

INSPECTION REPORT

MUCH MARCLE CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Much Marcle, Ledbury

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116904

Headteacher: Mrs S Hughes

Reporting inspector: Ken Sansom
21000

Dates of inspection: 25 - 28 September 2000

Inspection number: 196783

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Church of England Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Much Marcle Ledbury Herefordshire
Postcode:	HR8 2LY
Telephone number:	01531 660607
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Brooks
Date of previous inspection:	19 - 21 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ken Sansom 21000	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Catherine Rentoul 7834	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Pat Burcher 18079	Team inspector	Science History Geography Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Gwyneth Evans 27219	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Much Marcle is a Church of England primary school situated in the village, between Ross on Wye and Ledbury. The school draws its pupils from a very wide rural area, including Ledbury. The school is housed in attractive buildings, with extensive grounds that include a recently constructed “adventure” playground. At present there are 105 full-time pupils on roll, slightly more than at the last inspection. Seven reception aged children attend mornings only this term and will begin full time next term. There is significant gender imbalance in some year groups, particularly in Key Stage 2. Two pupils have English as an additional language. There are 15 pupils (16 per cent) on the register for special educational needs and one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need, both these figures are below the national average. Three pupils (three per cent) are entitled to free school meals. This figure is well below the national average but the local education authority does not operate a school meals service, which may have an adverse effect on this number. The ability of pupils on entry to school is, in the main, above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very popular and has reached its published admissions limit in most year groups. It is a very orderly, happy community reflected in the smiles and warm welcome offered by all the pupils. Relationships between pupils are very good. Pupils achieve good standards in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in English, mathematics and science. Standards in other subjects are restricted by the time allocated to them: the time for teaching English is much higher than that recommended. Provision for children under five is good.

The headteacher provides effective leadership but her role and that of the senior management team and governors in setting a clear educational direction is underdeveloped. Teaching overall is satisfactory but the links between teaching and learning to ensure consistently good progress are not always as strong as they could be. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision for children under five is good.
- The relationships between pupils and their personal development are very good.
- The pupils’ attitudes to school and behaviour are good.
- Good provision for extra-curricular activities.
- Good links with other schools that enhance the learning of pupils.
- Parents make a good contribution to their children’s learning.

What could be improved

- Setting clearer educational goals for improvement.
- Links between teaching and learning should be strengthened by ensuring activities meet the needs of pupils with different abilities.
- The use of time within lessons should be further developed, this has already been recognised by the staff.
- Raise standards in scientific investigations at Key Stage 2.
- The time allocated to many subjects is insufficient; there is an over-emphasis on English in the timetable.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in November 1996, the progress made by the school since then has been satisfactory. During the last four years the following improvements in the key issues have taken place:

- The headteacher and governors have begun monitoring literacy and numeracy;
- Standards in physical education have improved through the use of the village hall;
- Communications between the governors and parents have improved.

Progress with some areas has not been as rapid as it could have been. The teaching staff continue to explore ways of assessing pupils' achievement but there is no clear, consistent process in place. Whilst monitoring through classroom observation takes place there is no clear indication of its impact in raising the quality of teaching.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A*	A	B	B
Mathematics	A	B	B	C
Science	A	A	B	C

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been above the national average for the last three years, indeed in 1997 those in English were in the top five per cent. Trends are difficult to identify due to the small size of each year group. Early indications for 2000 show improvements in the results over those for 1998 and 1999 in all three subjects. The use of free school meals as a basis for identifying similar schools is affected by the fact the local education authority does not operate a school meals service and all pupils who may be eligible for free school meals do not register that fact with the school. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 are high in relation to the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. The targets set by the school are dependent on the ability level of each relatively small year group, the very high targets for 2000 were achieved and those for 2001 are appropriate. The work seen during the inspection confirms good standards in English and mathematics but not in science. In information technology attainment is satisfactory in those elements observed. Attainment is good in art and music, at least satisfactory in physical education and satisfactory in geography. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in design and technology and history.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic and fully involved in the activities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The behaviour in class has a significant impact on the standards achieved. The pupils are well behaved in the playground and when taken out of school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There are very good relationships between all age groups, a genuine family atmosphere. Pupils are fully aware of the effect of their behaviour on others.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There is, however, a significant minority of latecomers whose punctuality affects the efficient use of time.

This is a strength of the school. The good attitude and behaviour of all pupils have a significant impact on their attainment. Pupils are polite and very friendly towards each other and visitors.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Teaching is satisfactory or better in over 90 per cent of lessons; the quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage has many good features. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Key Stage 1. Throughout all age groups literacy and numeracy are taught effectively, although teachers have already recognised the need to further develop the endings of lessons. In the best lessons, teachers clearly identify what pupils of differing abilities will learn and what the teacher's role will be to enable this to take place. This is not consistently applied in all lessons. Good standards of behaviour are maintained throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported during lessons. The teachers in Key Stage 1 successfully ensure pupils in Year 1 in both classes achieve similar standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. The school provides good extra-curricular activities and has effective links with other schools. The structure of the timetable allows too little time for teaching many of the foundation subjects by placing too much emphasis on literacy and swimming.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. These pupils are well integrated into all activities through the careful support of the classroom assistants and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The good provision for social and moral development has a positive impact on the good behaviour. Opportunities for multicultural and spiritual development are not always consistently planned for.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Staff know the pupils well. The caring atmosphere extends the pupils, as seen when older ones look after their younger friends.

The links between home and school have a positive impact on pupils' learning, either informally or through formal homework structures. The school provides an effective range of school clubs and activities. Pupils with special educational needs take part in all activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and staff successfully develop a positive ethos that results in good behaviour. This is not always reflected in the commitment to maintain or improve standards and the quality of teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors know the school well, with both the literacy and numeracy governors carrying out effective monitoring. The role of "critical friend" in other areas of their work is not as well developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Systems for monitoring literacy and numeracy are in place but as yet it is not possible to measure their impact on raising the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The purchase of new computers is helping improve standards but as yet they are used too infrequently in other subjects.

The school has addressed the issue of large classes in Key Stage 2 by ensuring that all classes have a support assistant each morning. The accommodation within the school is supplemented by using the village hall for physical education.

The headteacher, senior management team and governors are genuinely committed to the school and its pupils. The school development plan identifies a number of areas for improvement, however, these are not prioritised. They also lack clear targets and precise costings. Whilst governors carefully monitor spending they have yet to fully apply the principles of best value to their decision making process.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The good behaviour of pupils. • The quality of teaching. • They feel comfortable in approaching the school with any concerns. • The expectations of the school for their children to work hard. • Links with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The school provides an interesting range of activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work pupils are expected to do at home.

During the pre-inspection meeting with parents differing views on homework were expressed; that it was too much or too little. The amount of homework is appropriate and there are many examples where it has a positive impact on standards; for example, the models made by pupils in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes. Inspection findings support the parents’ positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The Key Stage 2 national test results for the last three years show that pupils attainment in English, mathematics and science have been above the national average in all subjects, on occasions it has been well above and in 1997 English was in the top five per cent of schools. The results at the end of Key Stage 1 show even better attainment. The results of the tests for this age group have usually been well above the national average and they were in the top five per cent for reading and mathematics in 1997 and writing in 1999. In 1999 the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels at Key Stage 1 were well above the national average in reading and writing and close to it in mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 2 the number achieving at the higher level was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science.
2. The results for 2000 show the best results ever in English and mathematics, and they are high compared to previous years in science. Trends over time are difficult to identify as the size of year groups are relatively small. There are variations in the relative performance of boys and girls, with boys doing better some years and girls in others. Once again these are comparisons of small groups of pupils.
3. When compared to similar schools the results at the end of Key Stage 2 appear less impressive. However, these evaluations are based upon the level of free school meals. As the school does not provide school meals, this figure does not give a clear comparison. Having looked at the Key Stage 2 results compared to the pupils' Key Stage 1 results as well as taking into account the 2000 results and the work seen during the inspection, the comparison with similar schools in English, mathematics and science is at least average. The 1999 results at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above those for similar schools in reading and writing and broadly in line in mathematics.
4. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in language, mathematics, personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are aware of routines and work independently. These young children listen carefully to instructions and enjoy looking at books. Mathematical language is developed in shape and number. Investigations are carried out through first-hand practical tasks. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children in the reception age group achieve the national targets outlined for pupils entering Key Stage 1.
5. Standards observed in English are good in all aspects at the end of both key stages. Speaking and listening skills are well developed. Pupils in Key Stage 1 pupils are articulate and fluent. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils converse well with adults, confidently expressing their own ideas. Pupils develop a range of strategies to read new words and as they move through the school, they develop an enthusiasm for reading that results in good standards. When writing, young pupils use many different forms that they adapt for a variety of audiences by the end of Key Stage 2.
6. Pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in mathematics. They have a good understanding of number. A significant proportion of pupils achieve good standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

7. Attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with national expectations. The evidence of pupils' work during inspection shows attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify and name the parts of a skeleton and investigate materials. In Key Stage 2 pupils have limited experience of planning and devising their own experiments, thus restricting their overall attainment.
8. The standards achieved in information technology are satisfactory in the lessons observed but this represents only part of the curriculum. There is little evidence of other areas such as modeling or appropriate use of software packages by pupils in Key Stage 2.
9. In art and music pupils achieve good standards and make good progress. Pupils use a variety of media, tools and techniques in two-dimensional work. The standards achieved in music are good in both singing and playing.
10. In geography pupils in Key Stage 1 understand the difference between villages, towns and cities. Whilst in Key Stage 2 their work shows they appreciate how places and environments are changed. Overall progress is satisfactory.
11. Progress since the last inspection has been good in physical education. The standards achieved by pupils are at least satisfactory in gymnastics, dance and swimming.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes to their learning. They are keen to come to school and eager to take an active part in lessons and after school activities. Most enter classrooms promptly and settle quickly to work. The meeting with parents and results of the questionnaires show most parents are very positive about pupils' attitudes to school. This is confirmed by the findings of the inspection and is similar to the previous report.
13. Pupils show interest in their lessons and sustain good levels of concentration. They listen well and answer questions eagerly and share ideas about their work with confidence. Pupils are happy to explain what they are doing and are confident to seek advice from teachers if they are unsure what to do.
14. Standards of behaviour in the classroom, the playground and around the school are good. This contributes much to pupils' learning in the classroom and to the quality of life throughout the school. Pupils know what is expected of them and they demonstrate high levels of self-discipline. They are very polite and considerate to one another, to staff and to visitors. Good habits and routines are established in the early years and continue as pupils progress through the school. The pupils show respect for property belonging to the school. There were no exclusions at the school last year.
15. Relationships and pupils' personal development are very good. These are strengths of the school. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups and understand the importance of taking time to listen to others. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils respond positively to different views and ideas. They form friendly relationships with one another and with staff and adults. In classes, there is an atmosphere of willing co-operation and mutual respect and trust between staff and pupils. Pupils are

sensitive to each other's feelings and during the inspection older pupils talked freely about being caring towards younger children. Pupils of all ages work and play together happily and harmoniously.

16. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils take on responsibilities; for example the school tuck shop, ringing the bell and collection and distribution of registers. Opportunities are provided for pupils to practice individual study but they are rarely required to take responsibility for their own learning. The pupils mix freely and give friendly and sympathetic support to pupils with special educational needs, often benefiting themselves from this social interaction. The school ensures that equal opportunities are given to all pupils, for example, the school encourages both boys and girls to play football. The school's reward system operates with positive effect. Pupils are proud of their achievements and the Headteacher Awards and the Golden Book of Achievements acknowledge these.
17. The levels of attendance are satisfactory and in line with the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is well below national average. The majority of pupils arrive punctually, although there are a number of persistent late comers.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. At the time of the last inspection, it was good. Over nine out of ten lessons are satisfactory or better, with over a third good. In the classes with reception age children and Key Stage 1 pupils teaching is never less than satisfactory.
19. Teachers plan their lessons effectively and in the better lessons the intended learning is shared with the pupils, as seen in the mathematics lesson with the youngest pupils. These pupils were able to describe what they had been asked to do and what the intended outcomes were. All teachers manage pupils well; they expect and achieve good standards of behaviour. This good behaviour occurs in all classes and subjects. It is a particular feature when teachers take classes different to their own and these high standards continue.
20. Implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has been successful, although the time allocation for literacy is too much in some classes.
21. Often good subject knowledge is shown through effective questioning that challenges pupils of different abilities, as seen in a Key Stage 1 geography lesson where pupils explained the similarities and differences between villages, towns and cities. Teachers use their own expertise. For example, it is effective in enhancing the standards of music and information technology by "specialist" teaching and by teachers who use their expertise with their own classes, as seen in art and dance at the end of Key Stage 2.
22. In a number of lessons teachers are clear about their role in enabling learning to take place and they achieve a good match between independent and supported learning. On some occasions, however, teachers talk for too long and activities do not provide such effective learning. This results in pupils working at a pace that does not match their ability.
23. In a mathematics lesson for the oldest pupils the mental arithmetic session at the beginning reinforced pupils' learning effectively. Many lessons have these pacy,

interactive introductions. This good use of time does not always continue throughout and some time at the end of lessons is allowed to slip. The staff have recognised the need to improve the endings to enhance learning. A Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson was concluded effectively as the teacher assessed pupils' understanding through careful questioning. This use of assessment is not consistent across the school.

24. Pupils are able to concentrate well, during either teacher explanation or group activities. Their skills in taking responsibility for their own learning are not always fully exploited.
25. Appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs is provided through classroom assistants, particularly in English and mathematics and through individual work from the special educational needs co-ordinator. The work for these pupils is always matched to their ability. This match of work is not always achieved in the same way for more able and average pupils. As a result they do not always make appropriate progress.
26. The teachers in Key Stage 1 successfully ensure that the standards achieved by Year 1 pupils are similar in both classes. The recent developments in information technology have yet to be fully integrated in other subjects.

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

27. The school provides a curriculum that has breadth, but it is not balanced. It places a heavy emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and to a lesser extent, numeracy. Time allocations show that the emphasis on English leaves insufficient time for other subjects. Large parts of the morning are taken up solely with mathematics and English and pupils are engaged in concentrated work for long periods with little variation. Teachers try to fit the rest of the curriculum into afternoons and combined with the amount of time the school devotes to swimming the cumulative effect of this is to restrict the balance and richness of the curriculum.
28. The organisation of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. The work is planned according to the national guidelines and ensures the pupils' smooth transition to the National Curriculum.
29. The length of the teaching week is below recommendations for both key stages. The statutory requirements for the National Curriculum are met. There is satisfactory provision for health education, including sex education and attention to drugs misuse.
30. There are satisfactory policies for all subjects and teachers plan from national schemes of work and other materials. The rolling programme of long-term planning, to prevent repetition in subjects such as science, history and geography has been revised in light of the new National Curriculum. However, it is not written in a way that makes planning the time for different subjects easy.
31. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Although those pupils who receive instrumental tuition miss lessons each week, care is given to ensure that this time will vary over the term. The use of the village hall means that pupils now have full access to all aspects of the physical education curriculum. This represents a considerable

- improvement since the last inspection. Boys and girls have equal access to extra-curricular activities, such as sporting activities.
32. The provision for literacy and numeracy has been satisfactorily established. The school has worked hard to improve the provision for information technology and has plans for further improvement.
 33. Provision and planning for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. All requirements of the Code of Practice are met. Appropriate targets are identified and reviewed regularly in the individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in the curriculum with sensitive classroom support. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is supportive. She has frequent meetings with the special educational needs co-ordinator and visits the school on a regular basis. The school policy for able and talented pupils refers to the needs and identification of the more able pupil; however, there is no evidence of clearly defined ways for consistently challenging these pupils on a day-to-day basis in teachers' planning.
 34. Extra-curricular activities provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their curriculum experiences. This provision is a strength of the school. There are a number of sports activities and teams for boys and girls at all levels and ages. During the inspection, the pupils took part with enthusiasm in math's club, Key Stage 1 sports club and the school choir, which was well attended. At least one activity takes place on each afternoon giving every pupil the opportunity to take part in something. Other activities include French and drama this term.
 35. An appropriate range of educational visits support pupils' learning, including trips to a museum, a cathedral, sea life centre and outdoor education centre. Visitors to the school include a poet, an artist as well as musicians and a theatre group.
 36. Satisfactory use is made of homework to extend and support pupils' learning. The school is enriched by parents who support their children's learning, for example, models of houses and homes in Class 2 and science activities on light in Class 4.
 37. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education, collective worship and assemblies contribute a major part to this. Opportunities for quiet reflection are included in the school's music; however, this is not consistent or planned for in other subjects.
 38. Moral values are positively and sensitively encouraged throughout the school. Provision for their development is good. All adults help pupils to understand the differences between right and wrong. From an early age, children in the Foundation Stage are clearly made aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The school's behaviour policy places considerable emphasis on co-operation, respect and responsibility.
 39. Pupils' social development is good and is well provided for in the behaviour management carried out by all staff. Social contact outside the classroom is promoted through the many extra-curricular clubs and by participating in sports teams, competitions and local festivals and fayres. Pupils are encouraged to think of others by raising money for charities, for example, help the aged.
 40. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides a range of visits and visitors and involvement in local activities such as the Ledbury Poetry Festival week. Multicultural aspects are to be seen in a number of subjects but

- opportunities to develop awareness further are not evident. Some links have been made, for example, with a previous teacher in Australia, but such links are not a regular feature of school life.
41. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory. There is a policy for health education and the school has included PSHE on its curriculum rolling programme. Guidance for sex education and drug awareness is given. Sex education is appropriately taught to Year 5 and 6 pupils, with the assistance of the school nurse.
 42. The school takes advantage of the opportunities the community offers to enhance the curriculum. Pupils visit local museums, attend training and sporting competitions at the local rugby club and have strong connections with the local church. The school also contributes to the parish newsletter.
 43. The school has good relationships with other schools and since it is part of the cluster group of local schools, there are opportunities for curriculum support and sporting activities to enrich the pupils' experiences. Good links have been established with the local secondary school, these ensure that the pupils' transition to secondary school is smooth and effective. Other liaison includes pupils' workshops for more able pupils and staff training sessions. Well established links have been made with the local nursery.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Pupils come from a scattered community but the school provides a secure environment where all pupils can settle in to classroom routine, make new friends and gradually take increasing responsibility. They benefit from a building that is light and well kept with good outdoor play facilities. Since the last inspection, governors and staff have improved health and safety practice and now carry out regular risk assessment. Members of staff have had first aid training and cope well with minor accidents or the administration of medication, where it has been prescribed. Child protection measures are sound and set out clearly, although staff training has not been updated recently.
45. Once the initial period of assessment has been completed, the school gives appropriate support to pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are drawn up and parents are kept fully informed. The staff are generous in offering individual support and call on outside specialists as well. Pupils behave well, bullying is not a problem and it is a strength of the school that pupils support one another with kindness, whatever their need. The relationship between the oldest and youngest pupils is especially good. The older pupils look after the younger ones, for example, travelling together for the weekly swimming sessions. This caring atmosphere in itself promotes satisfactory attendance and there was little unauthorised absence last year. The "Late Book" although an effective part of tracking the accuracy of the attendance registers, which are meticulously maintained, has not solved the problem of a small number of persistent latecomers.
46. The first stage of the foundation years is carefully organised and parents report few problems when their children start school. As they go up the school, their progress is entered in Records of Achievement and annual reports. Staff know their pupils well and informal monitoring backs up all assessment. However, the issue of improving the use of assessment to guide curricular planning and supporting pupils' individual progress which was identified in the last inspection report, has not been fully resolved.

A system of target setting, after discussion between staff, pupils and their parents, is still not in place across the school. There is substantial information on pupils' past performance but it is not used effectively to raise their achievement.

47. The school works hard to look after the health and safety of all pupils whether in the school or on outside visits. Sports and indoor physical education facilities have been improved since the last inspection and most pupils value the opportunities this gives them. The school has brought in coaches for hockey, netball and tennis in the junior classes and organise fixtures for the netball and football teams. The school hall is not suitable for use as a dining room but whenever possible, pupils are allowed to eat their packed lunches on the numerous picnic tables in the playground instead of remaining in their classrooms. The policy of packed lunches makes the promotion of a "Healthy Eating" programme difficult but milk is available to order and jacket potatoes are on sale once a week. The school nurse helps with the health education lessons that are timetabled for the summer term and is available for pupil support and counselling when needed. Governors have attended courses on drugs education and child protection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school enjoys the confidence of the parents. Many choose to send their children to Much Marcle for its Christian ethos. All value the school's expectations of good pupil behaviour that they also promote at home, forming an effective partnership that underpins the life of the school and all pupils' achievements. They value the emphasis on praise and encouragement and are grateful that the majority of their children are happy at school. There are varying views on the amount of homework set; some feel there is too little, others too much.
49. Parents value the "open door" policy of the school. Those answering the questionnaire were unanimous that they would feel comfortable approaching the school with problems. Since the last inspection, informal termly meetings between staff, governors and parents have been set up.
50. Annual reports and the ongoing Records of Achievement give information about pupils' progress. Regular newsletters give information about school events and achievements. They also publicise the "parent register" asking parents to volunteer their skills and time to help in the life of the school. Staff welcome help in the classroom and with outside visits or offers of special skills such as information technology, art, or sports' expertise. Parents also help with minor maintenance and improvement projects within the building. Parents respond generously. Some offer their individual skills as helpers or perhaps governors, some support fundraising. They all recognise their vital role in reinforcing expectations for good behaviour and helping their children to gain basic reading skills.
51. When pupils enter the school, their parents and carers automatically become members of the Parent Teachers' Association and are asked to enter a home-school agreement. The Parent Teachers' Association raises valuable funds for the school and at the same time encourages parents to meet socially, strengthening the support available for pupils in the community outside. The "Home School Agreement" sets out the areas where parents can help the school to improve their children's education, such as attendance and punctuality, which are vital to maximum teaching effectiveness. The school benefits from parental co-operation especially during the

early terms when children are learning to read and write and welcomes parents into school to see pupils' progress in all areas of the curriculum.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school is a friendly and welcoming place. It has a strong ethos that emphasises care and consideration for others and positive behaviour. The parents are proud of their school and show support through their contribution to pupils' learning at home. The aims of the school, which include a commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all, do not focus with sufficient clarity on the school's commitment to improve standards and achieve high quality teaching and learning.
53. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. The headteacher is strongly committed to the school and she provides effective support for the whole staff. Under her leadership the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, particularly in addressing the issues relating to physical education and governor-parent links. Monitoring teaching has begun but there has been insufficient time to determine its impact. The use of assessment to ensure good progress has not been fully developed.
54. The roles of other staff, including the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators, to promote and develop their subjects and their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. However, opportunities for them to gain an insight into the quality of teaching and learning in the school are limited, money is identified in the school budget to address this issue. There is some evidence of work sampling, especially at Key Stage 1, to determine pupil achievement. The school has set targets in English and mathematics for national tests but these have not been developed to set short-term individual targets for all pupils. There is a considerable amount of information, which the school intends to put on a computerized system, but, as yet, this is not fully exploited to ensure that pupils make good progress. Monitoring the school's performance is underdeveloped.
55. The number, qualification and experience of teachers and support staff are appropriate. Induction procedures for new teachers are in place and shared planning has provided support for staff. Experienced members of staff are mentors for new teachers and act as good role models. There is no definitive appraisal system in place, but the school is preparing for the implementation of performance management. Staff development and training are linked to the needs of the school as stated in the school development plan.
56. The school development plan is a comprehensive document that covers all areas of school life. It includes specific targets related to each subject, in-service training implications and outline costs of development. There is little evidence of clear prioritisation, the impact that actions will have on raising standards and success criteria to indicate how initiatives will be evaluated. For example, the co-ordinator and literacy governor have monitored developments in literacy, but the criteria only refer to the successful implementation of the strategy, not how its success in terms of raising standards will be assessed.
57. The governing body provides sound support for the school. Governors know the school and they are beginning to develop a greater understanding of how to fulfil their responsibilities but their role in helping shape the educational direction of the school is underdeveloped. The governors are successful in meeting their statutory requirements.
58. Governors visit the school on a regular basis, which helps them to gain a good insight into the functions of the school, but their role as "critical friend" is at an early stage of

development. They rely heavily on the headteacher to inform them about the direction of the school and they do not make best use of the information available to analyse its strengths and weaknesses. The governors responsible for literacy and numeracy have been fully involved in the implementation of the national strategies, through monitoring of lessons and involvement in the purchase of suitable resources. This has enabled them to develop a deeper understanding of the work of the school. The current strong relationship between the headteacher and the governing body provides a solid foundation on which to develop these roles further.

59. Since the last inspection parents now feel they are better informed about their children's progress. The school prospectus is informative and easy to read. Regular newsletters give a range of information for parents and pupils contribute to the community newsletter. Governors have succeeded in improving the quality of communications with parents as required by the last report. They have provided opportunities for parents to set the agenda for meetings with governors on an informal basis to discuss any concerns.
60. The school's financial planning provides satisfactory support for educational priorities, but governors do not play an active part in the formulation of these priorities. The principles of best value are currently integrated into the school's budget setting process. The school has accumulated a substantial financial reserve from its delegated budget and with specific grants has been able to extend the classroom support staff throughout the school. The long-term strategy for the use of these funds is to provide further opportunities for monitoring of teaching and support from co-ordinators. The school manages its finances well on a day-to-day basis. The secretary maintains all school accounts, and office procedures run smoothly with information technology effectively used. The finance committee of the governing body monitors the budget on a regular basis. At both key stages the school has successfully introduced new initiatives. Specific grants have been used for their designated purposes.
61. The school accommodation is appropriate for the full curriculum to be taught effectively. Following the last report the school has found ways of improving both indoor and outdoor physical education by using the village hall, which is very close to the school, and also the provision of outdoor climbing apparatus. There is a large field and playground area. The small hall within the school building has recently been developed as a computer suite.
62. The school is appropriately resourced in most subjects. Provision for under-fives is satisfactory although there is no dedicated area for outside play. The school library is small, with a restricted range of books and its use for research skills is limited. There are sufficient computers but at present they are used infrequently.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. To further raise standards in the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Set clearer educational direction by:
 - prioritising the initiatives in the school development plan;
 - identifying the impact on raising standards;
 - establishing specific criteria to identify how successful those initiatives have been.

(Paragraphs 52, 55, 56 & 57)
- (2) Improve standards in scientific investigation at Key Stage 2.
(Paragraphs 7, 102, 103 & 104)
- (3) Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - exploring the use of time within lessons to ensure that it is used effectively, particularly, as identified by the school already, at the end of lessons;
 - clearly linking the intended learning in each lesson to the activities, so that they match the ability levels of the pupils, and to the assessment of what pupils know, can do and understand;
 - improve the identified system of monitoring so that it enables the sharing of good practice and addresses any weaknesses.

(Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 52, 53, 54, 83, 85, 86, 91, 94 & 97)
- (4) Review the timetables and long-term planning for all classes to ensure that they meet the recommended time for each subject and deliver a balanced curriculum.
(Paragraphs 26, 28, 29, 85, 106, 132 & 150)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	36	50	9	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)	n/a	108
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	15

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

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	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.05
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	3	12	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	15	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	93 (100)	93 (94)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	15	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	93 (100)	100 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (78)	81 (72)	81 (83)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (83)	81 (83)	81 (83)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	105
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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 – YEAR 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – YEAR 6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	83

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	199,055
Total expenditure	191,272
Expenditure per pupil	1,822
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,489
Balance carried forward to next year	24,272

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	150
Number of questionnaires returned	51

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	24	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	45	39	6	2	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	33	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	45	12	4	10
The teaching is good.	71	23	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	39	4	0	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	16	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	45	4	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	67	27	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	11	4	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	33	0	0	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

64. Children enter school at the beginning of the year in which they are five years old. Seven children started school at the beginning of the autumn term 2000. They are taught in a class of older reception year children and pupils from Year 1. Baseline assessment information indicates that the children's attainment on entry to school is slightly above average, and by the time they are five children are attaining the targets specified in the national guidance. Many are working on the early stages of the National Curriculum.
65. Children make good progress in their personal and social development and achieve the expected levels by the age of five. Children behave well and co-operate with each other and with older pupils in the class. They take turns when playing a card game based on the reading scheme to identify main characters. They are aware of daily routines such as hanging up coats and putting their lunch boxes in the correct place. Children work independently, and take responsibility for themselves, whilst dressing and washing their hands.
66. The provision for personal and social development is good. Members of staff are patient and they show a great deal of care and concern. All staff are good role models for the children and set high standards.
67. Children make good progress in the development of speaking and listening. They listen well to the story "I fell out of bed". They find rhyming words and join in conversations especially when supported by a member of staff in group activities. They listen carefully to instructions.
68. Children make good progress in the early stages of reading. They enjoy looking at books and know that the words and pictures have meaning. They know that in English, print is read from left to right and from top to bottom. They are beginning to understand the elements of stories such as main characters. Children are making sound progress using pictures and symbols, related to early writing skills, and begin to write simple words.
69. Speaking and listening are well organised and children have many opportunities to take part. The teacher uses questioning effectively, and sets high expectations for the children to follow instructions.
70. Overall, progress in mathematical learning is good. Children are familiar with number rhymes and songs. They are beginning to develop mathematical language to describe position, shape and size. They readily participate in singing as they learn to count on one and recognise numerals to nine.
71. Children make good progress gaining knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They find out about themselves through a project called "All about me", and role play in the doctor's surgery. They explore a wide range of materials and use the computer to carry out simple functions.
72. Children are able to experience a wide range of first hand practical tasks that support their learning. The teacher expects that they will investigate and find out, through their experimentation with sand, coloured water with sequins in it, and red play dough.

There are good opportunities to communicate their feelings when trying out new materials.

73. The provision for children's physical development is sound. There is no specific outdoor provision, but there are opportunities provided for use of small and large equipment and moving with control and co-ordination. They use a range of materials and equipment in their work and use their manipulative skills well, using pencils, scissors and computer mouse with increasing dexterity.
74. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is never less than satisfactory and there are many good features. The class teacher and support assistant work well as a team, giving a varied input. The work is well matched to the needs of the age and ability of the children. It is based on secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn, and good classroom management. The curriculum provided is good. It is planned for a mixed age class and therefore relates to the national guidance for older pupils, but there is planning provided specifically for this youngest group and it is linked to the National Curriculum planning.
75. There are effective links with parents through the Starting School booklet that encourages parents to assess their child's progress before entering school. Children are invited to spend time in school before they start their part-time schooling.

ENGLISH

76. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, standards in reading are well above the national average. Performance in writing is very high compared with the national average. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading and writing. In the 1999 tests for 11 year olds, attainment in English is above the national average, and when compared with similar schools it is broadly in line. At Key Stage 2 in comparison with the national average, boys have performed better. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of literacy skills and their achievements and progress in terms of prior attainment are satisfactory overall at both key stages. The recent concentrated initiatives in the literacy hour, including additional support for pupils and improvements in teaching resources have contributed towards the good standards. The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels at the end of both key stages are well above the national average.
77. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate good standards in speaking and listening. At the age of seven they are articulate and fluent and are able to use well formed sentences and a good range of vocabulary such as the use of words related to magic. For example, "Izzy whizzy, let's get busy" and "Abracadabra". They are able to respond to questions recognising the need for sequencing in their work as in the lesson about following instructions.
78. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards above national expectations. Pupils engage in good levels of conversation with adults and are confident in expressing their ideas and opinions after careful consideration, reflecting the good quality of their listening skills. This was evident in the development of character studies following shared reading of a text by Roahl Dahl.
79. Reading standards are above national expectations and many higher attaining pupils read fluently, with independence and enjoyment. They show a good understanding of the text and are able to make predictions about the story. Pupils use a range of

strategies to attempt to read new words, for example, using clues from pictures. Low attainers show some hesitation in their reading, but are able to recognise familiar words. Additional books to support the literacy hour, including the use of big books have improved the enjoyment shown by the pupils in their reading. They have some knowledge about the structure of books for example the title, and related words.

80. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above national average. Pupils show confidence in discussing their preferences in reading and are able to evaluate texts. Many have favourite authors and are enthusiastic about reading, showing understanding and they read with expression. Most pupils know how to find information for research in other subjects and are familiar with the library system.
81. By the age of seven there is evidence of joined handwriting and a knowledge of punctuation and spelling rules. Pupils use descriptive writing to develop character studies and they are able to sequence events such as instructions for cleaning your teeth. Word banks support spelling and punctuation is beginning to be used correctly. All pupils can write a short sentence independently, but spelling is weaker. In early Key Stage 1 pupils are able to copy labels prepared for them, and can write a simple sentence about the skeleton and its function in science. There are frequent opportunities during the literacy hour to practise phonic rules and appropriate equipment such as letter fans is used to support this work. There are some good examples of different forms of writing such as descriptive writing about "Me" and writing using comprehension skills.
82. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils use good expressive language and an awareness of grammar in a variety of work such as writing for different audiences. There is evidence of information and communication technology skills when pupils produce newspaper reports based on Red Riding Hood in Key Stage 2. In early Key Stage 2, pupils are able to use their writing skills to create postcards with various greetings. The quality of handwriting and presentation is variable. Standards in all areas are similar to those found during the last inspection.
83. Teaching is satisfactory or better in Key Stage 1 and pupils' learning is good including those with special educational needs. Teachers have a clear understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and share the objectives with pupils. However, they are not always understood. Planning is sound and focuses on improving skills to extend pupils' learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and use good levels of questioning and discussion to help them develop their ideas in both spoken and written language. Staff who work specifically with special educational needs pupils provide well targeted support.
84. Overall, teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. However, on some occasions, pupils are not challenged or given the opportunity to extend their language skills in an independent way and the pace is sometimes too slow. This sometimes leads to loss of concentration by some pupils.
85. The National Literacy Strategy is effectively implemented in all classes. Shared text work is a strength of the teaching but the endings of lessons are not used effectively to enhance learning. This has been recognised by the school as a focus for further development. There are some examples of the use of literacy skills across the curriculum, for example in science, Year 3 and Year 4 children are able to write an account of how a bulb works. Often there is a heavy dependence on worksheets to produce a final result. Information technology is used well to support the literacy strategy and is regularly a part of editing and presentation of writing. An after school

drama club enriches the curriculum for English and there have been opportunities for pupils to take part in a local poetry festival and a week when books have been the focus.

86. Effective management has successfully prepared the staff for the literacy hour and the co-ordinator has begun to use monitoring but, at this time, the information gathered is not used to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

MATHEMATICS

87. The results for the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show attainment above the national average and in line with similar schools. The results for 2000 indicate similar attainment. There has been no significant trend in these results over the last four years, mainly due to the small size of each group.
88. The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show attainment above the national average in 1999 and average when compared to similar schools. The results showed a downward trend to 1998 but improved in 1999. Early indications show 2000 as the best set of results ever. During the last four years there has been no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls.
89. Observations and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate at least satisfactory attainment in all classes, similar to that found during the last inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop their concept of adding and subtracting one through song and carefully matched activities. Older pupils in this age group extend their understanding of measure by carrying out practical activities using non-standard and standard units of measure. Examples of work seen show pupils have a good understanding of basic number skills.
90. In the earlier part of Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their use of measure through millimetres to kilometres. At the end of Key Stage 2 a significant proportion of pupils show good attainment: they are able to count back using negative numbers and carry out investigations into number patterns. Effective use is made of the maths club to further enhance this work for Year 6 pupils.
91. The progress of all pupils is not always consistent. In some lessons the work is insufficiently matched to a variety of ability levels: on some occasions the more able are not challenged enough and on others, average pupils are not supported appropriately. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress through valuable support with work that is matched to their ability.
92. The pupils' good behaviour supports their learning. They join in whole-class activities with enthusiasm. When required they settle down quickly to individual and group activities. They remain on task and are well motivated.
93. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. All teachers have appropriate understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy.
94. The beginnings to lessons are pacy and help provide a good start. In the best examples teachers share the intended learning so that pupils are fully aware of what their involvement will be. However, assessment of this learning at the end of the lesson is not as well developed. The co-ordinator and staff have recognised this and

have plans to address it. Teachers make good use of questioning that is adapted to the age and ability levels within the class

95. During the introduction of the main task teachers take the opportunity to explain carefully. On some occasions they do not follow up with individuals or groups to ensure they have fully understood what to do, either during their questioning or when the task has been set. During the activity teachers take opportunities to support groups or individuals through focused teaching, during the best lessons this ensures that good progress is made.
96. A recently introduced mathematics scheme is used effectively to support pupils' learning through the selection of appropriate activities. The time allocated to the subject is appropriate.
97. The mathematics co-ordinator and numeracy governor ensure the subject is managed successfully. Planning is effective in ensuring coverage of the subject. The co-ordinator supports staff on a day-to-day basis. Although some observation of lessons has taken place, an effective system of monitoring that will support teaching and help address weaknesses has yet to be implemented. Parents are kept well informed of developments in numeracy through meetings and written information.

SCIENCE

98. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for the end of Key Stage 1, show that the proportion of pupils achieving expectations were very high in comparison with the national average. When results are compared with those of similar schools, they remain high. When comparing the proportion of pupils achieving significantly above the national average, the school's results are high and above average for similar schools.
99. In the 1999 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, the school results overall in science were above the national average. Compared to similar schools the results were below average. Taking the trends over the past four years, pupils performance overall has been well above the national average. The 2000 results indicate an improvement overall in science.
100. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Inspection findings are, therefore, based upon scrutiny of work, teachers' planning, discussions and display.
101. At Key Stage 1, attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average knowledge and understanding. Their rate of progress throughout the key stage is satisfactory. Younger pupils in the key stage find out how the skeleton moves, what is its function and identify and name external parts. Older pupils are investigating materials. They are able to identify reasons for using materials for a particular purpose and know that materials are chosen for specific purposes.
102. Pupils in Key Stage 2, including higher attaining pupils are achieving unsatisfactory standards overall. This represents a decline from the last inspection. Pupils in the Year 3 and Year 4 class are investigating the conditions for growth of healthy plants and the functions of the roots and their parts. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are investigating

forces. They are finding out that objects are pulled downwards because of the gravitational attraction between them and the Earth.

103. Throughout Key Stage 2 opportunities for developing investigate skills are limited. There is no evidence to show that pupils are able to plan and devise their own investigations. Pupils offer their predictions but lack of subject knowledge inhibits them from making links back to previous work. Pupils are limited in being able to ask questions that can be investigated scientifically. Opportunities to think about what might happen, or deciding what to do, what kind of evidence to collect and what equipment to use restricts their depth of understanding and knowledge.
104. Evidence from scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils indicate that progress is unsatisfactory overall in scientific enquiry throughout the key stage. Too often, teachers focus on what the pupils are to do and fail to highlight what pupils are expected to learn.
105. The development of pupils' literacy skills is appropriately supported through listening and speaking. However, the contribution science makes to the development of pupils' writing skills is not fully exploited at present. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows too much reliance is placed upon pupils using detailed work sheets and information sheets and not enough emphasis is placed upon pupils recording accounts for themselves. As a result the writing is superficial. Teachers' marking is inconsistent and variable. Generally, marking is not used as an opportunity to help pupils towards a better understanding of their learning or how to make improvements. Misconceptions and factual errors are on occasions not identified and opportunities are missed to consolidate and extend learning. Little evidence could be found how numeracy is developed through graphs and measurements. Some data handling was evident in Key Stage 1 from a mini beast survey. The use of information technology to support pupils' work in science is underdeveloped.
106. The school's provision for science meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school uses national guidelines and imported curriculum materials. The policy statement does not provide sufficient detail to help teachers' planning nor give guidance on assessment and record keeping. There is little formal assessment in science to measure pupils' level of attainment or to use for planning future work. Monitoring and evaluation of science are underdeveloped, including the effective use of time allocation in Key Stage 2.
107. Resources are stored centrally and the newly appointed co-ordinator has a regular budget for the replacement of consumables.

ART AND DESIGN

108. The school has maintained the high standards of attainment identified in the last inspection. Observation of one lesson at upper Key Stage 2, scrutiny of work and display provide sufficient evidence to judge that standards at the end of both key stages are above that expected, and progress is good for all pupils including those with special educational needs. There is a strong commitment to art and display, and this is supported by a clear scheme of work that incorporates skills development produced by the curriculum co-ordinator, who also provides curriculum support when necessary. The co-ordinator assesses work at the end of each key stage.

109. At Key Stage 1 art teaching was not observed but previous work and display show evidence of a good range of media, tools and techniques in painting, collage and printing. There is evidence of a developing confidence in use of media and choices made. Although pupils are beginning to show an awareness of elements such as line, colour and shape, there is less evidence of skills practice and development of observational drawing in sketchbooks.
110. There is evidence in art display of an appreciation of works by famous artists, such as Picasso and Klee, and pupils have developed their interpretation of the work into other media, such as felt and material. There are examples of art supporting other subjects, such as Aztec wax drawings and multicultural artwork, with “mendhi” patterns.
111. Pupils’ attitudes to the subject are good at Key Stage 2 and the older pupils are able to make detailed observational drawings based on learned techniques such as cross-hatching and bracelet shading. They make careful records based on observation of natural objects, such as wood and stone. They are confident in their use of a range of media to include pastel, collage, watercolour and ink and are able to use related language to express opinions about their own work and that of others.
112. Display shows an awareness of different art styles such as “Pop Art”, and there is some use of computer generated design. Pupils have experienced visits from artists in the community, working with a potter, silk painters and a stone carver.
113. There is little evidence of three-dimensional artwork, but there has been work at upper Key Stage 2 using batik materials and applique work which have been used as permanent displays in the school.
114. Display throughout the school is of a high standard and adds value to pupils’ work. Pupils have developed positive attitudes to their work, and show commitment and involvement.
115. Art supports other areas of the curriculum at this key stage, such as literacy and numeracy. The co-ordinator has begun to develop resources to support all areas of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of pupils’ attainment in design and technology, as no lessons were observed during the inspection. Standards of attainment in both key stages during the last inspection exceeded national expectations.
117. At the upper end of Key Stage 1 there was evidence of work in design and technology linked to other areas of the curriculum, such as modelling of lighthouses to include simple circuits based on stimuli from stories and wheeled vehicles made from cardboard rolls linked to a history project. There is evidence of work about toys that move using paper. Homework effectively supports the work in class, as shown in models of houses made by pupils at home.
118. In Key Stage 2, there were examples of work based on other areas of the curriculum such as model boats made from a range of materials.

119. The subject has joint co-ordinators who have written a scheme of work following a commercial scheme. The scheme of work is based on a two year rolling programme of topics. This does not at this time, include a progression of skills. Pupils take part in discussions when evaluating their work and have attended a design and technology workshop with other schools from the cluster when they designed and constructed containers.
120. There are limited resources for both food technology and work with rigid materials.

GEOGRAPHY

121. During the inspection only one geography lesson was seen. A scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' previous work indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and standards attained are those that would be expected. Pupils' understanding is built on a range of experiences that moves the pupils from local to wider and contrasting environments.
122. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are studying "where they live" and compare their village with the nearest town and surrounding locality. Pupils have contributed to a display portraying their homes and where they are located in relation to Much Marcle linked to an ordnance survey map. Pupils are developing knowledge and understanding of places and are able to explain the differences between village, town and city. They know cities have cathedrals.
123. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; they offer their suggestions enthusiastically.
124. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Teachers' planning, standard of pupils' work and displays indicate that learning is satisfactory.
125. Work scrutiny indicates that pupils in Key Stage 2 have studied the locality and can recognise some of the physical and human processes and that these can cause changes in places and environments. Pupils are currently developing their knowledge and understanding of how places are linked to other places in the world, for example weather in other countries. Pupils use secondary sources of information to develop their enquiry skill.
126. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have used the locality to develop their skills and are able to use symbols and keys to interpret and make maps. Pupils use maps and plans at a range of scales, for example in following a route to a town.
127. The school uses the national guidelines to plan work. Resources for geography are satisfactory with good use of the local environment to widen pupils' knowledge and understanding and develop skills.

HISTORY

128. Opportunities to see history lessons were limited during the inspection. Insufficient evidence from scrutiny of pupils' past and present work and from work on display prevents an overall judgement on attainment and progress being made.
129. It is evident from teachers' files that planning is satisfactory and that teachers have at least sufficient knowledge of the subject. Good use is made of local resources,

museums and visits to enrich the curriculum. These include the Black Country museum and the Commandery at Worcester to complement the study of the Stuarts.

130. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 are studying the Romans. They are researching about the experiences and everyday life of men and women in Roman times and comparing life in Britain today. Provision is appropriately supported by resources from a local museum, which promote historical enquiry skills.
131. The school uses the national guidelines to plan work. Resources for history are satisfactory. The school has recently revised its long-term curriculum plan in light of National Curriculum changes. At present, monitoring of the subject is not sufficient to track the balance of time given in each class to history,

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Positive developments in teaching information technology have recently been introduced. These include the appointment of a new co-ordinator, who teaches all age groups, and the creation of a computer suite. The standards achieved by pupils are satisfactory in the lessons observed, but these represent a narrow view of the information technology curriculum. During the last inspection standards were described as good. At present progress is impeded because not all pupils have access to the computers during lessons, the school has plans to increase the number of computers to help alleviate this situation.
133. Pupils at Key Stage 1 learn the names of different parts of the computer and their uses. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 highlight text and enlarge it. In Key Stage 2 pupils build a simple database, entering data about themselves whilst the oldest pupils use CD-ROMs to access a variety of information. Skills are developed through a carefully planned set of activities.
134. Pupils are well motivated. They keep on task and are not easily distracted. They relate well with each other, sharing the equipment effectively. This provides good social interaction between boys and girls. Those pupils who have well understanding of computers share their knowledge with others.
135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teacher has a good understanding of the technical vocabulary and activities are well matched to pupils' current ability.
136. The appointment of the co-ordinator is having a positive impact, particularly through her teaching of all age groups. The integration of information technology across the curriculum is less well developed. Whilst the current number of computers will help pupils make progress the school has plans to increase this further. The time pupils currently spend at the keyboard practising their skills is limited. Many pupils have access to computers at home, using them to enhance their homework, but others do not and progress in their computer skills is restricted.

MUSIC

137. Two lessons in music were observed during the inspection. Inspection findings are also based upon discussion with staff, extra-curricular activities and assemblies. From this evidence it is clear that pupils, including those with special educational

needs, make good progress in music and attain above average standards. This is similar to those during the last inspection.

138. Pupils build on their previous musical experiences. The quality of their singing and instrumental playing is good and they sing tunefully and with due regard to rhythm and pitch.
139. The co-ordinator teaches music to all classes throughout the school. Class teachers also teach a recorder lesson on a fortnightly basis to all pupils in Key Stage 2. The pupils are set according to their ability. It is the school's aim that all Key Stage 2 pupils learn to play the recorder.
140. There are opportunities for instrumental music tuition. Two peripatetic music teachers come to the school to teach brass, woodwind and violin.
141. In the lesson observation in lower Key Stage 2, pupils show they can rehearse and perform with others in starting and finishing together and keeping to a steady beat. They learn how to use their voices expressively by singing songs. Pupils explore and express their ideas and feelings about music, movement and pictures to a popular sea shanty.
142. Most pupils have positive attitudes to music, they enjoy the opportunities they have to perform and listen to music. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into lessons and are able to play a full and active role in playing a recorder. Behaviour is generally good.
143. Too few lessons were observed to make an overall judgement about teaching. The two lessons observed were characterised by careful planning, shared learning objectives and a brisk pace of teaching.
144. It is evident that the teaching of recorder playing has been good. In the lesson observed pupils perform confidently and were required to concentrate very hard to ensure that their performance was accurate. They play effectively showing a high degree of dexterity and musicality. The teacher plans work to build carefully on music skills that have been practised in earlier lessons. Pupils are taught how music is produced through notations and to use music vocabulary.
145. The school choir is a strong feature of the school. It is well attended and about a third of the school roll take part. Pupils demonstrate good quality singing and an awareness of rhythm and pitch. The choir participates in termly events such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest services and school productions. Links with the community also provide opportunities for the choir to perform, for example, the Ledbury Festival.
146. The school is fortunate in being able to utilise staff expertise to ensure that the teaching of music is carried out by a knowledgeable practitioner. There is a newly introduced policy and the rolling programme for both key stages aims to fulfil the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Pupils listen attentively to music in assemblies and there are opportunities for reflection while listening.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. Only three lessons in different aspects were observed and it is not possible to judge the overall standard of physical education. However, the standards in the lessons observed were good, reflecting the improvements in provision since the last inspection. Effective use is now made of the village hall to teach gymnastics and dance to all but the youngest pupils. The physical education curriculum is supported through a residential visit in Key Stage 2.
148. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. Teachers maintain good but unobtrusive discipline. Good questioning enables pupils to suggest ideas for improvement. Some opportunities for pupils to appraise their own performance and that of others are missed.
149. Pupils behave well during their physical education lessons. They participate fully and do their best. Enjoyment is an obvious part of the lesson and adds to the standards achieved. Independence in Key Stage 1 pupils is fostered through the teacher's insistence that they change themselves with a minimum of help.
150. Very effective use is made of the local swimming pool and its staff to ensure good progress. All pupils attend these swimming lessons each week; this is inappropriate for a majority of Key Stage 2 pupils who already achieve the National Curriculum requirements to be able to swim 25 metres.
151. Physical education is supported by a number of parents who help with the swimming lessons. Standards are also enhanced through a Key Stage 1 sports club.