

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TEMPLE MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cradley Heath, West Midlands.

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103957

Headteacher: Mrs N Ridge

Reporting inspector: Mr David Carrington  
15414

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 224040  
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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wrights Lane  
Cradley Heath  
West Midlands

Postcode: B64 6RH

Telephone number: 01384 569021

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Tonks

Date of previous inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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			The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Teaching and learning
Mrs Joanne Illingworth 13395	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs Carole Bond 26405	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		English as an additional language	
Mr Rod Bristow 18346	Team inspector	Mathematics	Leadership and management
		Geography	
		Special educational needs	
Mrs Trudy Cotton 3751	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Art and design	
Mr Trevor Neat 20007	Team inspector	Science	
		Physical education	
Ms Fiona Robinson 22182	Team inspector	English	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Temple Meadow Primary School is situated in the heart of the Black Country in Cradley Heath, Sandwell. It draws its pupils from the nearby district although a small number with particular needs come from further away in the borough. Pupils join the school at the start of the year when they reach the age of four and most have below average levels of skill and knowledge at this time. In all, there are 179 boys and 175 girls aged up to eleven, including an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and an above average proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language. There is a higher proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals than is usually found in primary schools. The school strives to make sure that pupils become happy, confident and independent learners who can benefit from all the opportunities given to them.

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

Temple Meadow Primary School is a good school. Because the headteacher has very clear ideas of what she wants the school to be, other staff are given a very good lead in making improvements. There is much evidence to show that the quality of teaching and learning has been boosted well and that this is filtering through to the raising of standards. The staff know that standards in writing could be much better than they are and everyone is determined to raise standards in writing throughout the school. There are a number of other things identified in the report that the school could make even better, but there is much that is already done well. Further improvement will bring the school closer to excellence. In all, the school gives good value for money.

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

- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and key members of staff.
- The quality of teaching is very good and this results in a good quality of learning.
- Pupils are keen to come to school, they behave well and get on well with each other.
- The pupils also develop as very pleasant people with very good understanding of the special qualities in life and the need to do right.
- Pupils get off to a flying start in the nursery and reception classes.
- The school uses its finances very efficiently to make sure that pupils get a good deal from school.

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

- Standards in writing are not high enough.
- Ways of checking how well the pupils are doing and the use made of the information produced from this could be even better than they are.

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

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

Since the last inspection in 1996 there has been a major change in the staff of the school but managers have worked hard to make sure that improvements have been made. The school has made good progress with the four key issues identified last time and has shown that it can continue this improvement in the future. All the staff and the governors are ready for the tasks that lie ahead.

## STANDARDS

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

<i>Performance in:</i>	<i>compared with</i>			
	<i>all schools</i>			<i>similar schools</i>
	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2000</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>mathematics</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>science</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>E*</i>	<i>A*</i>	<i>A*</i>

<b>Key</b>	
<i>very high</i>	<i>A</i>
	<i>*</i>
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
<i>very low</i>	<i>E</i>
	<i>*</i>

*Similar schools are those schools with between 20% and 35% of the pupils entitled to free school meals*

Standards improved much in the 2000 national tests from the position in 1999. This year, pupils at the end of school scored similar marks to pupils in all other schools in English but did better than this in mathematics and reached high standards in science. When these results are compared with those for pupils in similar schools, pupils at Temple Meadow did just as well. The school radically overhauled its teaching of science between 1999 and 2000 and standards increased dramatically as a result. Standards also improved at the end of the infants. The results in writing were not high enough for seven and eleven year old pupils.

During the inspection it became very clear that pupils are making steady progress and that the standard of work completed is similar to that found in other schools. Because the quality of teaching of literacy and numeracy is improving, gains are being made in these subjects, but the school knows that it still has much to do to improve the weaknesses in writing. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning because the support they are given is well focused. Those who speak English as an additional language learn as well as other pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they concentrate well in lessons. This means they benefit from the activities they take part in.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The quality of behaviour has improved in recent years and the school is a settled place of work and play. The one or two pupils who are distracted more easily than the rest are well dealt with by the staff. Three pupils were excluded from school last year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well with each other and they show good levels of independence and responsibility in their work. They are very pleasant people to talk to.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The level of attendance is below that found in most schools though the school is working hard to close the small gap that remains.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors saw 94 lessons during their time in school. Of these, about three-quarters were taught well with a quarter showing very good or excellent teaching. The rest were taught soundly and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In all, the proportion of good or better teaching seen was greater than is usually found and inspectors judge that teaching is very good overall.

Teaching is good in English and mathematics overall and is good for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also taught well. The strengths of teaching include the methods used, discipline and control, the use of time and resources, teaching of basic skills and the use of homework. Aspects for improvement are the use of marking to show pupils how they can improve and the amount of challenge in the work for high attaining pupils.

Because teaching is so good, pupils' learning is very good too. Pupils work hard, they concentrate well and they make steady progress from day one in school to the end of Year 6.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. On the whole, pupils learn about the things they should. However, there is not yet enough use of computers to support learning in all subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and classroom assistants give these pupils good support and they make good progress. Some pupils with particular needs make very good progress indeed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress and keep up well with others in the class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. One of the school's great strengths is in the way it helps pupils to understand and enjoy the special things in life and the works of famous artists, writers and musicians. It also helps them to work very well with other people and to act sensibly when making difficult choices.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. All staff value the children and take good care of them. Ways to check how well pupils are doing have improved recently, though there are still some things to be done to make sure that the right targets for attainment are set and tracked properly at all times.
Partnership with parents and carers	Satisfactory. The school has worked hard to build a partnership with parents, but not all of them join in. However, parents think a lot of the school and they are pleased that their children go there.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher is very successful in setting up systems that make sure that what has to be done, is done. She motivates the staff very well and other key managers join with her in the very smooth running of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors know what is happening in school and what still needs to be done. They take good steps to make sure that the school gives parents and pupils best value in what it does.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. This is an aspect of school management that is improving steadily. There are still a number of things to do to make sure that everyone in school has a full role in checking that Temple Meadow is as good as the best schools in the country.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school's budget is looked after very carefully and decisions on spending are not made lightly. Money and other resources are used to good effect for the benefit of the pupils.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• Pupils make good progress.</li> <li>• The staff expect the best of the pupils.</li> <li>• The children become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• They feel at ease when talking about problems or concerns.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are not enough activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

On the whole, inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. They also judge that there are enough activities outside lessons.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Because the quality of education is good in school, pupils make good progress from class to class and standards are improving. In the past there was considerable variation in standards from year to year, especially at the end of school. Changes made to the curriculum, teaching and learning have filtered through to standards and this year the results of the standardised assessment tests (SATs) are the best they have been for a number of years.
2. In 2000, eleven year old pupils did particularly well in science, where their results could not be bettered, since every pupil reached the expected standard at least. This means that the school's science results at the end of Year 6 are amongst the top five per cent in the land. This is a total turnaround since 1999 when they were amongst the lowest five per cent. Standards in the Year 6 mathematics SATs were better than found in most other schools, and in English pupils matched the standards found nationally. In both cases there was a marked improvement on the situation found in 1999. Standards show the same pattern when the results are set against those found in schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (between 20% and 35%).
3. Standards in the SATs for seven year old pupils in 2000 were also better overall than in previous years. The exception was in writing, where standards were too low. There is also evidence of below average standards in writing in the English SATs for eleven year old pupils. The SATs results from the last four years show some variation in the standards produced by boys and girls. The school identified this trend some time ago and has taken some effective steps to even out standards. During the inspection there was little difference in the work of boys and girls and teachers were seen to use a range of resources chosen carefully to appeal to boys as much as the girls.
4. These standards are particularly good because pupils start in the nursery with below average levels of skill and knowledge. The work is well planned in the Foundation Stage and teachers and other staff ensure that the children are set tasks that help them make good progress in all six aspects of their work. This stands them in good stead for work in the infant classes.
5. When looking at samples of pupils' work, and listening to readers from all classes, a common comment by inspectors was that skills and knowledge are built well, especially in reading, mathematics and science. All groups of pupils make good gains in their learning, though the very highest attainers are sometimes capable of even better things. The work in books shows consistent and effective teaching of basic skills and a matching rate of progress. Inspectors judge that standards in all subjects are satisfactory by the age of seven and eleven and that pupils make good progress from the below average level of skill and knowledge that they have when they start in the nursery. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. Some pupils with physical special needs and those with statements make very good progress indeed because of the careful tracking of their work.
6. The school sets appropriate and challenging targets for improvement of standards each year and has met these with considerable success. However, managers are not complacent and targets are kept under close review and revised upwards where necessary in order to boost standards even more.
7. There is much evidence to show that there has been a major improvement in the quality of teaching in recent months. This year there are a number of teachers new to the school and they show very good potential as highly effective teachers. The impact of this improved teaching is to be seen in the work completed this term. This is of better quality than in the terms before. Inspectors judge that because progress is good, the standards achieved by the current Year 2 and 6 classes in the end of the year tests will be at least as good as those of pupils in the parallel classes in May 2000. Furthermore, standards in writing are likely to be much better than before.
8. Temple Meadow Primary School is raising standards effectively. Attainment in design and technology and history is above that expected for pupils aged eleven and standards are rising in other subjects. There are

still one or two things to sort out, and these are listed later under the heading of *What the school should do to improve* (page 18), however, the prospects for even more improvement to standards is good.

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

9. The findings of this inspection reflect the positive judgements of the previous report. The good teaching and harmonious relationships found at all levels, encourage pupils to work well together and to make informed choices about their actions and the impact they have on others. Pupils are very keen to come to school and enjoy their learning.
10. The school has high expectations of how pupils work and learn together and so standards of behaviour are good. This in turn influences the happy atmosphere found in and around the school. Pupils are caring and respect other people's feelings and beliefs. The school has a good reputation for tolerance and racial harmony. There is evidence of mutual respect in lessons: pupils feel confident enough to talk about their personal beliefs and family values. They are beginning to develop a greater awareness of life in a wider world. Boys and girls work equally well and pupils with special needs are motivated to do their best.
11. Pupils are polite and confident in their discussions with visitors and listen with interest in lessons. Parents are pleased their children enjoy coming to school and appreciate how well they are learning and behaving. In all year groups pupils show initiative and are willing to take responsibility. Younger pupils take care of their own personal property, help tidy away and share equipment amicably. As a matter of course, monitors fulfil their roles and pupils with difficulty with their behaviour respond well to extra responsibility in the information and communications technology suite. Three pupils were excluded from school during 1999-2000.
12. The school monitors attendance carefully. A pattern of short and extended holidays, taken in term time, leads to below average levels, though they are not far short of the national average. The school ensures all parents are aware of this. Links with the Educational Welfare Service also aim to reduce levels of absence. Lessons start on time each morning and not many pupils are late for the start of school.

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

13. It is obvious from all the available evidence that pupils are very well taught at Temple Meadow Primary School and that this has a major impact on the rate at which they learn. Inspectors often commented during the week of their visit that teaching was lively, motivating and captivating and they looked forward to their lesson observations. Pupils get a very good deal in lessons and this enables them to do well. Overall, this represents good improvement since the school's last inspection.
14. During the inspection week, ninety-four lessons or part lessons were observed. There was no unsatisfactory teaching as all teachers, whatever their experience, have the craft of teaching successfully in practice and most were observed to teach well or very well on a good number of occasions. Nearly three quarters of all lessons observed were of good or better teaching quality, a proportion that is much better than is usually found. In a quarter of the lessons very good teaching quality was seen, including a small number where teaching was second to none. This pattern of teaching is evidence of the good rate of improvement made to teaching skill since the last inspection.
15. Pupils in all parts of the school experience the same very good teaching. From the first days in the nursery to the last days of Year 6 it is clear that teaching varies little. Pupils make good progress in all parts of the school and on the whole, it does not matter which of the two classes in any one year they join, as there is good consistency in every year. This pattern of teaching is seen in most subjects, especially in English and mathematics, though it is evident that alterations made to teaching in these two subjects in the last couple of years have had major impact. The teaching of English was not as effective in the past, as shown by the standards achieved, but today, things are better and pupils benefit from the more focused teaching in the subject. Writing standards throughout the school are the current priority for improvement. Standards in the 2000 SATs have risen well in relation to the situation in school in 1999.

16. In a sense, the very good quality of teaching seen by inspectors is a challenge for the school. The inspection took place early in the school year and a fairly large proportion of teachers are new to the school. These factors make monitoring of teaching quality a key priority in order to build on strengths and maintain the things already done well or very well. Not every subject coordinator has been directly involved in the formal observation of other teaching and although coordinators' awareness of teaching is good, there is room for enhancement. School managers have earmarked teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in information and communication technology as a priority for development.
17. Because the quality of teaching is of such very good quality, there are few weaknesses. The marking of pupils' work could be focused much more on identifying ways in which the pupils can improve their work and there could be rather more consistency in setting and sharing targets for individuals and groups of pupils. There is some very good practice in both of these aspects of teaching and the school has good models to build on. In a number of lessons it was evident that the highest attainers were not set work to tax them enough. Their work held their interest but it did not always go the extra mile and provoke their imagination or initiative to the full. Teachers' expectations of such gifted pupils could be higher and more demanded of them in the work set.
18. Despite these relative shortcomings, there are far more strengths to teaching. The homework programme in school is a particular instance of where the school is a step or more ahead of most other schools. This programme is very well planned, regular and demanding. It is also very well matched to the particular needs of different attainment groups. What really make the lessons come alive are the teaching methods used. Teachers have polished a wide range of methods that include very clear explanation, very well targeted questioning to support, extend and assess learning, practical activity that involves all pupils actively in order to boost independence and initiative and well judged closing sessions that round-off the learning most effectively.
19. A visit to any classroom during a lesson shows that pupils are given every opportunity to succeed. Teachers value their pupils very much and this results in a friendly, enthusiastic response and much hard work. The overall quality of learning is good and some is very good indeed. Many lessons are hives of industry where humour and reflection confirm pupils' motivation and interest. Teachers are very good at involving pupils almost as one of the family, and so the sense of being immersed in, and central to the learning is obvious. Pupils respond well to such opportunities and they develop a maturity of learning that is based on independence and responsibility. Teachers take great pains to ensure that pupils have ample opportunity to talk about their work and to judge their own successes. One example that caught the imagination of the whole inspection team is the *thumbs up* method for pupils to show their own knowledge and understanding. Even very young pupils can cope with this system of self-assessment and their thoughtfulness when weighing up their own response is very evident.
20. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language share the benefits of very good teaching. The teachers know the pupils with special needs well; value their contributions; and plan activities to match their needs. Where additional support staff is available to pupils, it is used effectively and pupils make good progress. Teachers maintain detailed records of the gains in skills, knowledge and understanding and then set targets for improvement. Teachers value the contributions of all pupils, and are effective role models enhancing pupil self esteem. These pupils revel in their successes. 'I can do it Miss!'
21. The sense of purpose and direction in lessons is very much a reflection of the overall ethos of the school. Teaching is a central strength of the school and its impact on learning is filtering through well to standards.

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

22. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall in curriculum provision since the last inspection in 1996. Teachers have worked hard to implement successfully the national initiatives for teaching literacy and numeracy and to adapt the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage to follow the new national guidelines. There is a good balance in children's curricular experiences. The comprehensive planning and teaching of the Foundation Stage curriculum is a strength in the school, giving children a good start to their education. The development of the new Information and communication technology (ICT) suite in the main school is also a positive aspect of provision for learning, although this has still to be matched by a fuller development of ICT across the curriculum. Standards are now rising in the core subjects as the impact of these steady improvements begins to take effect.
23. The recent move to teach pupils in ability sets is making an important contribution to improving standards. Teachers have been fully committed to the implementation of the strategies for literacy and numeracy, which has caused provision for some other subjects to take a lower profile. There is some variation in the time allowed for subjects and personal and health education at present, but the school has earmarked the breadth and balance of the whole curriculum for an amendment review later this academic year to make sure the new National Curriculum is delivered in full.
24. Statutory curricular requirements are nevertheless met for all subjects including religious education. Care is taken in whole school planning to ensure that systematic progress is made by all pupils as they work through the curriculum in core subjects, but this is not yet consistent enough in practice, particularly in the teaching of some aspects of writing. The school has implemented a rigorous monitoring procedure to ensure that curriculum issues are identified and discussed at weekly meetings held in each phase of the school. This is providing an effective mechanism for alerting senior staff to curricular needs, and ensuring that there is whole staff contribution to appropriate development of the curriculum.
25. Underpinning the school's curricular success is the very good provision for personal education. All pupils feel valued and confident throughout their school life. Personal education is effectively developed through the whole curriculum. Some aspects are well supported by specific provision for collective worship and others, for example health issues, by the themes that run through science. The organisation of the school day to include sessions of structured play for all year groups gives an effective boost to pupils' learning by its stimulating impact. There are some opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school, for instance by collecting registers and organising milk distribution, and pupils' ability to manage their own learning and to make decisions for themselves is well developed. This is particularly so for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language.
26. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, both in the lessons and in other aspects of school life. The school's aim to create confident, happy, independent and well-adjusted children is well achieved. In-class collective worship sessions are well planned and cover a wide range of issues, giving pupils opportunities to reflect on ideas and beliefs. As examples, reception children are given a moment to think about creation and to reflect upon belief in stories, and pupils in Year 4 experience a moment of spiritual reflection as music is played during their class assembly. Spiritual development is fostered well through several opportunities to reflect on key thoughts and questions about creation. The school itself is aesthetically pleasing beautiful pictures hang in the hall, classrooms and corridors. There is enrichment through the many artefacts on display and enrichment through the environment.
27. The school promotes its clear moral code. The difference between right and wrong is taught from the moment the children enter school and is well understood. Pupils learn to be honest, tell the truth, show a great respect and have considerable thought for their own and others property. Social skills are well developed, both in lessons through collaborative working and in the programme of extra curricular activities, which the school offers. The school is a safe, orderly and happy community.
28. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural traditions other than their own in English, art, music, history, geography and religious education. There has been a significant improvement in the quality and range of multicultural education since the last inspection, through the work of famous artists, writers

and musicians. There are also many opportunities for pupils to take part in activities that draw on and celebrate their own cultural traditions.

29. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all school activities and are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum. The quality of individual education plans is good and teachers and other staff make sure these pupils follow a programme of work that is well matched to their needs. There is also good support for pupils overall who speak English as an additional language and they make good progress in their learning.
30. Some parents are concerned that there are not enough activities outside lessons, but inspectors judge that pupils' learning is satisfactorily supported by the provision of a range of after-school clubs. These include sports clubs and inter-school matches for mixed groups of boys and girls, as well as arts, music and dance activities.
31. All pupils have the same opportunity to take part in all aspects of school life. The school has a good reputation for tolerance and respect of others within the wider community. Pupils learn to make choices in their life and the school provides the building blocks.

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

32. At the time of the last inspection the school provided a safe and secure environment for its pupils and had clear and effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, though there were weaknesses and inconsistencies in the assessment of pupils' progress. The inspection report therefore identified assessment as a key issue for action.
33. There has been good progress with improvement to assessment during the last four years. The school has taken the recommendations of the last report seriously and has significantly improved its procedures for checking how well children are doing academically. This work is not yet complete, and the use of assessment to raise attainment is still an aspect for continuing improvement. In other areas the school has maintained the high standards which were evident at the time of the last inspection. It continues to take good care of its pupils, and to give them support which meets their needs and promotes both their academic progress and general well being.
34. The school has put in place good arrangements for child protection and there is also good provision for pupils' health and safety. Children are well cared for from their first days in school. There are good arrangements for introducing new pupils to the nursery unit with the result that they settle in quickly and make good progress. As they grow older they are taught how to look after themselves through the school's programme of health education. Pupils in year 6 are prepared well for their transfer to secondary education. There is good liaison with receiving schools over pupils' participation in induction events.
35. The school has good systems for promoting pupils' attendance. Registrations and reporting procedures comply with legal requirements and members of staff follow up unexplained absences. The school's aspirations regarding attendance are appropriately high. It recently set a target rate of 95%, which it seeks to achieve by close monitoring and rewards for good attendance. Although this figure has not yet been reached, the policy has been effective in raising levels of attendance.
36. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very successful. The school has high expectations, and via its code of conduct and anti bullying policy ensures that pupils understand what is required of them. They know that they are expected to be polite, considerate and to work hard. They also know that bullying and aggression are unacceptable. High expectations are matched by effective practical measures to promote high standards. There is an appropriate formal system of rewards for achievements, and teachers also make good use of informal measures, such as praise for hard work in lessons. The school has adopted a policy of assertive discipline. Members of staff have received good training in how to use it and successfully manage the behaviour of some difficult pupils.
37. The positive features in provision for assessment that were evident four years ago have been sustained and developed. The school continues to employ baseline assessment in the nursery unit, and has already reorganised its records to take account of the new Foundation Stage curriculum. At the same time the school has taken action to address the weaknesses identified by the previous inspection. It has reviewed its

assessment procedures and has introduced improvements including gathering together much information on pupils' attainment in core subjects, though provision is more variable in the foundation subjects. Despite these aspects for development, the school's assessment procedures are good overall and help to raise levels of attainment.

38. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. Formal arrangements are thorough in the nursery unit where staff keep comprehensive records on children's development and give them very good support. The personal development of pupils in other year groups is well monitored through the system of "intervention sheets". This is effectively complemented by informal methods of assessing progress. Members of staff know children well as individuals, have good relations with them, and are sensitive to their needs. They are quickly aware of any pupil who is not doing well and are able to provide appropriate support. The quality of academic guidance is good in lessons where teachers as a matter of course tell pupils how they are doing and advise them on how to improve. However, formal support for academic progress is less well developed. Currently the school does not have a system of target setting that gives each pupil targets for improvement.
39. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all statutory requirements are met. The level of care and support given by teaching and non-teaching staff is of the highest standard and is a strength of the school. The strategy to involve teaching, non-teaching staff and visiting physiotherapist in the development of fine and gross motor skills for pupils with statements of need on a regular weekly basis is excellent.

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

40. The last inspection report described the school as having a positive and open partnership with parents. The school has continued to develop its links with parents and has increased its efforts to get parents more involved in their children's learning. The most recent inspection questionnaire shows that the school is making good progress in this area. Eighty seven percent of those who sent in replies said that their children get the right amount of work to do at home. Most parents are strongly supportive of the school. There are very high rates of approval for the quality of teaching, the progress that pupils make, and the way in which they are helped to become mature and responsible. As in 1996, a number of parents think that extra-curricular activities are inadequate, but this is now the only issue which causes a significant amount of dissatisfaction. The present inspection team judges that the school makes satisfactory provision for activities outside lessons.
41. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory overall, with some good features. The school prospectus and annual report of the governing body meet legal requirements. The homework pack is major strength of the school's provision, containing as it does very good guidelines on how parents can support their children's learning. Pupils' homework diaries and reading records act as a useful day-to-day line of communication between home and school and a regular source of information on what children are learning. However, the annual written reports do not include ICT as a separate subject or specific targets for improvement.
42. The school finds its partnership with parents and carers a challenge but it strives hard to support parents and seeks ways to help them to help their children. It has carried out its own survey of parental views and ideas, put in place a home/school contract and run computer courses for parents. As a result it has managed to create a satisfactory partnership with pupils' families. Overall, parents make a positive contribution to the life of the school and help to raise levels of attainment. Parents want their children to be successful and they take an interest in their progress. Parental attendance at consultation evenings and school events such as plays and concerts is good. A significant percentage of parents are involved directly with their children's learning at home and this supports pupils' achievement successfully.

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

43. Leadership is very good and the governing body, headteacher and staff have a shared vision for raising standards. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is a driving force in moving the school forward carrying out her duties in a determined and effective manner. Teaching and learning is monitored rigorously

so that strengths are developed consistently and areas for development are built upon. Consistency in the quality of teaching is having a positive impact upon the climate for learning. The headteacher and co-ordinators are aware of the need to continue to raise standards particularly in the quality of writing across the curriculum and are working hard to make improvements.

44. The head teacher and key managers have put much well-focused effort into the analysis of pupils' performance. This enables staff to set meaningful targets for learning and to track behaviour, personal and social development and overall achievement well. Managers evaluate and review the targets set at regular intervals and adjust them carefully in the light of this process. The school's overall targets for attainment in the SATs have been achieved well and these are revised well to reflect the value the school intends to add to all pupils' achievement.
45. Governors are well informed about the curriculum. In addition to reports from the headteacher and other senior staff, regular governor visits are arranged and reports are received. The overview of the governing body is good and it is well placed to challenge the school in shaping its future direction by developing a policy for performance management by the end of this year. Members are involved in the school's budgeting process, and are consulted at all levels of the strategic planning. The annual report to parents meets statutory requirements and includes information concerning the achievements of the school when compared both with national averages, and with those of schools of a similar nature.
46. Clear roles are established for the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team. The management system moves the school forward with phase co-ordinators taking an effective role in whole school and staff development. Some non-core subjects have been managed on a low maintenance basis, and recently established coordinators for these subjects have yet to have full opportunity to show all of their management strengths. Phase leaders and co-ordinators review planning efficiently and produce good action plans before setting targets for improvement. However, their role is not fully developed. There are not enough opportunities for them to contribute to the raising of standards by direct monitoring and evaluating good practice in teaching and learning.
47. The management of special educational needs continues to be a strength of the school. The co-ordinator maintains the register of pupils for special educational needs efficiently and contributes effectively to the very good level of provision, effective support and the good progress that is made by pupils. Strengths and weaknesses are identified at an early stage, recorded using new technology, and then analysed so those targets are set which are realistic and manageable. Individual educational plans are reviewed regularly, and parents are fully involved and informed at all stages. Clearly structured materials are making a significant impact on the quality of learning for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those receiving additional literacy support.
48. There are sufficient, appropriately qualified, staff to meet the needs of pupils and teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The staffing provision for children in the Foundation Stage is of very good quality. The provision for in-service training is generally good and recent training in curriculum planning is having a significant impact on teaching quality. Senior staff have effectively delegated powers to share good practice in their commitment to raising standards, and to monitor curriculum initiatives in specific phases.
49. The accommodation is adequate for all requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has made the best of the Victorian building, with elegant Victorian furnishings to enhance the fully carpeted interior. Although children in the Foundation Stage have daily sessions of outdoor play, the area set aside for this is not ideal. Hard and grassed areas are available to children in the Nursery, but the location and slope give limited opportunities to provide appropriate equipment for the development of all physical and spatial skills. Learning resources are generally satisfactory, including the very good ICT suite.
50. The school makes very good use of the resources it has. It uses the money available very carefully and very effectively to improve the standards that pupils achieve and the quality of children's life at school. Spending is directed appropriately to help to bring about those things that have been agreed will best help to improve pupils' achievements. Special grants and extra funding, such as that for special educational needs, are spent efficiently. Senior managers and governors benefit greatly from the support of the school's finance officer who supplies them with high quality information. The governing body is actively involved in

drawing up the budget, and monitors spending well through the work of its finance committee. The school is good at taking advantage of opportunities to save money. This was shown when it acted quickly to bid for extra funding to get more computer equipment. The current surplus in the budget is earmarked carefully to maintain the quality of teaching and other support for all pupils in the school.

51. Managers are aware of the need to make sure that the school gets good value from its spending. For example, if money is used to provide extra support for a particular group of pupils, after a while it checks to see whether their work has improved. Parents and pupils are asked about important decisions, such as how a piece of land bought by the school might be used, and quotes are sought for work to be done or goods to be bought. High quality, clear and concise financial records are kept, and the school's clerical staff work very effectively with the headteacher to ensure that the school runs efficiently from day to day. New technologies are exploited well, especially in assessing pupils' achievements through the use of the *Assessment Manager* software, though this remains an area that the school intends to develop even more.

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

52. The school has had good success with improvement since the last inspection and staff are determined to do even better in the future. The school improvement plan emphasises several things that could be even better than they are. Inspectors do not disagree with this list and therefore judge that the school should focus future efforts on the following things:

### **1. Improve standards in writing throughout the school.**

By:

- Widening the range of writing.
- Ensuring that writing is well developed across the curriculum.
- Checking that there is a closer match of tasks to the interests of both boys and girls
- Widening and improving the role of ICT in the development of writing
- Introducing a more consistent approach to handwriting.

(See paragraphs 3, 24, 60, 66, 73, 74 and 106)

### **2. Continue to make improvements to assessment.**

By:

- Making sure that there is consistency in assessment between classes.
- Developing a rigorous system of assessment in all foundation subjects.
- Drawing all staff into the process of tracking progress.
- Setting and sharing targets for learning with pupils in lessons and reviewing them at the end of the session.
- Using comments when marking to show pupils how they can improve their work
- Refining the information on progress and ways to improve given to parents to help them help their children.
- Continuing the development work to use new technologies to support the tracking of pupils' performance.

(See paragraphs 33, 37, 51, 95, 98, 103, 109, 115, 119 and 123)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	20	52	26	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	354
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		98

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	70

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	41

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	27	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	22
	Girls	21	20	23
	Total	38	37	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (61)	65 (66)	79 (80)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (80)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	18
	Girls	21	15	17
	Total	42	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (57)	61 (73)	61 (63)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	21	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	21
	Girls	20	19	24
	Total	35	35	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (52)	78 (55)	100 (55)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	20
	Girls	19	17	22
	Total	33	33	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (52)	73 (45)	93 (58)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	1
Pakistani	16
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	1
White	261
Any other minority ethnic group	12

*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	4	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)	19.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	23.6

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

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	119

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.0

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.7
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1998-9
	£
Total income	628 970
Total expenditure	626 827
Expenditure per pupil	1 650
Balance brought forward from previous year	56 730
Balance carried forward to next year	58 873

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	54

**Responses (percentage of answers in each category):**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My Child likes school	59	39	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	63	35	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good	43	46	7	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	34	53	9	4	0
The teaching is good	56	44	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	44	52	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	64	30	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	63	31	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents	39	46	13	0	2
The school is well led and managed	63	28	6	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	63	33	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	33	41	19	6	2

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

54. The quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. It has improved greatly since the last inspection in 1996, giving children a very good start to their learning. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below national average, but children make rapid progress, particularly in the key areas of language development and social skills. The immediate focus on appropriately structured experiences through the system of 'plan, do and review' enables all children to take full advantage of the learning opportunities. Very good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes is having a significant impact on the quality of provision, as children follow the 'stepping stones' detailed in national guidance on early learning goals. Most children will achieve these goals by the time they move to Year 1, and many will exceed them in the areas of speaking and listening and personal development.
55. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is within the nursery and two reception classes. At the time of the inspection, very few reception age children had reached their fifth birthday, and although most nursery children were still aged three, over half had a term's part-time experience at the school. The nursery admits children immediately after their third birthday whenever possible, and this practice provides an appropriate system for ensuring that there is always a group of children in the nursery with experience of routines and organisation. This has a beneficial effect on the security of newly admitted children and is a contributory factor in enabling children to achieve highly in the area of personal development. Parents are invited to attend with their children prior to admission to the nursery, and reception children are gradually introduced to full-time education in the September following their fourth birthday. Induction processes are successful, enabling all children to appear confident and secure early in the term. Local authority assessment profiles of attainment are undertaken for all Foundation Stage children after a few weeks, but had not been completed for the new intake at the time of the inspection. The inspection findings are that attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, but that children make sufficiently good progress during the early years for attainment at the end of the reception year to be similar to that in other schools.

#### *Personal, social and emotional development*

56. Children's development in this area is very good. The majority of children in the Foundation stage achieve the early learning goals by the age of five and many will exceed it. Very good quality teaching ensures that children settle down quickly to the planned learning routine, happy to be in school and eager to learn. They know the importance of classroom routines such as lining up, tidying away properly and listening quietly to the teacher and each other during the important 'circle times'. Their positive approach to activities encourages them to explore new learning with concentration and perseverance, and to ask questions of interested adults. They take turns easily, sometimes without direct guidance, and help each other over simple routines such as fixing tracing paper appropriately to pictures. The nursery nurses and teachers place great emphasis on the development of independence and self-esteem. As a result the children respond confidently to the new challenges presented. The children are well behaved, and are able to follow and build on instructions from adults. Children treat equipment with respect and are able to work independently when required, such as in the writing corner or when painting. Relationships with each other and with adults are very good, although at times nursery children are not made sufficiently aware of the impact of their behaviour on others. This is particularly so outside, when the many wheeled toys are in use in a cramped area.
57. Teaching in personal, social and emotional development is otherwise very good. The well-structured activities, effective language development opportunities and consistent approach by all adults contribute very successfully to children's progress. There is an excitement to the pace of lessons, creating an air of expectancy throughout every class. Children are rarely disappointed by the quality of the learning they then experience. Children with special educational needs are effectively encouraged to participate in this early learning goal, enabling them to make good progress.

#### *Communication, language and literacy*

58. In both the nursery and reception classes the children have very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and make good progress as a result. The regular ‘circle times’ enable children to develop a clear understanding of the intended learning for that session, and to talk about their planned activity in a way that will shape their thinking. Many children have immature speech on admission, and a few find it difficult to communicate in sentences. There is a small group of children for whom English is an additional language, and they are given specific teacher support in developing skills in speaking English. Teachers and nursery nurses are good role models for encouraging children to talk purposefully about their chosen task, and to report back to the class about their success. Skilful questioning also helps children to evaluate their learning and think about the next steps, as reception children did when encouraged to tell others of the difficulty in forming some of the letters in their name. Adults show that they value children’s efforts in communicating, but at times they dominate the conversation too much. Reluctant speakers in the reception class use the toy telephone effectively. All children enjoy regular opportunities for singing rhymes and listening to stories, and their ability to follow instructions eagerly is excellent.
59. Children in both classes show a lively interest in books, sharing them appropriately with adults and each other. They know that print tells the story, and how to use pictures for information. Reception class children are able to recognise some letters by sound and name, and to identify a few characters and key words from the reading scheme. Higher attaining children, however, show below average progress in early reading skills at this stage in reception.
60. There are good opportunities for children to explore writing and drawing. Supplies of paper, pens, crayons and pencils are available and children readily use them. For example, nursery children needed to write a ‘shopping list’ for the policeman’s party, and reception children copied letters and numerals at the painting easels. Several children can write their own names unaided – nursery children are encouraged to attempt this from the start, and most show good control and a mature pencil grip. Skills in writing improve during the Foundation Stage, but are below what is expected for some of the children.

#### *Mathematical development*

61. There is an improvement in this early learning goal since the last inspection. Reception children enjoy counting to ten together and some can record numbers beyond that. They listen well to a child recounting his success in drawing numerals in the sand. Nursery children are beginning to count on their fingers in number rhymes, but their understanding of number value is at an early stage. Number language is emphasised in children’s planning - *Get three things from the dolls’ house* - and the language of shape such as ‘circle’ is used frequently. There are regular opportunities for children in the reception class to develop their mathematical thinking independently, with effective and targeted support from the teacher when required. Nursery children practise sequencing and pattern making with bead threading and painting activities, and in both classes children develop understanding through a good range of activities, for example, sorting crayons into colours, water and sand play. The more mature learners in reception have acquired the language of ‘time’ with words like ‘o’clock’, ‘hands’ and ‘face’, and are developing an awareness of addition through simple problem-solving such as ‘one more’. Good teaching and adult intervention promotes the development of mathematical understanding. By the end of the reception year most children achieve the early learning goals in this area and they make good progress in nursery and reception classes.

#### *Knowledge and Understanding of the World*

62. Experiences prior to coming into the nursery are often limited, but children make satisfactory progress in this early learning goal because teaching quality is good. Early topics about ‘Ourselves’ encourage children to talk about their families and their experiences at home, and to explore change in their environment. They investigate objects and materials using all their senses, such as listening to and making quiet and loud musical sounds, exploring the ‘feely bag’ and using the magnifying glasses to look at familiar objects. Both classes have a good range of construction toys that enable children to develop appropriate technological skills. There is great emphasis in teachers’ planning on the environment. This is neatly threaded through all topics so that every opportunity is taken for children to take note of the world around them, and to consider why things happen and how things work. When the reception class was outside ‘painting’ the patio floor with rollers, brushes and water, they noticed how

slowly the paving slabs dried, and how quickly water ran down the slope to the fence. Some expressed surprise that water ran down the walls before disappearing quickly into the brickwork. Children are developing early mouse skills and keyboard awareness as they become familiar with computers, but most need adult support to make any progress. Reception class children enjoy using tape recorders in the book corner.

#### *Physical development*

63. Children have daily opportunities to play outside with a range of appropriate toys and equipment. They can run, jump and hop, and are developing good throwing and catching skills in their structured play sessions with their teachers. The imaginative development of these play sessions, including ring games and role play, has been a major factor in helping the children make good progress in most areas of their physical development. Good teaching in both classes enables children to practise a range of movements that develop co-ordination and confidence well. The children show increasing understanding of how their bodies move. There are easily accessible activities such as pegboards and construction toys for developing hand co-ordination. The outdoor area provided for the nursery is unsatisfactory, however. It is sloping, uninspiring and too small for a large group of children to use appropriately. Nearby storage areas are sufficient for wheeled toys and some small equipment, but children's opportunities to deal with challenging climbing and balancing activities are limited.

#### *Creative development*

64. Attainment in this early learning goal is average by the time children move to Year 1. Children start with a low level of skill when they enter nursery and make satisfactory progress throughout nursery and reception years. In the nursery class children create collages using interesting materials such as feathers, leaves and autumn fruits which they bring in from home to add to the attractive wall display. They develop sound cutting and sticking skills. They use modelling material to roll, stretch, squeeze and shape, and show independence in their selection of tools. There is satisfactory provision for children to develop a sound sense of colour, and opportunities are made for children to learn the effects of mixing colours. The regular use of small world activities enables children to explore space and form as they build stories into their play routines. Nursery children enjoy singing a range of nursery rhymes, giving children with special educational needs a chance to shine as they imitate the actions. Children engage in delightful sequences of spontaneous play in the home corner, with effective adult intervention to extend and deepen their learning. Good opportunities are provided for children to use their imagination and extend language skills in these sessions.
65. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The two nursery nurses who teach the nursery children work very effectively as a team, leading the activities for their own groups during 'circle times', but sharing well the support and guidance needed for the wide range of appropriate and interesting activities they provide to promote and encourage learning. They involve the support staff well, particularly in managing behaviour issues, so that children have maximum benefit from their nursery sessions. The two teachers in the reception classes have also developed a very effective routine. Their thorough planning and highly organised use of time ensures that children waste nothing of their school day. All the adults in both classes interact very well with the children. They have high expectations and use praise and encouragement to good effect. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated tasks, culminating in children's review sessions which so effectively reinforce learning. The very good use of resources enables children to work independently. The staff have a thorough knowledge of the early learning goals, planning lessons which effectively challenge children's learning. Assessment information is used well to identify specific learning needs for individual children and groups, and to contribute to future planning. Indoor accommodation for both classes is very spacious and well organised, offering experiences in all six areas of the early learning goals, but outdoor play areas are too limited for satisfactory development for all Foundation Stage children.

#### **ENGLISH**

66. Standards improved much in the 2000 national tests from the position in 1999. This year eleven year-old pupils scored similar marks to pupils in all other schools in English, and, when these results were compared with those for pupils in similar schools, pupils at Temple Meadow did just as well. Standards

also improved in English at age seven, though the results in writing were not high enough for seven and eleven year old pupils.

67. During the inspection it was evident that pupils are making good progress and that the standard of work completed is similar to that found in other schools. Gains are being made in English because the quality of teaching literacy is improving, but the school knows that it still has much to do to improve the weaknesses in writing. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in learning because the support they are given is well focused. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in their learning.
68. On entry to school attainment in language, literacy and communication is well below average, but in infant classes pupils achieve well and make good progress with their learning, especially with their basic skills in literacy. Learning is also good for junior pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
69. Classes are set for literacy lessons throughout the juniors and this is improving pupils' progress particularly in reading, speaking and listening and spelling. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy consistently in each year group. It is successful in all classes and in the infants teachers work confidently to the framework for class and guided group work. Plenary sessions (feedback time) are used successfully across the whole school to share and consolidate learning. Junior teachers plan very effectively to national literacy guidelines. The quality of planning is very good and has improved throughout the school. Planning sessions are used successfully by teachers across the school to share and consolidate learning.
70. Standards in listening are good throughout the school. Pupils listen attentively and are very interested in what other pupils say. Speaking skills are average. In the infants pupils share ideas and answer questions fully. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were keen to given instructions for writing a list explaining how to make Victorian games. Very good questioning by the teachers ensures that all pupils are drawn into the subject being studied and they benefit from being given good opportunities to contribute their own ideas. Pupils also respond well to the friendly and encouraging atmosphere created by teachers at both key stages. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are developing greater competency with the spoken word. In Year 5, pupils conduct lively debates as to why Boudicca revolted against the Romans. By the end of school they clearly express their own points of view. Throughout the school the use of standard English is encouraged by teachers, who guide learning in a sensitive manner.
71. Reading standards are average by the end of Year 2. Teachers use every opportunity to use and develop pupils' reading skills across the curriculum. Pupils enjoy exploring stories and talking about what might happen next. More able pupils read books that challenge their skills, while pupils with difficulties with reading are well supported individually. Pupils are eager to blend sounds and skills with phonics and using sight words are well developed. All enjoy reading and regularly take books home.
72. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is average and good progress is made in reading. The skills needed to read with deeper understanding are being taught at an appropriate level in whole class and guided group reading time. For example Year 5 pupils read expressively and are keen to identify the features of recounted text. They make good progress with their reading in Year 6 as they 'skim' and 'scan' for information about the 'Great Fire of London' and learn to read at greater speed. Pupils have access to a wide range of books, which ensure that there is breadth and progression in learning, particularly for the more able readers.
73. Writing standards are below average in the infant classes. Younger pupils experiment with their early writing skills. They develop greater control over letter shape and size and are beginning to spell everyday words correctly. By seven, pupils are beginning to write for a range of different purposes, including stories, letters and accounts. Sentences are becoming grammatically correct, spellings are improving and punctuation is being used more accurately. Handwriting using a cursive style is not yet consistently used. Standards of writing are well below average by the age of eleven. Pupils are making wider choices of vocabulary and use punctuation more regularly in their writing. Higher attaining pupils make good progress as they learn to structure narrative. The range of writing is not as wide as in most primary schools and spelling varies in accuracy, although pupils refer to dictionaries to help and attempt to spell words independently.

74. Throughout the school pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are developed successfully through links with other subjects especially history, science and religious education. However opportunities for writing more extensively are not widespread in other subjects in junior classes.
75. The quality of teaching is very good at both key stages. There has been a general improvement in teaching throughout the school and teachers are confident in delivering the National Literacy Strategy. There are many planned opportunities to develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and the effectiveness of planning is very good. There is a consistency in the management of lessons so that learning is built upon and developed well. Objectives are clear and tasks are matched well to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work covered. In a very good Year 6 lesson on the use of 'connectives' the teacher was alert to opportunities to expand and consolidate knowledge. Teachers focus well on particular skills and build on them in subsequent lessons. Regular homework supports classwork and is helping to develop individual research skills. Teachers check what pupils' understand on a daily basis and good use is made of assessments so that attainment and progress are monitored successfully. Marking is carried out regularly, but there is inconsistent use made of individual target setting for pupils. Pupils are well motivated and eager to learn during lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils are keen to learn. Pupils participate fully in discussions and work well together.
76. The co-ordinator is providing very good leadership for the subject, which ensures very clear educational direction for the subject. She has monitored the effectiveness of teaching planning and learning throughout the school in partnership with the headteacher. There is good, shared commitment to the improvement of the subject. More frequent use is being made of information technology for pupils in order to improve their skills and knowledge in all aspects of English..

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. Pupils are making good progress by the age of seven, and their present attainment indicates standards will be above those achieved nationally by the end of Year 2. By the age of eleven, both in the standards observed in the classroom and in those evident when analysing current and previous work, pupils are making satisfactory progress and standards are broadly in line with what pupils are expected to achieve nationally. This all marks good improvement since the school's previous inspection. Standards in the 2000 national tests were above those found in similar schools. Although in some past years boys did better than girls in national tests, these differences were not evident during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make at least satisfactory progress. Where there is a good level of effective support these pupils make good progress.
78. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, they respond well to challenge and are enthusiastic about their experiences. They are keen to participate in mental introductions and are eager to share their work when progress is reviewed at the end of lessons. Generally, pupils are well behaved, and teachers handle any inappropriate behaviour very well. They collaborate well to solve problems, and have the ability to work independently when strategies expect the teacher to focus on other activities. Relationships are very good, promoting increased confidence. Teachers present very good role models, and by valuing the contributions of all pupils they enhance the quality of learning significantly.
79. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and almost 60 percent of teaching observed was good or better, with evidence of excellent teaching in Years 2 and 5. Since the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy in 1999, and the grouping of pupils according to prior attainment, there has been a sharper focus and pace to lessons. Teachers have focused more closely on the teaching of mathematical skills, and concentrated on creating practical opportunities for pupils to use their skills, knowledge and understanding. They question pupils very well, constantly checking pupils' knowledge and challenging their understanding, as when higher attaining pupils in a Year 2 lesson investigated the properties of solid objects – 'We created pyramids yesterday and today we must create shapes which are more difficult!' In a Year 5 lesson pupils were expected to explain what they were doing when comparing fractions, and how they arrived at their answers, with higher ability pupils providing examples to be investigated by everyone during the summary at the end of the lesson. Homework is used satisfactorily, and records are kept of progress made. The use of ICT to track the achievements of pupils has

enabled teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in lessons, and then link activities more closely to need. As yet, marking does not meet these high standards, with teachers' comments being used mainly to praise rather than to indicate to pupils how they might improve their work. Support staff are used most effectively, particularly to provide good learning experiences for low attaining pupils.

80. There is little evidence of ICT used in the classroom to enhance learning. However, the addition of new resources in the computer suite has freed machines to be used in classrooms in order to provide opportunities for pupils to develop data handling skills to record, and to display and interpret information more efficiently.
81. Numeracy is taught satisfactorily across the curriculum, with time lines used in history; measuring and recording in physical education; co-ordinates, scales and compass bearings in geography; and recording in science. The development of speaking and listening skills is good with most pupils eager to contribute by discussing their reasoning and answering questions.
82. Leadership for mathematics is good and has been strengthened with co-ordinators for the infant and junior departments. A good subject action plan contributes to the priorities of the school development plan, and targets have been set for groups of teachers and pupils by the age of 5, 7, 9 and 11. The targets for 2000 have been surpassed, necessitating a review of the targets for 2001 and 2002. Added consistency in planning, the use of more varied teaching strategies, and a shared vision for improvement has contributed effectively to the raising of standards. Ways to check the strengths and weaknesses of mathematics provision are satisfactory.

## **SCIENCE**

83. Seven and eleven year old pupils work at the level expected of their age group and most make satisfactory progress. Most of the school's results in the national tests have been well below average in recent years, although they have varied greatly at the age of eleven. The results for 2000 show standards have risen again after a fall in 1999 and are high, being within the top 5% nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English make good progress. Gifted pupils make appropriate progress. This is clear from last year's national test in which one pupil achieved at a level much higher than that expected nationally.
84. Original ideas used by the teacher, including getting the pupils to model a circuit by holding hands, contributes well to their learning. The very good preparation and planning of some lessons creates very stimulating and effective learning experiences. Some very stimulating teaching observed in Year 5 contributed very well to pupils' knowledge of the work of the heart and the circulatory system. Overall, junior pupils perform equally well in the most aspects of science. However, observation of older children in lessons suggests that teachers do not always give them enough responsibility for carrying out experiments. This reduces the quality of learning, especially for higher attaining and gifted pupils.
85. The quality of teaching is good through the school. Overall, this results in pupils learning well. Most are keen to learn and behave sensibly. This improves the progress they make. The school has radically altered the way in which science is taught in a bid to raise the standards achieved in the years before 2000. Two very valuable features are now found in most lessons. The first is very conscientious preparation and planning. Teachers go to great lengths to provide stimulating activities. This is nowhere more apparent than in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, in which their classroom was changed into "Aladdin's Cave" to promote their work on 'Light'. Another very effective aspect of teaching is the good methods chosen to improve pupils' learning. For example, role-play was used very well in a lesson for Year 5, where the teacher took on the role of a doctor and the pupils the blood or parts of the heart. This increased pupils' levels of concentration and made sure that not only did they remember the facts, but they enjoyed themselves too. Most aspects of teaching are good, but although planning is good, that not enough thought is given to meeting everyone's needs, and pupils' past work indicates that teachers' marking does not always tell the children how they can improve. Nonetheless, the overall improvement in the quality of teaching has impacted very well on standards.

86. The acting co-ordinator has only been in post for five weeks, but has already carried out an audit of resources. She is aware of the need to put into place arrangements for checking how well pupils are learning and to ensure that the information found is used effectively to adapt science planning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

87. Standards in art are average. In each year group pupils make good progress as they study the work of famous artists and they experiment successfully with colour, light and texture and reflect new skills and techniques in their own work. Work is now more challenging and requires greater concentration and time for completion. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when work was judged as too easy and too quickly covered. For instance, younger pupils are given the time to look closely at fine detail in observational drawings of owls and to refine and improve their work over a series of lessons. They make good progress with their learning and can compare their first attempts to the finished work.
88. Art is used well in other subjects, such as history, when pupils express their ideas and feelings through a range of different experiences. This is adding greatly to the depth of study and standards achieved. An example is when Year 5 pupils draw from research on Roman culture as they design and produce a Roman flag using collage and printing techniques.
89. The school is beginning to use sketch-books effectively and pupils make good progress with developing and improving their pencil and drawing skills. However, as yet, most examples are of finished work, mainly in pencil, rather than working ideas showing different stages of development.
90. Pupils enjoy art lessons, share resources amicably and are keen to discuss their work with others. Older pupils can work independently at a chosen task. The good behaviour in classes adds to the hard working climate in lessons.
91. Teaching of art is good. Lessons are clearly planned and draw from guidelines that ensure a wide range of skills and experiences are built upon each year. Teachers make good use of *how?* and *why?* questions to develop learning. For instance, encouraging younger pupils to consider how to make their play dough models free-standing. Lessons are well paced and are well managed. Time is given for pupils to modify and improve their work and this helping to raise standards. As yet the opportunity in lessons to make choices about materials varies from class to class.
92. The coordinator has expertise and enthusiasm for the subject. A useful policy and guidelines are in place which show coverage of different skills and media. Ways to judge how well pupils are building skills and knowledge are not yet as strong in art and design as they are in most of the core subjects. Resources are appropriately supporting learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. There is a well thought out programme of work for design and technology that ensures that pupils build knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate through the school. This good rate of progress is also due to the good quality of teaching experienced by the pupils. It is clear that the school has been successful in improving teaching since the last inspection and that pupils respond positively to the better chances to do well that are now offered to them.
94. Displays about the school and pupils' work files show that there is firm emphasis on all aspects of the subject. From quite early in their school careers, pupils are shown the importance of preparing a well thought out design for their product. In the infant classes, pupils talk with obvious enjoyment about what they are going to make and how they will do it. They show these ideas on well drawn pictures and seven year old pupils label them clearly and make detailed lists of the tools and materials they will need. In the junior classes these skills are extended. Pupils think carefully of the size and proportion of the items they are to make, as for instance, a Year 5 class who were considering the intricacies of designing a hand grip for a Roman shield. As pupils pass through the school there is growing focus on the review and evaluation process that follows the practical work to make the item. The oldest pupils talk convincingly of weaknesses in their products and suggest sensible ways to improve them. The standard of finish on many items is good with careful attention to detail such as cutting, joining and mark making.

95. Design and technology has continued to hold a respected position in the overall curriculum during the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours. There are some good links made to other subjects, especially history. The current curriculum for the subject is well considered, planned and put into practice and the school is in a good position to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum. Many of these strengths are due to the very good calibre management of design and technology. Whilst the coordinator has not yet had opportunity to observe lessons in colleagues' classrooms, she is alert to the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has firm and appropriate priorities for future development of the curriculum and teaching and learning, including assessment. In all, design and technology is well served and the prospects of continued improvement are good.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

96. Standards in geography have been maintained since the last inspection and are as expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. In the lessons observed, most pupils had positive attitudes to learning, they were well behaved and enjoyed the company of others.
97. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils and activities planned appropriately for the needs of groups of pupils, with low attaining pupils given good support. Where teaching is good, questioning, particularly at the end of lessons, is used effectively to check what pupils understand and can do. In the lessons observed, the development of mapping skills and a growing knowledge of the locality was evident. In addition, these lessons had good cross-curricular links. For example Year 1 pupils practised their literacy skills when addressing postcards using the correct punctuation, with one pupil proudly announcing, 'I have used a full stop!' Year 4 pupils plot landmarks on a sketch map and accurately describe routes to a park they visited earlier.
98. The co-ordinator, who has only recently been given the responsibility for geography, has a clear vision for the future. After conducting a subject audit, she has produced an action plan indicating areas for improvement. She is aware of the need to match the provision in geography to the demands of the new National Curriculum, to develop the use ICT to enrich learning; and to improve assessment and resources, especially to extend mapping skills for older pupils.

## **HISTORY**

99. By the age of seven standards are satisfactory and they are good by the age of eleven. Infant pupils know that there was no electricity in Victorian times. They know about Edison and can talk about his invention. Pupils in the juniors have good knowledge of past events, they know about, and can put the wives of Henry VIII in sequence. Year five pupils understand the three parts of the Roman boys' names, they are aware that a girl was named after her father eight days after birth and that boys were named nine days after birth. The pupils' Roman time lines and their writing about the first invasion of Britain in 55 B C shows a sound understanding of chronology and the period studied. Overall progress is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors.
100. Teaching overall is good. One lesson, which had a very good impact on learning, focused on mummification of bodies and the storage of organs in canopic jars. Pupils were finding out how Egyptians preserved their dead. A wide selection of plastic bags including different foods had been prepared previously and had been left hanging in the classroom so that pupils could learn what makes things go mouldy and what preserves food. This led to a very good discussion about bacteria.
101. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
102. The strengths of the history curriculum are its very good links to all other subjects. Pupils begin to realise that studying pictures and paintings can reveal how people in the past lived. Pupils look carefully at the food they eat and consider whether the ancient Egyptians had a healthy diet. In maths a survey was carried out to find out which Greek Island is the most preferred destination today. The results are tallied

and then recorded on pie charts. The curriculum is further enhanced through visitors into school and visits to local museums and places of interest.

103. Overall there has been improvement in history since the previous inspection, however the assessment of skills and knowledge development is not consistent or developed to the full.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

104. By the age of seven and eleven pupils achieve standards similar to those found nationally. They make good progress as they improve their computer skills, make things happen and revise and evaluate their work.
105. Work in the information and communications (ICT) suite is a strength: the expertise and high quality teaching and planning of the ICT coordinator is raising standards. All year groups are making good progress because of this. Helping less confident teachers improve their subject knowledge is resulting in more challenging work in lessons. The provision of up-to-date resources is improving the breadth of learning and a careful choice of software ensures that skills are being built upon year by year.
106. Standards in ICT in everyday work in the classroom vary, but are sound overall. When teachers have clear subject knowledge and resources are effective, then pupils make better progress with their learning. An example is when lessons enable older pupils to plan a layout for a multimedia presentation using 'Power Point' and successfully use an range of ICT skills. Work linked to specific computer programs also improves learning. For instance, younger pupils develop their reading and spelling skills by using programs linked to their reading books, whilst Year 5 pupils can research independently and interpret information about the Romans using a CD ROM. However, there is less evidence of word processing used to draft and communicate ideas in writing in different subjects. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work also shows few examples of spread-sheets and data bases used to support learning in mathematics and science.
107. Pupils are very motivated by the lessons and resources in the ICT suite. From a young age they work well in pairs, sharing ideas and resources. For instance, Year 3 pupils draw from experiences from home and school as they explain how to change the size, style and colour of print. When given the opportunity in class pupils can use the skills they have previously learned well in lessons. Younger pupils controlling the mouse effectively and older pupils selecting icons are examples. There is a growing number of pupils with access to a computer at home and many older pupils show greater confidence and initiative as users.
108. Teaching is good overall, and is very good in the ICT suite. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be variable. The guidance of the ICT coordinator and the commitment of teachers to raise standards is evident. Throughout the school lessons are well managed and relationships good. Lessons in the ICT suite are well paced and planned and tasks are challenging but achievable. Good teaching in the classroom gives time for pupils to review and evaluate their work as they interpret instructions and information. In general, more time to gain familiarity with the keyboard when entering text and information is needed in planning for ICT.
109. The subject is very well managed and there is a clear, shared plan for the way forward. Some classrooms are better resourced than others with computers and software, but all pupils have timetabled access to high quality provision in the ICT suite. Assessment is not yet as well developed in ICT as it is in other core subjects.

## **MUSIC**

110. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are satisfactory by the ages of seven and eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Planning of the curriculum is very good and the quality of teaching has improved.
111. singing is tuneful and expressive in the infants. Year 2 pupils sing 'Going down to Cairo' enthusiastically and have a good understanding of the difference between 'call' and 'response'. They have a good sense of pitch and are given valuable opportunities to refine their performance by their

teachers. Pupils are given very good support and this has a significant impact on the quality of learning for all pupils. Clear explanations are given about adding suitable instrumental and rhythmical accompaniments resulting in pupils demonstrating that they have a good understanding of rhythm and tempo. They are encouraged to listen to music and comment upon it reflecting on the instrumentation when singing.

112. Junior pupils show good control of rhythm and pitch in their singing and in a Year 3 lesson high expectations from the teacher resulted in clear diction and good phrasing as they performed 'Tongo'. Valuable opportunities are provided for them to record, evaluate and refine their performance. Pupils listen attentively to a range of music from different traditions and cultures. Lessons are well planned and good links are made to topics the pupils are studying such as 'The Tudors' in Year 4 and 'Boudicca and the Romans' in Year 5. Resources are used well to enrich the pupils' experiences. The standard of composition work is improving through systematic planning and effective teaching.
113. The quality of teaching is good in all classes. Lessons are carefully prepared with well chosen songs and opportunities for singing, composition, percussion work, listening and appraising. In the most successful lessons planning is very good and teacher resources are well used. There is usually a brisk pace to lessons and pupils are challenged appropriately. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' performance and have secure subject knowledge and understanding. Pupils literacy and numeracy skills are developed well through song and composition.
114. All pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their listening, appraising and performing skills. Where the pace of the lesson is brisk and explanations are clear they make good gains in learning. Pupils co-operate well in group work. They listen carefully and have good attitudes.
115. The major improvement since the previous inspection has been a strengthening of the curriculum resulting in very good planning. Pupils' skills are developed systematically and teachers link the music to their topics where appropriate. Assessment in music remains an aspect for improvement, though the coordinator is aware of this. The co-ordinator provides clear educational direction for the subject and opportunities are provided for pupils to share their skills in performances within school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116. Standards attained by eleven year old pupils are satisfactory. Although the school makes proper provision for teaching physical education it was only possible to observe one lesson in the infants and, as a result, it is not possible to make judgements about standards or the quality of teaching there.
117. By the age of eleven pupils achieve satisfactory standards in games and gymnastic activities. Standards in swimming are improving and the school is working hard to ensure that all pupils have the desirable level of swimming skills by the time they leave the school. In games lessons, pupils work with control and show satisfactory co-ordination in skills such as throwing and bouncing. They begin to think tactically in games such as basketball. For example, they start to understand the importance of marking their opponents. They learn these ideas effectively, thanks to the good quality direct teaching. Higher attaining pupils are able to walk whilst bouncing a basketball, without looking directly at it. In gymnastics, pupils produce a variety of movements at different levels and are able to balance on different parts of their bodies. They begin to see similarities and differences between their own work and that of others and use this to improve their performance. However, when observing and appraising others, they do not always make suggestions for improvement. Also, some pupils do not use all the space available for working.
118. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and is now good. The teachers' skilful management and control of their classes allow pupils to concentrate well. Most pupils respond positively to this discipline and behave sensibly. This improves the progress that they make. Teachers observe the performance of pupils effectively and provide good opportunities for them to evaluate how others move or play. However, they sometimes fail to tell pupils how they can improve. This means that the quality of

work suffers. For example, pupils do not stretch when leaping or set themselves targets when practising games skills.

119. The current co-ordinator has only been in post for five weeks. She is well qualified and enthusiastic, and has already made a positive impact on provision by teaching model lessons and significantly increasing the opportunities for pupils to join in extra-curricular sports activities. She is aware of the need to develop the programme of work for the subject to ensure that it provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to gain skills, knowledge and understanding in a progressive way and meets the requirements of the new National Curriculum. The lack of agreed arrangements for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils makes it difficult for teachers to match activities to their learning needs. The range of gymnastic apparatus is not great enough to provide pupils with suitable challenges and opportunities for movement.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

120. Standards in Religious education are satisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language make the expected progress.
121. Infant pupils are studying the topic of light and are learning that candles are used for special events. These remind the pupils of Christmas and personal events and some effective use of candles in assemblies underlines the special moments of reflection that are important in many religions. Year 2 pupils have explored and can talk about the symbols related to the Lord's Prayer. Junior pupils are familiar with the Bible as a holy book and know many of its stories, particularly of the Creation and the story of David and Goliath, and the importance of the Israelite and Philistine armies.
122. The quality of teaching is good overall and on occasion it is excellent. This shows a great improvement since the previous inspection when some teaching was less than satisfactory. Very good and excellent lessons use strategies which involve pupils and help them with their learning, for example when music and a video of the story of Joseph are used to help pupils learn about, and show, forgiveness. The power of imagery can be superb in lessons, as for example, when Year 6 pupils respond very thoughtfully about how to help when Uncle Alf breaks his hip. Excellent learning, developing respect, responsibility and care for others then takes place. Challenging questions help pupils to understand the funeral rites and beliefs related to life in ancient Egypt. This also helps the pupils to show good sensitivity of other people's views and beliefs.
123. Management of religious education is effective, though assessment is a priority for the subject. Overall, religious education lessons make a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils and many are times of thoughtfulness, care and consideration.