

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Ponsbourne St Mary's Primary School**

Hertford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117396

Headteacher: Mr L Arnold

Reporting inspector: Mr M Massey  
23785

Dates of inspection: 8 –11 May 2000

Inspection number: 197064

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4yrs to 11yrs
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Newgate Street Village Nr Hertford Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG13 8RA
Telephone number:	01707 872395
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Sutcliffe
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M Massey	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Science	Teaching
		Information technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Modern Foreign Language	
		Physical education	
		Equal opportunities	
		English as an additional language	
Ms S Thomas	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ms C Kadir	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	
		Religious education	
		Under fives	
		Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7-10</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11-12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13-14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14-15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>15-16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>16-17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19-21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22-33</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ponsbourne St Mary's Church of England Primary School is situated in Newgate Street Village, near Hertford, in Hertfordshire. There are 70 pupils on roll, 34 boys and 36 girls, taught in 3 classes. The headteacher shares the teaching commitment to the older pupils. The school mainly serves the local community, although some pupils come from out of the school's normal area. The school is strongly committed to integrating pupils from all backgrounds. Pupils come from diverse social backgrounds with a high proportion of families having a professional background. There is a range of attainment on entry but overall standards on entry are generally above average. Children start at the school on a part time basis in the term after they are four years old. Thirty one per cent of the school's population is on the register of special educational need, which is above average, although the number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. Around 5 percent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below average. The school has a high pupil mobility, with a turnover of approximately 24 per cent. This is due to the recent expansion of the school, with numbers on roll rising from around 40 pupils to the present total. The accommodation has recently been extended and improved to cope with the increasing numbers. Parents and staff have developed the outside play areas to make an attractive and stimulating environment.

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

Ponsbourne St Mary's is a good school. It has consistently achieved high standards with the exception of results in 1999, which were due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs admitted following the expansion of the school. Standards are now improving again and are above average. The teaching is good overall and the pupils have a good attitude to school. The leadership and management of the school are good. The school receives an above average amount of income per pupil and gives good value for money.

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

- Achieves high standards in a number of subjects including English, mathematics and science.
- There are very good relationships across the school that contribute substantially to pupils' good behaviour and the hard work of staff, governors and parents.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- Good assessment procedures enable staff to track pupils' progress and ensure that they are in line to achieve their predicted grades in end of key stage tests.
- Good leadership and management give a clear direction to the school and are highly influential in establishing the caring and committed ethos.
- The positive attitude of staff and the work of voluntary helpers significantly enhances pupils' learning.

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

- There is not enough delegation of responsibilities to senior staff.
- The provision for the physical development of children under five is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is below the national average.
- The School Development Plan does not identify priorities clearly enough.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in September 1996. There has been satisfactory improvement in three of the areas identified in the last report namely information technology, geography and overall provision for children under five, although there is further improvement needed in physical provision for the under fives. The school has worked hard and made good progress in establishing schemes of work that give good support to teachers' planning. There are now specific learning objectives for subjects like English, mathematics and science that provide a clear focus to lessons. There has been a good improvement in tracking pupils' progress

through establishing assessment procedures that enable the school to make accurate predictions of what pupils should achieve. There have been further improvements since the last report in the quality of teaching, which is now good, and this reflects the hard work and dedication of staff. Standards in religious education have improved in Key Stage 2 and there has been a good improvement in standards in music.

## STANDARDS

There were only 7 pupils in the cohort taking the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1999. This is too small a number to provide a statistically accurate interpretation of results based on national averages. A review of standards over the past four years shows that standards were consistently high at the end of Key Stage 2 until 1999 when standards fell. This was due to the expansion of the school and the arrival of a number of pupils with special educational needs part way through the key stage. A similar pattern emerges in Key Stage 1. However, numbers have now stabilised and inspection evidence shows that standards are generally above average for the present cohorts of pupils in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages. In science, standards are above average in Key Stage 2 and average in Key Stage 1. In religious education at Key Stage 1 standards are average and by the end of Key Stage 2 they are above average. Based on the attainment of children when they enter the school, pupils make good progress, with many pupils achieving above what could be expected. The school is committed to maintaining high standards. The targets originally published are too low. However, the recently established assessment system has enabled the headteacher to identify this and amend the school targets accordingly. Children under five make satisfactory progress and are in line to attain the expected levels in all areas except for physical development. Many children are already achieving at this level.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy the activities offered to them. They sustain high levels of concentration and persevere well with challenging work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond well to high expectations from staff and behave well in classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and they accept responsibility happily. Relationships are very good and make a strong contribution to the positive learning environment.
Attendance	Below average. The high rate of authorised absence is due to sickness and some families taking holidays in term-time.

The very good relationships are reflected in the good behaviour and enthusiastic attitude to school displayed by pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good. In the lessons seen 95 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better. Of this 43 per cent was good, 19 per cent was very good, 5 per cent was excellent and only 5 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The other lessons were all satisfactory. The teaching meets the needs of the wide range of pupils' abilities well. Teaching in both English and mathematics is good

throughout the school. In English, lessons are well planned and teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn, conducting lessons at a good pace. In mathematics, teachers make good use of the Numeracy Strategy to improve pupils' mental mathematics capabilities. Crisp and direct questioning is often a feature of lessons and encourages pupils to concentrate well. A strength of the school is the good relationship between staff and pupils that results in a good working environment where pupils make good progress. In the very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, planning lacks a clear focus and as a result pupils lose concentration. A feature of the teaching is the flexibility of staff in grouping pupils, often across year groups, in order to ensure that activities are at an appropriate level. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils. There are good links between subjects and a wide range of activities are presented. French is taught to pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Carefully targeted support builds pupils' confidence, improves their skills and enables them to take a full part in lessons
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Good records are kept on pupils' progress and there is a high level of care shown to pupils. Formal records are not always completed and the approach to monitoring absence is informal.

The school meets all statutory requirements. All subjects of the National Curriculum plus religious education are taught. There is a strong focus on the learning of basic skills in English and mathematics. This is balanced by good links between subjects enabling skills learned in subjects like English to be reinforced and extended through work in history or geography. Provision for children under five has improved but there is still lack of provision for physical development, for example through the use of large equipment and outdoor play. Residential visits for older pupils significantly enhance their learning opportunities. The school has a good partnership with parents, who have a positive view of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher gives a clear direction to the school and is committed to improving provision and standards. He is well supported by staff but does not delegate enough responsibility to other senior staff members.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are well informed about what is happening in school. They have worked very hard to improve the accommodation but are not yet fully involved in monitoring the performance of the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses results of National Curriculum tests and other assessments well. Areas for improvement are identified but the number of initiatives in the School Development Plan makes it difficult to identify priorities.
The strategic use of	Resources are soundly used and areas of expenditure are clearly

resources	allocated in the School Development Plan. Overall the school gives good value for money.
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The very good relationships established by the headteacher contribute significantly to the overall effectiveness of the school. Good systems for assessment and monitoring of teaching have been implemented and these are raising expectations in the school. There is not enough delegation to other senior staff and their professional development is slower than it should be as a result. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately. Staffing and resources are satisfactory. The accommodation is unsatisfactory for physical education, school lunches and acts of collective worship. Maintenance has been poor in some areas and there are a number of rotten window frames as well as some loose flooring.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Pupils are expected to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• They are not well enough informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• There is not an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team fully agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. The team found that the amount of homework set for pupils and information given to parents was satisfactory. It is judged that links with parents are a strength of the school. The school has worked hard and successfully to involve parents in school activities. A number of parents help in class and many help freely with maintenance and gardening work around the school. The team is of the opinion that after school activities are limited but the regular residential visits and events with other schools make compensation.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The use of national assessment data to judge standards at Ponsbourne St. Mary's is unreliable. This is due to two major factors. The size of the cohort taking the tests at the end of each key stage is too small to be statistically reliable; for example, one pupil in the 1999 Key Stage 2 cohort was equivalent to around 15 per cent of the total. In addition, the school has expanded rapidly during the past few years, almost doubling in size. This has resulted in a number of pupils joining the school part way through both key stages. This has had a dramatic effect on national test results in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, three pupils from a cohort of ten transferred to Ponsbourne midway through the key stage and six pupils were on the school register of special educational needs. In Key Stage 2 out of a cohort of seven pupils only one pupil had been in the school at Key Stage 1. Three pupils had joined the school midway through the key stage and four of the pupils were on the school's register of special educational needs. As a result of these factors the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that when compared to all schools standards were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools standards in all three subjects were well below average. This contrasted sharply with the 1998 results which showed that compared to similar schools standards were well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. A similar pattern is evident in Key Stage 1. Taking into account the present cohorts of pupils, high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
2. Children under five years of age enter the school with slightly above average attainment overall. By the time they are five the large majority of them attain, and many exceed, the levels expected for children of their age. They have good listening and speaking skills, for example, talking about the pictures in books. They know that print carries meaning and are beginning to learn the sounds of letters of the alphabet. In mathematics, they have a good understanding of mathematical language and the majority of them can count and recognise numbers up to ten. Children are developing a good understanding of scientific investigation and accurately identify objects that will float or sink. They have good skills in art and modelling, often working independently. Children's physical skills are satisfactory but the limited provision for outdoor physical activity to develop their large motor skills means that children's skills in this area are not as well developed as they could be.
3. The inspection team found that in Key Stage 2 standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. In Key Stage 1 standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics and are satisfactory in writing and science. In information technology standards are average in both key stages. In geography and history at Key Stage 2 and music in both key stages standards are above average. In religious education standards are above the expectations outlined in the Locally Agreed Syllabus in Key Stage 2 and average in Key Stage 1. In French pupils make good progress in both key stages. In all other subjects standards are average.
4. In English, pupils read well and there are good examples of them using their speaking and listening skills to good effect in their discussions in subjects such as geography and history. In Key Stage 1, writing skills are satisfactory and the school is investigating ways of improving this through the provision of more opportunities for extended writing outside the Literacy Hour. Pupils make good progress in their writing skills in Key Stage 2 where pupils make good use of descriptive language and writing for different audiences. The National Literacy Strategy is being effectively implemented throughout the school and adapted appropriately for younger pupils. In mathematics, pupils' mental calculations and the ability to explain clearly what they are doing are a strength of the school in both key stages. This is due to the influence of the Numeracy Hour and the importance placed on this aspect of mathematics by the teachers. In science, pupils make good progress in their learning in Key Stage 2 and have a good understanding of a fair test. The good range of opportunities presented to pupils enables them

to achieve high standards in this subject. The school has worked hard, and successfully, to raise standards in information technology since the last inspection and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of desktop publishing skills and how to use them to enhance the impact of their work.

5. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching staff and classroom assistants. They make very good progress against the targets set out in their Individual Education Plans. The work carried out in small groups by the special needs teacher, for example in English and mathematics, is a key factor in the very good progress that pupils make. Higher attaining pupils make good progress overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. During the course of the inspection there was no obvious difference in the attainment of boys and girls. English as an additional language had been well supported and excellent progress had been made, with the result that no pupils now need support in this area.
6. The targets set by the school are too low and are presently being reviewed. This is understandable given the change in cohort over the past two years. However, the school has established a good tracking and target setting system for all pupils in the school. This gives a clear indication that targets established for all cohorts in the school are challenging and will maintain the present high standards. The published targets are now out of date. The headteacher, with the support of other staff, has analysed the results of national tests and used Teacher Assessment and baseline assessment information in order to target learning more effectively. This has resulted in pupils working at an appropriate level in English and mathematics irrespective of their age. This means that younger pupils work with older ones, and vice versa, to enable challenging work to be presented.
7. Taking into account that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is slightly above average, the changes in the cohorts due to expansion and the very good progress of pupils with special educational needs, pupils' achievement overall is good.

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

8. Children have good attitudes to their work. In some lessons they are very positive about their activities. In a reception/Year 1 literacy lesson pupils cheered when their teacher gave out the worksheets for their task. They were enthusiastic and found learning fun and the children's attitudes contributed positively to the progress they made in the lesson. Children concentrate well and work purposefully. In a Year 3/4 numeracy lesson pupils persevered with difficult work and were encouraged to think for themselves.
9. As in previous years, there have been no exclusions. Most parents who returned the questionnaire feel that behaviour is good. Inspectors agree. Year 6 pupils responded well in a science lesson to their teacher's high expectations of their behaviour. The aims of the lesson were achieved and pupils made good progress. Children know how they are expected to behave. At break, children play well together. No bullying was seen during the inspection. Throughout the school relationships are very good. Children care for each other and show respect for adults. They are friendly and welcoming.
10. Attendance is below the national average. Authorised absence is high. This is due mainly to sickness and to parents taking their children on holiday or for visits during school time. Unauthorised absence is low.
11. Eighty nine per cent of the parents who returned the questionnaire feel that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. The school is developing a sense of citizenship in the pupils. They raise money for those less fortunate than themselves and are keen to help the school, such as by contributing to the May Fayre.

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

12. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when

teaching was judged to be satisfactory. In the lessons seen around 95 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better. Of this 43 per cent was good, 19 per cent was very good and 5 per cent was excellent. In only 5 per cent of lessons was teaching unsatisfactory.

13. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall. Children are tested on entry to the school and the teacher uses the results of these tests to identify appropriate teaching areas for groups and individuals. Planning now takes account of the younger pupils, who are in a mixed age class with older Reception pupils and Year 1, and covers the whole range of activities. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Very good use is made of the classroom assistant who works well with groups of younger pupils. This is the result of good co-operation between the classroom assistant and the teacher. High expectations by staff lead to interested and motivated children who behave well and are eager to learn. Provision for the development of children's physical skills through the use of large equipment and apparatus is unsatisfactory. There is no specific area attached to the classroom and the teachers' planning does not make full use of the other facilities on the school site, such as the fixed outdoor apparatus. As a result children's physical skills are not as well developed as they could be.
14. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, art, geography, history and music is good. The teaching of information technology is sound overall, with some good teaching of older pupils. It was not possible to make a judgement on teaching in design and technology, French and religious education. In other subjects teaching is satisfactory. A strength of the teaching in both key stages is the good relationships that exist. This is a particular feature in the Year 4/5/6 class where the working environment that the teacher creates is excellent. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards of work and as a result pupils work hard and are eager to please the teacher. Teachers have good control over pupils by being firm and fair. Because of this and the high expectations, teachers can organise classrooms to give pupils good opportunities to develop their individual research skills in subjects like science and history. Pupils respond well to the trust put in them by teachers and show a real interest in their work, which in turn leads to their persevering in their learning. With the exception of the under fives' provision for physical education, teachers' planning is good overall, reflecting their good subject knowledge. Lessons generally have clear learning objectives and teachers show great flexibility in planning for groups of different attainment. A good example of this is the attitude to teaching mathematics. Pupils are organised according to attainment and not age and they move between classes when appropriate, for example, with some older pupils moving to another class base. This is handled sensitively by staff and pupils acquire skills and knowledge at the correct level. Higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged by teachers and make good progress in their learning. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen was due to the teacher trying to maintain too many different activities at the same time. This meant that there was not a clear focus on what some pupils were going to learn and as a result they lost concentration and worked slowly. Throughout the school very good use is made of classroom assistants and parents, to support pupils' learning. They work with groups of pupils in subjects like science and this high level of support helps to keep pupils on task and working at a good pace. The open attitude of staff and the clear explanations that teachers give to pupils mean that pupils have a very good understanding of what they are supposed to be doing. This is reflected in the open and knowledgeable way that they talk to visitors about their work.
15. The teaching of basic skills, such as reading and mental mathematics is good in both key stages and consequently pupils achieve well in areas like reading and mental arithmetic. Good overall planning leads to some good links between subjects. This gives pupils plentiful opportunities to reinforce and extend their mathematical and linguistic skills in lessons like geography and science. Teachers know how well pupils are progressing through the good day-to-day assessment, which contributes to the effective grouping of pupils for subjects like mathematics. Good plenary sessions in subjects like science are used well by some teachers to extend and reinforce learning. Teachers use the literacy and numeracy strategies well and this has contributed to the good pace seen in lessons.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school support teacher is very aware of pupils' individual needs and the pupils look forward to working with her. The school has placed a high priority on this aspect of their work and it is paying good dividends in the progress that pupils are making. Teachers' individual planning supports pupils

well and this reflects the good knowledge that teachers have of individual pupils. Support for English as an additional language is no longer required but has been valuable in integrating pupils into the school and ensuring that they make rapid progress in order to be able to have access to the whole curriculum.

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

### **Learning opportunities**

17. The school's curriculum provision is good overall. It meets the statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education and takes account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. In addition to the statutory curriculum the school enables pupils to learn French. The programme of learning for under fives includes all six areas of learning and is satisfactory overall; however, opportunities for some aspects of their physical development are currently not being fully realised. The balance of the curriculum favours the teaching and learning of basic skills and additional time is therefore available for English and mathematics. The breadth of the curriculum is being maintained appropriately and includes personal, social and health education teaching programmes with suitable emphasis on sex and drugs education. The school has undertaken appropriate curriculum development and as a result improvement in areas identified by the last inspection report have been good overall.
18. Curriculum documentation is now strong and helpful. Improvements have been made in raising standards in information technology at Key Stage 1 and geography at Key Stage 2 through the incorporation of nationally produced schemes of work into the school's own working documents. Learning objectives in teachers' planning are now closely matched to the Programmes of Study in the National Curriculum. Schemes of work clearly define stages of progression for all pupils in the school. The provision for pupils under five years of age has improved. Teachers have developed an appropriate curriculum with the exception of physical education.
19. Teachers' medium and short term planning is very thorough and identifies clearly the main learning objectives and activities for pupils of different age groups and abilities in each class. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a particular strength of the school. All pupils on stage two of the Code of Practice for special educational needs and above have effective Individual Education Plans that include sensible and achievable targets.
20. For the majority of time, pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and all teachers and support staff provide good support in whole-class, group or one-to-one situations. A very small number of pupils benefit from special language development support with the special needs teacher, who has received specialist training.
21. The school has effectively adopted the strategies proposed in the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. This clearly has had an impact on pupils' achievements in all curriculum areas but in particular in English and mathematics.
22. Equality of opportunity is good. The school's policies and practice ensure equal access and opportunity for all pupils to all activities and the whole curriculum provided by the school.
23. The school's support for learning outside the school day includes the regular setting and marking of homework. The school takes part in inter-school sports competitions and arranges two residential visits a year for pupils in Key Stage 2. Regular after school clubs are not available to pupils but the regular residential visits and events with other school compensate for this.
24. The school has good links with people and organisations from within the local community, especially the local church. Parents and grandparents who are governors at the school can be seen helping in the school almost on a daily basis. The school promotes these links as part of its curriculum, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

### **Personal development**

25. The ethos of the school is warm, welcoming and mutually supportive. Pupils and staff form part of a school community where everyone feels valued and visitors are welcomed. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and opportunities for their cultural development are satisfactory. Governors, parents and staff strongly support the values the school promotes.
26. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Spirituality is reflected in the opportunities the school provides, in religious education, collective acts of worship and at other times for pupils to reflect on spiritual matters. For example, during an assembly on the theme of "jealousy", pupils were listening to the story of "Joseph and his Technicolor Dream Coat"; they were played a tape with singing of "Close every door" and were entranced by this experience. In last term's Key Stage 2 project books there are some very moving examples of prayers for the new Millennium: "All I want for the Millennium is joy, laughter, peace and harmony" and "In the next Millennium where will I be, great big butterfly fat as a tree", for example.
27. Good provision is made for the development of a sense of right and wrong. Pupils respond well to ideas of fairness and justice and the rights of others. They are responsive in lessons and at other times. They enjoy good relationships with their peers and adults alike. Pupils show enthusiasm for their school and take a pride in its achievements. There are good opportunities in lessons and projects for developing pupils' understanding of moral issues; for example, understanding the need for the rest of the world, including themselves, to help flood victims in Mozambique.
28. Provision for social development is good. Pupils are confident and can express their ideas during lessons and in discussions in a very mature way. They are given opportunities to consider good and bad actions of others during assembly times, as part of their topic work and on other occasions during the school day. Children are taught right from wrong and standards of behaviour are always good. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Good opportunities are made for pupils to develop social awareness through collaborative project work, when pupils can be seen to work in pairs, a group and as a team.
29. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and opportunities are being provided as part of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities such as the May Fayre being planned for the weekend following the inspection. In music and art pupils are given opportunities to appreciate the work of national and other countries' artists. And as part of their religious education programme of study pupils have enjoyed the visit of staff from the local Language Unit, who demonstrated traditional Hindu dress and cooking; and they are becoming more aware of the religious and cultural traditions of Christian, Hindu and Jewish communities.

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

30. The school continues to be successful in promoting the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. This has a positive effect on their attitudes to learning. Staff know the children very well. They are alert to problems and deal with them effectively as they arise. Measures to promote discipline are good. Since the last inspection, the school has created appropriate disciplinary and prevention of bullying policies. These give clear guidance to staff on procedures. Children understand the merit system and look forward to receiving their stickers or awards for good work or behaviour.
31. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory overall. It is mainly informal because staff know the children and their families very well and the number of pupils is small. Appropriate referrals are made to the Educational Welfare Officer where necessary. A more formal approach to monitoring absence and punctuality has yet to be adopted. This was a weakness identified at the last inspection.
32. Child protection and health and safety measures are satisfactory. The school is sometimes lax in keeping formal records. This was drawn to the attention of the headteacher.

33. Assessment procedures are good. Children under five are assessed on entry to the school and these assessments are used as a starting point to plan work for individuals and cohorts. The progress of each individual is then tracked using the baseline assessments on entry to the school to ensure that pupils are making satisfactory progress. Results of other internal tests as well as end of key stage National Curriculum tests and optional end of year tests contribute to the overall picture. As a result predictions are made of each pupil's attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. This has resulted in school targets being amended upwards. An external adviser has worked with the school to sample pupils' work to ensure that assessments are accurate. The results of assessments are used effectively to target individual pupils for extra support in subjects like English and mathematics. The results of assessments are clear and concise making pupil tracking easy.

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

34. The school has established a very effective partnership with parents. It is a strength of the school. Eighty-six per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire feel that the school works closely with parents. The staff and the head are readily available to see parents and welcome them into school. Eighty nine per cent of parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. They appreciate the availability of the staff and the head.
35. The quality of information provided to parents is good. A range of letters keeps parents up to date with school events and activities. The school prospectus is clear and helpful to parents. The governors' annual report is an interesting summary of the school year. Parents' consultation evenings are usually held three times per year in addition to open evenings where children demonstrate particular aspects of the curriculum to parents. Pupils' annual reports are sound and give a satisfactory picture of children's abilities. In some cases, they do not always indicate the progress pupils have made over the year.
36. Parents' involvement in the life of the school and with their child's education is good. The Friends' Association works hard to raise money for the school. Many parents give their time freely to help with maintenance and gardening work. A number of parents help in class. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement. Their attendance at school events is very good.

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

37. The headteacher provides good leadership. He gives a clear educational direction to the school and shares a commitment to high standards with the staff and governors. He has worked hard to improve facilities in the school and he has managed the growth in numbers effectively, showing the flexible approach that is needed in a small school. The headteacher has established very good relationships in both the local community and the school. This results in good co-operation from staff and a high level of commitment from parents, many of whom help in the school. The headteacher has established a good assessment system with the help of other staff. This has enabled staff to track pupils' progress and revise school targets to a higher and more appropriate level, following the expansion of the school. The recently established system for monitoring teaching is good. However, only the headteacher is involved in this process and as a result other key members of staff are not sufficiently aware of the impact of new developments on pupils' learning. Although other areas, such as the monitoring of pupils' work, have been delegated to staff, individual co-ordinators do not manage budgets for their subjects. The lack of delegation means that the professional development of staff is slower than it should be. Appraisal is not fully in place but is carried out informally through the monitoring of teaching. The headteacher is committed to implementing performance management following staff training. The school's aims of high standards and a caring Christian community are very well reflected in the work of the school.
38. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator and works closely with a part-time member of staff to ensure that pupils' needs are effectively met. The school has a high

level of commitment to pupils with special educational needs and as a result pupils make good progress.

39. Governors make regular visits to the school. They monitor what is happening in classrooms and around the school and give regular verbal feedback to the full governing body. Staff give presentations to governors and parents. As a result of these activities governors are well informed about what is happening and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The chair of governors is very committed to the school and is anxious to make the experience of being a governor a positive one for new governors. The governing body is not yet fully involved in appraising the work of the headteacher but is aware of the requirement to do so in the near future. The governors are very supportive of the work of the school and are committed to improving standards and they have worked particularly hard to improve the accommodation. They are very disappointed that the maintenance of the accommodation has been so poor and that the responsibility has now been transferred to them. They cannot see how they will be able to afford the necessary backlog of maintenance tasks. This has taken up a considerable amount of their time over the past few years.
40. The School Development Plan is presented in a clear format but contains too many initiatives that are not clearly aimed at improving standards. It is sometimes difficult to pick out specific areas within the plan; for example, the present focus on improving standards in writing is not clear. Funds are allocated to individual priorities appropriately in consultation with the finance committee of the governing body and specific staff responsibilities are outlined. There is a suitable timescale for each priority but it is difficult to evaluate initiatives as some of the success criteria are not measurable. Governors and staff are consulted by the headteacher as the plan is being drafted and the final plan is presented to the full governing body for ratification. Financial management is good. Information technology is used to support financial planning and regular budget statements and reconciliations are carried out. The most recent audit report was good and another report is due shortly. Specific grants have been used appropriately. Other grants were given to support the expansion of the school and went towards providing extra resourcing and increased teacher time.
41. There are satisfactory levels of resourcing in all subjects. Resources for science are good. The provision of large play equipment for children under five is unsatisfactory. The accommodation is suitable for teaching most subjects of the National Curriculum. However, it is unsatisfactory for physical education, school lunches and acts of collective worship as there is no hall. The village hall is used for physical education but lacks large apparatus. Classrooms are used for dining and acts of collective worship, necessitating the constant moving of furniture that the staff carry out with great patience. The new classroom is a good size but the sink is at the wrong height for young children. The maintenance of the old building has been unsatisfactory for some time and a number of the window frames are very rotten. Some areas of the flooring are loose and redundant pipework is still in place making re-decoration and improvement difficult. Staffing levels are good and staff are appropriately qualified. At present the headteacher supports learning in the Year 4/5/6 class and teaches music and physical education for around half of the week. The school does not have the capacity to offer initial teacher training in the present building.
42. The school takes appropriate account of how to obtain best value through careful identification of spending priorities and consistently questioning itself as to how it can improve standards and provision. It has a good capacity to continue to improve.

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

43. In order to improve the standards of attainment and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- Devolve more responsibility to senior staff in order to improve their professional development and further raise standards in the school by:
    - involving staff in monitoring teaching and learning in order to identify how standards and teaching could be improved;
    - allocating budgets to major curriculum areas and delegating responsibility for purchasing resources to subject leaders.

(paragraphs 37, 62, 68, 74)

- Improve provision for the physical development of children under five by:
  - incorporating more outdoor play in the teachers' planning and using staff and other adults flexibly to enable this to happen;
  - improving the range of large equipment available to children.  
(paragraphs 2, 13, 17, 44, 49)

#### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Improving the School Development Plan to identify priorities more clearly; (paragraph 40)
- Improving attendance. (paragraph 31)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	19	43	28	5	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	70
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	3

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	21

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.75
National comparative data	5.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.12
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	54
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Average class size	19

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	162163
Total expenditure	160375
Expenditure per pupil	2325
Balance brought forward from previous year	9703
Balance carried forward to next year	11491

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	28

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	39	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	36	54	7	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	68	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	50	18	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	39	4	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	46	14	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	21	7	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	32	4	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	11	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	43	50	7	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	43	7	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	21	21	21	18

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

44. The school makes satisfactory provision for children under five overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when curriculum provision for under fives was considered to be unsatisfactory. However, opportunities for the development of pupils' large motor skills provided through outdoor physical activities are still unsatisfactory. The school has benefited from the building of a new and spacious classroom enabling the school to admit younger reception children. Baseline assessment shows that the attainment on entry to school is slightly above average; however, a large proportion of children, i.e. 10 pupils out of 60, start at the school after baseline assessment has been completed. By the time they are five most pupils will attain, or exceed, the expected level in each area with the exception of physical development where standards are average.

#### **Language and literacy**

45. Almost all children have good listening skills and respond to questioning with appropriate answers and some are able to enter into quite lengthy discussions about themselves or the tasks they are engaged in. They can describe pictures and talk about their own experiences with confidence. They use language freely and creatively whilst playing in the role-play area, acting as waiters and offering visitors "sghetty bolonaise". Children handle books with care. They understand that print carries meaning and are able to interpret pictures in a book. More able ones share in the reading of the Literacy Hour text about "The house that ...built". During the Literacy Hour under five children in the mixed age class respond well and make real gains in learning, building on previous knowledge of initial sounds. They are well supported by the teachers and support staff during the focused group work, confidently tackling their writing tasks.

#### **Mathematics**

46. Many children already have a good understanding of mathematical language, being able to make comparisons between big objects and small ones. In number the majority can count and recognise numbers to ten and more able ones can count to 20. They are capable of adding two sets of cubes by counting on from a given set and more able ones know some of their number facts to ten. Several children already have an understanding of 'bigger' and 'smaller' than a given number.

#### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

47. Children are able to talk about their classroom and the things they like doing in school such as playing with lentils, rice and other pulses in the sand tray. The youngest reception children are able to sort objects, after experimenting, into sets of those that will float and those that will sink. They use appropriate vocabulary and are able to explain what they are doing. The classroom assistant interacts successfully with the youngest children in the class building on their understanding about the properties of objects. Some of these children are already quite knowledgeable about the objects featured in a picture and know that jelly shoes are made from plastic, the key is made from metal and the cup from china.

#### **Creative development**

48. Children show good skills in art and modelling. Younger pupils are able to experiment with junk modelling independently and enjoy making a crocodile, a spaceship, a water tower and a fountain. Older reception pupils would benefit from more open-ended creative activities, deciding which materials and objects to use to make their scarecrow, drawing their own outlines and mixing their own colours to paint.

#### **Physical development**

49. Children handle tools and objects with confidence. They successfully cut materials and hold pencils and brushes with increasing control. Their physical development for large motor skills is currently restricted to 30 minutes of outdoor play with a small number of wheeled toys. The school is aware that this is unsatisfactory and plans to timetable outdoor physical activity on a

more regular basis from next month.

### **Personal and social development**

50. Children form good relationships with one another and with the adults in the class. The effective use of the classroom assistant to support children means that they are secure and confident and they settle to tasks quickly. Children are eager to take part in activities and their behaviour is good. They share and handle equipment well and take turns happily.
51. The quality of teaching for the under fives is satisfactory overall but can be good at times when the teacher feels comfortable in the presence of observers. Teaching is usually warm and lively and helps the children to feel happy, secure and involved. Teaching and support staff are enthusiastic and have high expectations of children's ability to achieve and their behaviour; as a result children show curiosity and are interested to learn. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of different groups of children. Planning is satisfactory overall but the provision for the development of children's large motor skills is unsatisfactory. Good support is given to children with special educational needs, whilst higher attaining pupils are being sufficiently challenged. One more able reception pupil joins Year 1 pupils for guided writing tasks. Classroom assistants contribute significantly to the children's learning.
52. The curriculum is based on the appropriate areas of learning and enables children to progress towards and beyond the Desirable Learning Outcomes. It links in well with the National Curriculum. Baseline assessment is used to identify areas for development of groups and individual children.
53. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and are frequently seen in classrooms as volunteer helpers.

### **ENGLISH**

54. Standards in English for the present cohort of pupils are good overall. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
55. Small cohort sizes mean that comparisons with national averages have to be treated with caution. The large number of pupils with special educational needs who took the 1999 tests adversely affected the results for 1999.
56. Current standards in speaking and listening and those in reading are above the average at the end of both key stages. Key Stage 1 pupils listen attentively and respond clearly. In Year 2 pupils are able to understand and clearly explain the meaning of words with prefixes, such as "non-flammable means it doesn't catch fire" and "antibiotics means against an infection". In Years 3 and 4 pupils are able to discuss the difference between fiction and non-fiction. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are able to enter into mature discussions about their geography, history and religious education topic work on Canada, the Tudors and a visit to a local temple.
57. The same pattern of standards is evident in reading. Most pupils in Year 1 use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read words and they recognise many words in a simple story. In the Literacy Hour Year 1 pupils read out loud accurately and with confidence the stories they have created; for example, "this is the house that God built and a blossom lies in the house". Pupils in Year 2 read confidently and accurately with good word attack and are beginning to develop expression in their reading. In Year 3, pupils read and explain words such as "appearance", "diet" and "habitat". Year 6 pupils are inspired reading from "The Midnight Fox" by Betsy Byers; pupils read with enthusiasm and enjoyment, many of them successfully modelling their teacher's expressive reading. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in both key stages. At Key Stage 1 they receive excellent additional support from the special needs teacher concentrating on phonic word attack skills. Pupils make good progress during these sessions. This gives them the confidence and ability to participate in whole class and guided group reading sessions successfully. At Key Stage 2 special needs pupils are supported by an adult reader during guided reading times. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 read a range of books confidently and many read fluently and with expression. Opportunities to develop

library skills are limited. The school library is very small and lacks a formal library classification system.

58. Standards in writing are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 and they are above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Year 1 pupils have a good awareness of phonic sounds and most know that letters make words which, in the right order, make sentences. They can spell, "mum" and "dad" and attempt the word "fairy" in their Literacy Hour writing task. Pupils in Year 2 write short book reviews, such as "My favourite book is called 'Lilly the Puppy'". Pupils write in simple sentences; their writing is imaginative and well organised. Sentences extend ideas in logical sequence and spelling of common words is usually accurate as is punctuation such as full stops and capital letters. Most pupils' handwriting is legible and consistent in size. At Key Stage 2 pupils are writing in a range of different forms, such as a play "Elizabeth 1", an adventure story. Ideas are developed in an interesting way with a well structured story line and lovely descriptions, such as "the wind was howling like a dog". Pupils clearly have an understanding of characterisation, setting and plot and know how to engage different audiences. The overall standard of presentation in written work is good and at times even excellent, such as the collaborative project books produced by Year 6 pupils on "Canada" and "The Tudors" by Year 5 pupils. Most Year 6 pupils are beginning to use vocabulary that is more interesting and are developing ideas through their writing. Handwriting is joined, legible and mostly fluent.
59. The quality of teaching is good overall and can be excellent. Throughout the school, lessons are well planned and have precise objectives that reflect the objectives in the National Literacy Strategy framework. There is good teaching of text and sentence level work and this helps to give pupils the understanding of text necessary to reach higher levels of attainment. Teachers use effective questioning techniques directed to the whole class, groups and individuals. Their assessment of pupils' potential is very accurate, which has a direct impact on individual pupils' learning. Teachers give precise guidance to pupils so that they understand exactly what to do. Clear and explicit links are made between learning spellings and the usefulness of this in writing. Support staff and voluntary helpers effectively have a great impact on all pupils' learning but in particular those with special educational needs. The management of pupils is usually good, which is reflected in the way pupils respond so well to adults and each other. On the very rare occasions when it is not so good pupils become restless and this affects productiveness. Clearly established routines are evident. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and confident delivery of lessons. Planning is consistently good with objectives in lessons clear. Activities are well structured with little time wasted. Lessons usually flow smoothly with good pace producing an industrious working atmosphere overall.
60. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their English skills across the curriculum at both key stages; in particular, they write in subjects such as history, geography, science and topic work. Information technology is used very effectively, in particular in Key Stage 2.
61. Pupils respond well to the Literacy Hours. They are used to the structure and are able to sustain concentration well and stay on task. They are enthusiastic, relationships are very positive and they are able to show independence, to collaborate and work well together.
62. Resources are good; however, the provision of library facilities is inadequate, which has an impact on the acquisition of some library skills. The school is aware that this is an area for development. A subject policy is in place and the school has incorporated the National Literacy Strategy in its own scheme of work for English. Strategies for assessment are good overall and they are very good for pupils with special educational needs; this is an improvement since the last inspection when no summative record of pupils' attainment levels was in place. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and the monitoring of teaching and learning is at the early stages of development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

63. Attainment overall is above average and higher attaining pupils are working at an appropriate level. This trend is likely to be maintained over the next three years provided the cohort remains stable. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have standards which are above average. There is evidence of some pupils in Year 4, for example, working at eleven-year-old levels. Pupils with

special educational needs make good progress in their learning and in many cases achieve at the expected level for their age. There has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection.

64. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make good progress in their learning. This is due to the fact that teachers know their pupils well and target work at an appropriate level, irrespective of the pupils' age. As a result pupils in both Year 4 and Year 5 will often be working on similar work to pupils in Year 6. By the time they leave the school at eleven pupils have good mental mathematics skills. They double two and three digit numbers accurately and have good strategies for working out the answers to questions like 86 add 85 because they use the strategies applied when doubling numbers. They multiply whole numbers and decimals confidently by 10 with higher attaining pupils working accurately with numbers above 100,000. Pupils have a good understanding of the relationship between numbers and know that 4 times 18 is the same as 8 times 9, which can help them to work out the answers to sums more easily. They can multiply two digit numbers, such as 24 times 12, accurately and explain clearly how they do this. Higher attaining pupils work accurately with negative numbers to plot shapes on a grid. Pupils measure angles to the nearest degree and find the areas of shapes such as triangles through calculations. Pupils have good data handling skills; for example, using line graphs to record and interrogate information on temperature. They use these skills to good effect in other lessons like science. In their work on probability pupils use their scientific understanding of a fair test well to decide whether the activities that they are doing will provide accurate results, recording comments like "The game is very unfair".
65. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have good verbal skills, which are seen to good effect in the mental mathematics work when they explain clearly how they arrived at their answers. Pupils are quick and accurate; they subtract numbers up to 10 and most pupils work happily subtracting numbers up to 20. Higher attaining pupils are working confidently subtracting numbers up to 100 and other pupils are beginning to work at this level. Pupils multiply numbers by 10 and accurately identify fractions like thirds and quarters. They draw their own block graphs using a tally chart to collect the data, for example by counting and recording the number of sunny and cloudy days. They know the names of shapes such as cubes and that different shapes have a different number of faces. Higher attaining pupils recognise the properties of different shapes, for example by identifying right angles correctly.
66. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both key stages. This is due to the well-structured support they receive during lessons. Pupils in Key Stage 2 work in a small group with a teacher and receive intensive, high quality support in these sessions. Because of the small group pupils receive virtually individual tuition and therefore gain a good understanding of the work. In problem solving, although they can do the mathematics the reading is difficult for them and the teacher has to give support with this.
67. Teaching is good overall. Teachers are using the Numeracy Hour strategy effectively. This is particularly noticeable in the mental mathematics activities at the start of the lessons. These activities are carried out at a brisk pace and questioning is sharp and directed at groups and individuals. Pupils respond well to this, enjoying the challenge and being keen to answer questions. The good relationships that teachers have with pupils mean that pupils are confident to explain how they have arrived at their answers and any wrong conclusions are sensitively handled by teachers. As a result pupils are not afraid of trying again after they have got an answer wrong. The good use of mathematical vocabulary by teachers is reflected in the good use of language by pupils. In around half of the lessons seen teaching was very good. This is due to the high expectations and enthusiasm that teachers have. Activities are challenging and pupils are encouraged to work at a high level. In these lessons pupils' behaviour is very good and they greet activities with enthusiasm, for example when playing multiple bingo. The very good use of plenary sessions reinforces and extends pupils' learning by building on the activities that pupils have completed and encouraging them to explain and extend their thinking. In all classes lessons are well planned and there is a clear learning objective, which reflects teachers' good subject knowledge. Teachers know their pupils well and set work that is appropriate to the different levels of attainment in the class. Homework is used effectively to re-enforce pupils' learning.

68. The subject is co-ordinated by two teachers, who work closely together. They have attended relevant training on the National Numeracy Strategy and share this knowledge with other staff. Key objectives have been identified for all year groups and some commercial schemes are used to support pupils' learning. The headteacher monitors teaching but co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to do this, making it difficult for them to influence developments fully. Co-ordinators have a good knowledge of standards throughout the school and are committed to improving pupils' performance. There are good assessment procedures and staff moderate pupils' work together to agree levels. A good system of tracking pupils' progress through the school is in use. This is also used to predict future National Curriculum test results and enable the headteacher to check that cohorts are progressing as expected. Resources are satisfactory and they are made readily available to pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

69. Standards for the present cohort of pupils by the time they leave the school at eleven are above average. These standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection.
70. By the time they are eleven pupils have made good progress in their learning. They have a good understanding of how to establish a fair test. They know that conditions have to be identical and talk knowledgeably about how they have done this in their work. They record the results of their experiments accurately in a variety of ways; for example, by drawing, writing and using tables. Pupils are used to making initial predictions, often in the form of questions, and using experiments to test their theories. They have a good understanding of the conditions necessary for plant growth and reproduction and know that the environment is an important factor in determining where various creatures live. They have a good knowledge of the properties of materials and successfully carry out experiments on filtration to separate various materials. Pupils' work on electricity is satisfactory with higher attaining pupils working on more challenging tasks. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are attaining at an appropriate level. They cover much of the work of higher attaining pupils, although in less depth.
71. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have made sound progress in their learning and standards are satisfactory. They know that plants have basic needs such as water and light to grow successfully and they carry out controlled experiments with bean seeds to show this. They talk happily about what is happening to the seed but cannot always name the roots or the shoots correctly. Pupils record the results of their experiments accurately by drawing the seeds at various stages of their development. They know that various materials have different properties and carry out investigations to find out which is the most water resistant. They have a good understanding of how factors such as heat can change materials but there is little evidence that they know how some changes can be reversed.
72. In Key Stage 1 pupils' response to science is good; in Key Stage 2 it is very good. They handle equipment and materials sensibly and carry out experiments carefully. Pupils show a keen interest in the subject and are eager to be involved, particularly in the practical investigations. They have a clear understanding of what they have to do and their behaviour is good. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have good discussion skills and talk confidently to visitors about their work.

73. Overall, teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives and effective introductions which remind pupils of their previous work; this leads well into new learning for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. Questioning is used well to ensure that pupils pay attention and understand what they have to do and this is often appropriately targeted at different attainment levels within the class. The use of practical resources in Key Stage 1 is also effective in engaging pupils' interest. A very good learning environment is created for the older pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, based on good relationships and high expectations. Pupils respond to this very well and it is a delight to be in the classroom. Classroom organisation is very good and adult helpers are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Lessons are conducted at a good pace, which encourages pupils to work hard. The teachers in both key stages insist on using scientific language and as a result pupils accept this as normal and use it confidently themselves. Plenary sessions are used effectively to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding through discussion of investigations that pupils have carried out.
74. Planning is based on a two-year cycle in Key Stage 1 and at the beginning of Key Stage 2 and a three year cycle at the end of Key Stage 2. There is a very good coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study based on the nationally produced schemes of work. The school also offers booster classes for older pupils after school. Co-ordinators and other staff have worked hard to produce a "Key Facts" booklet to support pupils in their learning and this is a useful information and revision resource. There are good links with other subjects, such as history and mathematics, which are consciously exploited by staff. Regular assessments are carried out and the results are used to predict end of key stage test grades and track pupils' progress. Resources are good and co-ordinators have prepared resource packs for use throughout the school. However, there is no opportunity for the co-ordinators to monitor teaching.

## **ART**

75. Only one lesson was seen in each key stage during the inspection. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with staff and pupils and evidence from lesson observations. In both key stages pupils reach average standards, overall, and make sound progress. The rate of progress has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make very good progress in three dimensional art, where standards are higher than those normally seen at the end of Key Stage 2.
76. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have above average skills in making objects out of clay and chalk. They use ideas from the work of established artists to model heads from clay, accentuating features, such as the nose. During this activity they concentrate intensely and show a real enjoyment of the subject and desire to produce high quality work. Modelling is a skill that requires great patience and attention to detail and pupils display these qualities in abundance. The finished products are pleasing to the eye and, even more important, pleasing to the pupils. Pupils have produced good quality sculptures using plaster blocks which they have made themselves. Good links have been established with other subjects, like history, where pupils have made Greek vases and painted them in the style of ancient Greece, following research from books. Once again there is good attention to detail, both in the making and decorating. Pupils mix their own paints to produce appropriate skin tones when painting portraits. They learn about the painting styles of other artists, such as Lowry, and paint in a similar style. Information technology is used by pupils to create their own pictures and the finished product shows that they have a good eye, as well as suitable technological skills.
77. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know that different artists paint in different styles and they make their own pictures using different techniques, for example when painting a picture in the style of Monet. Their drawing shows that they are developing sound observational skills and understanding of the importance of line and scale. Some higher attaining pupils include good detail in their finished work. Pupils understand the importance of design in their art work and they make their own designs on paper before transferring them to a plant pot. They know that their design must not be too intricate if it is to transfer effectively to the actual pot. Pupils achieved good results in this activity.

78. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and their behaviour is good. They handle tools and equipment carefully and share resources happily with others. Pupils maintain their concentration well, apart from a small minority who find the observational drawing difficult. They listen carefully to instructions and have a clear understanding of what they have to do. Older pupils work independently and carry out their own research before deciding on a suitable subject when using clay.
79. Teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and there are clear learning objectives. Teachers organise the resources and activities well and therefore pupils have the equipment readily to hand and can start work quickly and efficiently. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and teachers have good control, which means that pupils can work undisturbed and maintain high levels of concentration. This produces a good working environment in the classroom that encourages pupils to try their best. Teachers work well with pupils, providing support and advice. There are good opportunities for promoting speaking and listening skills and the activities in Key Stage 2 promote good social interaction.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

80. During the inspection no direct class teaching was seen and it is not possible to judge teaching in this subject. Judgements are based on the observation of a small group of children working at the end of Key Stage 2, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work. At the last inspection standards of attainment were judged to be in line with national standards. The school has maintained these standards and pupils, including those with special educational needs, continue to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Teachers' planning and the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that all elements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are covered.
81. By the time pupils leave the school at eleven they know that design is an essential part of the subject. They prepare their own designs from a brief given by the teacher and include relevant measurements and notes to enable them to produce a working model. They understand that models have to be strong enough to be functional and modify their designs to improve the finished product as a result of their experience during the building phase. They make strong and functional vehicles out of materials such as balsa wood and have a good working knowledge of how to use various items of equipment safely; for example, by using a bench hook when sawing wood. Some pupils use construction kits to make powered vehicles.
82. Pupils enjoy the subject, particularly when they are presented with challenging tasks. They work well in pairs and reach mature, joint decisions on how best to progress with the task. Pupils are used to choosing their own tools and they handle these carefully and safely.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

83. During the inspection only one Key Stage 2 lesson in geography as part of an integrated topic was observed. Judgements on standards are based on the analysis of work and discussion with pupils and staff. Standards of achievement at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations and at the end of Key Stage 2 they are good. The school has undertaken appropriate development to address the issue of raising standards in the subject at the end of Key Stage 2. During the inspection week it was possible to discuss Year 6 geography work with pupils who had produced project folders during the current academic year. The range and depth of topics presented is challenging and improves pupils' understanding of the themes and concepts they are studying. There has been a good improvement in standards by the time pupils leave the school at eleven.
84. At Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate the ability to recall simple facts and answer questions based on worksheets and simple sources of reference; they engage in simple weather and climate studies and relate this to a topic on shelters, "Who shelters where?" and "Design a shelter". Pupils are able to draw simple classroom maps representing the positions of tables, chairs and other fixtures within their classroom environment.

85. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate their knowledge and skills in relation to studies of a range of places and themes such as the Year 6 Project folders on “Canada” and “Natural Disasters”, in which they describe and begin to offer explanations for geographical patterns and for a range of physical and human processes. Two Year 6 pupils were able to explain why helicopters had to be used to transport tree trunks to the sawmill and how the human activity of de-forestation might affect the landscape and have other environmentally detrimental effects. They show a good understanding of the immediate effects on human life of natural disasters such as the floods in Mozambique. Moreover, they empathise with the victims of these disasters and try to alleviate some of the effects through a whole school fundraising event. Pupils are able to select and use appropriate skills researching for evidence on the Internet to help them investigate places and themes. They reach plausible conclusions and effectively present their findings both graphically and in writing.
86. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they respond with enthusiasm when discussing the work in their project books. They listen attentively during lesson time and are able to make sensible contributions that further their own and their peers’ learning.
87. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was good: the quality of teaching is judged to be good overall. Teachers’ subject knowledge is secure. They plan their work appropriately to enable pupils of different abilities to engage in the same tasks. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work supporting the school’s own planning documents ensures progression within each year group and continuity across the key stages. The scheme helps to identify assessment opportunities and these will enable teachers to make judgements on individual pupils’ achievement and future learning needs. Monitoring of the subject is done through evaluating pupils’ work and reviewing curriculum planning to ensure all Programmes of Study are covered at both key stages. Resources have improved considerably with a positive impact on standards. Pupils’ project folders and classroom displays provided excellent evidence of the effective use of information technology in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

88. During the inspection only one lesson in history as part of an integrated topic in Key Stage 2 was observed. Evidence was gathered from teachers’ planning, pupils’ work and discussions with pupils and staff. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
89. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards for the majority of pupils are in line with national expectations. Pupils develop an understanding of time through simple sequencing of events and from noting changes in their own life. They listen to stories of people and events from the past and then use their understanding of chronology to sequence objects on a worksheet. At Key Stage 2 pupils achieve standards that are above average for their age. They demonstrate good factual knowledge of Tudor and Victorian times. The “History Challenge” topic work on Egypt is of a very high standard. Pupils researched the “Mysterious Valley of the Mummies”, the daily life of Egyptians and their diet. Pupils demonstrate an increasing factual knowledge of aspects of the history of Britain and other countries. During the integrated topic lesson pupils were expected to plan and design their next topic and decide on an area of study. Two pupils decided on World War Two because: “we are interested in the children being evacuated”. Pupils use and develop enquiry skills during lessons where the teacher encourages them to research archive materials and develop note taking skills that analyse findings rather than just copying information.
90. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons; they listen with interest both to their teacher’s introduction to the topic and to ideas expressed by their peers. They are thoughtful in their responses and very productive during lesson time. They take pride in the good quality of their finished work.
91. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was good; teachers have high expectations of their pupils’ learning and behaviour. They show enjoyment, appreciation and good subject knowledge and are able to motivate their pupils. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives and methods and strategies match the needs of all the pupils.

92. The school has developed the subject along appropriate lines through incorporating the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work into their own scheme of work for the subject. Subject progression occurs in each class and continuity across the two key stages is in place. The scheme identifies opportunities for assessment enabling teachers to make a judgement on individual pupils' achievements. The subject is monitored through evaluating planning and teaching and learning outcomes in pupils' project books. Good use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in history.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

93. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils make sound progress in both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were found to be below expectations. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to improve provision and keep pace with new developments in the subject. The fact that a variety of computers are used makes it difficult for compatible programs to be bought but pupils are well aware of which machines run which programs.
94. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have sound word processing skills and use them to produce their own poems, which they print out with help. They know how to make figures move around a screen to arrive at a pre-determined point and are developing good skills in control technology. They have good mouse skills and use them to good effect when using a painting program; for example, by drawing and colouring their own pictures of a flower in art. There is good interaction with Year 6 pupils who work with pupils in Year 2 to enter data that the Year 2 pupils have collected on weather and then print out the results in graph form. With adult support pupils access the Internet to support their work in mathematics.
95. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have continued to make sound progress in their learning. They have good desktop publishing skills, moving text on a page, importing pictures and using conventions such as bullet points to add impact. They save and retrieve their work confidently. Pupils know how to access various programs on the computer independently. They use this knowledge to good effect to support their learning in science; for example, when varying conditions, such as light or water on plants to discover the impact on growth. In data handling, pupils carry out their own research on a variety of subjects, such as seashore life or eye colour. They use spreadsheets to compile data and print their results in a variety of forms, like pie charts and block graphs. They have limited experience of control technology with the majority of them having used the computer to operate model cars when on the annual residential visit. Music composition is also carried out on the residential visit.
96. Pupils are confident users of information technology and many of them use computers at home. They ask one another for help and in discussion with pupils it is obvious that help is given freely and in a positive manner. Year 4 pupils were very happy to ask Year 6 pupils when they could not remember how to do something. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils use a variety of programs independently. They respond with maturity to learning opportunities during lessons, taking advantage of information technology when appropriate.
97. Little direct class teaching was seen. Most of the teaching is carried out in small groups. Overall teaching is sound but there is some good teaching in the older pupils' class where the teacher has a good subject knowledge. This is shown in the good skills progression that is built into lessons and the confident approach of the teacher to helping and guiding pupils. A good working atmosphere is created and pupils respond positively by using equipment and opportunities sensibly. Relationships are good and as a result pupils behave well. There are good teaching opportunities presented in a range of subjects, such as art, mathematics, science and English. Staff have worked hard to achieve this and are often well supported by parents who work in the class alongside the teacher.
98. The school uses the nationally produced scheme of work as a basis for planning and this provides clear guidance to teachers. Where appropriate equipment is not available in school,

for example in control technology for older pupils, this is covered in a block on annual residential visits. The co-ordinator has established a school website and is investigating the establishment of a computer suite, although limited accommodation makes this difficult.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

99. French is taught to pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2. This is an additional subject that the school has introduced since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching.
100. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to learn the correct pronunciation for common words such as "chaude" due to the good modelling of language by the teacher. They respond in French to the teachers' questions and know some words to describe articles of clothing. Pupils are happy to try to name articles of clothing in French and some can do this from memory. The teacher provides a worksheet which acts as a prompt to those who have difficulty remembering the French words.
101. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils count up to 20 accurately and they know the days of the week. They have a good vocabulary of common words and are confident in speaking in short phrases and sentences in French, for example "J'aime l'histoire". They are developing a written vocabulary and becoming familiar with French spelling.
102. Most significantly the pupils are enjoying learning French. This is due to the enthusiasm and subject knowledge of the teacher, who makes learning fun for the pupils. She engages and maintains pupils' interest and concentration through presenting a variety of activities and maintaining a brisk pace throughout the lesson. The use of singing and a tape recorder reinforces vocabulary and adds a further enjoyable dimension to the lessons.

## **MUSIC**

103. Standards in music have improved since the last inspection and are now above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2.
104. The standard of teaching is good and is marked by good subject knowledge and high expectations to which pupils respond well. Pupils participate with enthusiasm and work cooperatively in groups sharing instruments and taking turns.
105. Progress is good over time. At Key Stage 2 pupils can describe how sounds are achieved and how a piece of music makes them feel. Listening to Allegri's "Miserere", one pupil said it made him feel "like being in a church" and another thought she felt "like dying on the Titanic". The selection of songs is appropriate for both teaching points and reflecting the multicultural nature of our society.
106. The standard of singing is good at both key stages. During assembly times Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in singing and older pupils accompany this playing the recorder. Pupils sing a good range of unison songs well and show an increasing awareness of tone and expression.
107. At Key Stage 2 pupils show understanding of many of the elements of music, such as dynamics and tempo in the context of the lesson. They understand about accompaniments and are able to explore rhythmic patterns and expressive elements. They are able to consider and discuss the intended effect of their playing and singing when putting together a class performance.
108. The provision for music is well planned. Pupils gain confidence using both their voice and instruments in public. This was clearly evident on a videoed performance from the Christmas

“Millennium Celebration” held in the local church and the performance given at the end of a Key Stage 2 music lesson observed during the inspection week. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in line with their capabilities.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

109. Only two lessons were seen in physical education, in floor gymnastics. In this aspect of the subject pupils make satisfactory progress. It was not possible to judge standards in dance or games. A scrutiny of school records indicates that pupils make good progress in swimming. This reflects an improvement in standards since the last inspection.
110. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the importance of warming up before taking part in vigorous activity. Pupils have developed good poise and control when developing sequences of movements. They work out their own sequences of movements working across and around mats. Some pupils link balances with arab springs or forward rolls and others successfully attempt difficult balances such as headstands. By the end of the activity they are successfully linking four or five movements and balances to form a smooth sequence.
111. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils copy the teacher’s movements in the warm-up activity and begin to develop sound balance and physical co-ordination. When developing their own sequence of movements and balances pupils introduce twists and turns, for example when jumping. They understand that sequences have a start and a finish and incorporate this into their sequence. They have sound hand-eye co-ordination, as when using a small ball and tennis racket and catching small balls.
112. A scrutiny of school records over time shows very good progress in swimming. Virtually all pupils who have been at the school for any length of time can swim in excess of 20 metres. Around 80 per cent of pupils take other qualifications, such as Watermanship, which involves them treading water or submerging while swimming. Around 50 per cent of pupils attain their Bronze Survival Award which means that they can swim at least 150 metres and around 25 per cent of all pupils gain the Silver Award.
113. Pupils enjoy physical education. They are responsive to the teachers’ instructions and try hard to develop their sequences and improve their performance. Their behaviour is good and they allow one another to work undisturbed. Pupils are appreciative of the work of others and watch carefully when other pupils demonstrate their movements.
114. Teaching is satisfactory. The teacher has a sound subject knowledge and joins in many of the activities to show pupils what they should be doing. He uses other pupils to demonstrate activities and spread good practice, thereby encouraging others to be more ambitious in their work. The lessons are effectively planned and pupils are given a warm down time at the end of lessons. There is sufficient challenge in the lessons, particularly in the transition from warm-up to sequence development, but vigorous activity is lacking. The teacher’s use of music in the warm-up is good, giving pupils an opportunity to develop rhythm and co-ordination while interpreting the composer’s intentions.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

115. At the end Key Stage 1 the standards achieved meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards achieved are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards were found to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress. They understand that there are different religions and different religious practices. They demonstrate their factual knowledge in discussions about the Hindu, Jewish and Christian festivals and the different places of worship they have visited, such as their own local church, a Hindu temple and a Jewish synagogue. Pupils develop their ideas and increase their understanding of symbolism, beliefs and the cultural importance of religious festivals through visits to places like Bhaktivedanta Manor. A Year 6 pupil was able to explain how pupils were made to feel welcome at this Hindu temple. He described how they

learned about the importance of prayer and the worship of different religious traditions but also discovered many similarities between them.

116. Display evidence and pupils' work scrutiny revealed the breadth of work being covered, such as celebrations and ceremonies, communities and life styles and beliefs and values. Pupils have gained good skills, knowledge and understanding by the end of the key stage.
117. The response of pupils to the subject is very positive. They enjoy talking about their experiences during the visits to different places of worship; and also about visits by religious leaders of different faiths to their school. They are quite mature in their attitude and talk about their experiences and understanding of them.
118. Due to the timing of the inspection no religious education lessons were observed; therefore, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. From the work seen and from discussion with pupils and from teachers' planning, it appears that teachers have good subject knowledge enabling them to teach the content of the scheme of work. Arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are limited to evaluating pupils' project books and reporting progress to parents in the annual report. The co-ordinator is assisted by the religious education governor; together they monitor the subject through looking at project work and teachers' planning. The subject has a high profile throughout the school with staff, governors and parents. Staff and governors have attended training and new sessions are planned when the newly updated local syllabus applies, which is due in June this year. The subject is well resourced and the school makes excellent use of the facilities available in the local community.