

INSPECTION REPORT

FINSTALL FIRST SCHOOL

Bromsgrove

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116660

Headteacher: Mr D J T Richards

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson
25406

Dates of inspection: 18 – 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 192731

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 9 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Carnforth Road
Bromsgrove

Postcode: B60 2HS

Telephone number: 01527 872938

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Terry O'Reilly

Date of previous inspection: 10 – 13 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Nicholson 25406	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The schools' results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Janet Butler 9428	Lay inspector		How high are standards? 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?
Beryl Rimmer 20655	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art Geography Music Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
Sanchia Pearse 4787	Team inspector	English History Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Finstall First School is situated in a favourable residential area within the market town of Bromsgrove. The school is popular with parents and is over-subscribed. Currently, there are 312 pupils on roll (168 boys and 144 girls) aged between four and nine years. Almost all pupils come from white United Kingdom backgrounds. Less than one per cent speak English as an additional language or come from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is low. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is well below the national average. The school has identified 13 per cent of the pupils as having special educational needs, which is well below the national average. One pupil has a statement for special educational needs. On entry to the reception classes, children's attainment is above average for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school, which achieves high standards. Children enter school with standards of attainment already above average, and standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave at the age of nine. This represents a good level of achievement for the pupils. The school is very well led and managed and the overall quality of teaching is good. This school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science and above average standards in most other subjects.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes towards school. Their behaviour and personal development, including their relationships with each other and with staff, are very good.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and he is well supported by the governors and all members of staff.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, and often better. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The school has an ethos of very high expectations of work and behaviour, which permeates all its work and pupils are encouraged and do give of their very best.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology, as pupils do not achieve appropriate standards for their age in all aspects of the subject.
- Whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the non-core subjects so as to make teachers' planning more effective.
- Opportunities in all subjects for pupils to develop their understanding of the richness and variety of other cultures found within British society today.

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 made good progress since its previous inspection in February 1997. It has successfully addressed most, but not all, of the issues raised at that time. Improvements include teachers' planning, the range of teaching strategies used, assessment and its use in English and mathematics, the monitoring of teaching and strategic planning. This has resulted in better teaching and the raising of standards. The school recognises the need for further development in the teaching of information and communication technology and assessment in non-core subjects, which remain as areas for development.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key

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

Over recent years almost all pupils by the end of Year 2 have achieved Level 2, the expected standard for a typical seven-year-old, in reading, writing and mathematics. A larger proportion than found nationally has achieved the higher standard, Level 3. Consequently, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been well above the national average for these subjects. The school's results have been improving broadly in line with the improving national trend. They are very favourable when compared with those of similar schools. (National benchmark information bands together 'similar schools' based on the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.) Inspection evidence confirms a similar position in the current Year 2, with well above average standards in English and mathematics, and also in science. Pupils achieve above average standards in art and design, geography, history, music and religious education by the end of Key Stage 1. In design and technology and physical education, standards are average.

Overall, standards by the end of Year 4 are also high. Almost all pupils achieve the standards expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. A larger proportion of pupils than normally found continues to achieve standards above those expected. Standards in geography, history, music, physical education and religious education are above average. In art and design and design and technology, standards are average.

Throughout Years 1 to 4, standards in information and communication technology are below average. Pupils achieve appropriate standards for their age in some aspects of the subject; for example, in the use of word-processing programs to present their work and in using the Internet to gather information. However, in other aspects, such as the use of databases and control, they have not sufficiently developed their skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. They are very enthusiastic and show great interest and involvement in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are polite and friendly.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Their relationships with each other and with staff are very positive.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance rate is well above the national average.

The pupils' excellent attitudes, very good behaviour and very positive relationships are important strengths of the school and contribute greatly to their good levels of progress and the positive ethos of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
63 lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and often better and as a result pupils make good progress in their learning. Teaching was good in almost a half of lessons observed during the inspection. It was very good or better, including examples of excellent teaching, in a further third of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This represents an improvement on the teaching found at the last inspection. Good and very good teaching was observed throughout the school. The teaching of pupils in the reception classes is particularly strong.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. Strengths in the teaching include very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and the very good management of pupils. Consequently, pupils develop very good levels of concentration and independence and they put much effort into their work. Minor weaknesses in the teaching include a lack of confidence and subject expertise in the teaching of information and communication technology, insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils in some lessons and the over-use of worksheets.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides pupils with a good range of learning opportunities that meets the needs of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for these pupils, including carefully drawn up individual education plans and good support from classroom assistants. As a result pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for pupils' personal development. Provision is excellent for their moral development and very good for their social development. Both spiritual and cultural development are good overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Finstall is a very caring school. Good procedures are in place to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils. Overall, there are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' progress through the school.
How well the school works with parents	The school has a very positive partnership with its parents. Parents make a very positive contribution to their children's learning both at school and at home.

Strengths in the school's curriculum include very good learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage and the very good contribution made by the community. The curriculum does not sufficiently develop pupils' multi-cultural awareness, particularly the contribution made by other races and cultures to music, the arts, science and British life.

The school has very good procedures for promoting good behaviour and it offers very good levels of support and guidance to its pupils. Assessment and the use of assessment data in planning in English and mathematics is good, but in other subjects it is not as effective or consistently used throughout the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good, strong and dynamic leadership. He is very well supported by the senior management team. Together, all members of staff make an effective team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive and it successfully monitors the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school successfully evaluates its own performance and identifies appropriate areas for future development.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its staff and resources. There are efficient systems for financial planning and administration.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The staff are suitably qualified, experienced and well matched to the needs of the pupils. The school's buildings and grounds provide a very good level of accommodation and provide a stimulating environment for work and play. Learning resources are of a high quality.

Leadership and management, particularly that of the headteacher, are a strength of the school and have a very positive impact on the high standards achieved. Between governors, headteacher and staff there is a shared commitment to continual improvement. The school effectively applies the principles of best value in its management and use of resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

One hundred and forty-eight parents (47 per cent) completed questionnaires and 18 parents attended a meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • Children like school. • Teachers have high expectations and they help children become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good and children make good progress. • Children are well behaved. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views of the school. Inspectors found that the school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities that supports pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection, pupils aged seven attained overall standards in line with national expectations, with above average standards in English, mathematics, history and religious education. By the time pupils left the school at age nine, they achieved good standards in English and average standards in all other subjects. The school has made good progress in improving standards and as a result pupils at both the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 now achieve high standards overall, except in information and communication technology. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. There are no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys.
2. Children's attainment on entry to the reception classes is above that expected for their age. The school's initial assessment shows that a much larger proportion of the children than is normally found have above average personal and social, literacy and numeracy skills. Overall, the school makes very good provision for these children in the Foundation Stage¹, including very good teaching and a rich and varied curriculum. Consequently, they learn basic skills of literacy and numeracy well and their levels of achievement are above those usually found. By the end of their reception year, almost all children achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals² in mathematical, physical and creative development and greatly exceed them in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children have a very secure foundation to support their future progress in all the subjects of the National Curriculum.
3. Over recent years (1998-2000) results in National Curriculum tests and tasks at the end of Key Stage 1 show that overall standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above the national average. In 2000, almost all pupils achieved Level 2, the expected standard for a typical seven-year-old, in reading, writing and mathematics. This was above the national average for each test. Nearly half of the pupils achieved Level 3, the higher standard, in reading, 18 per cent in writing and 42 per cent in mathematics. These results were well above the national average in reading and writing, and above the national average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' results were well above average in the three tests.³ In teacher assessments for science, almost all pupils achieved Level 2, which is similar to the national average. A third of pupils achieved the higher standard, which is above the national average.
4. Inspection evidence indicates a similar pattern of high standards of attainment in the current Year 2. This represents a good level of achievement for these pupils. They make good progress as a result of their excellent attitudes towards school and good quality teaching. Almost all pupils achieve at least the expected standards for their age in English, mathematics and science. Over a half achieve the higher standard in English, a third in mathematics and over a third in science. Standards in writing are particularly high and reflect the focus given to this area during the past year. This supports well pupils' learning in other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in art and design, geography, history and music are above average and in design and technology and physical education they are average. However, in information and communication technology standards are below national expectations. While pupils achieve average standards in some aspects of

¹ [Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class.](#)

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

³ National benchmark information bands together 'similar schools' based on the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

the subject, standards in other aspects are below average. For example, pupils use the Internet to seek information, but have had insufficient opportunities to develop the data handling and control aspects of the subject or to use simulation software.

5. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils continue to make good progress in the first two years of Key Stage 2. By the age of nine, pupils maintain high standards in English, mathematics and science because almost all pupils achieve the expected standard for their age in each of these subjects and a higher proportion than is normally found achieves a higher standard. Standards in geography, history, music and physical education are above average and in art and design, design and technology standards are in line with national expectations. Standards in information and communication technology remain below national expectations. The positive impact of the school's recent initiatives in this subject has not yet sufficiently raised standards in all the necessary aspects. Standards in using computers to organise and present their work are average, but pupils have not sufficiently developed their skills in other areas, such as the use of e-mail and databases, and giving sequences of instructions to control devices.
6. In religious education, pupils in both key stages achieve standards above those expected for their age as outlined in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. They make very good progress in learning about Christianity and satisfactory progress in learning about other world faiths. Pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on this knowledge when considering their own ideas and actions.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. They take full part in all lessons and respond well to questions and activities set in class. They benefit from small group and individual support by knowledgeable classroom assistants. The school analyses in detail the baseline assessment from the reception classes; the national tests for seven year olds; and optional tests for eight and nine year olds. This accurate data informs teachers' decisions to place pupils on the special educational needs register and helps set specific targets for their individual education plans. The school has improved its overall provision for its higher-attaining pupils and this is reflected, for example, in the improving standards in writing. However, it does not use the assessment data as well to fully challenge these pupils across all subjects.
8. Pupils develop and make use of both their literacy and oral skills in other subjects. For example, in history pupils write extended stories of a good quality about the Fire of London and talk clearly about life in castles during role-play activities. In design and technology, pupils write imaginative stories for a book with moving pictures they design and make for younger children. Pupils make some use of their numeracy skills in other subjects, but this is limited. Pupils sequence dates on a time line in history, but do not consistently develop numeracy skills in subjects such as science, geography and design and technology.
9. The school has consistently achieved well above average results over the last three years in national tests for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents a good level of achievement for the pupils. Their performance in these tests shows they are about two terms ahead in their learning. The school, through careful analysis of pupils' results, continues to set challenging targets for further improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. They are very keen to come to school, extremely eager to learn and enthusiastically take on the challenges set for them. They love to listen to stories and have the ability to absorb facts and use them in their own work. New skills are learnt with precision and pupils take care with presentation. Overall, they do their very best for their teachers and are proud to be members of Finstall First School. During the

inspection a notable feature each morning was the intense interest and excitement inspired by the ever-growing collection of innovative and imaginative 'Jumble Jars' which pupils were bringing in for the school fete.

11. Behaviour is very good both in lessons and at playtimes. In almost all of the lessons seen, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better, and they were never less than satisfactory. Pupils demonstrate that they understand and can be trusted to abide by the school's code of conduct. Parents greatly value the way the school encourages good behaviour. Whether in class or out at play, pupils are self-controlled, considerate and helpful. The atmosphere in the dining hall is very civilised and pupils readily respond to requests to keep noise at a minimum. Out on the field pupils take full advantage of the freedom given them and engage in a wide variety of imaginative and physical games, which are friendly and inclusive, without any signs of oppressive or anti-social behaviour.
12. Relationships are excellent. This provides the foundation for all the good learning and very good personal development that takes place. Pupils work and play extremely well in groups, with some very good examples of collaboration in art lessons, when creating sculptures from natural objects, and in design and technology. For example, pupils in Year 4 worked well together to design and make books with moving pictures for their younger reading partners in the lower school. They are happy to share ideas, listen to their peers and refine design points accordingly. The pupils' relationships with their peers reflect the excellent relationships they enjoy with all adults in the school.
13. The personal development of pupils is very good. Right from the start, pupils make very good progress in developing independence, confidence and an awareness of the impact of their actions on others. Through circle times⁴ they develop a very good level of understanding for the feelings and values of their peers. In religious education, they learn to respect the different values and beliefs of other religions. They respond very well to the opportunities provided to encourage a sense of ownership of the school's systems and organisation. This extends from reception, where one four-year-old had organised a group of children in some collaborative artwork for display, through to Year 4. The older pupils organise the care of the school pet, sometimes initiate fund-raising for charities, and have their own dance group, which performs for occasional assemblies. Throughout the school pupils show a very mature and sensible attitude and have their own high expectations of an orderly and harmonious community, which prepares them well for future citizenship.
14. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Absences are always explained and unauthorised absence is extremely low.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good, and often better. In 46 per cent of lessons observed teaching was good. In a further 35 per cent of lessons, teaching was very good or better, with examples of excellence. No lessons were judged to be less than satisfactory. Teachers use an increasingly wide and varied range of approaches, making learning interesting and enjoyable. The high quality of teaching leads to high standards of work, excellent attitudes towards school and good progress. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in eliminating elements of unsatisfactory teaching.
16. The teaching of children aged six and under in the Foundation Stage is very good and a strength of the school. Teachers in the reception classes are knowledgeable about the needs of this particular age group. They provide a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, carefully planned and structured to ensure that children have ample opportunities

⁴ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues that face them as part of everyday life.

to learn through direct teaching and through practical, relevant experience. Children make very good progress and are ideally prepared for the subjects of the National Curriculum by the time they reach the end of reception. There are examples of very good procedures for checking how well children are learning during their activities. Consequently, teachers have a clear idea of what children need to learn next and they use this information when planning the next week's work. They are particularly effective in teaching the areas of learning that promote children's personal, social and emotional development, their language skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

17. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers have established very good and sometimes excellent relationships with pupils. They have a pleasant but firm approach, mostly treating pupils with respect and sensitivity and setting a very good example. Teachers welcome and listen carefully to pupils' contributions and, as a result, pupils are attentive and confident to respond and share their ideas and thoughts. In a very good lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils were successfully encouraged to express their views about codes of conduct. Teachers use praise and, in some cases, humour, mostly to good effect, to give children confidence and to build their self-esteem.
18. Teachers are adept at introducing new and technical vocabulary, extending pupils' learning well. The successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has given teachers confidence in the teaching of these basic skills. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are very well planned and structured. Learning objectives are made clear to pupils at the start of the lesson and different activities are well matched to the different ability groups. There is a suitable ending to the lesson where the teacher draws pupils together to talk about what they have learnt. In the minority of lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, work is not sufficiently well matched to the needs of all ability groups.
19. Teachers use very good questioning skills, involving pupils of all abilities. They effectively check pupils' understanding and encourage them to give full answers to questions. This develops pupils' vocabulary to a very good extent and promotes good standards of speaking and listening. In science, for example, pupils in Year 3 define meanings of words such as 'translucent', 'transparent' and 'opaque' in response to skilful questioning. Good questioning also helps to evaluate and refine pupils' ideas in design and technology in Year 4.
20. The teaching of physical education is of a very good quality in the majority of the lessons seen in both key stages. Planning is effective and teachers use demonstration particularly well. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they make very good use of the time available. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, religious education, history and music. Although few lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology and geography, teaching is judged to be good from evidence of past work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. There are high levels of subject expertise, skill and enthusiasm shown by teachers in many of these subjects. Teachers use a variety of interesting strategies to bring pupils' learning to life. In a lively introduction to a mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils have fun passing around a furry spider to successfully reinforce and develop their knowledge of multiples of two, five and ten. In history, teachers use a number of different strategies to deepen pupils' learning. They invite visitors to talk to Year 4 about their experiences during the Second World War; involve Year 2 pupils in role-play during their work about castles and take part in acting out scenes from the life of Dr. Barnardo in Year 3. Teachers successfully capture pupils' enthusiasm and imagination when they use the expansive school grounds to carry out weather experiments in geography in Year 3 and create three-dimensional sculptures from natural materials in art in Year 1.

21. In information and communications technology (ICT), teaching is improving as a result of recent developments. Following current training, lessons in this subject are of a good and sometimes very good quality. Teachers are beginning to make some use of ICT in other subjects, but not sufficient to enable pupils to make better progress.
22. Teachers expect pupils to behave well. They make good use of praise and encouragement when it is deserved and set high standards. Classrooms are very well organised and orderly and teachers manage pupils, including those with challenging behavioural problems, skilfully. As a result, pupils get on with their work quickly and quietly and concentrate well, responding well to requests and instructions. There is good teamwork amongst the teaching staff and they share expertise. A good example was observed where the teacher took advantage of the charismatic story telling skills of the headteacher to capture pupils' interest in religious education.
23. Teachers know their pupils well and make accurate assessments of their abilities in English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, in science. In most lessons, group activities are appropriate and usually well suited to the majority of pupils. However, they do not always provide sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers' expectations of what pupils will achieve in written work are not always high enough. For example, able Year 1 pupils cut up and order simple sentences in a sequencing task that does little to further their reading or writing skills. Pupils of differing abilities are at times given the same tasks, frequently in the form of worksheets that are too easy for some and beyond the capabilities of lower-attaining pupils. Consequently, a minority of pupils does not always make as much progress as they should. Teachers do not consistently identify assessment opportunities in their planning for non-core subjects. Consequently, they do not always match work sufficiently well to pupils' abilities. The marking of pupils' work is very positive and encouraging, in line with the school's policy. Pupils are encouraged to correct and improve their work.
24. Teachers make particularly effective use of classroom assistants, who are very well prepared and support pupils well. They make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly to those requiring additional help. Occasionally, they help pupils to complete work that is too difficult, rather than develop their understanding at a more appropriate level. A structured framework for monitoring and evaluating teaching and additional training has been effective in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

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

25. The school provides a full curriculum, which meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. Overall, it provides pupils with a good range of learning opportunities supported by very good personal development.
26. Pupils in the reception classes receive a very good quality and range of learning opportunities that give them a very secure foundation for further learning. There is a rich variety of activities and this enables pupils to make very good progress in all the recommended areas of learning. The school then continues to provide a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant throughout the age range. This combined with well co-ordinated and thorough planning promotes very good academic standards and personal development for all pupils.
27. In Years 1 to 4, the school provides good coverage of all of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education, except in information and communication technology, where there is satisfactory coverage. The school is developing this aspect of the curriculum. All statutory requirements are met. The school has worked on the

recommendations of the previous inspection and now has more effective curriculum planning. Improvements have led to planning that now promotes the progression of skills in science, information and communication technology, geography and art and design.

28. There is good provision for personal, social, and health education. The school is awaiting the local education authority's guidelines on Citizenship 2000 to further improve the programme, especially in terms of a more formal approach to sex education. Currently, the school's policy is that sex education is not formally taught, but if the topic should arise it will be discussed in an honest and sympathetic manner. Personal, social, and health education lessons are not yet fully timetabled, but pupils benefit from some lessons, and from regular circle time, where they can discuss topical issues and reinforce good social and moral development. There are good opportunities for reflection on healthy living both through physical education and visits, such as to the Life Caravan, in Year 4.
29. A strong emphasis is given to the development of pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded. Teachers use planned opportunities creatively in other subjects to strengthen pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The matching of work to meet the needs of different pupils in English has improved since the previous inspection and the school is aware of the need to develop this still further, especially in relation to the highest attaining pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactorily in place. However, there is a tendency to over use worksheets and this hampers progress, especially for the higher attainers.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection from satisfactory to good. Individual education plans are carefully drawn up and reviewed regularly and conscientiously every term. Withdrawal from the classroom is now minimal and teachers make sure that pupils do not miss the same lessons on a regular basis. Most support now takes place successfully in class as part of the planned provision. This leads to pupils with special educational needs making good progress in line with other pupils. Teachers share their planning well with the classroom assistants, who work with pupils in a clear and focused way.
31. The school is successfully adopting and adapting the recent national guidance in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. The newly introduced curriculum for information and communication technology has not yet had a sufficient impact on raising pupils' standards. Subject co-ordinators are aware of the need to keep evaluating the new guidance in order to retain the best of previous schemes of work at the same time as incorporating new ideas.
32. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the good provision. Staff are aware of equal opportunities issues, especially in relation to gender. However, the principles of equal opportunities are not applied at present to the learning of recorders and the school needs to review this practice. Parents also raised issues relating to summer-born children. The school is now in a strong position with individual tracking to analyse the impact of present practice on this group and make any necessary modifications. Equality of opportunity in relation to different ethnic groups does not arise within the school. The school is aware of the need for pupils to learn about other cultures and makes efforts within religious education and assemblies to talk about the major faith communities. However, there is not yet a natural inclusion of the rich diversity of cultures in Britain automatically included across all aspects of the curriculum.
33. There is a very good range of high quality after-school and lunchtime activities that are well attended. These include a variety of physical activities, including team games and dance; several music clubs, including a lively choir of about 30 pupils; and a range of crafts, such

as sewing and knitting. All clubs include boys and girls. All teachers are involved in leading clubs and there are at least two on offer every day.

34. Another strong feature of the school is the very good links with the community. There is a steady stream of visitors, who come to talk to pupils, from local industry and business. Others come to share their interest and knowledge about local history or experiences of the past. There are good links with professional trainers, who support physical education both in and out of lessons. The school also has good links with local pre-school providers and the middle schools. Teachers plan carefully with the middle schools to ensure full coverage of the curriculum across all subjects. The school also provides good opportunities for initial teacher training.
35. Overall, the provision made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. The school places the development of the whole child at its very heart. It offers a broad range of opportunities to inspire, support and nurture this growth. This is a strength of the school and one that is highly valued by parents. It pervades all areas of school life, is a true representation of the school's aims and adds greatly to the school's ethos.
36. Central to the school's approach to this provision is the daily act of collective worship. This session, normally led by the headteacher, provides pupils with a wealth of knowledge about Bible stories, other world faiths, moral teachings, and a greater understanding of the social framework within school. Opportunities for music appreciation, performing to an audience and celebrating personal achievements are very well used. Assemblies also provide appropriate focus for reflection on personal behaviour and emotions, but they often over-run and this can affect the teaching time for the first lesson. Collective worship, religious education and circle times contribute to good provision for pupils' spiritual development, although this is not an area that the school actively promotes through planned opportunities in other lessons. The imaginative development of the playing field, however, is a very good example of providing opportunities for pupils to explore and marvel at the wonders of creation, or simply to sit and contemplate.
37. The moral principles and framework within which pupils are taught right from wrong, and begin to understand fairness and inequality, are excellent. Pupils are actively involved in drawing up agreed versions of the school rules appropriate to their ages. All adults in the school provide a consistent reinforcement of this code and pupils are always treated fairly.
38. The ways in which pupils are encouraged to become socially aware and useful members of the school community are very good. The reading partners scheme ensures mixing of pupils across the age range, which also continues happily at lunchtime. Opportunities for collaborative work are a feature of many lessons, and this is an area in which pupils really benefit from teamwork, shared ideas and tolerance of lower attainers. Within society at large, pupils are taught about the local community in which they are situated and they often have the chance to share thoughts with older people who volunteer to help in school. Their social responsibilities are promoted through a range of duties within school, as well as an awareness of the needs of the less fortunate around the world and how they might help.
39. The cultural provision for pupils is good overall. A strength is the range of opportunities they have to explore and appreciate music and the arts. Arts week last year provided a wealth of creative and sensory experiences for pupils. The school has acknowledged the need to increase pupils' multi-cultural awareness and has embarked on a programme of visitors from foreign countries, as well as putting more emphasis on teaching world faiths. However, this provision is not directly applied to the rich ethnic and cultural diversity found within British society today. The staff do not place sufficient emphasis on respect for the contributions made by other races and cultures to music, the arts, science and British life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school places a high priority on the welfare and safety of its pupils and makes good provision for their care. Procedures for child protection are fully in place and follow local area guidelines. The headteacher and governors ensure that the health and safety policy is adhered to, with full safety checks and risk assessments. Since the last inspection the school has increased the number of staff with a first aid qualification to ensure better coverage.
41. The carefully planned smooth transition into the reception classes for full-time pupils is a feature that is valued by parents. Pre-school opportunities like the story club are very popular and parents would appreciate the extension of this facility to the younger children who attend only part-time until Christmas.
42. The monitoring and promotion of good attendance is satisfactory, but there is inconsistent practice between class teachers when marking the register. The recording of pupils' absences lacks sufficient rigour. Teachers know the pupils and their families well and although absence is monitored formally, the procedure for closing registers is too lax.
43. There are very good procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour. Pupils enjoy a culture where the best examples are highlighted and celebrated, with consistent use of praise and the award of merit points for personal achievements. Disciplinary checks are very unobtrusive, and pupils respond so well to the system that to feel they have disappointed a teacher or the headteacher is usually punishment enough. Bullying or anti-social behaviour is talked about to reinforce the expectations of the whole school community that it will not be tolerated.
44. The special educational needs co-ordinator has very good links with other agencies, including social services, and works hard to ensure that the pupils receive the most appropriate support for their personal and academic development.
45. The personal and social development of pupils is very well monitored and supported. There are personal targets that are agreed and reviewed each term. The planned programme of personal, social and health education is supplemented by a rich variety of visits and visitors and some unplanned opportunities that arise during circle times. Overall, the school works hard to promote high self-esteem and confidence, self-control and consideration for others such that pupils are very well prepared for the next phase of their education.
46. In response to the previous report, the senior management team and the assessment co-ordinator have identified more opportunities for assessment in English and mathematics. There are now good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress that all teachers implement. This includes very detailed tracking of individual pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science that allows pupils' strengths and weaknesses to be noted easily. The analysis of this data sets targets both for individuals and the whole school. For example, the recently successful focus on writing sprang from the detailed analysis of pupils' responses to questions in a range of tests.
47. Assessment in English and mathematics is now good in terms of day-to-day assessment. For example, some teachers note findings from their informal assessment during the lesson onto their lesson plans in order to modify future work. This is lacking, however, in other subjects. There are good examples of portfolios of moderated work for each pupil, again mainly in English and mathematics. Assessment in science is satisfactory, but needs further refinement. In the other subjects, there is not sufficiently rigorous, regular, assessment. Some subject co-ordinators, such as for history, have devised appropriate

assessment procedures. Others are waiting to adapt the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidance on assessment.

48. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall with very good practice in one class. The teacher uses an efficient system of record cards to make pertinent and accurate observations of children's achievements or difficulties with learning. These assessments are transferred to detailed and useful records, which are used to plan future lessons and activities most effectively to ensure good progress.
49. There have been improvements in teachers' planning, as it is no longer 'too heavily based on whole class teaching'. Teachers are beginning to match work more carefully to pupils' needs, especially in English. Most teachers do now set extension work and they continue to have higher expectations of the quality and amount of work for the higher-attaining pupils. However, there is still a lack of the use of assessment to provide additional opportunities to challenge the highest attainers. The school now needs to spread the good practice in English and mathematics to ensure that the whole school assesses all pupils in all subjects rigorously and regularly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. One of the school's many strengths is the open and welcoming way it embraces parents and carers as mutually supportive partners in the education of children. Very effective links have been maintained and nurtured since the last inspection. Parents think very highly of the school and it is continually oversubscribed. The headteacher and staff place great value on the partnership and genuinely seek to involve parents in whatever ways they can.
51. The foundation for the partnership is the breadth of information provided by the school, which is good overall and has some very good features. Parents appreciate the newsletters, termly topic information, the pupils' target sheets and the formal opportunities they have to discuss progress. The annual progress reports, whilst popular with parents and quite detailed, are strong in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but less informative for all the other areas of learning. In the core subjects, reports define the attainment reached by pupils, offer suggestions for improvement and frequently give relevant comparisons, for example according to age. However, in the other subjects parents are not told how well their children are achieving, as there is no regular assessment in place. The reports in these areas concentrate on what aspects and skills have been covered. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well produced and easy to read. The school is now aware of a few missing legal requirements.
52. The level of support by parents is very good. They value and underline the school's aims so that pupils receive consistent messages about personal standards and the value of education. In school, about 40 parents volunteer to help regularly, giving valuable assistance in hearing readers, helping with design and technology projects, supporting literacy and information and communication technology lessons, and even running extra-curricular clubs like the sewing club. Homework tasks are supported well, and parents make good use of the topic information by extending their children's experiences within given themes. The current Second World War project in Year 4 is a good example of families supporting their children's investigations.
53. All staff, including the headteacher, know all pupils well and keep in regular touch informally, as well as formally, with parents concerning any specific needs of pupils with special educational needs. Through parent interviews, parents are aware of targets set for these pupils and they work with the school to reinforce particular skills, such as reading or number work at home.

54. Overall the pupils benefit greatly from the very good impact made by the parental partnership. The very active parents' association organises a range of social and fund-raising ideas that often involve all the family and generate considerable interest in school. As a result of their extremely generous financial support, the school is able to purchase an impressive array of extra resources, from stage lighting and computers to funding for an arts week and a willow tunnel. In this way, the partnership helps to raise academic standards and improve the school's environment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. At the time of the last inspection the school was well led and managed. Since then there have been improvements to the monitoring of teaching and learning, which have improved the quality of teaching and raised standards. As a result, the school is now very well led and managed. Some of the weaknesses identified in the effectiveness of the school's development plan have been addressed, though it remains an area for further development. Parents recognise and are appreciative of how successfully the school is led and managed.
56. The school has a very clear mission statement, which is published in its prospectus. It promises to strive for excellence within a happy, secure and stimulating environment. The school wants every child's efforts to be valued and their potential realised. The work of the school makes an excellent contribution towards achieving these aims. The headteacher provides very strong leadership, with a clear vision for the school. He is not complacent and seeks to continually raise standards. His dynamic approach and regular involvement in the classrooms provide a good example to staff. The headteacher is very well supported by the senior management team. All members of staff feel valued and are an effective team that makes a good contribution to the management of the school.
57. The governing body is very supportive of the school. It successfully fulfils its statutory responsibilities by ensuring all legally required documents and policies are in place, including a special educational needs policy. There are, however, a few minor omissions from both the prospectus (absence rates and information on collective worship) and the governors' annual report to parents (a full financial statement and a statement on security). The governing body meets regularly and has an appropriate structure that includes advisory panels for finance, curriculum, property and health and safety. Governors have a very good understanding of the work of the school through regular classroom visits and by their links with classes and subjects. They see questioning policy and practice as an important part of their role. Their limited involvement in the preparation of the school development plan restricts their role in shaping the direction of the school. Governors carefully monitor spending. They have put high priority on funding an increase in the number of classroom assistants in order to support pupils' learning.
58. There are very effective procedures for the monitoring of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. In other subjects, co-ordinators satisfactorily monitor planning and pupils' work, and on occasions teaching. The school has successfully introduced procedures for performance management. These strategies are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection the school has introduced more effective school development and improvement plans. These identify appropriate priorities and provide a satisfactory long-term view for curriculum and management development, but they do not provide a clear focus on how the whole school will achieve the targets set. However, there is a strong commitment to continued improvement and a very clear capacity to succeed.
59. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with the senior management team and the governors to ensure good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The governors have deliberately increased the number of hours for classroom assistants in order to raise standards still further. The improving standards for seven-year-olds, for

example, in English, suggest that this has been a significant part of a successful strategy. Classroom assistants are well trained and are an important and integral part of the school team.

60. The school makes effective use of specific grants, including the Standards Fund and funding for special educational needs. The various functions of the school's office are run efficiently and the school makes satisfactory use of new technology to store, for example, financial data. The school effectively applies best value principles in its management and use of resources. It is developing an appropriate self-evaluation scheme, analysing its results and comparing them to similar schools, and successfully providing good value for money.
61. All teaching and support staff form a dedicated team which works well together, sharing subject expertise to provide the best learning opportunities for pupils. The staff are experienced, suitably qualified and very well matched to the demands of the National Curriculum. Individually they are self-evaluative and regularly take up professional development opportunities. All teaching staff contribute to the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The smooth and efficient running of the school day is also a tribute to the cheerful and reliable team of ancillary staff including the office, lunchtime and cleaning staff.
62. The accommodation is very good and provides a stimulating environment in which to work and play. Imaginative design features in the grounds give pupils a wealth of sensory experiences and the adventure playground is very well used. The interior of the building is very well presented and the colourful displays provide information and inspiration as well as an opportunity to celebrate pupils' own work. The computer suite is proving an effective use of space for teaching new skills.
63. The learning resources are very good, maintained to a high quality and used effectively to deepen pupils' understanding in lessons. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the range of materials and tools for artwork and an improvement in the resources for information and communication technology. The library is a well-resourced environment in which pupils can practise their reading skills, or research topics from a reasonable range of reference books. The Internet is fast becoming the preferred resource for reference activities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. To build on its many strengths and to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) raise the overall standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school, by:
 - ensuring all aspects of the subject are taught in sufficient depth, particularly the areas of data handling, giving instructions to make things happen and exploring real and imaginary situations;
 - providing continued in-service training to improve teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in the use of resources and software available;
 - developing the use of ICT in other subjects;
(Paragraphs: 4-5, 21, 125-127)

- (2) develop whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the non-core subjects so that teachers' planning can more closely match the needs of pupils and to provide better information when reporting to parents;
(Paragraphs: 23, 47, 49, 116, 120, 124, 128, 136, 144, 151)

- (3) further develop pupils' awareness of the diversity and richness of other cultures by:
 - enriching the school's curriculum, through the inclusion of opportunities in all subjects for pupils to explore examples of the rich variety of cultures found in Britain.
(Paragraphs: 32, 39, 108, 134, 150)

In addition to the above key issues, the following less important areas for development should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan. They are indicated in the inspection report in the following paragraphs:

Area for development	Paragraph/s
Ensuring that activities, particularly the use of worksheets, closely match the needs of all pupils, especially higher attainers, so as to achieve the best possible progress.	23, 29, 85, 94, 95, 987, 105, 128
Having a clearer focus to the school development plan; ensuring the governors' involvement in the setting of its priorities; and clearly showing how the whole school will work towards achieving its priorities.	58
Induction procedures for children entering the reception class.	66

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
5	30	46	19	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	312
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	40

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

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

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
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
	2000	37	28	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	36
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	62	63	64
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	95 (90)	97 (89)	98 (98)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	35
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	63	63	63
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (89)	97 (98)	97 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	250
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	31.2

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	570,228
Total expenditure	549,432
Expenditure per pupil	1,773
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,261
Balance carried forward to next year	40,057

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 47.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	310
Number of questionnaires returned	147

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	37	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	36	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	42	7	1	1
The teaching is good.	70	29	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	41	7	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	26	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	40	5	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	82	16	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	37	18	1	5

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

65. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for children under six in the Foundation Stage are very good. There are two classes, one of which is housed in a mobile classroom away from the main building. The rich, varied and stimulating curriculum provided in both the reception classes is well structured and organised, taking good account of all the areas of learning required for the age group. Children learn basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. They attain and exceed the Early Learning Goals expected for their age and make good progress during their time in reception, experiencing depth and breadth of experience and learning. Teaching provides a good balance between children choosing for themselves and adults directing them in purposeful, well-planned activities. This ensures a very secure foundation for children's future progress in all the subjects of the National Curriculum.
66. Most children have benefited from a range of pre-school experiences and they are all given generous opportunities to get to know teachers and prepare for school routines. Older children who start full-time school in September visit the school every week with their parents to enjoy a story from their teacher and choose a book to take home. Younger children who start part-time in September, although well prepared by weekly visits to get to know their teachers and their fellow classmates before the start of afternoon school, do not have the same opportunities. A small number of parents have expressed concern and the school should consider a more equitable arrangement.
67. The initial assessments carried out by teachers show an above average spread of attainment in language, mathematical and personal development when children start school at the age of four. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, almost all children have achieved and exceeded the Early Learning Goals in mathematical, physical and creative development. They far exceed expectations in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their levels of achievement are above those usually found.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Children are interested, excited and very well motivated to learn because of the very good teaching in this area of learning and the wide range of interesting and stimulating activities provided. Children develop a positive disposition towards their learning through an enjoyable and purposeful environment designed to motivate them to learn and to gain self-confidence, independence and assurance. Good organisation and routines make equipment and resources readily accessible and encourage children to be independent. Children take responsibility for themselves and their belongings to a good extent. For example, they sensibly get ready for physical activity and put their writing in the 'Finished Work' box without being reminded. They show mature and sensible attitudes when they take responsibility for feeding the fish. During the inspection, a few children were reluctant to part from their parents and showed a dependency upon comfort toys from home. The majority, however are relaxed and confident, eager to participate in new experiences, choose activities and relate positively with visitors. Very good relationships are established between children, their families and teachers at the beginning of their time in school, through very good induction procedures. Teachers and assistants provide excellent role models, interacting well with children, treating them in a consistently firm but friendly manner. Consequently, children learn to be polite and courteous to adults and to one another. Clear rules and guidelines are well established and, as a result, children are well behaved and responsive. They line up sensibly when asked and willingly share resources and take turns, showing respect and consideration for others. They co-operate very well

with one another in the role-play area, discussing who should be the next patient in the 'Health Centre', for example. Children develop good levels of awareness that people have different views and beliefs, when the teacher shares her own experiences of Malaysian customs and practice.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children reach very high standards in this area of learning. They listen attentively, to adults who provide good role models as they give clear instructions and read well-chosen stories, such as *David and Goliath* from the Bible. They are confident and articulate and readily talk to one another and adults during activities. They speak audibly and clearly when they make observations and ask questions, such as, 'Can I have a bit of your blue, please, Edward?' Children take delight in exploring the meaning and sounds of words, such as when they recognise that the word 'gigantic' is a bit like 'giraffe,' showing a growing knowledge of phonetics. Children choose to read independently and are keen to talk about their favourite books and stories. The higher attainers are already established readers, reading simple books with understanding and expression, taking account of punctuation. Many know the difference between fiction and non-fiction; one child explains that non-fiction is about 'true stuff'. The majority has very good levels of word recognition, recognising words such as 'machine' as well as familiar words in their chosen books. They are confident in their knowledge of letters and sounds because of systematic, well-organised language activities. Almost all children write their names clearly with well-formed letters and accurate use of capital and small letters. They write for genuine purpose, such as putting names in an appointment book, making lists and labelling diagrams. The most able make confident and accurate attempts to spell independently, impressively spelling unfamiliar names accurately because of their good knowledge of sounds. A significant number exceed expectations, using their knowledge of sounds to write recognisable sentences with well-formed letters, without adult help.
70. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Adults very effectively engage children in conversation about their work. During whole-class discussions, they encourage all children, including those least confident, to talk, asking relevant questions to promote thinking and prompt a reply. They give children time to respond, listening to and valuing their contributions. Teachers and their classroom assistants have high expectations, developing vocabulary very well by encouraging children to think of words that mean the same as enormous, for example. Classrooms are rich in the provision for language activities, with books, labels and notices being prominently displayed. Children have access to a wide range of enjoyable and productive reading and writing activities. Teachers foster an interest and enthusiasm for language through strategies such as the 'writing teddy' and develop early reading and writing skills very well. This results in children making very good progress.

Mathematical development

71. Children achieve beyond the expected Early Learning Goals in mathematics. They have many opportunities to sort, match and count, using a wide variety of high quality equipment. Consequently, they recognise numbers up to 10 and beyond, matching them correctly to symbols and putting them in the correct order during a variety of enjoyable activities. Children enjoy counting forwards and backwards. The higher attainers double numbers, such as 14, with ease and count in twos accurately, commenting that when you count in twos you miss the odd ones out. Good questioning from teachers constantly challenges them. Children understand mathematical vocabulary to a good extent, using correct names for solid shapes as they discover them in a 'feely bag'. They correctly use positional language, such as first, last, beside, in front and behind as they form two lines to go round the school grounds on a 'number hunt'. Many are beginning to show an understanding of the principles of addition and subtraction and compare numbers and quantities by using vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less'. Teaching is good. Teachers create a colourful,

stimulating environment rich in numbers and reinforce mathematical language to a good extent.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children start school with a good general knowledge and are curious and interested enough in the world around them to gather information at a fast rate. By the end of the Foundation Stage children talk about themselves, their families and where they live, many knowing when their birthdays are. They predict who will be the next to have a birthday by using the displayed calendar with good understanding. The extensive school grounds are a rich source of learning and children show familiarity with a water boatman and life cycles of the frogs and butterflies. Children make daily weather observations and take care of creatures such as fish and caterpillars. They explore the properties of sand, water and dough, guided by good teaching to consider shapes, size and texture, linking their learning in different areas in a relevant and meaningful way. During a visit to a local environmental centre, children investigate objects and materials, using all their senses. Photographs show children absorbed in smelling bluebells and using mirrors to view trees at different angles. Children ask questions about why things happen. They follow the lead provided by adults, who model such investigation by frequently posing questions themselves and setting challenging tasks. They know that snakes lay eggs and model them from dough, commenting on their different sizes. 'Do horses have eggs?' was a comment from one child that led to significant new learning. They know about their own culture and begin to know details of other cultures, such as Malaysian because of the teacher's own personal experience. Children regularly work independently on computers to develop early skills in information and communication technology. They operate controls to click and drag objects on the screen to reinforce positional vocabulary by putting them 'in', 'under' or 'beside' other objects. Children's achievements prepare them well for the subjects of the National Curriculum.
73. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. There is a very clear purpose for the planned activities. Teachers provide a wealth of enriching experiences and opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding effectively. They do so through direct teaching and through frequent well-judged interactions. When a child shows fascination with a tiny insect on her arm, the adult reacts typically by immediately finding a magnifying 'bug box' to examine it more closely so that the child learns that an insect has six legs.

Physical development

74. Children have frequent opportunities to use a very good range of high quality large apparatus, both indoors and out. Children move confidently with good levels of co-ordination and balance as they climb adventurously and imaginatively around, over and through a challenging sequence of obstacles in the hall. Showing pride in their achievements, they hang expertly from their knees and weave in and out of wall bars. With agility, they invent increasingly complex sequences of movements, incorporating turns as they jump from the apparatus. Teachers show good attention to safety and children follow instructions well. They know how to bend their knees for a safe landing, for example. In dance lessons children run, jump, march, move on tiptoes, stopping and starting with good levels of control. Children develop dexterity in small-scale movements by using a range of construction equipment and small toys. They handle tools, such as scissors and brushes, and malleable materials safely and effectively with good levels of control.
75. Teaching is good. Teachers talk to children about their actions, teaching them skills, which they practise and refine. Teachers do not always make the best use of the available space and children sometimes carry out warm-up exercises in cramped conditions.

Creative development

76. Children explore colour, texture and shape using a wide range of media and materials. These are incorporated most successfully in collage flowers inspired by the artist Georgia O'Keefe. Children are taught to make patterns, exploring symmetry in black and white; they mix colours, knowing that blue and yellow will make green. In an outdoor activity, children enjoy painting with large household brushes to make group pictures, watching with fascination at the effect of sprinkling red paint in a large pot of blue. Their self-portraits are imaginative and expressive and of a high standard of painting and composition. The children express themselves confidently through drama and role-play. They re-enact familiar situations in the home corner and readily become involved in being doctors and patients in their 'health centre'. In response to stories, rhymes and music children join in actions and movements with enjoyment and sensitivity. For example, they pretend to look scared when they come across a cave during a 'Bear Hunt'.

ENGLISH

77. Standards in English are well above the national average at the age of seven and well above national expectations at the age of nine. This represents a further improvement on the above average standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Results of the national tests for seven-year olds, at the end of Key Stage 1, show that standards have been consistently well above the national average for the past three years and are well above the average for similar schools. There are no significant differences in attainment between girls and boys.
78. The school is not complacent. Following the analysis of the Key Stage 1 national test results in 2000, writing was identified as an area for further development. The clear focus on writing has been effective. The predicted results of the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds indicate that the results for writing have risen to 42 per cent of pupils now attaining the higher Level 3. This is a significant improvement from 18 per cent in 2000. Likewise reading has further improved in 2001. All pupils now reach the national average of Level 2 by the age of seven and just over a half reach the higher standard. These high standards continue until the age of nine when pupils leave the school with literacy and oral skills that are well above national expectations. The work seen during the inspection confirms the high standards throughout the school and in all aspects of English.
79. Pupils enter the school with above average skills in language and literacy. Building on their good speaking and listening skills, they make good progress in reading and writing in the reception classes. This provides a firm foundation for further development as pupils move through the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress throughout the school, as teachers plan rigorously together to make sure all pupils have the same opportunities. Individual results are carefully tracked and this shows that most pupils make good progress. The highest attaining pupils make sound progress from their high starting point and ensuring their good progress is a constant challenge for the school.
80. Speaking and listening skills are highly prized and constantly practised throughout the school. The headteacher establishes high expectations for speaking and listening in assemblies every day. From the time they enter the school, pupils listen attentively to stories and offer definitions for words, such as 'contemplate'. They speak confidently in front of the whole school. This good model continues throughout the day, including during circle time, when pupils listen to each other and share ideas and thoughts in a mature way. Teachers insist on pupils giving full answers to questions and constantly encourage them to use the most appropriate word. As they progress through the school, pupils enjoy seeking alternative words and using imaginative expressions. For example, a reader in Year 4 automatically includes adjectives, such as 'cosy' and 'wicked', when retelling the plot of a

story. This forms a very good basis for reading and writing as pupils understand and use a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Teachers emphasise new words or technical vocabulary; invite explanations from the pupils; and take time to check thoroughly for comprehension. They reinforce key words in displays in every classroom. Displays throughout the school act as a stimulus for developing speaking skills. For example, the jumble jars in the library area created a buzz of excited exchange of observations every time pupils walked past. They described what was in them in detail, stating preferences and listening to each other's opinions.

81. As parents observed, the idea that reading is fun permeates the school. An attractive library area greets pupils as they enter the school. They are stimulated by high quality reading books and the very good teaching of basic reading skills. Pupils enjoy reading together from big books during the literacy hours and from an early age develop a good flow and sense of expression. They appreciate the impact of punctuation and talk about why authors have, for example, used an exclamation mark or bold print. They develop a good understanding of phonics that helps them to sound out unfamiliar words. From reception onwards, higher attainers read 'chapter' books, by authors such as J. K. Rowling, Roald Dahl, Dick King-Smith and Enid Blyton. Most pupils can attempt unfamiliar words and, from Year 2 onwards, successfully look up meanings in a dictionary. Throughout the school, pupils read fiction and non-fiction books with confidence. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoy the challenge of reading about water boatmen and caddis flies in their book on tadpoles, whilst pupils in Year 2 use information gained from the big book about castles to support their history topic. By the end of Year 4, many pupils confidently use the school and public libraries to learn more about their own interests, such as animals, the Vikings, or cars. Reading is further promoted by the reading partner scheme that involves older pupils reading with younger partners once a week; and by adults, who come in regularly to read with individuals. In Years 3 and 4, lower-attaining pupils benefit from the additional literacy programme that builds confidence and further reinforces the strategies for successful reading. Parents make a significant contribution by listening to pupils reading regularly at home and recording comments in the reading records.
82. Teachers build on the very good speaking, listening and reading skills to engage pupils in writing. There is a strong sense of writing for a purpose engendered throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 have good letter formation, spacing and sizing. They already have a good understanding of what constitutes a sentence. By the end of Year 2, pupils have neat, joined-up handwriting that springs from regular handwriting lessons and teachers' high expectations. They take a pride in their work and are already writing lengthy stories. The higher attainers take genuine pleasure in writing, for example, accounts of the Fire of London, or imaginative stories based on ideas from their reading. For example, in response to Ted Hughes' story, pupils in Year 2 write about The Iron Man's Wife. Higher attainers show an appreciation of the stylistic points employed in the original story of *The Iron Man*. They build up the suspense over several pages, deliberately using repetition and punctuation as stylistic points. For example, when building up the image of the iron man meeting his wife, a higher-attaining pupil wrote,
- 'When the iron man went back to the sea, he thought
he heard the sea whispering something to him and it was!
It was saying, 'Go to the sea'. 'Go to the sea'. So he did....
After a while, he noticed two eyes the same as his...an iron figure
the same as his. It was his wife!'*
83. Such stories are made into books for other pupils to enjoy. They involve editing and redrafting and the finished products are correctly spelt and punctuated, beautifully presented and a pleasure to read. This attention to detail continues in Years 3 and 4 where pupils learn the differences between formal and informal styles. For example, when writing a letter to parents about the forthcoming fete, the teacher encourages pupils in Year 3 to

write from the point of view of the headteacher. After exploring ideas together, they use formal phrases and the language of persuasion effectively, such as, *'We would appreciate it if you would come to our exciting fete on Saturday'*. They confidently attempt spellings of difficult words, such as 'appreciate', and enjoy trying to find the right words to persuade parents to come. In Year 4, pupils love writing their own poem based on the *A is for Apple* poem, read together from a big book of classic poems. Once again, the teacher insists on exploring a range of possible words before choosing the best. This challenge encourages pupils to think imaginatively and results in high quality, original work. They take great pleasure in sharing their poems with each other and enjoy the humour deliberately included by some pupils. Pupils' confidence in trying spellings and the use of imaginative writing has improved considerably since the last inspection.

84. Teaching has also significantly improved since the previous inspection and now ranges from satisfactory to excellent. It is now good overall at both key stages, with three-quarters of lessons seen being good or better. The National Literacy Strategy is well embedded. Where there is good or better teaching, teachers use the framework and ideas creatively to meet the particular needs of the pupils. In the quarter of lessons seen, where teaching is very good or excellent, teachers constantly challenge pupils to think harder about responses; to look in detail at texts; and analyse how words and phrases are used. They have an infectious enthusiasm that lends great pace and energy to an imaginative range of activities. They have high expectations of all pupils doing their best and pupils respond avidly to the challenges and enjoyment on offer. Such lessons inspire pupils and develop a sense of confidence. In the best lessons, teachers constantly assess pupils both formally and informally. They share criteria with pupils and encourage them to analyse their own work and the work of others in a constructive manner.
85. Where teaching is good, pupils benefit from the careful attention to detail in the teachers' planning that helps them build on previous knowledge. They enjoy a good range of activities that are matched to the varying levels of need in the class. Well-trained classroom assistants are used to work effectively with individuals and small groups within the classroom. This support ensures that the lower attainers fully understand the tasks and allows for individual reinforcement of key skills. Where teaching is satisfactory, there is not always sufficient challenge in the work set for different levels of pupils' abilities. The lesson aims are not clearly shared with pupils and assessment does not play a key role in the lesson. This can lead to some pupils being unsure of the purpose of the activity or being under employed. However, strengths in the teaching outweigh these weaknesses and overall pupils make satisfactory progress. All teachers have very good relationships with pupils and very good classroom management. This means that behaviour and concentration in lessons are never less than good and most often are very good. This is a direct reflection of the high expectations of the school and the consistent application by all teachers of positive reinforcement for good work and behaviour. Planning for different levels in the class has improved considerably since the last inspection. However, there is still a tendency to overuse worksheets for grammar and punctuation and still a lack of very high challenge for the most able, except in the very best lessons.
86. English is very well managed and clearly reflects the priorities set by the school. There is a strong commitment to developing speaking and literacy skills in all subjects, which is increasing pupils' command of English. This includes sound links with information and communication technology. Teachers now use the new computer suite for some literacy lessons, using the opportunities to engage in reading and word-processing.
87. The careful attention to the analysis of test results, and the individual tracking and setting of personal targets for pupils, has led to improved standards from an already high baseline. The whole area of assessment within English has dramatically improved since the last inspection and now represents good and very good practice.

88. There is a genuine sense of teamwork amongst the teachers that enables good practice to spread. The regular monitoring of teaching both by the co-ordinator and the senior management team encourages the identification and spread of best practice. There is a healthy culture of self-evaluation that inspires teachers to identify clear priorities and continue to strive for higher standards.

MATHEMATICS

89. Standards are well above the national average at age seven and at age nine because of good teaching and pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. This high standard is an improvement on the last inspection, when attainment at seven was above average and at nine was only average. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons and because of this they make good progress towards their individual targets. There are no significant differences in attainment between girls and boys.
90. National tests in 2000 for pupils in Year 2 show that almost all pupils attained Level 2, the expected standard, which was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils that went on to achieve the higher standard, Level 3, was also well above the national average. Consequently, the overall standard achieved by the school was well above the national average, and also well above the average achieved by similar schools.
91. Evidence from the inspection confirms these high standards have been maintained. It indicates that currently overall levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 are well above average. In the present Year 2, almost all pupils achieve the expected standard for their age and a third achieve the higher standard, which is lower than in 2000. These findings do not indicate a lessening in the school's drive to raise standards, but reflect the different mathematical ability of these classes compared with the previous year.
92. By the time they are seven, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of number to at least 100 and beyond for many. They count accurately in twos, fives and tens and recognise that numbers such as 70 are multiples of two, five and 10. Pupils understand that multiple addition can be written more quickly as a multiplication. For example, they know adding five two-pence coins is the same as $5 \times 2p$. Pupils make equally good progress in other aspects of the subject. They use both non-standard measures, such as hand-spans and strides, and metric measures, such as metres and centimetres, to measure length. They know the names and simple properties of two-dimensional shapes, such as triangles, rectangles and hexagons.
93. By the end of Year 4 most pupils achieve the expected standard for their age and many are working at a higher standard. Continued good progress ensures that the high standards achieved at seven are maintained. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and write and order numbers to 10,000. They use a range of strategies to add three-digit numbers and successfully multiply numbers to 100 by a single-digit number. Pupils are making good progress in learning their multiplication tables. Many understand negative numbers, for example, when used in temperatures. They recognise simple fractions and their equivalents, but do not yet add and subtract or fully understand the place-value of decimal numbers to two places. The school's current priority to raise standards in the aspect of shape, space and measure has been successful. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of angle and symmetrical shapes, and they sort polygons by their properties and use an appropriate range of metric measures. Most pupils accurately use both digital and analogue methods to tell the time.

94. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to very good; overall, it is good in both key stages. Teachers have effectively introduced the National Numeracy Strategy, which ensures clear progression in pupils' learning. They have a sound, and often better, understanding of the subject. Consequently, pupils make good progress in gaining basic number skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 use their previous knowledge of number patterns to double 128 and quickly find the answer 256 mentally. In most cases, teachers plan their lessons thoroughly ensuring there is parity between classes of the same year. They make effective use of day-to-day assessment to ensure activities meet the needs of almost all pupils. Occasionally, the higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged to ensure the best possible progress. This is often the case when teachers use the same worksheet for the whole class. Even when different activities are given to these pupils they do not always provide sufficient challenge. In one lesson, the activity they were given involved easier calculations to those completed by the rest of the class.
95. Classroom assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs. They are well briefed by the teachers and provide good levels of support both in preparing resources and in helping pupils during individual and group activities. At times, they help pupils to complete their work rather than develop their understanding of the activity. Again, this is particularly the case when the whole class is given the same activity or worksheet, which does not carefully match the needs of the lower or higher attaining pupils.
96. Teachers manage the pupils well and have high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils show great interest in the subject and are very well behaved in lessons. Relationships between pupils and adults are exemplary. Consequently, pupils co-operate well and support each other in their learning. They show good levels of concentration. Their very positive attitudes are an important element in the good progress they make.
97. The best lessons are characterised by brisk sessions of mental mathematics at the start. These challenge pupils according to their prior attainment, stimulate their intellectual involvement and encourage and motivate them to make progress. For example in a Year 3 lesson, pupils responded well to the teacher's enthusiastic approach. This resulted in pupils making good progress in asking appropriate questions and remembering the given facts when identifying an unknown number. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities with a clear focus to match the needs of the different ability groups within the class. They make effective use of resources, such as cubes, coins and number lines and grids, to help pupils visualise their calculations. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by the teachers' clear explanations of appropriate strategies. For example when adding three or more numbers, pupils look to add the easier combinations first. These effective lessons end with the teacher highlighting the lesson objective so that pupils consolidate their learning and recognise the progress they have made.
98. In lessons that are satisfactory, rather than good, strengths outweigh the minor weaknesses. These include, for example, mental sessions at the start lacking pace and not fully involving all pupils. Occasionally, teachers do not carefully consider the effectiveness of worksheets in matching the lesson's objectives and their appropriateness for all pupils.
99. Teachers have securely introduced the National Numeracy Strategy, which is improving the overall quality of teaching in the school. While teachers make some use of computers to support pupils learning, they do not use them effectively for data handling. The curriculum provided meets the statutory requirements and meets the needs of almost all pupils. The use of numeracy skills is not well developed in other lessons and opportunities to use numbers, make measurements and to handle data are often missed. Homework makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The assessment arrangements are good and the use of assessment information in curriculum planning is much improved since the last

inspection. The management of the subject by the co-ordinator has many strengths, including the analysis of test results and the monitoring of teaching.

SCIENCE

100. As a result of good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to learning, standards are well above the national average at both age seven and age nine. These high standards are an improvement on the last inspection, when attainment at seven and at nine was average. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons and because of this they make good progress. There are no significant differences in attainment between girls and boys.
101. The results of teachers' assessments in 2000 show that, by the age of seven, almost all pupils achieved Level 2, the expected standard for their age. This was above the national average. Over a third of pupils went on to achieve the higher standard, Level 3. This was well above the national average and compared favourably with similar schools. The results also show that there are no significant differences between pupils' attainment in each aspect of the subject including experimental and investigative science, which was a weaker area at the last inspection.
102. Inspection evidence shows that standards for pupils at the age of seven continue to be well above those found nationally. All pupils in the current Year 2 achieve the expected level for their age, and over a third achieve the higher standard. Pupils know the names for parts of a plant, including 'root', 'stem' and 'leaf', and they understand plants need water and sunlight in order to grow. Through studying the life cycle of a frog, they recognise that living things grow, feed and reproduce. They understand that some features of a person change as they grow older, while others remain the same. They successfully use simple equipment and record their observations. For example, pupils use batteries, bulbs and wires to make simple electrical circuits. They test and record which materials in the circuit make the bulb light up and which do not. An outstanding area is the pupils' correct usage of scientific vocabulary, as when describing these materials as either 'conductors' or 'insulators'. A higher-attaining pupil correctly identified the terms 'race' and 'gender' as being possible differences between people.
103. Pupils continue to make good progress in their learning in Key Stage 2. By the age of nine, almost all pupils attain standards at least in line with national expectations for their age, and for almost half of them standards are above expectations. This represents good levels of achievement for the pupils with overall standards well above those normally found. Pupils sort materials as solids, liquids and gases. They understand the simple properties of each of these states. For example, they know that solids keep their shapes and have tightly packed particles while liquids run downwards and take the shape of their container. Pupils have good knowledge of the planets in the solar system and that the movement of the Earth causes day and night and the seasons.
104. During the inspection teaching ranged from satisfactory to good; overall, teaching is good. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their learning. Contributory factors in the rate of progress are the positive attitudes pupils have and their keenness to absorb new facts. All teachers have good questioning techniques that encourage pupils to think as well as to state what they know. For example, in an effective lesson on plants, the teacher questioned pupils on whether certain fruit and vegetables grew in or above the ground. Throughout the school, pupils use scientific terminology correctly because teachers are good at developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in the subject. They ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand all the key words they use when answering questions. In a Year 4 lesson on mini-beasts, the teacher took care to ensure all pupils understood the terms 'endoskeleton', 'exoskeleton' and 'vertebrates'. Teachers make good

use of resources to add interest to lessons and motivate pupils. While observing snails, wood lice and worms through hand lenses, pupils showed good levels of concentration and interest despite their obvious excitement. In another lesson, pupils were amazed and waited with anticipation as their teacher made popcorn to show how vegetables can be changed.

105. Pupils develop good investigative skills through carefully planned activities. They have a good understanding of how to carry out a fair test. For example, pupils in Year 3 used the same quantity of different fats when investigating which one melted the fastest. Teachers plan lessons from recently introduced national guidelines. They introduce pupils to a variety of methods of recording their work, including effective use of literacy skills to explain their observations. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of pupils' numeracy and information and communication technology skills to support pupils' learning. Occasionally, teachers use worksheets that are not appropriate for the needs of all pupils or do not closely match the lesson's learning objectives. Consequently, the effectiveness of their teaching is reduced. Assessment procedures and the monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator are satisfactory. She recognises the need to evaluate the newly introduced units of work to ensure that they provide a broad range of learning opportunities that meet the needs of all pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Pupils achieve standards that are above national expectations for their age, both by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Effective leadership has led to an improvement in the provision of resources, such as books and videos, and to higher standards of achievement. Since the last inspection, the policy has been re-written to include a scheme of work that provides a clear progression of skills and this, along with good teaching, has impacted on pupils' work to good effect. There are individual examples of exceptional talent in Year 2 and Year 4 in particular.
107. Teachers give pupils experience of a wide range of colourful materials and media, including paint, clay and thread and show them how to use different techniques, which results in good progress in the development of practical skills. Pupils produce strong visual images in Year 2, when they paint pictures of their pets, including fish, hamsters and a particularly striking blue budgerigar. They make good use of line and shape and drawing is a particular strength of the school. Observational drawings of fruit and flowers are excellent, with a strong feeling for design. A detailed drawing of the eagle on a lectern, following a visit to a church, is of a very high quality. Pupils make very good use of shading techniques and pay close attention to fine detail to reproduce the texture of natural objects, such as a piece of bark, faithfully. Teachers use the school's immediate environment to provide stimulus and inspiration for much of the pupils' work. For example, pupils combine chalk, pastels and fabrics to create imaginative compositions in Year 1, closely linked to environmental studies in geography. The environment played a significant part in exciting work based on a video of the artist Andy Goldsworthy. Pupils explore colour, shape and texture when they create sculptures in three-dimensions, using a variety of natural materials such as grasses, fir cones and stones found on the school field. They develop good levels of imagination and aesthetic awareness, gaining increasing understanding of the richness of pattern and design in the natural environment around them.
108. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show good levels of knowledge about artists because of good opportunities for discussion and, in a number of cases, the influence of home backgrounds where visits to art galleries are a regular feature. They write about the lives of Impressionist artists, such as Monet, showing good knowledge. During discussions, they confidently describe the work of artists such as Picasso, Leonardo Da Vinci and Van Gogh, using terms

such as 'abstract' appropriately. However, pupils have little opportunity to study art from other non-western cultures. In recalling work in lessons, pupils show sound knowledge of shades and tones and explain the meaning of landscape and portrait paintings. In Year 4, they blend pastels successfully in work on landscapes and sketchbooks show useful experimentation with lines following study of the work of Paul Klee. Pupils enjoy creating patterns and designs using information and communication technology.

109. Teaching is good overall. It is good in Key Stage 1 and, judging from samples of work and discussions with pupils, teaching is at least satisfactory in Key Stage 2, although no lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers show good knowledge of the subject and their enthusiasm is reflected in the interest and total involvement of the pupils, who rise to the high levels of challenge presented. The effective organisation of resources and management of pupils provide a very good balance between guidance and freedom to experiment. As a result, pupils behave very well and are totally absorbed and confident to give their imaginations free reign. They work well together in small groups. Teachers value pupils' work and displays; the suspended panels based on the work of Mondrian are impressive. They pose questions about famous works of art to encourage thinking and a spirit of enquiry about art. There is a successful Arts Week in the autumn with opportunities for visiting artists to broaden pupils' experience. Pupils worked effectively in the past with a visiting artist on a productive millennium project. Pupils enter competitions both locally and nationally and an art club, currently available for the younger pupils, enhances the curriculum.
110. There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils' work, including a school portfolio. Sketchbooks are now well established and provide evidence of good progress over time, particularly in drawing and sketching where pupils show above average skill. They are insufficiently used as a means of collecting and experimenting with ideas to use in pupils' finished work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Overall, pupils aged seven and nine achieve the expected standards for their age. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress in their learning. This is an improvement on the last inspection when progress for some pupils was unsatisfactory.
112. The school has recently adopted national guidelines to support teachers' planning. As a result, teachers provide pupils with a good range of activities that cover all areas of the statutory curriculum. Teachers carefully plan activities and often link them to pupils' work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 make hand-held toy windmills that they then use in science. Teachers provide an appropriate range of materials and tools for pupils to use. In Year 1, pupils use recycled materials to make simple musical instruments. Pupils in Year 3 use card to make photograph frames and in Year 4, pupils use wood to make the framework for their model buggies. They learn appropriate making skills through the use of simple tools, such as scissors, card cutters, hacksaws and hole punches.
113. Pupils use simple techniques to fasten materials together. For example, they use paper fasteners to fix the paper sails of their windmills to the wooden shaft. In Year 3, pupils use sticky tape to fasten their photograph frames to their stands. By Year 4, pupils successfully use a glue gun to join the wooden pieces of their model buggies. Throughout the school, teachers satisfactorily develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of mechanisms and structures. In Year 2, pupils use a simple winding mechanism to make a spider, a cloud and sun move up and down in a model depicting the story of *Incy-Wincy Spider*. Pupils in Year 3 satisfactorily investigate ways in which to make cardboard structures more stable. In making their buggies, pupils in Year 4 use cardboard corners to strengthen their models and electric motors to turn a wooden dowel axle and pre-cut cardboard wheels. Pupils

investigate simple products in order to learn how they work. For instance, pupils in Year 4 examine various pop-up books before making their own moving pictures.

114. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs and small groups, for example, when making storybooks with moving pictures. Pupils collaborate very well together and support each other in their learning. As a result the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and through supporting much of the teaching within the classroom gives a good lead to the subject. Pupils' attitudes are therefore very positive. They enjoy the subject and take great care when making and decorating their models, which results in many producing artefacts of a high quality.
115. While pupils' making skills are often of a good standard, their designing skills are not fully developed. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make simple freehand drawings of what they think their finished product may look like. When planning their musical instruments, pupils add an appropriate sentence to indicate how the instrument would make its sound: for example, 'You have to shake it'. In Year 2, pupils add lists of materials needed to their simple sketches, as when designing their 'Iron Man' models. Pupils in Year 3 incorporate their knowledge of stable structures into their photograph frames and in Year 4 they sketch brief outlines of how each page in the story books will look. However, pupils do not progressively develop the standard of their designs so as to include measurements, the size and quantity of materials required, a list of tools needed or the sequence of actions to be followed. There is no system for pupils to save their designs from each activity to give them knowledge of their learning in this aspect of the subject. Similarly, while pupils evaluate their models and make appropriate changes when making them, they do not record their evaluations of the final product or indicate ways of improving it.
116. In the one lesson observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher's very careful use of questions ensured all pupils understood how levers and pivots could be used to make their pictures move. The teacher provided clear demonstrations on how to use tools, such as the hole punch. Very good classroom management and the effective support of other staff resulted in pupils making good progress in the development of their practical skills and their understanding of the difficulties of manufacturing their simple designs. The school has recently introduced new national guidelines to help teachers in their planning. These provide a full range of activities to meet the requirements of the subject. The school is now adapting these to ensure clear progression in development of making skills. There are assessment procedures linked to the guidelines, but these are not yet fully or effectively in place throughout the school. The school has good quality resources to support pupils' learning.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. Standards met national expectations in both key stages previously, with a need identified to improve the development of skills. This has been successfully achieved as a result of the effective introduction of the 'Geography Trail'. This thoughtfully designed and interesting scheme of work, based on a systematic programme of visits, ensures that pupils build progressively on geographical skills from year-to-year. This is now well established and provides good guidance for teachers and good provision for pupils' learning. As a result, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reach above average standards and by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, they are still above those expected and well above in their understanding of some aspects of physical and human geography.
118. Teaching is good, providing an interesting and stimulating variety of activities to motivate pupils well. Teachers make very good use of the school grounds and the area around the

school to develop pupils' knowledge of places in Key Stage 1. As a result of good teaching, pupils have a good knowledge of the local area, including the local shops, railway station and church. They watch carefully chosen videos to examine the physical features of a village and make comparisons between towns and villages. Good questioning from teachers encourages pupils to talk about where they live and the things that they like and dislike in their environment. They develop geographical skills well when they carry out a traffic survey of the local area, showing an understanding of environmental issues, such as pollution. They record their findings in a variety of imaginative ways, including independent writing, tables and charts using the computer. Useful diagrams are used to record features pupils see and find during a walk incorporating a pond and a field. This makes good links with other subjects, such as mathematics and science, and provides relevance to pupils' learning. Good quality teaching further develops and extends their learning when pupils are encouraged to make comparisons between a Moroccan bazaar and a local supermarket. Teaching makes good use of pupils' own experiences and parents make a valuable contribution. Although there is still some use of worksheets that do little to enhance learning, these are used much less and are part of a wider and more interesting programme of work, with a strong emphasis on fieldwork. Pupils present their work very well.

119. In Key Stage 2, pupils enlarge the area of their visits to include the old school and the railway station in Year 3. Pupils explore and evaluate the school grounds using plans, to locate sunny and shady places. They observe compass points with suitable reference to the school's weathervane. In Year 4, pupils benefit considerably from a residential visit to Monmouth. They have above average mapping skills and locate the different places they visit on an Ordnance Survey map. Pupils use grid references with confidence and have a secure knowledge of which maps are used for which purposes. They examine maps of the British Isles and the world and can point out the major countries and features with above average knowledge of the world. When they produce a plan of the school they explore the environment with good levels of consideration for its accessibility to all. They describe and contrast physical and human features well when they produce brochures for Bromsgrove and holiday brochures for Kenya. Good teaching deepens pupils' understanding when pupils compare the daily routines of their own lives with those of a child in Kenya. Teaching poses searching questions and challenges pupils' thinking. Pupils evaluate places, showing carefully considered reasons for going there on holiday. They have a secure knowledge of the water cycle and use accurate vocabulary, such as 'source' and 'tributary' when they talk about rivers.
120. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has taken expert advice to introduce an effective programme of work specifically designed for the school. Assessment procedures have been considered and devised, but are not yet fully implemented.

HISTORY

121. Pupils achieve standards above the national expectations in history both at the age of seven and nine. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection when standards by the age of nine were average.
122. In Key Stage 1, pupils benefit from a wide range of approaches to teaching history. For example, pupils in Year 2 talk with enthusiasm about their own experience of castles. Teachers use these experiences skilfully to draw out key facts about castles and the way people lived in and around them. Several pupils had brought in books from home and this further enlivened the already well-resourced lessons. Pupils respond well to the re-arrangement of the tables to create the formation of a feast. They participate wholeheartedly in the role-play and grasp the ideas of the hierarchy of the top table. This kind of

imaginative approach and use of a wide range of teaching techniques are key factors in the good and very good teaching seen in history lessons. Pupils in Year 2 recall previous history topics. For example, they remember key dates and facts about the Fire of London. As one boy explained, 'I know that the Fire of London started on 2nd September 1666 because my birthday is on 20th September'. Teachers encourage this kind of linking with pupils' own lives in order to make the learning relevant. Pupils' extensive writing shows how effectively this topic has stimulated their imaginations. Aspirations and expectations are high. As one higher attaining boy explained, 'I wanted to write like Samuel Pepys, but I couldn't write quite as much because I can't do short-hand like he could'.

123. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 talk animatedly about their experiences of history. They recall in detail the visits, for example, to a Victorian classroom; and the visitors, such as Annie the housemaid, who brought to life the conditions of staff in a 'big house'. They remember making the 'huge' model of a Viking ship and the key features that made it possible for the Vikings to sail long distances. In the lessons seen, pupils in Year 3 confidently place dates on a timeline showing the Acts of Parliament that helped improve conditions for children working during the 1800s. They thoroughly enjoy acting out a dialogue between Dr Barnardo and the first orphan who triggered his concern, reading with expression and confidence. They linked this to the present work of the children's charity when a representative of Dr Barnardos talked about their work in an assembly. The good teaching encourages pupils to identify with the issues raised and express their own opinions. In Year 4, pupils are thoroughly immersed in learning about the Second World War. They describe it as their best topic so far because it is recent and they can talk to people who remember it happening. A talk by two visitors about their experiences of being evacuees fascinates the pupils, who ask interesting questions and listen attentively. Afterwards when writing letters as if they were evacuees, pupils show good recall of key points made during the talk. They also recall information gained when reading *Goodnight Mr Tom* during English lessons. They benefit from the many artefacts on display, which they enjoy handling and talking about together. They show an understanding of the use of primary and secondary sources of information. This is consistently reinforced in lessons and in displays.
124. As in the previous report, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. There is now also some very good teaching. Teachers present history in a lively and interesting way that triggers the curiosity and imagination of the pupils. They present key issues clearly and reinforce ideas through a wide range of resources, including information and communication technology, visits and visitors. This encompasses a variety of styles of learning and helps pupils with special educational needs make good progress in line with other pupils. They build on pupils' experiences and previous knowledge well and make good links with other subjects. History is thoughtfully linked with developing pupils' speaking and literacy skills. The main area for improvement is the consistent use of formal assessment. The procedures and assessment format are in place, but are not always used on a regular basis.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with national expectations. However, the school did not keep pace with the rapidly developing expectations of this subject. Currently, pupils aged seven and nine achieve standards below that now expected for their age. The school has recently made several important changes in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) in order to raise standards. Much progress has been made in a short period of time as the result of the introduction of new national guidelines to help teachers with their planning, training for teachers and the improvement of resources through the opening of an ICT suite. These recent initiatives have not yet had a sufficient impact on pupils' learning to raise standards to an appropriate level in all aspects of the subject.

126. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils satisfactorily use ICT to communicate information using text. For example, they use a word-processing program to write, save and print sentences that describe their artwork. Pupils gather information from a variety of sources, including CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils, with help, successfully access a web site on British grassland animals by typing in the correct Internet address. They use the web site to research facts on creatures, such as the rabbit and ladybird. In mathematics lessons, pupils use numeracy programs to develop their understanding of number. For example, they use a number grid on the screen to show that adding nine can be quickly calculated by adding 10 then subtracting one. Pupils use a data-handling program to show the results of a traffic survey as a bar chart and pie graph. However, pupils have had only limited experience of using such programs to organise and classify information and present their findings. Pupils use the mouse to move an object around a maze on the screen, but do not have sufficient opportunities to either programme a toy robot or record a sequence of instructions to move an object on the screen. Pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to explore what happens in real and imaginary situations through the use of adventure games or simulation software. Currently, pupils by the age of seven have not had sufficient opportunities to develop an appropriate understanding for their age of each of the subject's five major themes.
127. By the end of Year 4, the situation is similar. Pupils have achieved an appropriate standard for their age in some aspects of ICT, but in others they have made insufficient progress. They satisfactorily organise and present their work. Pupils edit their text, as when writing and printing reports on Victorian Britain. They use different fonts, sizes and colours when producing acrostic poems. They successfully use graphics to produce calligrams of their names. However, pupils have had only limited opportunities to send and receive e-mails, use databases and use sequences of instructions to control devices.
128. While pupils' progress over time has been unsatisfactory, the quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good overall. Teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good and reflected differences in the teachers' knowledge of the subject. As a result of recent professional development and improvements in the curriculum and resources, pupils now make good progress in lessons. Strengths in the teaching include the very good management of the pupils. Consequently pupils are very well behaved in lessons. They show good attitudes to work and enjoy using the computers. Teachers satisfactorily plan activities for their pupils, but what is provided for the higher-attaining pupils does not sufficiently extend their learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are not yet fully implemented. Teachers make good use of ICT to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills when they use the computer suite. For example, when researching grassland animals on the Internet, pupils in Year 2 developed their reading, scanning and note-taking skills. In a Year 3 class, pupils made good progress in their understanding of angles when using the computer to draw regular two-dimensional shapes. Teachers, classroom assistants and helpers give good support to pupils with special educational needs, which results in them making similar progress to their classmates. Some teachers do not make sufficient use of their classroom computers to use and develop the skills learned in ICT lessons.
129. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. He is aware of the need to further develop the subject and for continued staff training in the use of the software available.

MUSIC

130. Pupils achieve standards above national expectations for pupils of their age, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average both at age seven and nine.
131. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of rhythm, pitch, pulse and dynamics. During the playing of tapes of melodic songs, pupils clap spontaneously, keeping good time and showing a strong sense of rhythm. Enthusiastic teaching encourages them to develop this further by encouraging them to use different parts of the body to tap, stamp, blow and click, in time with the music. Pupils imaginatively reproduce animal sounds, creating their own musical patterns and compositions with great enjoyment. They are encouraged to handle musical instruments with care when they experiment with percussion instruments to identify sounds they might hear at sea, for example. Pupils listen very carefully and distinguish accurately between high and low sounds and recognise long and short notes. Teachers give good guidance, well supported by the resources of a newly introduced scheme of work, and pupils make good progress.
132. Pupils in Key Stage 2 successfully recognise and sustain a repeated rhythm, even when a second, then a third rhythm is introduced, showing good levels of listening and concentration. Pupils have good opportunities to experiment with sounds and notes played on keyboards and xylophones. They reach a high standard of composition during a lesson based on a Victorian topic in Year 3 where teaching provides expert guidance and sets high standards. Pupils have good knowledge of written symbols and compose simple tunes to go alongside Victorian street cries. They combine a tune and a rhythm successfully, showing a well-developed sense of which notes go well together.
133. Pupils sing tunefully, with confidence and clear diction, and enjoy singing together from memory with a good sense of timing. They pitch their voices accurately and modulate them appropriately, according to the song or occasion. By the time they leave the school, they have built up a good repertoire of hymns and lively songs they know well. They have a good degree of vocal control during the singing of their favourite songs, such as *The Big Ship Sailed on the Alley*, *Alley O*. The standard of singing by the school choir is very high and sets a good example to the school. Pupils are willing and confident to sing songs such as *Tomorrow* in front of an audience; they perform well.
134. Pupils are encouraged effectively to listen attentively to music by different composers, such as Schubert, during lessons and in assemblies. They have a secure knowledge of the names and different styles of composers and comment on what they like and dislike in their music. During art week, they benefited from visiting groups of musicians from different backgrounds and cultures. They do not, however, have regular opportunities to listen to music from other cultures and traditions during their lessons.
135. The majority of pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 choose to play the recorder and they have good opportunities to perform with others during lessons, assemblies and special occasions, such as concerts and church services. By the time they leave the school, these pupils play recorders accurately, with confidence and are able to read notation, in some instances supported by letter names to a good extent. This is an improvement since the last inspection when inspectors judged that pupils had an underdeveloped knowledge of notation and graphic scores. Effective questioning from teachers challenges pupils to think about musical scores to good effect. Pupils sing and play expressively in two parts, reaching high standards of performance, responding well to the praise and encouragement given by their teachers. Teachers have high expectations and during playing and singing insist on good deportment and handling of their instruments, leading to good standards. These are high quality experiences for pupils, who achieve well and gain high levels of self-esteem. Pupils who do not choose to play recorders miss a significant part of their musical curriculum.

136. The music co-ordinator has experience and personal expertise in playing and singing and leads by example and enthusiasm, setting high standards of performance throughout the school. There is a strong musical tradition within the school, which is being well maintained. In an improvement since the last inspection, the school has introduced a commercial scheme of work, which provides clear continuity and progression and covers the requirements of the National Curriculum adequately. It gives additional support to non-specialist teachers. It has not yet been fully adapted for this school's needs, however, and there is some inconsistency on its implementation according to teachers' levels of competence and confidence. Assessment procedures are incorporated in the scheme, but are not being implemented appropriately by teachers and this is a weakness of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. Overall attainment in physical education remains in line with national expectations at the age of seven. However, in the limited number of lessons seen, pupils attain above average skills in games and dance. There has been improvement by the end of Year 4 since the previous inspection and pupils now perform at above national expectations in swimming, games and dance. It was not possible to see gymnastics or athletics at Key Stage 2 during the inspection.
138. Pupils make good progress throughout both key stages. By the end of Year 2, pupils create simple sequences in gymnastics and make sensible choices about the most suitable apparatus to use when demonstrating particular skills. They behave well and show sound body control, for example, when travelling in different ways whilst supporting their own weight and landing in a controlled fashion when jumping from a range of apparatus.
139. In Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy learning country dancing and by the end of Year 2, they perform in a ceilidh, using dances that include progressing from one partner to the next. They keep in time and retain sequences well. This is further developed in Years 3 and 4 when pupils benefit from further opportunities to perform in public. For example, boys and girls volunteer to take part in maypole dancing at the school fete. The older pupils learn to interpret music and show a good awareness of the use of space, pathways, levels, speed, and direction. They become absorbed in conveying the mood of the music and sequence routines that they confidently perform to others in the class. They carefully observe each other and offer constructive criticism that helps improve their own performance.
140. The very good outdoor facilities and wide range of equipment help ensure that pupils experience a good variety of games, including cricket, netball, basketball, football, rounders and tennis. As they progress through the school, they develop confident ball skills, showing good co-ordination and control. They pay close attention to advice offered, as they have a strong desire to succeed and improve their performance. This was particularly evident in Year 4 during cricket and rounders lessons, where pupils responded positively to advice and made good progress in their batting, bowling and fielding skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand rules for games and play co-operatively together. By the end of Year 4, pupils develop a good team spirit and enjoy the element of competition, for example, in cricket and rounders. They also appreciate the individual challenge in developing the skills for tennis. Pupils at both key stages appreciate the need for warm-up and cooling down sessions. From Year 2 onwards, pupils speak of the impact of physical activity on the body and understand the links with health and fitness.
141. By the end of Year 3, all pupils swim confidently and all, bar a few, achieve 25 metres, which is the basic requirement by the end of Year 6 to meet national expectations. The majority exceed this minimum requirement and already in Year 3 are competent swimmers, using several different strokes and a variety of ways to enter the water. Pupils respond

enthusiastically to the challenges set during swimming lessons and work hard to achieve the best they can.

142. There is a very good range of after-school opportunities for sport and pupils benefit from working with trained instructors as well as their own teachers. Year 4 pupils enjoy taking part in a mini Olympics, competing with other schools in the area. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development.
143. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall. At Key Stage 1, teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory. The teaching seen at Key Stage 2 was never less than good, with half the lessons being very good. Where teaching is good or better, teachers set good examples, demonstrating key skills themselves and showing enthusiasm for exercise. They have high expectations of participation and performance. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure pupils build on previous skills and develop new ones. Teachers use pupils to demonstrate and encourage constructive comments from those observing. They share the aims of the lessons with pupils and indicate the areas of improvement at the end of the lesson. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not offered enough guidance or are insufficiently challenged. The main focus of the lesson is not clear and, on occasions, there are too many skills attempted in one lesson.
144. Although teachers use informal assessment, they do not use a formal means of recording progress that would help with their future planning and with pupils' sense of achievement. As noted in the previous inspection, this is an area for development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. The school has a well-established programme for religious education, accurately reflecting the main requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 4, they fully meet these requirements. They reach standards above those locally expected, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the age of nine.
146. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a very secure knowledge of Christianity, knowing many Bible stories from both the Old and the New Testaments and their meanings. During whole-school assemblies, frequent references are made to Bible stories, such as 'The Lost Coin' to illustrate the chosen theme, developing pupils' understanding of parables. Pupils know the major Christian festivals and fully understand their significance when they write imaginative accounts based on the Easter story, for example. Pupils begin to learn the main features of Judaism and enjoy familiar stories from the Old Testament. In Year 1, for example, they enjoy taking part in role-play with puppets to illustrate the story of Esther. They know details of Jewish customs and the difference between the Old and New Testament and their significance to Christians and Jews. Pupils benefit from visitors of the Jewish faith, giving them insights into customs connected with the festival of Passover. Through very good teachers' knowledge, pupils have extensive and detailed knowledge of the signs and symbols in the Christian church and know the importance of certain rituals. They know that when the altar cloth is changed, for example, it is because something very special happens in the Christian calendar.
147. From this rich knowledge base pupils are encouraged, where teaching is at its best, to go on to interpret and reflect on their learning. In an excellent lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils were given very good opportunities to reflect on the place and purpose of the altar, the font, pulpit, candles and the church organ following a visit to the local church. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to think deeply. This leads to honest and open discussions and good levels of enquiry and investigation about fundamental truths. In considering questions they might ask of the vicar who came to talk to them, a pupil asks 'Is the Bible true?' Questions such as these are dealt with good levels of knowledge and sensitivity.

Pupils successfully learn from their knowledge of religion through good opportunities for discussion. They examine incidents in their own lives and are beginning to draw inferences and conclusions about the motives and reasons for peoples' actions and to recognise the importance of religion in the world. Pupils understand the significance of prayer in all religions and respect different customs. They make thoughtful and pertinent observations, based on their own experiences, showing high levels of involvement.

148. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to enrich their good knowledge of Christianity through learning about the lives of significant people, such as Mary Jones. Very good story telling in Year 3 deepens understanding and respect for the Bible. Pupils develop their understanding of other world faiths to a satisfactory level. They begin to understand the importance of religion in the world when they learn about Hinduism and aspects of Buddhism. They show respect for the fact that Hindus believe in different gods. Pupils make comparisons of symbols and customs between Judaism and Christianity. They know the importance of special books in religion, although they have difficulty recalling the Torah or the Qur'an.
149. Teaching is good overall. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of Christianity, reflecting teachers' own knowledge and beliefs. Occasionally, teachers present beliefs as facts, which gets in the way of pupils' learning. However, teachers have a growing awareness and willingness of the need to develop their own knowledge of other faiths and are gaining in confidence. Good displays reflect the school's commitment to provide knowledge of Judaism and Hinduism. However, there is insufficient emphasis that these are significant religions within Britain. Good teaching gives pupils a very good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and sufficient knowledge of the main elements of Judaism and Hinduism. Where there are opportunities for discussion, teaching encourages a depth of thinking about world faiths leading to good attitudes towards religion. As a result, pupils make good progress throughout the school, with pupils gradually developing both their knowledge and understanding. Teachers make good use of artefacts and visual aids to illustrate the importance of the ritual of prayer and help pupils to understand the reverence involved in religious customs. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' contributions, building successfully on their prior knowledge. Teachers are successful in making good links between pupils' own experiences and knowledge about religious faiths. There is a good balance between teachers' demonstrations, contributions from pupils and discussion.
150. Assessment is unsatisfactory, with a lack of agreed procedures for determining pupils' knowledge and understanding. There is little work recorded in books to show how much progress pupils are making and opportunities are missed to develop literacy skills through the subject.