention paid to the quality of finish. In Year 6 the majority of pupils continue to make sound progress. Overall teaching is sound although opportunities for design work are limited. Teachers use a good range of focused practical tasks that motivate pupils and help to develop their knowledge and understanding about how particular materials are used for specific purposes. Work in textiles is appropriately developed and is of a satisfactory standard by the end of Key Stage 2. For instance, good examples of work were seen in Year 4 where the pupils worked with a range of different fabrics to produce a good quality picture. This was linked well to literacy teaching.

77. Pupils enjoy their design and technology lessons. They are well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. They co-operate well in using the tools and resources and help each other to complete their constructions. This was evident from the work carried out by Year 6 in designing and making a model shelter to be enlarged for use on the school's sports day. Here pupils used a range of tools and construction materials, sharing well to produce one model per group.

78. In Year 2, good use is made of a computer program to produce a repeated pattern design, which could enhance the fabric used to make Joseph's coat. In a Year 6 lesson on designing and making moving toys, a CD-ROM was used well to help to develop pupils' thinking about how various mechanisms create movement when located inside products. The school does not use assessment data on completion of projects to monitor pupils' progress and inform future teaching fully. Class teachers do not use their own assessment data rigorously to identify and focus on particular aspects of the design and technology curriculum.

79. Much work has been undertaken by the co-ordinator since the previous inspection to develop a scheme of work and planning for design and technology. This provides the backbone for the planning to ensure that there is progression of skills and continuity in learning. Whilst food technology is now incorporated into the scheme of work, designing with food as a material remains underdeveloped. Overall, the quality of work available during the inspection represents a good improvement in making, but the progress in the teaching of design is still unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. In the last inspection, the main weaknesses in attainment were the limited making skills and technological understanding,

particularly in relation to control mechanisms and the absence of the design element in much of the work. The school has made good progress with developments in making products: all objects made were of at least satisfactory quality and many were very well made. An example of this was when Year 4 made a textile collage, using the theme of a fairy story as the stimulus for their ideas. Each example seen demonstrated that pupils had a good grasp of joining fabrics in different ways to assemble their collage, so that the finished picture was of good quality.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

80. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in geography at both key stages. By the time they leave school, their attainment is at a level expected for pupils of this age. This level has been maintained since the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a sound understanding of their local environment and learn to make simple comparisons with communities in other countries such as Kenya in Africa. Younger pupils develop mapping skills by making plan views of roads in their area. Older pupils extend their knowledge of the wider world and make good comparisons between the lives of different sections of the Indian society and themselves. They know the main towns and rivers in India. Sound progress is made in understanding the relationship between rivers and settlements. Mapping skills develop appropriately at Key Stage 2 so those pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of the purpose and functions of a variety of maps. They know about scale and grid references. Observations of few lessons, discussions with pupils and examination of their work indicate that geography is appropriately taught. In the lessons seen teachers had good subject knowledge to draw out factual knowledge and understanding as pupils research the area of Start Bay. Lessons generally move at a brisk pace and pupils respond enthusiastically, and there is a useful plenary session to discuss pupils' understanding and reinforce teaching points. A very good range of resources and artefacts capture pupils' imagination and interest.

## **HISTORY**

81. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in history. By the time they leave the school, the standard of history is at the level expected for pupils of this age. This standard has been maintained since the last inspection. The youngest pupils gain an understanding of the passage of time through the study of their families. They have a simple understanding of the changes between babyhood, childhood and adulthood. They draw simple deductions from historical sources such as, old and new teddy bears. Year 2 pupils learn about famous people, such as Mary Seacole, and are able to make comparisons between hospitals in the late nineteenth century and the present day. Pupils develop an early interest in history and begin to appreciate how many aspects of society have changed. Pupils at Key Stage 2 build on their knowledge of historical events over a longer time scale and find out about periods of history including the Ancient Greeks and Tudors. They acquire a good level of information about the daily lives of people in the past. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils begin to understand why changes occur over time. For example in their study of the Romans, pupils are able to discuss and write about why they came to Britain, the influences they had upon the country and their impact on the Celts. Observation of few lessons, discussions with pupils and teachers about their work and observation of teachers planning and pupils' work in books and on display show that history is appropriately taught at both key stages and that pupils' attitudes towards this subject are good. Teachers' planning is sound and enables pupils to build on their skills and understanding as they move through the school. Assessment procedures are less well developed. Very good use is made of historical artefacts and visits to historical sites, which enhance the pupils' experience and bring relevance to their learning.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

82. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above that expected nationally. They can switch on the computer and, using their good keyboard skills, put in their name, use the delete functions and change the font size and type. Some higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 can save data. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. Pupils reach expected standards in communicating and handling data. All pupils learn to use the computer to organise text and other symbols on the screen and to explore simple simulated worlds. At the end of Year 6 all pupils can select what they want from a program menu, store and retrieve information and understand how to edit and store text. They store their work on a disk. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are below the standard expected nationally in the areas of control technology, monitoring and modelling. This is because the school has not yet fully implemented their new scheme of work, where these areas are well provided for.

83. One factor currently affecting attainment is that some teachers lack adequate knowledge and understanding of the potential of information and communications technology within the curriculum. Whilst this is compensated for to some extent using good support from classroom assistants, they are unable to deepen the application within the subject.

84. Throughout the school, pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning and in a significant minority of lessons, they make good progress. In lessons where progress is good, teachers have high expectations and lesson plans are very clear; pupils know what is expected of them. Direct teaching is balanced well with practise on computers. For example, Year 4 using Dazzle are shown how to use the basic functions of the program to create a repeat pattern, which will complement their art work based on a study of William Morris. This was demonstrated by the classroom assistant and pupils practised using the program. The majority of pupils were able to draw, highlight, produce a tile, repeat the pattern, save and print. There is a systematic approach to teaching skills; pupils' high level of enthusiasm and the use of extra support ensure that good progress is made.

85. Overall teaching is satisfactory but where it is good, the teacher provides pupils with clear instructions and a defined goal and reinforces each new discovery so that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils can use wordprocessing techniques to present their work in interesting ways by changing the fonts and layout. Younger pupils and all pupils, who have special educational needs at Key Stage 1, make good progress in communicating and handling information. Pupils also use programs that are designed to develop their number skills and their literacy skills.

86. Pupils look forward to using information communication technology and use a range of machines such as tape recorders, video players, computers and programmable toys. There is a good level of co-operation and mutual support within pairs and groups of pupils. In Year 1 for example, pupils work individually to produce their own labels to go onto a class display. In the process of working, they support each other when there are difficulties.

87. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum, but the lack of an assessment scheme means that the teachers do not systematically mark or assess work fully. However, a recently introduced self-assessment sheet is beginning to identify where pupils need to practise their skills if they are to improve.

The school has made a positive response to its last inspection. The appointment of a new co-ordinator with responsibility for the subject and its development in the school has led to improvements in the standard of guidance to teachers. There is greater coherence in the teaching programme through the provision of a well-planned scheme of work. The school makes satisfactory use of the available resources. All of this is reflected in the appropriate use of computers in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 2 the use of PrimeArt to produce good designs for an African mask. In Year 6 pupils used a spreadsheet to support learning when calculating the quantities and costs of food planned to be taken on a school trip. In Year 1 learning to give directions was enhanced when pupils learnt to control the movement of a programmable toy.

## **MUSIC**

88. Few lessons were seen during inspection; evidence from these, assemblies, extra-curricular activities and discussion indicates that pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve the expected levels for their age. Pupils communicate ideas effectively by combining sounds, for instance by using words, body sounds and percussion instruments to explore rhythms and suggest rain and puddles. They interpret simple notation and identify changes in mood. There are some weaknesses in the musical knowledge and understanding of the oldest pupils, particularly in relation to composition skills and technical vocabulary. Pupils at both key stages sing tunefully and enthusiastically in assemblies. Those pupils who receive instrumental tuition make good progress. Pupils enjoy music making and work well together to share ideas and perform. They listen attentively and support to each other well. Overall progress of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. This is a similar situation to that found at the time of the last inspection.

89. Teaching is satisfactory, with significant strengths in the lessons observed. These include effective planning to provide a rich and integrated musical experience of composing, performing and appraising. Well-constructed questions help pupils to focus on musical elements and good expectations for group work ensure that pupils apply creative effort. Teachers' planning is well supported by a published scheme. The music curriculum is enriched by a number of extra-curricular activities that include choir, recorders and guitar groups. Pupils enjoy participating in annual concerts and talent shows. Instrumental tuition for saxophone, violin, keyboard, flute and trumpet has a positive impact on pupils' musical experience. Arrangements for using information and communications technology and the assessment of music are underdeveloped. The subject co-ordinator provides effective support for colleagues and has an appropriately strategic music development plan.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

90. At the end of both key stages pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. This is a similar situation to that found at the last inspection. At Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average standards in gymnastics and by the end of Year 4 all pupils achieve the national expectations in swimming. Pupils demonstrate good physical skills in all activities, moving with control and co-ordination and demonstrating good spatial awareness. In dance they perform expressively and with good body shape and tension. Pupils work independently and inventively to compose actions, for instance in a Key Stage 1 dance lesson about 'Cops and Robbers' pupils explored different ways of travelling and combined these in a sequence. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. It is particularly good in gymnastics. In dance pupils have the ability to achieve above average standards but are not always sufficiently challenged.

91. Teaching is satisfactory overall but with significant strengths in gymnastics. Teachers provide a variety of tasks to set creative and physical challenges. They use questioning and demonstration effectively to improve technique, as in a very good Key Stage 2 gymnastics lesson where good quality demonstration and analytical feedback helped pupils achieve good results with their 'balance and momentum' sequences. Weaknesses in teaching include unclear objectives, over-direction and poor pace in some lessons. Most of the lessons observed were too long which affected the pace of learning. Pupils enjoy physical education, they are keen to improve and remain energetically active for sustained periods. The size of the hall inhibits performance in gymnastics and dance but pupils use the space sensitively and sensibly. There is insufficient gymnastics apparatus, particularly for the younger pupils. A rolling programme of extra-curricular activities, including football and netball, provides further enrichment to the curriculum. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and leads by example. She has an appropriately strategic development plan to improve standards and provision.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils largely attain the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus although they lack the depth of understanding and ability to express their feelings. This is in sharp contrast to pupils' attainment by the age of eleven where it exceeds the expected levels. At Key Stage 1, when learning about books, which are special to them, pupils can explain their significance, but there are lost opportunities to develop the relationship between their experience and the importance of religious beliefs and commitments. Overall pupils' achievement in religious education is not good enough at Key Stage 1 given their prior attainment and the good development of expressing their feelings in the youngest class. There is little evidence of work at Key Stage 1 to make a secure judgement about pupils' progress over time. This again is in sharp contrast to very good standards of work achieved in Reception and Key Stage 2 when studying Christianity and other world religions. Higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 are underachieving because not enough is expected of them. Lessons that are over-long develop into literacy sessions and lose both the religious education content and interest of the pupils. Consequently pupils' behaviour deteriorates towards the end of the lesson.

93. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement is very high. When the youngest pupils at this key stage reflect on the commitment shown by Mother Teresa in supporting under-privileged people they understand conviction and experience a real depth of feeling. This is because the methods of evoking those feelings are brought directly into their own experiences. Pupils raise emotional questions from studying photographs, and the role-play used by the teacher enabled them to search for their own values. They work well together in groups and this work has a significant impact on promoting their personal development. The oldest pupils make good progress when the teacher helps them to clarify their thoughts about the role of religion in people's lives. When comparing artefacts between different world religions pupils apply their prior knowledge well. Their understanding and knowledge of the importance of prayer in world religions is well developed. Through this work pupils reflect on the meanings of their own lives with maturity. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well by their peers and the teacher and they achieve as well as can be expected.

94. At the time of the last inspection few lessons were seen and attainment at the end of both key stages was in line with expectations. Attainment by the age of eleven is now better than expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The use of visitors to bring the subject to life has been maintained. In an excellent lesson seen during inspection with the

oldest pupils, a visitor shared her own religious convictions very well with the pupils who were spellbound by her commitment. Throughout the school, teaching last time was generally good. Teaching is satisfactory overall now at Key Stage 1, although there are unsatisfactory features such as when the teacher struggles to maintain control throughout the long sessions and insists on writing down feelings when oral expression is the most appropriate to meet the learning intentions. At Key Stage 2 teaching is now excellent and this has a significant impact on standards achieved and progress pupils make.

95. The teacher's planning at Key Stage 1 clearly shows the development of relating pupils' own experiences to religion, although in practice this was insufficiently developed. The methods used prevent pupils from deepening their understanding of the importance of artefacts. Excellent teaching at Key Stage 2 promotes very high standards. There are clear expectations, which ensure pupils explore their thoughts and feelings well. The method of discussing photographs enables pupils to develop their thinking by generating questions. Planning is effective and this results in pupils being able to apply prior learning to questions posed about Mother Teresa's work. Teaching at this key stage inspires pupils with its visitors, creative methods and use of artefacts. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and she leads the subject well. A good pace to learning ensures lessons are fun for pupils. The teacher manages the oldest pupils very well and high standards of discipline are maintained. She supports pupils' ideas totally and encourages their learning in a secure environment where they are not afraid to give their ideas. Not all teachers at Key Stage 2 have religious education on their timetable each week. The co-ordinator monitors termly planning and has acted upon knowledge gained from this although she is not in a position to monitor weekly coverage. This is an area for development. The co-ordinator has clear aims for the development of the subject and has recognised that further monitoring and in-service training are important. Resources to support this subject are good although there are plans to develop them even further for all six religions studied.