

INSPECTION REPORT

**ASTON ST MARY'S C OF E (AIDED) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Stevenage

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117421

Headteacher: Mrs W S Dellar

Reporting inspector: Miss M A Warner
17288

Dates of inspection: 5 – 7 February 2001

Inspection number: 193066

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane
Aston
Stevenage
Hertfordshire

Postcode: SG2 7HA

Telephone number: 01438 880212

Fax number: None

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Rev. G White

Date of previous inspection: 7 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
OIN: 17288	Miss M A Warner	Registered inspector	Mathematics, Science, Information and communication technology, Design and technology, Equal opportunities, English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
OIN: 9010	Ms G Ellisdon	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
OIN: 8139	Mrs B Johnston	Team inspector	English, Music, Foundation stage curriculum, Special educational needs.	How well does the school care for its pupils?
OIN: 2200	Mr J Stirrup	Team inspector	Art, Geography, History, Physical education.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development, 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

St Mary's C of E Primary School is situated in the village of Aston, to the south of Stevenage. The school is smaller than most primary schools nationally, with 110 pupils on roll, including 15 in the reception year. There is little difference between the number of boys and girls. Although nursery aged pupils attend the school, there was none on roll at the time of the inspection. One third of the pupils come from the village of Aston and the remainder from Stevenage, with a few from other villages. Eleven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. Thirty-five per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average but one per cent has a formal statement of need, which is below the national average. Almost all the pupils are white and one pupil has English as an additional language. The cohorts in the school are small and pupils' attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year: overall it is average. Comparisons between years and also between key stages are therefore unreliable particularly as a substantial minority of pupils leave in Year 4 to go to a local middle school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very effective and the school's ethos promotes learning very well. Teaching is good across the school and is very good in a quarter of lessons. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Over the last three years, overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 exceeded the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry varies but is broadly average. However, some pupils have special educational needs on entry. The socio-economic background of the pupils is above average. Pupils' achievement is good in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. The leadership and management of the school are very good, ensuring that considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. Taking all these factors into consideration, together with the fact that the cost per pupil is high, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards, of the present pupils in English, are above average across the school and in mathematics are above average in the foundation stage and in Key Stage 1. Higher attainers reach above average standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Provision for the foundation stage is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for pupils' social development is very good: the school provides a caring environment where pupils are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school and pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are very good.
- There is a high degree of satisfaction with the school by parents.

What could be improved

- There are limited opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes and styles, in an extended manner, across the curriculum.
- Standards in science, in Year 6, are below standards expected of pupils of their age.
- Opportunities for pupils to explore and use three-dimensional media, including ceramics, in art and design are limited.

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 met the requirements of the key issues of previous report:

- Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are now taught separately for most lessons and procedures for assessing their needs have improved.
- Standards in design and technology and information technology are in line with expectations.

Other improvements:

- There is no unsatisfactory teaching of English.
- Pupils now work in a new, well-equipped technology room.
- A useful homework policy has been compiled and a survey was carried out after it had been running a year.
- Parents, pupils and class teachers sign a home/school agreement at the start of the school year.
- Pupils' reports have improved and targets for pupils are now mentioned within them.
- Outdoor provision for nursery and reception children has been developed.
- A 'Trim trail' (outdoor climbing equipment) has been installed and developed. Landscaping has enhanced the curriculum, through the teaching and the learning environment outside.
- Safety has been improved by separating the pupils' entrance and play area from the car park;

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	A	A	A	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	C	C	C	
Science	B	B	E	E	

The small number of pupils in each year group should be noted when considering test results. In the main report, therefore, where fewer than ten boys or girls took the tests details of results are not given. It should also be noted that in Year 6, in 2000, almost half the pupils had special educational needs and in the same cohort, half the higher-attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 left the school, some for the middle school, before the end of Key Stage 2.

Standards on entry vary considerably from year to year because of the small cohorts. Overall, they are similar to those expected of children of the same age. The majority of children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year.

- Over the last three years, the school's performance at the end of Key Stage 2 exceeded the national average in English and mathematics but fell below the national average in science. There was no difference between the performance of boys and girls in English and mathematics but in science boys performed better than girls. In Key Stage 1, however, over the last three years, girls performed better than boys in reading and mathematics but there was little difference between them in writing.
- In 2000, pupils' attainment in English was much higher than the predicted targets at the end of Key Stage 2. Their attainment in mathematics was close to the targets. The school has set much higher targets in both English and mathematics for 2001.
- The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects, over the last five years, was below the national trend. The school maintained above average standards until 2000, when standards were in line with the national results, which had risen. The small cohorts make overall results unreliable as in 2000 almost half the pupils had special educational needs.

- The inspection found that pupils' attainment is well above expectations in speaking and listening and in reading it is above expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils' writing at the end of both key stages is in line with expectations. Although pupils' literacy skills are good, there is limited provision for all pupils to be involved in a range of writing opportunities across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average and at the end of Key Stage 2 is average overall, with a group of high attainers reaching above average standards confidently. In science, pupils' attainment is above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 to Year 5 but below expectations in Year 6. Pupils achieve well in relation to their age and ability in English and mathematics. In science pupils' achievement is good up to Year 5 but is unsatisfactory in Year 6.
- In other subjects, standards are above those expected of pupils of their age in physical education in both key stages and in line with expectations in all other subjects. These standards are often not as high as at the last inspection in many subjects. A possible factor is the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies, which has meant that less time has been spent on teaching these subjects. Standards in design and technology and information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 have improved. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and physical education in Key Stage 1 and in English and physical education in Key Stage 2. Their achievement is satisfactory in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, approaching their lessons with interest, commitment and enthusiasm. They listen quietly to teachers, are keen to respond to questions and, working independently or collaboratively, enjoy contributing to their own learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' very good behaviour has a very beneficial impact on their learning and contributes to the active and rigorous working environment, which exists in many lessons. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, display pride in their environment and behave well in assemblies and in the dining room, where they show particularly good social skills. They have a clear understanding of the behaviour expected of them and respond in a very positive way.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Well-planned personal, social, health education and citizenship lessons provide well for pupils' personal development. The school council is much valued by all pupils, who feel that their suggestions are listened to, respected and acted upon. Adults in school present good role models and there is a genuine feeling of mutual respect between teachers and pupils.
Attendance	Overall, attendance is good; in the last full reporting year before the inspection it was well above the national average. Punctuality, however, is still a problem with some pupils arriving up to twenty minutes late on most days. This can mean that the first part of the day is disrupted, rendering it less effective as a constructive learning time. Unauthorised absences are marginally above the national average. One or two parents persistently fail to let the school know the reason when their child is away.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is excellent in two per cent, very good or better in 26 per cent, good or better in 79 per cent and satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons. It was unsatisfactory in two per cent of lessons.

The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is good. The teaching of English and literacy and of mathematics and numeracy is good. In English, the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and homework is used particularly well to reinforce their understanding of what has been taught in class. In science, teaching ranges from very good to, very occasionally, unsatisfactory.

The quality of teaching is good in design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT), although teachers do not have a clear knowledge of what ICT skills pupils bring to school. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of art. Teaching is satisfactory in geography and history. Teaching of instrumental music and physical education is good. The school meets the needs well of all pupils in these mixed-aged groups, in almost all classes and lessons.

Pupils' learning is good across the school. Contributory factors are the fact that teachers are secure in their knowledge of subjects, praise is used in an effective manner to promote pupils' confidence and pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. The good use of resources, matched well to the needs of different pupils, also makes strong contributions to pupils' learning. The learning of lower attaining pupils in information and communications technology is good, because of small-group teaching focused on their particular needs. In all classes the strong contribution made by learning support assistants and, sometimes, parents is noticeable. In music, pupils' learning is particularly enhanced by extra-curricular activities. In subjects where pupils do not study subjects in depth, or those, such as history, where there is over-use of worksheets, learning is only satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and fully prepares pupils for the next stage of education. The school has good links with the pre-school nursery and secondary schools ensuring smooth transition between all stages of education. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Music tuition, visitors, field trips and educational visits all make important contributions to the extended curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs who are supported well in class, both by teachers and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Only one child has English as an additional language and he is supported and challenged well.

Aspect	Comment
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are satisfactory opportunities for providing for pupils' spiritual and cultural development but there is no policy or planning for this area of the curriculum. Moral and social development is promoted well through the school's personal, social and health education programme. Pupils' social development is particularly well planned for.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school promotes a caring environment in which all pupils feel safe and secure. All staff and other adults in the school show considerable concern for pupils' welfare.

The good partnership with parents reported in the previous inspection has been maintained and has a positive impact on their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides strong educational direction for the school and is supported well by her deputy. Staff work well as a team and have a strong shared commitment and capacity to succeed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is good expertise amongst them. Each governor monitors a different subject, including literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. The governing body is not at present at full strength and has two vacancies.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There is good monitoring and evaluation and the school has taken effective action to meet its targets.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school's priorities for development are appropriate and supported well through very good financial planning.

The school applies the principles of best value well. Staffing and accommodation are good. Learning resources are satisfactory overall and are good in English, mathematics, science and design and technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. Behaviour is good. Parents are well informed about the school's work. Annual reports are comprehensive and helpful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant minority of parents feels that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities.

108 questionnaires were sent out and 49 were returned. In all except one question, positive responses were 90 per cent or higher. Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of the school on the questionnaires and at the parents' meeting. Inspectors agree that parents are well informed about the school's work. Scrutiny of pupils' reports showed parents' praise to be largely justified. The inspectors do not agree with the view on extra-curricular activities: they consider the provision to be good, particularly for a small school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards on entry to the school vary considerably from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each year. Overall the majority of children in the reception class enter the school with levels of attainment similar to those expected by the local education authority of children of the same age. By the time they reach the end of the reception year the majority of children are achieving national expectations in all areas of learning and are ready to begin the National Curriculum. One child at present has English as an additional language but is a fluent speaker of English. Children with special educational needs make good progress. Higher attaining children make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
2. Results, when there are small cohorts, vary considerably from year to year, therefore results in any one year do not give a reliable picture of the school's performance. When there is a small number of boys or girls taking the tests, results are not recorded in detail in the report. However, the school's performance can be judged by taking the average National Curriculum points over the last three years. At the end of Key Stage 2, it exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science overall. It exceeded the national average in English and mathematics but fell below the national average in science.
3. In English, the National Curriculum test results in 2000, at the end of Key Stage 1, showed reading to be well above the national average. It was also well above average, when compared with similar schools. Writing was close to the national average overall and was close to the national average when compared with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, results were well above, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. A small minority of pupils in both key stages are attaining well above the national average. Pupils are achieving well in relation to their age and ability. The school has been successful in maintaining the good standard of pupils' work since the previous inspection.
4. The inspection found that in English, pupils' attainment is well above expectations in speaking and listening at the end of both key stages. Their reading is above the national average at the end of both key stages. Many pupils are confident readers. Pupils' writing at the end of both key stages is in line with expectations. In Key Stage 1, many pupils write confidently and their work shows a satisfactory use of vocabulary. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing secure skills in spelling and in the use of punctuation. Most pupils develop a fluent, cursive script by the end of Key Stage 2 and their work is well presented.
5. Pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum are good. Pupils take notes and write accounts in history and geography. There is provision for higher attaining pupils to write in a more extended manner. However, there is limited provision for all pupils to be involved in a range of writing opportunities across the curriculum.

6. In mathematics, the National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1, over the last three years together and in the 2000 tests, were in line with the national average. They were also in line with results of similar schools. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2, over the last three years together, exceeded the national average. In 2000, when nearly half the pupils had special educational needs, they were close to the national average and were also in line with similar schools. The results are similar to the last inspection.
7. Inspection evidence finds that attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. This is because of excellent teaching and pupils' very good attitude and behaviour. Teachers have very high expectations and use mathematical vocabulary and well-matched resources very well to develop a real understanding of the subject. Pupils are also beginning to use mental strategies well to find answers to problems. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average overall and there is a group of high attainers who confidently reach above average standards. The school combines the Numeracy Strategy with further work to maintain a wide range of mathematical activities. This is proving successful in achieving high standards.
8. The school is beginning to use assessment data well to set individual targets for pupils and to set end of Key Stage 2 targets. As pupils often leave the school to go to the local middle school in Year 4 and new pupils arrive, this prediction cannot always be made accurately. This result reflects the fact that out of seven pupils who achieved level 2A in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, four left, some for the local middle school, before they reached Year 6. In contrast over half the pupils who joined the school in Key Stage 2 and took the end of Key Stage 2 tests achieved a level 1 or 2C at the end of Key Stage 1. In the English National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the pupils reached much higher standards (93 per cent at the expected level or higher) than predicted (61 per cent at the expected level or higher). Targets for 2001 have been set higher than before at 85 per cent. In mathematics the prediction was more accurate with 61 per cent predicted and 60 per cent achieved. Targets in mathematics for 2001 have been set at the much higher level of 92 per cent. The school also aims to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher level 5 in mathematics in 2001. From the lessons observed and the work seen, these targets are judged to be challenging, but realistic, for the higher attainers in this particular year group.
9. In science, the National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, in the 2000 teacher assessments, were above the national average at the expected level 2 and well above at the higher level 3. These results were the same when compared with similar schools. However, pupils' attainment in investigative and experimental science was in line with the average for similar schools at the expected level 2 and below the average for similar schools at the higher level 3. At the end of Key Stage 2, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average at the expected level 4 and very low compared with the national average at the higher level 5. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was below the national average at the expected level 4 and very low at the higher level 5. These results are lower than at the last inspection but the attainment of different small cohorts needs to be taken into consideration, especially as in the cohort for 2000 almost half the pupils had special educational needs.

10. Inspection evidence finds that attainment in science is above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 to Year 5 but below expectations in Year 6. A contributory factor for this result could be seen in the work scrutiny and lessons observed, where expectations of pupils in Year 6 were seldom higher and results were sometimes not as high as for Year 5 pupils. The school is aware of this and has plans to teach the two years groups separately. The inconsistent teaching through experimental and investigative work is also a contributory factor in pupils not achieving the higher levels throughout the school. There is evidence that the school has improved the amount of investigative and experimental science but has not thought through the recording of this work sufficiently, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. As a result these pupils do not enjoy the subject and this is evident in their results.
11. Pupils achieve well in relation to their age and ability in English. The school uses the literacy hour very well to help pupils to progress in all areas of English. The twenty-minute, daily group reading activity also develops pupils' reading skills well. Pupils' achievement is good in mathematics in Key Stage 1, because there are high adult-pupil ratios in class, teaching is very good and pupils have very good attitudes to learning. In Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement is good, with higher attainers challenged well. In science pupils' achievement is good up to Year 5 but is unsatisfactory in Year 6.
12. In English at the end of Key Stage 1, over the last three years together, girls performed better than boys in reading and mathematics but there was little difference between them in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, over the last three years together, there was no difference between boys and girls in English and mathematics but in science boys performed better than girls.
13. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects, over the last five years, was below the national trend. The school maintained above average standards until 2000, when standards were in line with the national results, which had risen. The small cohorts make overall results unreliable as in 2000 almost half the pupils had special educational needs.
14. Standards are above what is expected of pupils of their age in physical education in both key stages and in line with expectations in all other subjects. These standards are not as high as at the last inspection in Key Stage 1 or in history and geography at Key Stage 2. The introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies has meant that not as much time has been spent on teaching these subjects. The small number of pupils in different cohorts also makes direct comparison unreliable. However, standards in design and technology and information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 have improved, from below average to average, since the previous inspection. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and physical education in Key Stage 1 and in English and physical education in Key Stage 2. Their achievement is satisfactory in other subjects.
15. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets identified for them. Although attainment is mostly below that expected from pupils of a similar age, the majority of these pupils achieve the targets set for their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. The parents' questionnaires show that almost all parents agree and mainly strongly agree, that their children like school. Pupils approach their lessons with interest, commitment and enthusiasm. Pupils listen quietly to teachers in their lessons and are keen to respond to their questions. They are able to work both independently and collaboratively and enjoy contributing to their own learning.
17. The behaviour of pupils is very good. This has a very beneficial impact on their learning and contributes to the active and rigorous working environment which exists in many lessons. Pupils behave well in classes and assemblies and show good social skills during lunchtime in the dining room, where older pupils are responsible at the head of each table. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and display pride in their environment. They have a clear understanding of the behaviour expected of them and respond in a very positive way. The rewards and sanctions scheme used by the school is carried out in an effective manner, with the emphasis being very much on the promotion of good behaviour. The relationships amongst all members of the school community are very good. Adults in school present good role models and there is a genuine feeling of mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Praise is used well by teachers to raise pupils' self-esteem and to develop their confidence in their abilities.
18. Pupils' personal development is very good. They are encouraged to act responsibly and opportunities are provided for older pupils to take a part in caring for younger ones during lunchtime. The school council is much valued by all pupils. They feel that their suggestions are listened to, respected and acted upon. Pupils' personal development is well provided for by well-planned personal, social and health education and citizenship lessons and opportunities to discuss issues close to their hearts are given in regular 'circle time' activities. All teachers have records of pupils' personal development with individual targets being set for improvement. These targets are on display in all classes, often in an imaginative manner. Pupils are very aware of the need for concern for others within the school, the local community and the wider world. This is reflected in their regular fund-raising activities for local, national and international charities; for example, in the week of the inspection the school council decided to raise money for the earthquake victims in India.
19. Confidence grows considerably as pupils progress through the school. They learn to appreciate their own achievements and are quick to praise the efforts of other pupils in their class. Pupils have very open minds and listen to and respect the opinions of others. The good assemblies provided for pupils and a range of visitors into school make a positive contribution to pupils' growing knowledge of the spiritual dimension of the world around them. The residential holiday, provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6, helps to develop problem-solving and team-building skills, whilst pupils' regular physical education lessons often focus on the need to work together in order to succeed.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well in classes and show an interest in their work. They are well behaved and have good relationships with teachers, learning support assistants and one another.

21. Overall, attendance is good; in the last full reporting year before the inspection it was well above the national average. As reported in the previous inspection, punctuality is still a problem with some pupils arriving up to twenty minutes late on most days. This can mean that the first part of the day is disrupted, rendering it less effective as a constructive learning time. Unauthorised absences are marginally above the national average because the school rigorously vets reasons given for absences. One or two parents persistently fail to let the school know the reason, when their child is away. Registers are taken promptly at the start of the morning session and again in the afternoon; they are marked accurately according to local authority guidelines. Details of attendance are given in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents and on the pupils' annual reports.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is excellent in two per cent, very good or better in 26 per cent, good or better in 79 per cent and satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons. It was unsatisfactory in two per cent of lessons.
23. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is good and this ensures that a secure atmosphere prevails and children enjoy their learning experiences. This in turn promotes well their personal, social and emotional development. Detailed marking of the children's work results in appropriate work being set for children of differing attainment which develops their literacy skills effectively. Good resources, excellent teamwork and tasks, very well matched to children's needs, are well planned for in mathematics. This is also true of the tasks designed to enhance children's physical development. The teacher's own good singing voice promotes tuneful singing by the children and effective questioning helps children to learn about different instruments in music lessons.
24. The quality of teaching, overall, in literacy skills and English in both key stages, is good. Lessons are planned well and objectives for the lesson are shared clearly with pupils. Good questioning, work well matched to pupils' levels of attainment and good marking were evident in the good teaching seen. Homework is also used effectively. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and additional literacy support has made a significant impact on pupils' learning and attainment.
25. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy in Key Stage 1 is excellent. This is because of the very good planning of lessons, based on a very clear understanding of what is to be achieved and how it is to be taught. Mixed aged classes are very effectively taught in numeracy lessons, with well targeted questioning, high adult/pupil ratios and activities carefully matched to the very wide variety of attainment of pupils, who are well supported by the adults. Expectations are challenging for the higher attainers, whether in the younger or older year of the class, and lower attainers are taught at a speed and at a level appropriate to their needs. In Key Stage 2, mathematics and numeracy are taught satisfactorily, overall and teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6. The National Numeracy Strategy is followed appropriately. Once a week, three years are taught together for mathematics and opportunities are given for them to cover wider mathematical problems. This is a positive initiative but work is not always sufficiently well matched to Year 4 pupils, who struggle to understand the tasks. Information technology, however, is effectively used to develop numeracy and good questioning about programs, by the teacher, supports this initiative.
26. In science, teaching is very good in Key Stage 1, with very good planning of a range of different activities within a lesson. The length of the lesson and the receptiveness of

pupils enable them to make good progress. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching ranges from good to, very occasionally, unsatisfactory. Where it is good, strengths are in the questioning of pupils at the beginning of the lessons and the clear explanation of the process being studied. Where teaching is unsatisfactory there is not enough difference between what is expected of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. The school is aware of this and has plans in place to rectify it.

27. The quality of teaching is good in design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). No teaching was observed in ICT at the last inspection. In design and technology teachers having a much clearer understanding of the subject than was reported at the last inspection. Pupils' books show that they plan and evaluate their work well. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of art and convey it to pupils in a meaningful manner. Teaching is satisfactory in geography and history, both of which are very well planned. Activities in these subjects are well matched to the different attainment of pupils and encourage pupils to work both collaboratively and independently. Lower attaining pupils are well supported and assessment is used well at the end of lessons to find out what pupils understand. Teaching is good in physical education. Instructions are clearly delivered with appropriate emphasis being placed on health and safety issues. A particularly good feature is the timed targets which help pupils to stay on task. The experience and enthusiasm of the instructor, employed by the school, makes a very positive contribution to the teaching of the subject. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the foundation subjects.
28. Pupils' learning is good across the school; this is mainly because of good teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to learning. In the foundation stage, good support by different adults makes a strong contribution to the children's learning. In English, the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and homework is used particularly well to reinforce their understanding of what has been taught in class. In art, learning is good and pupils make good progress because teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject, praise is used in an effective manner and promotes confidence in the pupils and opportunities are given for them to appreciate each other's achievements. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and show real interest in the subject. In both art and history, the good use of resources and stimulating artefacts makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Learning is also effective in subjects such as geography, because teachers use different resources to match the needs of different pupils and as a result, there is a clear increase in pupils' knowledge and understanding. This is particularly effective in information and communications technology in Years 3 and 4 when lower attaining pupils benefit from small-group teaching, which helps them both to access knowledge about computers and develop their literacy and mathematical skills. A further reason why pupils' learning is effective and their progress is good is the good contribution learning support assistants, parents and visiting teachers make to lessons. For example, there are particularly good working relationships between the visiting teacher and pupils in physical education. In all classes, the strong contribution learning support assistants, and sometimes parents, make is noticeable. In, for example, mathematics and information and communication technology lessons, there is particularly good support of pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers and in design and technology good support ensures that pupils work safely with new tools. In music, pupils' learning is particularly enhanced by extra-curricular activities of various kinds.
29. Where learning is only satisfactory, such as in history, few opportunities are given in Years 3 and 4 to study topics in any real depth and worksheets, in Years 3 and 4, do little to challenge the higher attaining pupils. In information and communication technology, there has been no real assessment carried out of what skills the pupils already have and, as a result, pupils who can already confidently use a computer

sometimes waste time being too directed by the teacher. Independence on the computer at an early age is not yet apparent. In science, learning is restricted when expectations of Year 6 are not high enough, when practical work and the writing up of it are separated, so that the interest and excitement of investigative work is lost or when mathematical skills have to be taught before pupils are able to record an investigation, losing the impact of the discoveries made. A reason for learning being more difficult in the room used as a classroom and housing the computers, is that the constant noise of the computer server, results in the teacher always having to speak at a level louder than should be necessary. In lessons where almost or complete quiet is expected, this noise is particularly disturbing.

30. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive good support in class. Teachers know their pupils well. They are aware of individual pupils' needs and targets and their planning makes reference to them. For example, a pupil with English as an additional language attains highly in mathematics and specific provision is made for this. Appropriate work is set in order that pupils with special educational needs meet their targets. Good support is provided by learning support assistants who work closely with teachers. Planning is good for almost all groups of pupils and the school has already addressed the only concern: by planning to teach Year 6 science separately from Year 5. The school successfully plans and teaches in a way that includes all pupils and provides well for their differing needs.

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

31. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils is good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements and reflects the aims and objectives of the school well.
32. The curriculum provided for the foundation stage children is good. The school provides a range of good quality opportunities for these children. The six areas of learning are promoted well by teachers. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 covers all areas of the National Curriculum and the Agreed Syllabus for religious education used by the school. The school maintains a satisfactory curriculum balance between core and non-core subjects. The good planning and training for the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have ensured satisfactory implementation and practice in these two very important areas of the curriculum. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and fully prepares them for the next stage of education. The school has good links with both the pre-school nursery in the village and the various secondary schools that pupils move on to. This ensures smooth transition between all stages of education.
33. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is actively promoted throughout the school. The school governors have suitable policies in place for sex education and drugs awareness, with these two areas of the curriculum being taught across all years where it is deemed appropriate. Time is set-aside in Year 6 for the police liaison officer and the school nurses to focus on these two issues. PSHE and Citizenship is taught each week, with all pupils partaking in 'circle time' activities once a fortnight. Strategies to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to the planned curriculum are securely in place. The school fully responds to the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. There is good provision for these pupils, who are supported well in class, both by teachers and learning support assistants.
34. There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Planning for all subjects is

good, with teachers' long, medium and weekly plans providing clear guidance for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Subject co-ordinators monitor the curriculum through the collection and review of teachers' planning documentation and a regular scrutiny of pupils' work. The headteacher monitors the whole curriculum. The teaching and learning policy covers all areas of curriculum planning. The governors' curriculum sub-committee is actively involved in curricular issues and ensures future practice is closely linked to the school development plan. The school has addressed the issues concerning the curriculum which were identified in the previous report.

35. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, both of a sporting, academic and artistic nature. Booster classes in literacy and numeracy make a valuable addition to the school curriculum. The school also offers musical tuition in violin and clarinet. A number of visitors to the school contribute to the curriculum. Opportunities are provided to take part in field trips and visits to places of educational interest. All of these make an important contribution to the extended curriculum provided by the school.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development but there is no overall policy or planning for this area of the curriculum. Assemblies and visits to the church on special occasions provide good opportunities for pupils to experience the spiritual dimension of life. They sing well and prayers are said respectfully and with meaning. Tree and bulb planting days also promote pupils' sense of beauty and the spiritual. The school responds well to pupils from a different culture, whether from Britain or from overseas. Pupils enjoy looking at resources that are brought in from other countries and more aggressive cultures within Britain are acted out and challenged through drama and music. Art makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development: pupils have looked at Rangoli patterns at Diwali, Tchokwe sand drawing from Angola, Tamil threshold designs from India and Shonyo networks from Africa.
37. Moral and social development is promoted well through the school's personal, social and health education programme. Each class draws up its own set of class rules and from these the school rules are written and displayed each term. They also review what bullying is and what should be done about it. The pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and their excellent attitudes confirm this. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and a noticeable feature of the school is how well the older pupils care for and play with younger ones. The school prides itself on its family atmosphere. The prefect system and the school council gives pupils in Years 5 and 6 opportunities to put forward views, which are listened to and acted upon; for example, raising money for different charities. A residential visit gives further opportunities for pupils to learn to live together in a setting away from home.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school promotes a caring environment in which all pupils feel safe and secure. All staff and other adults in the school show effective concern for pupils' welfare. This positively contributes to the progress and development of all pupils.
39. There are satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer and has been involved in regular training. There is a clear health and safety policy, which is known by all staff. There are two trained first aiders in the school. Regular health and safety checks as well as risk assessment procedures are carried out. The personal, social and health

education lessons cover a range of issues. There are visits to the school by the police to talk about drugs. The school nurse contributes to the teaching of the sex education programme. The school is working with the parish council to provide a Walking School Bus, where pupils walk to school, escorted by adults and their bags are carried for them. The accommodation is well looked after, as a result of the dedication of the headteacher and staff. At present there is no caretaker to ensure that routine jobs and repairs are quickly carried out. The control equipment for the computer networking system is in the information, communication and technology room, which is used for class teaching. It causes a disturbance to both teachers and pupils during lessons, due to the unacceptable noise level.

40. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Close contact is maintained with parents. Letters are sent home and teachers talk to parents about any concerns. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school has high expectations of behaviour and incidents of poor behaviour, which are rare, are swiftly dealt with and records kept. There is a file which records any problems with bullying. If there is a problem every teacher is quickly informed and parents are contacted.
41. The school has good procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have detailed individual education plans, which are written by class teachers together with the special educational needs co-ordinator. These contain appropriate achievable tasks. A review of the progress of each pupil is carried out on a regular basis to ensure that individual targets are met. Occasionally, pupils are able to come off the register of special educational needs on the recommendation of the class teacher and special educational needs co-ordinator. Provision for a pupil who has a statement of special educational need is in place. All required procedures are met. Good support is provided for pupils by outside agencies.
42. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Detailed records are kept of individual pupils. The baseline assessments are used well to record children's ability as they enter the school. The record of achievement for children in the foundation stage is used efficiently to chart progress and is carefully tracked as pupils move through the school. Individual targets are set for each pupil in reading, writing and mathematics. These are monitored and pupils in need of extra support are identified. Each has a portfolio which records work that the pupil has enjoyed doing. Portfolios also contain other items that celebrate the pupil's time in school. Annotated pieces of work to assist teachers in accurately judging pupils' levels of attainment are retained centrally. Assessment procedures in the core subjects are thorough and highlight areas for development. The information is used well and enables the curriculum to be planned more effectively. Teachers meet regularly to discuss pupils' progress and steps are taken to address any problems. There is a satisfactory school marking policy, which is followed well. Pupils' books are monitored to ensure that there is a consistent approach to marking. There are good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Each pupil has a target for personal development and this is displayed in classrooms. The school effectively facilitates transfer to secondary schools through its procedure and support. The previous report stated that assessment procedures were not always used effectively for younger pupils in Key Stage 2. The school has now improved these.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The good partnership with parents reported in the previous inspection has been maintained and has a positive impact on the pupils' progress. The school believes that

close co-operation between home and school is vital if pupils are to achieve their best: it very actively encourages parents to support their children's education. In turn, parents consulted during the inspection, expressed high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of the school and are in sympathy with its aims. A significant minority of parents feels that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities. The inspectors do not agree with this view: they consider the provision to be good, particularly for a small school.

44. The school considers it essential that parents become involved in their children's learning and works hard to support them in this. The home-school reading scheme is explained to them well at induction meetings and there are helpful guidance notes. As a result, the majority of parents, particularly in Key Stage 1, help their children very effectively with reading at home and this has a positive effect on standards of attainment in English. The school's homework policy is regularly reviewed and parents are given a copy so that they are fully aware of expectations. Most co-operate by ensuring that their children complete their homework on time and sign the homework diary each week. A few also use the homework diary for a written dialogue with teachers about their child's progress and other matters.
45. Parents feel well informed about the school's work. Inspection evidence shows this confidence to be well founded. There is an overview of what is taught in the prospectus and parents have access to more detailed plans. The curriculum is explained at September class meetings and some teachers also display, or send parents, half-termly topic details with suggestions for out-of-school activities. Successful curriculum evenings and related activities are held. For instance, following a well-attended talk about the National Numeracy Strategy by the head teacher, parents were invited to see numeracy in action and four further explanatory/training sessions are about to take place. The headteacher's informative, weekly newsletters ensure parents know about school events and other important day-to-day matters. The prospectus and governors' annual report also contain much useful information although some details, for example regarding the school's arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, are somewhat brief.
46. The majority of parents are satisfied with the school's formal consultation arrangements for keeping them informed about their child's work and progress. In addition, most feel able to approach staff at any other time to share concerns about their children's education; they find staff very willing to listen and assist. However, ten percent of those who returned questionnaires said that they would not be comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. This is a concern that the school needs to address. At Key Stage 1, many reading record books contain useful comments from parents and teachers and provide further ongoing information about progress. This is less evident in the Key Stage 2 homework diaries. Parents also applaud the pupils' annual reports, which they say are comprehensive and helpful. Scrutiny of reports during the inspection showed their praise to be largely justified. Reports include clear details of the individual's progress and targets for further work. Best examples also give precise information about the pupil's attainment in terms of the National Curriculum, particularly in the core subjects. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when the reports were said to be insufficiently informative. The opportunity for parents and pupils to contribute to the report is a good feature.
47. Families feel welcome at the school and are supportive of it. Several give valuable classroom support by helping with reading, mathematics and art on a regular basis. Others help with swimming or on visits. A few give talks on topics related to the children's studies; for example, a grandparent shared memories of her childhood in the village. A very willing band of about a dozen parents assists with decorating and minor

maintenance jobs and a grandfather helps with gardening.

48. Liaison arrangements with parents of children with special educational needs are good and many parents choose the school because they consider, rightly, that this small school is particularly supportive of children with special educational needs. Parents are informed when their child is put on the special educational needs register and they are aware of the targets set out in the individual education plan. Frequent opportunities are provided for parents to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher or special educational needs co-ordinator.
49. A small, but very committed, group of parents runs a successful and greatly appreciated Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association. The association works hard to raise funds and engender a community spirit through uniform sales, auctions, talent shows and other very well attended social events. Profits are used to purchase play equipment, printers and other resources for the benefit of the pupils. Association members also make a valuable contribution by helping with special projects such as the development of the 'TrimTrail' (outdoor climbing apparatus) and tree planting.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school and is supported well by her deputy. The staff work well as a relatively new team and have a strong shared commitment and capacity to succeed. There is very good monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and of teaching and the school has taken action to meet its targets successfully. The school is very clear about its priorities for development.
51. Subject co-ordinators, some of whom are new to their posts, are knowledgeable and keen to develop their subjects. They are very well supported by the headteacher in this relatively small school. The special educational needs co-ordinator also provides good leadership. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs makes a valuable contribution to the provision for these pupils. The school is very effective in considering the needs of all pupils. They have bought in books with boys specifically in mind in order to help raise their attainment, are in the process of writing and implementing a policy for able pupils, having identified pupils with talents in sport and music and are very supportive of a pupil with emotional and behaviour problems.
52. The governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is good expertise amongst them. The school development plan is drawn up jointly with the headteacher and brought to the finance committee for approval. Each governor monitors a different subject, including literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Good relationships have been built up over the years with the governors acting satisfactorily as critical friends. The vicar, who is chair of governors, is very well supported by a knowledgeable vice chair, who is also involved in education in a wider context and brings good expertise to the school. Governors value the support of each other; for example, they have co-opted a past governor to be on finance committee. There are at present two vacancies on the governing body: for a diocesan parent governor and a foundation governor.
53. There is very good financial management and governors are kept well informed about the budget. A considerable amount of money is raised by the PTFA and building and site developments are continually being planned and carried out. For example, the very large carry forward of £40,172 is to go towards the development of the foundation stage outdoor play area, further developments to the grounds and site and the retention of a

good pupil teacher ratio so that mixed aged classes can be avoided where possible. Involvement in the strategic planning is therefore good but the governing body is less involved in shaping the educational direction of the school.

54. The previous report indicated some weakness in accommodation for the foundation stage. The school is in the process of addressing this issue. There are plans to extend the classroom, the outside play area has been improved and further developments are planned. The previous inspection also reported that, although the accommodation was generally adequate for the number of pupils, space for practical and specialist activities and for the under fives was restricted. Since then the school has made good progress in addressing these concerns and there is now ample accommodation for effectively supporting the delivery of the curriculum. A dedicated technology room has been built and a Trim Trail constructed in the grounds; an outdoor space for the foundation stage is being developed. Although a low ceiling in the hall continues to limit some indoor physical education activities, this is offset by the good outdoor facilities. The school has been without a caretaker since Christmas and for the last two years those appointed have been short-term. Despite considerable difficulties in obtaining long-term care-taking and cleaning staff, the governors, in conjunction with parents and the headteacher, work hard to ensure the accommodation is kept in a satisfactory state of repair and decoration and provides an attractive learning environment for the pupils. The school reflects its aims and values well with everyone pulling together in difficult times. However, the headteacher at present unlocks the school at the start and sometimes locks it at the end of the day. The minor repairs and health and safety issues that would normally be noticed and attended to by a caretaker are at present dependent on the observations of staff in general and the goodwill of parents staff and governors. This is not a satisfactory situation and is a potential health and safety risk.
55. The school has good resources for the core subjects; English, mathematics and science and satisfactory resources for other subjects. Spending has been well above average on resources. There is a good number of new books in the library, which can be borrowed but, because of the limited size of the library, it is seldom possible for pupils to use it for research work. Many resources are in the classrooms and therefore readily available and accessible.
56. The school is very effective and the school's ethos promotes learning very well. Teaching is good across the school and is very good in a quarter of lessons. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Over the last three years, overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 exceeded the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry varies but is broadly average. However, some pupils have special educational needs on entry. The socio-economic background of the pupils is above average. Pupils' achievement is good in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. The leadership and management of the school are very good, ensuring that considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. Taking all these factors into consideration, together with the fact that the cost per pupil is high, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Increase opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purpose and styles, in an extended manner, across the curriculum; (Paragraphs 5, 70,73,103)
- Raise standards of Year 6 pupils in science; (Paragraphs 2, 10, 11, 29, 30, 81, 83, 84)
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to explore and use three-dimensional media, including ceramics, in art and design lessons. (Paragraph 87)

Consideration should also be given to the following:

- The appointment of a school caretaker/cleaner in charge, so that duties normally assigned to them are not covered by other people; (Paragraphs 39, 54)
- The intrusive noise of the server for the computers in a room used as a classroom. (Paragraphs 29, 39, 108)
- Formally provide individual education plans for talented and gifted pupils. (Paragraphs 114, 121)
- Continuing with efforts to reduce the degree of pupil lateness and make it clear to parents that parents should let the school know on the first day of their child's absence. (Paragraph 21)

The school may also wish to give further consideration to the following:

- Raising the standards of average pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 2; (Paragraph 75)
- Being more selective in the use of photocopiable materials, for Years 3 and 4, in geography and history and matching work to the attainment of the pupils more carefully; (Paragraphs 97, 103)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	26	79	98	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	110
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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

Results are not shown in full because fewer than ten boys took the tests.

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	12	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (94)	90 (94)	90 (83)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (94)	90 (83)	95 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Results are not shown in full as fewer than ten boys and ten girls took the tests.

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	14	9	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (89)	60 (78)	87 (89)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (78)	73 (78)	73 (78)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	94
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	18.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89.25

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	260126
Total expenditure	248272
Expenditure per pupil	2122
Balance brought forward from previous year	28318
Balance carried forward to next year	40172

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	108
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	29	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	61	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	43	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	29	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	35	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	29	10	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	57	35	4	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	43	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	35	14	4	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. The educational provision for children in the foundation stage is good. The school has been successful in maintaining this good provision since the previous inspection. Children are admitted to the school in September or April, according to their date of birth. They attend initially on a part-time basis. During the time of the inspection there were fifteen full-time reception class children. They are taught in the same class as seven Year 1 pupils and work is appropriately matched to their respective needs.
58. The majority of children in the reception class enter the school with levels of attainment similar to those expected by the local education authority of children of the same age. Procedures for assessing children when they enter school are good and detailed records are kept of each child's progress. By the time they reach the end of the reception year the majority of children are achieving national expectations in all areas of learning and are ready to begin the National Curriculum. Children with special educational needs make good progress. Higher attaining children make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school has been successful in maintaining the good quality of teaching since the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year. Good relationships are established with parents and the pre-school group in the village. As a result, children settle quickly into the routine of the classroom. They understand the class rules and show a caring relationship with one another. They behave well in lessons and around the school. They begin to accept responsibility; for example, when taking turns to return the class register and collect the milk. They make decisions about their choice of activity by using the class planning board. Children respond very well to adults and each other and co-operate when completing tasks or playing outside. Teaching is well planned and a secure atmosphere enables children to enjoy their learning experiences.

Communication, language and literacy

60. By the end of the reception year the standards achieved in the early learning goals for writing are likely to be in line with those found nationally. Standards in speaking, listening and reading are expected to be above those found nationally. Many children speak and listen satisfactorily when they enter school. They make good progress in developing confidence when speaking and talking to adults and in front of the class. Most children in the reception year are attentive listeners. They enjoy looking at books and begin to sound out words with confidence. Many are able to read simple texts fluently and a small minority are able to read more difficult texts with skill. Teaching is good; frequent opportunities are provided for children to enjoy listening to stories. Children's writing is developing well. The majority of the children in the reception year can recognise and write their own names and are beginning to construct simple sentences. The higher attaining children usually write unaided and show accuracy in spelling simple words. The teachers mark children's work in detail. This results in appropriate tasks being set for individual children. Children's learning is also supported well by other adults in the classroom.

Mathematical development

61. By the end of the reception year, the standards achieved in mathematics are likely to be above the national expectations of the early learning goals. Pupils can count to ten, with many confidently counting to twenty. They recognise and name different shapes and make simple comparisons when weighing objects. They use sand and water to gain an understanding, through practical activities, of a container being full or half full. They look at different coins and say whether they are worth more than 5p or 10p. They buy items from the home corner shop trying to work out how much change they will receive. Teaching is good, because the reception class staff work very well as a team and as a result pupils of different ages and attainment are provided with activities that are very well matched to their needs. Resources are also well prepared and enhance children's learning well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. By the end of the reception year most children achieve the early learning goals for the foundation stage in their knowledge and understanding of the world. During the inspection children were planting cress seeds and watching them grow. Good teaching, such as providing the children with interesting activities enables them to make good progress in their learning. Effective questioning by the teacher enables the teachers to assess the children's understanding. In one lesson, children thought about the foods that were good for them to eat. They were able to make accurate suggestions about the right foods to eat to stay healthy and they showed a good range of knowledge such as the names of different fruits and vegetables. Simple computer programmes are used well and provide further enjoyment for children.

Physical development

63. By the end of the reception year most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for physical development. Children gain confidence in controlling and using their bodies in different ways. They move around the hall showing an awareness of each other's space. They show skill when throwing and catching soft balls. They use the outside area for simple games and enjoy using the small equipment. They use a range of materials well to develop manipulative skills. They take care when handling tools for cutting and modelling. Good teaching and planning results in children making good progress in developing their skills.

Creative development

64. By the end of the reception year most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for creative development. The children work well together on a range of activities and gain skills in using different media in their work. They draw their own faces, showing good pencil control. They make the shape of vegetables out of playdough. Children enjoy musical activities. Good teaching in a lesson observed resulted in good learning taking place; effective use was made of the teacher's own tuneful singing voice. Children made good progress in understanding the different sounds produced by percussion instruments. They followed symbols, which indicated how their instruments were to be played. They joined in simple musical question and answer games and enjoyed learning a Victorian song. They sang well to the accompaniment of a guitar.
65. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is good overall and this ensures that a secure atmosphere prevails and children enjoy their learning experiences.

ENGLISH

66. The 2000 results for Key Stage 1 showed reading to be well above the national average. It was also well above average when compared with similar schools. Writing was close to the national average. It was also close to the national average overall, when compared with similar schools. At Key Stage 2, results were well above average, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. However, only a small cohort of pupils in each key stages took the tests. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 attainment is above the national average, overall. A small minority of pupils in both key stages is attaining well above the national average. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well above the expectations for their age in both key stages. Attainment in reading is above the national average and in writing it is in line with the national average in both key stages. A small minority of pupils attain standards above the national average in writing in both key stages. Pupils are achieving well in relation to their age and ability. The school has been successful in maintaining the good standard of pupils' work since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
67. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' speaking skills are well above those expected from pupils of a similar ages. They show confidence in expressing their ideas and use a range of appropriate vocabulary. They answer questions well in class and are able to communicate clearly with teachers and other adults. Listening skills in both key stages are similarly well above expectations. Pupils listen attentively in lessons, in assemblies and when adults are speaking to them.
68. Reading skills are above the national average at the end of both key stages. Many pupils are confident readers. In Key Stage 1 pupils show a good understanding of different texts. For example, six pupils in Years 1 and 2 read a short play script together. They followed each other's parts and read their own at the correct time. They added expression to their reading to create the desired effect. In Key Stage 2 pupils show an increased confidence in reading. Many pupils can identify mistakes in their reading and often use the skill of self-correction. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 read confidently, accurately and with expression. They are able to talk about a book, describe their favourite character and make predictions about the ending. They can locate information quickly and read unknown texts with confidence and fluency. Years 5 and 6 pupils use a response sheet during reading activities. Pupils record new, exciting words or phrases found in their reading books. They are then able to use these in their own work. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The twenty-minute daily group reading activity further develops pupils' skills.
69. Writing skills in Key Stages 1 and 2 are in line with the national average. In Key Stage 1 many pupils write confidently and their work shows a satisfactory use of vocabulary. Pupils settle quickly to writing tasks and usually complete the required amount in the lesson. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing secure skills in spelling and in the use of punctuation. Older pupils in the key stage make good use of adventurous words when writing and check what they have written for accuracy. The handwriting of pupils in both key stages is satisfactory, with some good examples. Most pupils develop a fluent, cursive script by the end of Key Stage 2 and their work is well presented.
70. Pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum are good. Pupils take notes and write accounts in history and geography. There is provision for higher attaining pupils to write in a more extended manner. However, there is limited provision for all pupils to be

involved in a range of writing opportunities across the curriculum. There are good opportunities for pupils to use computers.

71. Teaching in both key stages is good, overall. One satisfactory and two very good lessons were also seen. As a result learning is also good in both key stages. Lessons are well planned and the learning objectives are clearly shared with pupils. Work is carefully matched to individual pupil's capabilities. In a very good Years 5 and 6 lesson, effective use was made of questioning to extend pupils' understanding. Pupils read an extract from the 'War of the Worlds' by H.G. Wells. The teacher used a variety of specific questions, which enabled pupils to understand how the author had built up suspense in the text. Pupils discussed the way feelings and emotions had been conveyed to the reader. The marking of pupils' work is good. It is very good and detailed in Years 5 and 6. Homework is used well to re-inforce pupils' understanding. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' progress. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well by teachers with positive results. The Additional Literacy Support programme has also made a good impact on the pupils' learning. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the younger classes of Key Stage 2.
72. All pupils have good attitudes towards the subject and by the end of Key Stage 2 attitudes are very good. Pupils in Key Stage 1 listen attentively in class and the majority settle quickly to tasks. In Key Stage 2, pupils join in discussions and work well together in groups. They work collaboratively on tasks, when required. Behaviour is always good in both key stages.
73. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. Assessment procedures are good and detailed records are kept of individual pupils. There is a portfolio of assessed, levelled and moderated work to assist teachers to make consistent judgements relating to levels of attainment. The school has highlighted the need to raise the standard of pupils' writing in both key stages and has good procedures in place. The subject is well resourced. The library provides an attractive place for pupils to enjoy books. However, it is underused for developing pupils' independent research skills. The governor for literacy has good knowledge of pupils' attainment in the subject and makes a valuable contribution to raising achievement. Pupils have performed in summer term productions involving music and drama.

MATHEMATICS

74. The school has maintained the standards recorded at the last inspection. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1, over the last three years together and in the 2000 tests, were in line with the national average. They were also in line with similar schools. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2, over the last three years together, exceeded the national average. In 2000, where nearly half the pupils had special educational needs, they were close to the national average and were in line with similar schools. Out of seven pupils who achieved level 2A in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, four left, some for the local middle school, before they reached Year 6. In contrast, over half the pupils who joined the school in Key Stage 2 and took the end of Key Stage 2 tests achieved a level 1 or 2C at the end of Key Stage 1.
75. Inspection evidence finds that attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. This is because of excellent teaching and pupils' very good attitude and behaviour. Teachers have very high expectations and use mathematical vocabulary and well-matched resources very well to develop a real understanding of the subject.

Pupils are also beginning to use mental strategies well to find answers to problems. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and, as a result, make good progress. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average overall, but there is a proportionately substantial number of high attainers who reach above average standards confidently. For example, one boy was able to explain how he ordered numbers without first finding the common denominator. The confident use of mathematical vocabulary is very evident throughout lessons and is promoted well by the teacher. When Years 5 and 6 are taught together, work is matched well to the needs of different ability groups and these two different year groups. Homework is also set appropriately and extends learning further. In upper key Stage 2 the National Numeracy Strategy is extended by further mathematical work once a week in order to maintain a wide range of mathematical activities. This is proving successful for pupils in Years 5 and 6, including those with special educational needs. Year 4 pupils, however, who join the other two years for one session a week, tend to struggle as work in this lesson is not sufficiently well matched to their more limited mathematical experience.

76. Targets for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 were appropriate with 61 per cent predicted and 60 per cent achieved. Targets in mathematics for 2001 have been set at the much higher level of 92 per cent. The school also aims to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher level 5 in mathematics in 2001. From the lessons observed and the work seen, these targets are judged to be challenging and realistic, as this particular year has a group of mathematically confident higher attainers.
77. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good in both key stages and are excellent at the end of Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils with considerable special educational needs are given sensitive support and adults have realistic expectations. As a result, they enjoy making contributions to class discussions, which are acknowledged warmly by other pupils in the class. The high adult/pupil ratio, in some lessons, contributes strongly to pupils' learning and enables them to discuss their work more fully. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' attention is excellent and this enables the teacher to teach at a very good pace. Very occasionally, when pupils are given early work in mathematics to do they could be extended further, rather than spend time colouring in. Pupils work well with partners or in groups when using computers, competently and enthusiastically, to aid them in their work. However, they do not always realise that mental agility is needed in working out answers and sometimes rely on best guesses too much. This ability, however, proves useful in another aspects of the subject and higher attainers particularly enjoy the challenge that demanding work brings. Lower attainers are not as well motivated and could sometimes benefit from more help earlier in a lesson.

78. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy in Key Stage 1 is excellent. This is because of the very good planning of lessons based on a very clear understanding of what is to be achieved and how it is to be taught. Mixed aged classes are very effectively taught in numeracy lessons, with well targeted questioning, high adult/pupil ratios and activities carefully matched to the very wide variety of attainment of pupils who are well supported by the adults. Expectations are challenging for the higher attainers, whether in the younger or older year of the class and lower attainers are taught at a speed and at a level appropriate for their needs. In Key Stage 2, the teaching of mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory overall but there are examples of very good teaching. When very good teaching takes place the pupils' real understanding of the subject is particularly noticeable. The National Numeracy Strategy is followed appropriately and the mental session at the start of the lesson is very effective in Year 5 and 6 with the teacher targeting appropriate questions very successfully at pupils of different attainment. The questions make pupils think hard and further examples given by the teacher help pupils develop their understanding and mathematical vocabulary. Class teachers and learning support assistants work well together and with different groups. Occasionally, time is not effectively used because work is not sufficiently well matched to the needs of Year 4 pupils when three years are taught together. Higher attainers, however, particularly in Year 6 are challenged very well. Work for Years 5 and 6 is very well matched to different levels of attainment. Information technology is effectively used and good questioning by the teacher supports and challenges pupils when working on computers.
79. The headteacher co-ordinates the subject. She is fully aware of the needs of different groups of pupils and in the past has taken higher attainers to ensure they are sufficiently challenged. This has resulted in good standards being reached. From sampling pupils' work she is aware that teachers sometimes underestimate what pupils can achieve. Standards have been rising, although there was a dip in 2000, and the percentage of pupils reaching higher grades is good. A contributory factor is the effective monitoring of the subject. Plans for development include tracking pupils and moderating levels of work. The National Numeracy strategy was welcomed and put into place positively. Bridging units are used for higher attainers in Year 6 to work at Year 7 work. The governor responsible for monitoring numeracy has attended training and observed all classes. An evening was run for parents to explain the numeracy strategy and mathematics homework often involves parents in working with their children at maths games. Parents also make a strong contribution to numeracy lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1. The leadership of the subject by the headteacher is very good.

SCIENCE

80. In science, the National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average at the expected level 2 and well above the national average at the higher level 3. These results were the same when compared with similar schools. However, pupils' attainment in investigative and experimental science was in line with the average for similar schools at the expected level 2 and below the average for similar schools at the higher level 3. At the end of Key Stage 2, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average at the expected level 4 and very low in comparison with the national average at the higher level 5. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was below at the expected level 4 and very low at the higher level 5. These results are lower than at the last inspection but the attainment of different small cohorts needs to be taken into consideration, especially as in the cohort for 2000 almost half the pupils had special educational needs. Overall, standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

81. Inspection evidence finds that attainment in science is above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Years 3, 4 and 5 but below expectations in Year 6. In Key Stage 1 pupils' work is very well recorded. Even in Year 1 pupils' exercise books are good reference books for them to refer to and remind them of what they have learned. They know how creatures move in different ways, how material can change shape and that forces 'make things speed up and slow down'. They know that exercise, having different foods and keeping clean and safe all help one to keep healthy. They are able to work out a menu for a balanced diet, referring to a food triangle collage. In Year 2, although the topics are similar to Year 1 the standard of work is considerably higher. In Key Stage 2 pupils are able to make a simple electrical circuit which they use as a question board. By the end of the key stage they have more detailed knowledge of forces, having studied gravity, friction and air resistance. They know about useful gasses and about condensations and dissolving. They have investigated their pulse rates and chest size to learn about the heart and know that some actions such as exercise can be beneficial but that smoking, drugs and alcohol can cause risks to the heart. As a result, their learning is satisfactory and sometimes good. However, as there are no pupils attaining at a higher level in Year 5, the overall standard is average. Both boys and girls present their work well. Although Year 6 have covered some work that is different from Year 5, there is little difference in the standards of the two years and sometimes Year 6 work is not as good as Year 5 work. Generally less work is recorded in Year 6 pupils' books. The school is aware of this and has plans to teach the two years groups separately in the near future. Inconsistent teaching of experimental and investigative work in the past is also a factor as to why pupils are not achieving at the higher levels. There is evidence that the school has improved the amount of investigative and experimental science since the last inspection but there is still work to be done, particularly on the recording of work in Year 6. At present these pupils do not enjoy the subject and this is evident in their results.
82. Pupils' attitudes are very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils take part in very interactive lessons. They constantly join in with answers and enjoy the humour behind the teaching e.g. Joe Bloggs is used as an example and pupils are encouraged, "Don't do a Joe Bloggs!" when considering a balanced diet. Pupils discuss seriously with each other; for example, "Smarties wouldn't be very good as they have sugar in them". The quality of pupils' discussions is well above average because of the knowledge they have gained. They are independent and use dictionaries to find out how to spell words without any prompting. They make very good progress within a lesson, well supported by the teacher and a classroom assistant. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes are good. In Years 3 and 4 pupils willingly talk about the work they have done, showing interest and knowledge. There are good relationships and as a result pupils work well collaboratively in lessons. Their books show that a good range of topics has been covered and that pupils are able to carry out investigations well. They know whether a test was fair or not. By the end of the key stage pupils' attitudes are still good and they enjoy experimental work, but find the recording of work less interesting. This is because it takes place on another day when the impetus and their interest has been lost and the task becomes laborious instead of being part of interesting, on-going learning associated with practical work.
83. Teaching is very good in Key Stage 1, with very good planning of a range of different activities within a lesson. The length of the lesson, the receptiveness of pupils and the interactive style enables them to make very good progress. Good reference resources and adult support also promote good learning. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching ranges from good to, very occasionally, unsatisfactory. Where it is good, strengths lie in the good use of the white board to reinforce pupils' learning, pupils being given time to evaluate their own work; in the good quality of the questioning of pupils at the beginning

of the lessons and in the clear explanation of the processes being studied. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, there is not enough difference between what is expected of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils and time has to be taken out of a science lesson to teach new mathematical knowledge before recording can take place. Marking is satisfactory but is not done in as much detail as in some other subjects such as English and mathematics and, therefore, has less impact on raising standards.

84. The headteacher co-ordinates the subject well. She samples work, comparing pupils' books with the planning documents. Moderation of levels takes place along with agreement trialling with the local education authority. The QCA guidelines have been adopted and are integrated with another published scheme. Resources are good and the school uses the grounds well as an outside resource, which the school has plans to develop further. The school development plan shows that science is to have a higher focus for development next year.

ART AND DESIGN

85. It was only possible to observe one art lesson during the period of the inspection. This took place in Key Stage 1. This lesson, however, plus a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils, indicates that pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject and achieve standards in line with expectations for their age. Standards in the subject have been maintained since the previous inspection.
86. In the lesson observed pupils displayed the ability to produce miniature portraits of their friends in a range of art media. They worked with felt tip pens, pastel pencils and demonstrated satisfactory colour mixing skills when working in watercolours. The teacher provided a good range of resources for the lessons, with pupils displaying an effective knowledge of the importance of the function of miniature portraits in an age when photographs did not exist. Pupils gave their work their full attention when working on their own, yet supported each other in their efforts. The teacher provided pupils with the opportunity to look at and celebrate each other's work. Praise was used in a very effective manner to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence in their abilities. All of this made a positive contribution to the good learning which took place in this active and well-paced lesson.
87. The scrutiny of pupils' art work in Key Stage 1, indicates that pupils develop satisfactory observation skills as they draw objects from nature. They also produce some attractive mosaics and collages. Pupils draw and paint in a range of media: pencil, pastel, chalk and water colour. Pupils continue to develop their drawing and painting skills as they progress through Key Stage 2. Pupils engage in printmaking, collage and textile work. Whilst pupils in both key stages consider the works of great painters such as Monet, Van Gogh and Picasso, there are at present insufficient opportunities to use this experience as a means of stimulating pupils' own work. There are occasional opportunities for pupils to engage in ceramics and three-dimensional work, but these occasions are limited and few in number.
88. Pupils really enjoy their art lessons. As already stated, they work with real interest and enthusiasm. They treat all materials in a safe and sensible manner and take as much care in tidying away, as they do with the activity itself.
89. On the evidence of the single lesson observed and the scrutiny of work it would appear that teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and convey it to pupils in a meaningful manner. Classroom assistants are used well to support pupils and to

extend their learning. Teachers' good classroom practices and the pupils' commitment to their work make a positive contribution to pupils' learning in the subject.

90. The subject is well co-ordinated. It is supported by a useful policy and a well-structured scheme of work, although specific areas of work remain undeveloped. The subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Only one lesson in upper Key Stage 2 was observed. Judgements are also based on a careful scrutiny of pupils' work, which included photographic evidence, an interview with the co-ordinator and on teachers' planning. Pupils' attainment meets national expectations in both key stages and the recording of their work, particularly in Key Stage 1, is often good. The school focused on improving design and technology immediately after the last inspection, when it was judged to be below national expectations in Key Stage 2. Standards in Key Stage 1 were judged to be above expectations at the last inspection. Over the last few years, with the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies, less curriculum time has been spent on design and technology. Pupils now achieve well in Key Stage 1 and their achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils' books show that they plan and evaluate their work well, recording what they have done in a number of different ways, including using simple graphs. In Key Stage 1, pupils have made a good variety of objects and learned a satisfactory number of techniques. Work is mainly based on the overall topics of clothes and vehicles. Pupils know how to fasten objects in different ways, how to strengthen paper and how to make simple levers and structures. Some simple sewing is completed on binca. They consider which material or fabric would be best to use when making different objects. They know the names of basic tools. This all leads to good progress and learning. Having made their model, they then complete an evaluation sheet. In the summer term they make sandwiches, milk-shakes and toppings for a crispbread, in food technology. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about pop-up mechanisms, know how a torch works and investigate structures through studying packaging. They use running stitch when sewing. In Years 5 and 6 pupils learn more about mechanisms such as cams and know that a cam changes a rotary movement to a linear movement. Pupils have made a toy based on a nursery rhyme, which included a cam action. They use design and evaluation sheets before and after they make a model. In the lesson observed pupils were successfully making fairground rides that turned. In that lesson pupils investigated what happens when a rope is turned round a handle a number of times or is twisted. The focus on investigative work was good. Satisfactory progress is made in Key Stage 2, with higher attainers reaching above average standards. In the summer term, pupils make bread and different types of sandwiches in food technology lessons when they study the topic, 'You are what you eat'. They build further on the science work covered in Key Stage 1 on food groups and values. Progression across the school is good. However, standards of Years 5 and 6 are similar and consideration should now be given to extending the skills of pupils in Year 6 further.
92. Pupils' attitudes in the one lesson observed were very good. They were extremely attentive during the introductory session, were very quiet when working practically and demonstrated enthusiasm and a responsible and mature attitude to the subject. They worked well independently and went to the support of others when they saw someone else needed help. The lesson showed that pupils have a balanced attitude of independence and care for others. The very well presented, well-written up work in Key Stage 1 books shows that pupils have positive attitudes and take a pride in their work. It can also be seen from their books that pupils in Key Stage 2 sometimes work successfully on a group activity.

93. In the lesson observed and from the pupils' work the quality of teaching is judged to be good and sometimes very good. Teachers in Key Stage 2 have a much clearer understanding of the subject than was reported at the last inspection. At the start of the lesson the teacher recapped on what had been discussed and learned in the previous lesson, partly for assessment purposes and also the benefit of pupils who had been absent, aware of the needs of all pupils. Good support was given to all pupils during the practical session, with additional support given by a classroom assistant when pupils used the drill, ensuring safety. Pupils' work is well marked with constructive comments, for example, about the accuracy of their scale drawings. In lower Key Stage 2, the teacher writes to the dictation of lower attaining pupils, recording an evaluation of their work; as a result, lower attainers achieve well.
94. There is a newly appointed co-ordinator who is at present supported by the headteacher. Management of the subject is good and good progress has been made in responding to the issues of the last inspection. Improvement has resulted in the previous co-ordinator attending a ten-day course and in teachers taking part in agreement trialling, levelling pupils work and looking carefully at planning across the school and in the writing of a new scheme. This scheme is still in use and was found to match the QCA guidance well. The school has a good range of resources. The school's technology room now houses the computers and a food technology area. For administrative purposes food technology mainly takes place in the summer term, which is satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

95. It was only possible to observe two geography lessons during the period of the inspection, both in Key Stage 2. These two lessons, plus a close scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning documentation and discussion with both teachers and pupils, all indicate that pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject and achieve standards in line with expectation for their age. This is somewhat different from the previous report when attainment was judged to be above average. The current judgement must be placed in the context of the changed curriculum since the last inspection and the increased emphasis on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

96. Pupils in Year 3 display satisfactory reference and research skills relative to their age as they explore a range of photographs and statements related to banana production in the island of St. Lucia. The satisfactory progress made in this lesson was influenced by the teacher's use of activities matched well to the needs of the lower attaining pupils, focusing on the photographs as a means of reference, whilst higher attaining pupils concerned themselves studying a range of statements. In each case, pupils were able to build up a knowledge of the sequence of events in the production of bananas. Pupils demonstrated the ability to work in a co-operative manner as they explored the different ways the photographs and statements could be sequenced, before arriving at a consensus of opinion as to the correct sequence. The teacher gave good support to the lower attaining pupils during this activity and allowed the higher attainers to develop their independent learning skills. Pupils were also observed making progress in their mapping skills in this lesson as they identified the major towns and ports on a map of St. Lucia and used a key to identify the main areas of banana production. Pupils in Year 4 were observed making sound progress in their knowledge of the immediate area as they considered the commercial and leisure facilities in the nearby town of Stevenage. The pupils' responses to the teacher's effective open-ended question demonstrated they had already built up a good body of knowledge about Stevenage's old and new towns and could talk in a confident manner about the difference between the two and the shopping and leisure facilities in each one. All this knowledge was put to good effect as pupils worked on the production of a poster to attract people to the town. The sound progress made in this lesson owed much to the very good range of resource materials provided by the teacher, her good classroom organisational and managerial skills and the pupils' commitment to their work.
97. Examination of pupils' written work in Key Stage 1 indicates that pupils have an effective understanding of the area they live in, are able to draw visual maps of routes around the village and can discuss how the place can be made safer. Pupils continue to develop their geographical skills in Key Stage 2. They make comparisons between Stevenage and other areas of England and study places in other countries around the world. Pupils recognise the importance of protecting the local and world environment and appreciate the impact of weather on people's daily lives. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their mapping skills. In some lessons there is an over-reliance on the use of photocopied worksheets from commercial schemes of work and there are limited opportunities for pupils to write in an extended manner.
98. Pupils display a positive attitude to their geography studies. They work with interest, often in a collaborative manner. Pupils have good working relationships with their teachers and are keen to please them.
99. The teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, resourced and managed. Teachers provide pupils with an interesting range of geographical activities and give good individual support to less able pupils. Teachers use the final parts of lessons in an effective manner to review the work covered by pupils and to assess their understanding.
100. Pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of field trips to support their studies in geography. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development.

HISTORY

101. It was only possible to observe one history lesson during the period of the inspection, this took place in Key Stage 1. This observation, however, plus scrutiny of teachers' planning documents and of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject and achieve standards in line with expectations for their age. This is somewhat different from the previous inspection when standards were deemed to be good. This must be set, however, within the changing nature of the whole curriculum and the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies on the availability of time.
102. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 display a simple understanding of life in Victorian times and are able to talk in a fairly confident manner about life in a Victorian home, the use of household artefacts and the Victorian education system. Pupils are aware of change over time and can draw comparisons between life in Victorian England and life now. Pupils are able to use satisfactory research skills when exploring a range of Victorian artefacts and come to an understanding of their use. The good progress made in this lesson was very much influenced by the pupils' positive approach to their work and the good use of stimulating artefacts provided by the teacher
103. Examination of pupils' written work in Key Stage 1 indicates that they develop a simple understanding of changes over time as they explore the developments in a seaside resort over time. They also have an understanding of how such figures as Florence Nightingale influenced and changed people's way of thinking about health care and how society views itself. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with the opportunity to study all the appropriate topics in the history curriculum. In the lower school, however, a number of them are dealt with in a superficial manner, with limited opportunities for pupils to explore periods of history in any real depth. The situation improves in the upper school with a number of pupils putting together some substantial topic files on the Ancient Greeks. The variety of work in individual files indicates that pupils have been provided with the opportunity to engage in some personal research. Despite this satisfactory provision, there is an over-emphasis on the use of photocopied materials, which require only colouring-in activities and very brief responses. These worksheets do little to challenge more able pupils. Indeed, there are very few examples of extended writing and no observed opportunities for pupils to write in an empathetic manner and in character.
104. Pupils enjoy their history lessons and approach them with interest. Pupils particularly enjoy the chance to explore history in a practical manner with, as in the lesson observed, pupils dressing up in character and using artefacts to simulate Victorian life.
105. Whilst it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching on the basis of one lesson, the lesson observed was extremely well planned, resourced and managed. Classroom activities were matched well to the different attainment of pupils and allowed them to work in an independent and collaborative way. Classroom assistants and parent helpers were used in an effective manner to support pupils' learning and the plenary session was used in such a manner as to share and celebrate pupils' achievements and to assess their understanding.

106. The subject is well led. There is a policy for the subject and a QCA scheme of work, which provides clear guidance for teaching and learning. The school has access to a sound range of resources. Visitors to the school and opportunities for pupils to visit places of historical interest makes significant contributions to pupils' learning. The subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Improvement has been considerable in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below average. They are now in line with expectations for pupils of their age. It is not possible to measure improvement in Key Stage 1 as the school has only just started using the new information and communications technology (ICT) suite and pupils in this key stage were being introduced to the new resource during the inspection. From the files kept by teachers and from their planning, standards are judged to be in line with expectations for pupils of their age. Pupils' achievement in both key stages is satisfactory. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2, continue to make good progress and can, for example, create a branch and a tree diagram. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress in lower Key Stage 2 because they are taught in a very small group, which enables them to work at a slower pace and yet all have the opportunity to take turns and develop ICT skills as well and literacy and numeracy skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are again reaching the expectations for pupils of their age and have a good range of ICT skills: graphic, spreadsheets, graphs, editing text and using a digital camera. Access to the Internet has recently been made possible and pupils know how to send e-mails and are beginning to use the Internet for research. Rules for using the Internet are clearly displayed in the classroom. Computers are used across the curriculum and were seen in Year 5 and 6 being used in mathematics lessons to solve problems and create graphs from inputted data. The school has limited resources in control and monitoring technology but provision for this aspect is being made through a residential visit in the summer term.
108. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In the computer suite pupils listen carefully to instructions before going quickly to the computers and working enthusiastically with a partner, supported by adults. Good learning and progress were seen during the lesson observed, because of the very good adult/pupil ratio. As a result pupils gained confidence using new equipment. As yet these pupils are not as independent as would normally be expected of pupils of their age because the routine is new to them. Special provision is made for pupils with considerable special educational needs who enjoy individual attention towards the end of the lesson. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 make very good progress within lessons because of their close attention to what is being taught and clear incremental teaching by the teacher. However, the noise from the computer server, makes listening to the teacher in the class teaching session difficult. Pupils with special educational needs in this age group enjoy the individual attention they have in a small group in the classroom and their confidence is also increased by these arrangements.
109. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers across the school are confident and well supported by the co-ordinator. Teachers use questioning very well to draw out information from pupils and teach new facts. Assessment is used well to plan which programs should be used in relation to other subjects such as literacy or for pupils with special educational needs. No analysis of the ICT skills pupils bring to school has been made, however, so teaching is less well matched to pupils' ICT attainment. At present the majority are being taught at the same level of ICT skills. However, higher attainers in the lower Key Stage 2 class have an on-going challenge to

input data about the class when they complete work quickly. There is a good pace to lessons and no time is wasted between lessons as pupils come to the lesson already changed for the physical education lesson, which follows. Further thought, however, should be given to pupils having bare feet for the whole lesson preceding the physical education lesson, particularly in cold weather.

110. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator who has a real interest in the subject and good computer skills of her own. She has attended courses and studied the subject through the Open University. She has led in-service training for the staff on the use of the network, new software and on multi-media presentations. The school has a good range of software, although more is needed in mathematics, but at the time of the inspection it had not yet all been installed onto the new computers. She monitors the time pupils spend on computers, both in the classroom and the ICT suite and looks at the teachers' half-termly plans. Assessments have been set at the end of each unit and teachers have been given exemplars of standards to expect. They keep examples of their own pupils' work in portfolios. The co-ordinator has moved the subject forward very well since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils now have more time on computers, learning is more practical and they are making more progress than when they were taught from only one computer in the classroom. The school has put in place new systems in order to raise standards. Plans for the future include a web page for the school for which Year 6 will take responsibility under the co-ordinator's supervision. The school has been well supported by local businesses and parental knowledge in building up resources

MUSIC

111. No lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and only one was observed in Key Stage 2. Standards in the lesson observed were above those expected of pupils of their age particularly in their rhythmic skills and musical vocabulary. Teaching was good and pupils' attitudes, behaviour and therefore learning was also good. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of tuned and untuned instruments and can name many of them. They understand signs for a rest and can follow a simple rhythmic pattern. Pupils can tell the difference between a verse, chorus, solo and group playing and can relate these to popular music that they know. They are able to rehearse rhythmic patterns, which include a rest, and perform them in groups. They are able to follow simple graphic signs, which indicate pitch and rhythm. Pupils also learn melodies by rote after they are played on the keyboard and attempt to put them into parts. This, however, is more of a challenge and not always successful.
112. Teaching in the one lesson observed was good because the teacher had secure subject knowledge and was able to identify and correct mistakes in the pupils' performance and, as a result, they made good progress. The amount of work covered in the lesson was good and included aural work on work on rhythm, pitch and performance. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and work well and higher attainers are challenged well.

113. Pupils were also observed during assemblies, extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons. Pupils sing well in assemblies. They have a good memory for the words of hymns and many pupils are developing an accurate sense of pitch. In extra-curricular activities and instrumental lessons they make good progress and gain in confidence as performers.
114. Pupils have good attitudes towards the subject. They are eager to participate and concentrate well. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities. There is a recorder group, an after school music club and four pupils attend an orchestra practice at Benington School. Pupils have performed at a concert in the Royal Albert Hall. Pupils sing in the annual carol service held at St. Mary's Church. Each class is involved in a production during the summer term. Eleven pupils receive instrumental lessons for violin and clarinet and pupils with particular talent have been identified. Pupils have attended instrumental days at Stevenage Music Centre. All these opportunities have a positive impact on developing pupils' performance skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Pupils' attainment in physical education at the end of both key stages is good and above that normally expected for their age. Whilst it was only possible to observe games and gymnastic activities during the inspection, a close scrutiny of teachers' planning documents indicates that provision is made for pupils to make good progress across all the required elements of the physical education curriculum. Virtually all pupils achieve the required standards in swimming by the time they are eleven.
116. In Key Stage 1 classes, pupils display simple ball control skills as they throw and catch a range of small and large balls. They improve their skills through repetition and are able to make up their own simple ball catching games. Pupils give their work their full attention and improvement in skills can be observed over quite short periods of time. Pupils display good dance skills as they explore the theme of Noah's Ark through the use of a taped music. Pupils demonstrate the ability to use slow and fast, heavy and light movements in the creation of a range of animal movements. Pupils interpret the music being played in a sensitive manner relative to their age and are successful in creating well-recognised kangaroos, butterflies, elephants and giraffes. Pupils in Key Stage 1 approach their physical education work in a committed manner. They display very good self-discipline and are keen to please their teachers with their efforts. Lessons are extremely well planned with a good range of sequenced challenging activities. All of this makes a positive contribution to the satisfactory and often good progress which takes place in Key Stage 1 lessons.
117. Pupils' very good self-discipline was once more a significant factor in the good progress made in physical education lessons in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 recognise the importance of warm-up activities before moving on to engage in a range of strenuous circuit training activities. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to take control of their own learning, as with pen and clipboard they monitored each other's performance. These results will later be compared with previous performance in order to assess improvement over time. A good working relationship was observed between the physical education instructor and the pupils. This made a positive contribution to pupils' learning with many of the pupils obviously wanting to please and impress him with their performance.

118. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate good gymnastic skills. They are able to put together well-sequenced gymnastic activities which include both movement, travel and balance. Good learning took place in this lesson, as the teacher provided pupils with the opportunity to refine skills and use them within a different context. The teacher had high expectations of all pupils as she encouraged them to look for the moment of stillness in their balancing activities. Pupils responded well to the challenging work and gave their full attention to improving their skills.
119. The good progress made in lessons in both key stages is very much influenced by the very positive attitudes that pupils bring to their work. They work with energy and enthusiasm and clearly focus on the skills to be developed. Pupils are keen to display their skills to the rest of the class and are able to evaluate each other's work in a positive and constructive manner. Evidence indicates that pupils in both key stages achieve well over time in relation to their prior learning.
120. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Lessons are well planned, organised and managed. Teachers' good disciplinary skills make an important contribution to the quality of learning. Instructions are clearly delivered with appropriate emphasis being placed on health and safety issues. Timed targets are often given for individual activities, which ensures that pupils stay on task. Praise is used well to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities. The experienced and enthusiastic instructor employed by the school makes a very positive contribution to the teaching of the subject.
121. The subject is led by a well-informed co-ordinator. The good policy and scheme of work allows for good progress in learning across all years and key stages. All pupils have equality of access to all areas of the curriculum and talented pupils have been identified. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular sporting activities and inter-school competitions. With its emphasis on team building skills and the need to work together, the subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social development.