

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BLISS CHARITY SCHOOL

Nether Heyford, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122048

Headteacher: Mr Alan Watson

Reporting inspector: Michael Raven
3961

Dates of inspection: 4th – 6th December 2000

Inspection number: 224604

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Green Nether Heyford Northampton
Postcode:	NN7 3LE
Telephone number:	01327 340758
Fax number:	01327 342341
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Emma North
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael Raven 3961	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs Susanna Stevens 9942	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr A J Taylor 4262	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
The Rev. John Pryor 21858	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Art Design and technology Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Meridian Inspections
23 Marlingford Way
Easton,
Norwich NR9 5HA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Bliss Charity School is a primary school which caters for 128 boys and girls aged from four to 11 years. It receives financial support from the Bliss Charitable Trust, William Bliss having founded the school in the seventeenth century. Most pupils come from the village of Nether Heyford, although a small number come from further afield. Almost all pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. A small number are learning English as an additional language. Thirty-three pupils have special educational needs, which at 26 per cent is above the national average for primary schools. Children enter the school with attainment which varies considerably, but is average overall in all the six areas of learning for children under five: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Standards are high by the time pupils are aged seven, particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, standards reached by the 11 year olds are not high enough, because not enough is expected of them, particularly the most able pupils. The quality of teaching is good overall, although teachers' expectations of the oldest pupils could be higher. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities for identifying priorities for school improvement and monitoring progress towards the targets it sets. The management role of subject co-ordinators has developed steadily since the last inspection and it is now satisfactory. The headteacher provides committed leadership, although there are weaknesses in the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching. The school offers sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The governing body is effective in promoting and supporting school improvement
- The teaching is good
- Standards reached by pupils aged seven are good, especially in English, mathematics and science
- The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The school places appropriate emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy skills
- Personal development is promoted well

What could be improved

- The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching
- The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in all subjects
- The match of work to the needs of the oldest pupils, especially to ensure that the most able are appropriately challenged, so that they reach their potential
- The use of assessment information to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1996, since when it has made good improvement. Standards reached by the oldest pupils in English, mathematics and science have improved steadily in line with the national trend. Teaching has improved and there is now much more very good teaching – about one lesson in every five. Improvement in the key issues for action identified at the last inspection has been good overall. The governing body has taken steps to

analyse the effects of its spending decisions on standards. The management role of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators has developed satisfactorily, so that, for example, the subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have now started to monitor teaching and learning. Appropriate schemes of work have been adopted, including the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's special educational needs policy has been re-written to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice on special educational needs. There has not been enough improvement in pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	A	A	C	well above average A
mathematics	B	D	C	D	above average B
science	A	D	C	D	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Standards in English were well above average compared to all schools nationally in the Year 2000 national tests and assessments for 11 year olds. They were average compared to similar schools, that is to say schools working in similar social circumstances. In mathematics and science results were average compared to all schools, but below average compared to similar schools. This means that the 11 year olds are not achieving as well as they should. The inspection finds that this is because not enough is being expected of the 11 year olds in mathematics and science, particularly the most able. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in English are above average by the time pupils are aged 11 and that they are average in mathematics and science. Standards reached by 11 year olds have been improving in line with the national trend over the period 1996 – 2000, since the last inspection. The school sets challenging targets for performance in national tests, although these were not met in the most recent tests. By the age of seven standards in national tests and assessments in reading and writing and in mathematics are well above average compared to all schools nationally. They are also well above average in writing and mathematics when compared to similar schools and above average in reading. The youngest children, in the reception class, achieve well and are on course to reach the early learning goals by the age of five and some will exceed this expectation. Pupils aged from five to seven also achieve well and this is why standards are good by the age of seven. Pupils aged from seven to 11 achieve satisfactorily overall, although the most able could do better in mathematics and science, particularly at the age of 11.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are sad that they will have to leave. They are very interested in their work and they concentrate well

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous and polite. They behave well in lessons and move around the school in an orderly fashion
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well together, collaborate and support one another
Attendance	Good. There is little unauthorised absence

Parents and carers report that their children like coming to school and this is supported by inspection evidence. Pupils get on well together and help one another as they work and outside lessons. For example, pupils are very helpful to others as they change their library books, helping one another to locate books on the shelves and put books back in the right place. The oldest pupils help the youngest, for example at lunch time and in the playground. There are some good opportunities for pupils to be independent, for instance they operate the school's computerised library system independently as they change their books.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
37 lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Taking the school as a whole, teaching is good or better in 75 per cent of lessons. It is very good in 22 per cent of lessons. In 92 per cent of lessons teaching is at least satisfactory and in eight per cent it is unsatisfactory. The percentage of good or better teaching is better than the national figure of about 60 per cent. The teaching of English and mathematics is good throughout the school and this contributes positively to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, there is a weakness in teachers' expectations of what the oldest pupils can achieve in mathematics, especially the most able. This weakness is also found in the teaching of science to the oldest pupils. These weaknesses mean that pupils aged 11 are not learning as well as they should in mathematics and science and so they are not fulfilling their potential. Particular strengths in teaching are found in the reception class, where the teacher has very good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals for children to reach by the end of their first year in school. The effectiveness of teaching methods is also a strength of the reception class teaching. These strengths promote good learning for the children under five. The school is very successful in meeting the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and they are helped to make very good progress in their learning. The needs of the few pupils learning English as an additional language are met satisfactorily.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and it is satisfactorily enriched with extra-curricular activities and visits, including an annual residential visit for the oldest pupils
Provision for pupils with	Very good. These pupils are supported very well in classes and in small

special educational needs	groups withdrawn from class and this helps them to make very good progress in their learning
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The very few pupils with English as an additional language are helped to have full access to the whole curriculum and they make satisfactory progress in their learning
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Moral and social development are promoted well
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Academic performance is monitored satisfactorily but assessment information is not used well enough to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching

The school's partnership with parents is good and it supports pupils' learning appropriately. Although the curriculum includes all the subjects required by the National Curriculum, and religious education, too little time and attention is given to the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Although there are suitable systems for assessing the progress pupils make, not enough use is made of the information gathered to help teachers plan their teaching to meet pupils' needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The role of subject co-ordinators has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection. A significant weakness is the lack of rigorous monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and its role in shaping the direction of the school is good
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have begun to look at the results of national tests and assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Monies allocated for the education of pupils with special educational needs are used very well to support their learning

Overall, staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. The headteacher provides committed leadership but he has only just been able to make a start on the monitoring of teaching to develop its quality and this is not yet a rigorous and systematic process. The governors provide a strong steer for the work and direction of the school. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value to its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The school promotes good attitudes and values • Behaviour is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities available to pupils outside lessons • Information about how their children are getting on • The amount of homework set • The closeness of the school's working with parents • The quality of teaching

The inspection team supports parents' positive views that pupils like school, behaviour is good and the school promotes good attitudes. The range of activities outside lessons is adequate, taking into account the size of the school, the age of pupils and the range of activities available in the locality. The information about how pupils are getting on is of good quality. The school makes satisfactory use of homework to support pupils' learning. The quality of teaching is good. The school has effective working links with most parents. Many parents support pupils' learning by helping in school. The school welcomes parental participation in its work. The negative views about the school are not representative of the views of parents as a whole.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the Year 2000 national tests and assessments in English pupils aged 11 achieved standards which were well above average compared to all schools nationally. Standards were average compared to similar schools, that is to say, schools where a similar proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Inspection evidence confirms that the standards reached by 11 year olds are above average, although standards in handwriting are below those usually found nationally at this age.
2. By the time they are 11 most pupils have well developed reading skills. They tackle unfamiliar words successfully, using their understanding of the sounds of letters and letter blends. They use the context of what they are reading to help work out the correct pronunciation and meaning. Pupils have a good understanding of how to use the library to find out information and they understand the use of the library catalogue and the computerised system for checking books out and back in. They display a sound grasp of grammatical structure and can, for example, recognise verbs and adverbs in text. By the age of 11 most pupils can turn direct speech into reported speech and vice versa. Their handwriting is not consistently good. Most pupils are able to write with a neat, legible joined-up style of handwriting, but they do not always do so in all subjects.
3. In the most recent national tests and assessments in mathematics the standards reached by pupils aged 11 were average compared to all schools nationally. They were below average compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are average compared to the national picture. They are not as high as they might be, because work for the oldest pupils is not well enough matched to their needs, particularly those of high ability. As a consequence they do not all fulfil their potential.
4. By the time they are 11 most pupils know, for instance, about some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes, such as a cylinder and a sphere. They use compasses and a protractor to construct accurately geometric shapes such as a rectangle and equilateral and isosceles triangles. They know what the numerator and denominator are in a fraction and they understand improper fractions, mixed fractions and equivalent fractions. They know about parallel and perpendicular lines and recognise line symmetry. The standard of this work is typical of that found nationally at this age.
5. In the Year 2000 tests and assessments in science pupils achieved standards which were average compared to all schools nationally and below average compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in science are average by the time pupils are aged 11. By that age pupils know, for example, about some of the effects of exercise on the human body and they carry out experiments to investigate this. They know that the heart beats faster when we exercise and understand that this is related to the need of the muscles for more oxygen.
6. In the most recent national tests and assessments for seven year olds standards in reading were well above average compared to all schools nationally and above average compared to similar schools. The inspection confirms that standards in reading are above average by the time pupils are aged seven. Standards were also well above average in writing, compared to all schools nationally and compared to similar schools. Again, the inspection confirms that standards are above average. In mathematics standards were

well above average in the national tests and assessments and also well above average compared to similar schools. The inspection confirms that standards in mathematics are above average.

7. By the time they are seven most pupils have very good reading skills. Many are very fluent. They mostly have good skills in working out unfamiliar words for themselves, using their knowledge of letter sounds to help them. They write descriptions and instructions, for example how to decorate a cake. In mathematics the seven year olds measure using standard and non-standard units of measurement, for example their hand or digit span. They recognise odd and even numbers and give change from £1.
8. In the Year 2000 teacher assessments in science seven year olds achieved standards which were well above average compared to all schools nationally. The inspection confirms that standards are well above average. Pupils understand, for example, the nature of a balanced diet. They classify foods correctly into categories, such as vegetables, meat, fish, dairy products and cereals.
9. Children enter the school at the age of four with attainment which varies considerably from one to another, but which is broadly average. By the time they are aged five at the end of their year in the reception class, the children reach the early learning goals in all the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. A small number of children reach the early learning goals before the end of their reception year and are ready to make an early start on the National Curriculum.
10. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are similar to what is usual at the ages of seven and 11. However, although there are some good examples of the use of ICT in lessons, for example as pupils in Years 5 & 6 produce high quality 'newspaper reports' of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankahmun, overall there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in other subjects. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the agreed syllabuses in use by the time pupils are aged 11. In design and technology and history standards are higher than those usually found by the age of 11. In art, geography and music standards are similar to those found nationally by the age of 11. In physical education no lessons for the oldest pupils were observed and so no judgement can be made about standards at the age of 11. At the age of seven, however, standards are typical of those usually found at this age.
11. The trend in the standards achieved by 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science over the past four years has been in line with the nationally improving trend.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The last inspection found that pupils had very positive attitudes to their work and their good behaviour showed high levels of self-discipline. These positive attitudes have been well maintained. Pupils are enthusiastic, share opinions and exchange views in a friendly, cheerful and generally respectful manner. These attitudes and a well-established sense of fairness make a substantial contribution to the pupils' enjoyment of the school, their daily progress and the standards they attain. The majority of parents at the pre-inspection meeting endorsed these findings and analysis of the returns to the parents' questionnaire provides substantial confirmation. Pupils are eager to attend school, are mostly punctual and enjoy the opportunity to socialise and extend their learning skills during registration sessions. Pupils of all ages are actively involved in all aspects of their learning, showing

good levels of concentration, responding well to question and answer sessions and developing good listening skills. They collaborate pleasantly with their peers, sharing resources and assisting others to complete tasks or helping a younger pupil to open a drinks container at lunchtime. In classes where pupil management is less secure or where the pace and content of lessons lack stimulus, a minority of pupils show a loss of concentration, becoming inattentive and noisy. However, they generally respond well to a quiet reprimand from their class teacher.

13. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. They are caring and sensitive to the needs of others, with older pupils playing happily with younger ones at break times. They are welcoming to visitors, courteous and friendly to staff and to one another. There is a respect for the feelings of others and an absence of any form of bullying or oppressive behaviour. Pupils are confident in discussing any problems they may have with adults in the school. In conversation pupils express a genuine pleasure at being in the school. There have been no exclusions and there is no truancy.
14. Pupils' personal development is good. They are encouraged to socialise and collaborate in a friendly and constructive manner in the reception class and throughout the school, taking turns to accept responsibility. Older pupils have opportunities for setting up apparatus for assembly or the delivery of computers to each class as required. All perform their duties with diligence and care. Pupils have well-developed research skills, using the library and computerised lending procedure with confidence and competence. Self-confidence is encouraged and stimulated by praise.
15. Relationships are generally good, both between pupils and between pupils and staff. Isolated incidents of immature, discourteous behaviour in some lessons are not copied by others in the class and are directly related to a lack of challenge in the lesson content. Support staff make a significant contribution to good relationships by their commitment and the support given to all pupils and especially those with special educational needs.
16. Attendance at the school is good, with minimal unauthorised absence recorded and attendance well above the national average. This has continued since the last inspection. Parents support the request to confine family holidays to school holidays wherever possible and usually respect the ten day limit on holidays in term time. Pupils are keen to attend school and are punctual. The brief, efficient, friendly registration periods provide a pleasant social start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching is good overall. The good quality teaching found at the time of the last inspection has been maintained and there is now a lot more teaching which is very good – about one lesson in every five. In 75 per cent of lessons teaching is good or better. Nationally this figure is about 60 per cent. Ninety-two per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory. Eight per cent is unsatisfactory and none is poor.
18. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is due to poor organisation, inappropriate tasks set and unsatisfactory class control.
19. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. In the reception class there is good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for children under five and the early learning goals in all the six areas of learning. This enables teachers to plan appropriate activities to promote children's learning well in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics;

knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. The good teaching they receive ensures that the youngest children are all on course to meet the early learning goals by the age of five and some will get there earlier and be ready to make an early start on the National Curriculum.

20. There are many good examples of teachers having good knowledge and understanding of their subjects. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson on shape in Years 5 and 6. The teacher's good grasp of the subject enabled her to explain things clearly and demonstrate well on the board, so promoting pupils' learning well.
21. Teachers teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. They are helped by the good guidance given by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In reading, for example, pupils are given a good grounding in the sounds that letters make so that they can work out unfamiliar words for themselves by 'sounding them out'. This work gets off to a good start in the reception class, where there is a letter of the week, such as 'G'. Children learn the name and especially the sound of the letter of the week. They all have a go at writing it for themselves and interest is added by collecting objects which begin with the letter, such as 'glasses' and some 'grass'. Such interesting teaching enthuses pupils well and helps them to make good progress in acquiring the basic skills of reading and writing. In mathematics there is good regular attention to mental calculation and the learning of number bonds and the multiplication tables, seen for example at the start of lessons in Years 1 and 2. The good regular daily attention to such basic number skills helps promote pupils' mathematical development well.
22. Teachers plan their lessons satisfactorily. They are clear about what they want their pupils to learn and how they should go about it. Planning takes good account of the different ages of pupils in most classes. However, planning does not often enough take account of the different ability levels within each age group. As a consequence work is not always well matched to the particular needs of pupils and in particular there is not enough challenging work for the oldest pupils of higher ability. These pupils therefore do not learn as much as they could. This is why standards in mathematics and science are not as good as they could be by the age of 11.
23. Teachers have high expectations of what the youngest children can achieve. This is seen for example in the reception class, where children are given important responsibilities in getting the daily snack ready for the class. The teacher and nursery nurse expect the children to carry out their task with maturity and independence and this helps promote their personal, social and emotional development very well. Expectations of pupils aged from five to seven are appropriately high and this promotes good learning, seen for example in a gymnastics lesson in Years 1 and 2. Expectations of the oldest pupils are not always high enough. The most able could be challenged to aim higher, so raising standards overall, especially in mathematics and science at the age of 11.
24. Teachers employ a wide range of appropriate teaching methods to promote pupils' learning. In the reception class good use is made of whole class teaching, small group work and individual learning. Children's social development is promoted well through many good opportunities to work together with others. This was seen, for example, as children made hand puppets, co-operating well together, taking turns and sharing resources such as scissors and glue. Whole class teaching is used to good effect to convey information and facts, for example as pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn about 'The Egyptian Way of Death'. Teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to stimulate pupils' interest and promote their learning. For example, the oldest pupils design and make their own game about the Egyptians in design and technology lessons. In physical education lessons

teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate their performance, so encouraging the others to try harder and improve what they do.

25. Pupils are managed well and this promotes good behaviour so that pupils can concentrate on their work, get on well and make good progress in their learning. This was seen, for example, in a gymnastics lesson in Years 1 and 2 where the teacher's good class control led to good behaviour and hard work, so that pupils made good progress in developing their sequences of curling and stretching movements on the floor and on the apparatus. The youngest children in reception are well managed, so that they soon learn some basic classroom rules, such as putting up their hand when they want to speak. This means that good order is maintained in whole-class discussion and everyone gets a turn to speak.
26. Time is used well. Lessons start promptly and proceed at a brisk pace. Pupils are encouraged to work fast and make full use of the time available. This was seen, for example, in a lesson in Years 5 and 6 on complex shapes, such as polyominoes and hexominoes, where the teacher intervened as pupils worked, urging them to work faster and so make good progress in their learning. Good use is made of support staff and parents who volunteer to help. Support staff working in the reception class play a valuable role in promoting children's learning, for example as they read with small groups in preparation for a whole-class reading lesson with the Big Book story of Goldilocks. Staff working with pupils who have special educational needs give very good support and promote their learning very well. This was seen, for example, in a lesson in Year 5, where a carefully planned individual programme of work in literacy and numeracy was followed very effectively by the special educational needs support worker. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning in all subjects of the curriculum. Although resources for ICT are limited more regular and effective use could be made of what is available.
27. Teachers assess the youngest children's work effectively as they work and make good interventions to help them improve what they do and make good progress in their learning. This was seen, for example, as a group of children counted out different coloured teddies to make five and the teacher helped them to add, for example three and two, by counting on. The work of the pupils aged from five to seven is mainly marked with them and this gives them good immediate feedback on what they have done and advice on what to do to improve, so promoting better learning. The marking of the older pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking and it does not always give good enough advice on what pupils should do to improve, for instance in the correction of some spelling mistakes.
28. Teachers use homework appropriately to support pupils' learning in school. Pupils take home reading books regularly. They also have appropriate tasks to complete, such as a drawing in the reception class and the planning of a special meal in Year 2, both appropriately related to what they have been doing in class. Although many parents express dissatisfaction with homework, the inspection finds that it is satisfactory. Not all parents support their children in doing their homework. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson only a third of parents had looked at the homework set, which was a particularly suitable opportunity for parental involvement.
29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and it enables them to make very good progress in their learning. A full-time special needs support worker gives very good support to pupils and this is augmented by the services of a specialist teacher from the local education authority. Care is taken to see that pupils with special educational needs have full access to the whole curriculum. When it is necessary to withdraw them from classes for small group or individual support the times for this are varied, so that they

do not regularly miss out on any one subject. Support is arranged very carefully, so that pupils often take part in the first, whole-class part of the lesson and are then withdrawn for individual or small group tasks.

30. The small number of pupils learning English as an additional language are well supported and helped to have access to the full curriculum and make good progress.

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

31. The curriculum is suitably broad. Its breadth has been maintained since the last inspection despite the increased emphasis on key learning skills in literacy and numeracy. It incorporates an appropriate range of subjects and aspects and meets statutory requirements for the provision of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, there are some limitations in the provision for information and communication technology in other subjects. Religious education is provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum includes good provision for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and provision for sex and drugs education and personal, health, and social education. There is an adequate range of extra-curricular activities, focused mainly on musical tuition. The limited range of these activities was criticised by some parents but the inspection finds that the provision is adequate and that it makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' overall development. The curriculum for children under five in the reception class is appropriately based on the new national early learning goals which most children should reach by the end of their first year in school. It includes all the six areas of learning for children of this age: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.
32. Learning opportunities overall are satisfactory. They are good for English and for the development of literacy. The majority of pupils establish good reading skills early on in their schooling and these are effectively developed in a progressive way. The provision for those pupils who have special educational needs is very good. They are supported very well and they make good progress in relation to their abilities. The curriculum is fully accessible to all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or background.
33. Although the curriculum has satisfactory breadth, the depth of experience for the pupils can be varied in some subjects, for example music, where certain aspects are not given sufficient attention. There is only limited evidence that the pupils use information and communication technology to support their work in other subjects.
34. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal development. The provision for pupils' moral development is good, as is the provision for their social development. These are positive features of the school's work. The school ensures that moral issues are discussed regularly. It helps pupils towards a good understanding of community needs through the writing of school rules, for example, in which they are fully involved. Pupils know right from wrong and generally act appropriately. All the adults working in school provide good role models. Pupils' social development is promoted by involvement in the local community. Members of the community, including some parents, help in school, for example in literacy lessons. There are good links with the playgroup in the village which many children attend before they come to the school. Older pupils help the younger children at playtimes and during lunchtimes and do much to ensure their welfare.

35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are opportunities for pupils to visit local museums and places used by different minority ethnic communities. The older pupils make an annual residential visit. They also study the work of some other artists in their art lessons. The weakness in the provision for pupils' cultural development is that too little attention is given to ensuring that pupils appreciate the richness and diversity of a range of cultures found in the wider society. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory overall but there are limitations. Music and art are not developed with sufficient depth to promote the spiritual nature of pupils' experiences and are not used sufficiently to enhance the ethos of the school. There are daily acts of collective worship which meet statutory requirements and provide pupils with some helpful opportunities for reflection and prayer.
36. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility, for example by helping with many tasks around the school, such as handing out hymn books for assembly and washing the paint pots after art lessons. Even the youngest pupils take responsibility for checking in and out their library books using the computerised record system. They develop a sound understanding of community needs and often show good initiative.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. At the last inspection, the school was found to offer good support to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its pupils. These standards have been maintained consistently. The school works hard to ensure that pupils develop confidence and perseverance in their approaches to work. Pupils enjoy a secure environment where courtesy and good humour are encouraged. Children are clearly happy in the knowledge that they are valued and respected as individuals by their teachers and other staff in the school. The majority of parents value the development of awareness of others and care for individuals which the school promotes. Informal procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are in place. There is good liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers, parents and support staff to review progress and set achievable targets. The quality of the pastoral care provided by the school for its pupils, including the very young, enables pupils to settle in, feel secure and develop confidence. Teaching and support staff know their pupils well, are approachable and sensitive to their needs, praising good work or acts of courtesy with a friendly word.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good, with efficient, prompt registration sessions and daily monitoring of registers by class teachers. Absences are followed up promptly if there is no explanation forthcoming from parents. The school has good procedures for health and safety, which are carefully followed. The designated member of staff for child protection has received appropriate training and staff awareness is reinforced by discussion at staff meetings. There are well-supervised break and lunchtimes, with older pupils taking responsibilities for younger ones, often including them in their games or walking and talking with them in the playground. The pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes good behaviour and the staff are generally consistent in their strategies for promoting good behaviour and set good role models. Isolated incidents of misbehaviour usually respond well to quiet rebuke from staff. There is no evidence of any bullying and both pupils and parents confirm that such activities would be swiftly dealt with by the school. There are careful first aid procedures with trained staff.
39. The school is clean and well maintained. Buildings and corridors are free from clutter and the grounds are litter free. Pupils take a pride in their surroundings, treating buildings and resources with care and proudly discussing the different games painted on the hard

surface of the play area. They appreciate the need to move carefully about the school, to hold doors open for one another and keep their cloakrooms tidy.

40. The school makes satisfactory provision for assessing and keeping records of the pupils' progress in academic subjects as well as in their personal development. The teachers' plans include sections for assessing how well the teaching has gone and identifying how well the pupils have learned what was being taught. This is true for both weekly plans and for the medium term planning over several weeks.
41. The records of what children can do when they enter the school are built up early in the autumn term. They provide a useful base from which future planning of work for individual children and small groups can be developed to meet their particular needs. This 'baseline' also provides the management of the school with a good means of measuring progress.
42. The results of the annual National Curriculum tests have been analysed, particularly those for mathematics and to a lesser extent science, to provide information about how standards in these subjects could be improved. It is currently too soon for this to have a visible impact on standards.
43. Most of the schemes of work developed in the school include opportunities for the work to be periodically assessed. When this is done it ensures that future planning builds upon a basis of firm knowledge and understanding and a competency in skills. This form of assessment for subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not consistently or regularly done and cannot effectively guide future planning in the curriculum. The use of assessment to support future planning is thus unsatisfactory and standards suffer. The assessment of attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science is better and the use of self-assessment as a regular aspect of planning in design and technology is a positive feature in the teaching of that subject. However there has been no extension of these good practices to other subjects.
44. The marking of pupils' work is generally sound, and in some cases, where the teaching is well managed and well planned, it provides the pupils with clear guidance as to what they must do to improve. In other classes where the marking lacks this rigour there is less clear guidance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The majority of parents are supportive of the school and value the educational opportunities and pastoral care that the school provides for their children. At the last inspection communications with parents were found to be good, parents felt well informed and that staff were readily available to discuss any issues they might wish to raise. The current inspection finds the quality of the information provided for parents is good, regular, well presented and informative about all aspects of the life of the school. The good quality annual written reports to parents are specific for each child, setting targets and elaborating on areas for greater endeavour or achievement. Staff are accessible at the beginning and end of the day to chat to parents. Parents with younger children are seen exchanging information with class teachers as they bring their child to school or escort them home.
46. However, at the pre-inspection meeting and on analysis of the questionnaire returns, there is a significant number of parents, although in a minority, who have strongly negative views about the work of the school. These parents feel they are unable to receive a satisfactory response to their concerns or do not have sufficient information about their child's progress.

The current inspection finds some of their views to be incorrect, or their expectations to be unrealistic in the context of the school.

47. The information for parents about the school is sensible, informative and regular. Newsletters are supplemented with detailed class information from teachers explaining curriculum work, topics, work planned and areas where parental help could be needed, for example encouragement in researching the Ancient Greeks. Letters from the governors give parents full details of new classroom and staff arrangements, the homework policy extract in the letter of welcome sets out daily objectives and given times for each year group. Teaching staff are available for consultation in the autumn and spring terms, with a realistic choice of times and dates open to parents. The previous inspection found the delivery of the pupils' annual written reports late in the summer term left little time for parents to approach staff with questions. The school now issues this report earlier in the summer term. The reports are very good, giving detailed information about all areas of the curriculum, with clear reference to individual pupils' attainment and progress. Target areas for greater endeavour and parental assistance are given and the pupils' personal development clearly set out. Parents are invited to contact staff to discuss any aspect of the report. Parents of children with special educational needs feel well informed and believe the provision to be good.
48. A number of parents and members of the community assist in school on a regular basis, helping with literacy lessons, for example, with display work or during a science lesson on healthy eating in Year 1. Such help is valued by staff and this involvement with the school is beneficial to the social and personal development of the pupils and to their learning. There are careful arrangements for the transition of Year 6 pupils to secondary school, with an exchange of pupil records, 'taster' days and staff consultations. Pupils express their confidence in these arrangements. There is some parental confusion about the level of homework given to different year groups but the majority of parents are satisfied with the homework given. Inspection findings are that the information provided by the school to parents is good. Staff try hard and usually successfully, to meet the particularly diverse views and demands of parents. The school however, is failing to reach a minority of disaffected parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher provides sound leadership and management. The role of the senior management team and the subject co-ordinators has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science have taken on more responsibility for managing their subjects and they have started to monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects, although there is too little evaluation and development of teaching arising from this monitoring. The governing body has taken the wise decision this school year to release the headteacher from classes two days a week to fulfil his management responsibilities. He has made a start on the important task of monitoring teaching. So far, however, this has not been a rigorous process involving the systematic evaluation of the quality of teaching and leading to development and improvement and so raising standards.
50. The school has appropriate aims which are published in the prospectus. These are concerned with the promotion of good relationships and high achievement, with pupils fulfilling their potential, with care for others and independence of thought and expression. These aims are substantially met. There are good relationships and pupils do care for one another. However, achievement is not as high as it might be by the time pupils leave the

school at the age of 11, because not enough is expected of the most able pupils and they do not reach their full potential.

51. The school development plan clearly sets out an appropriate number of suitable priorities for school improvement and includes success criteria, budget implications and monitoring responsibilities. Governors are well involved in setting the agenda for school improvement and monitoring progress towards targets set in the school development plan. A working party of governors regularly checks for progress on school development plan priorities, updates targets accordingly and reports to the full governing body.
52. The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of priorities for school improvement. Governors are very closely involved in the work and life of the school, all governors having links with subjects or aspects of the school's work, such as special educational needs and health and safety and there is an appropriate committee structure. Governors also have links with other local schools and this helps them to see the school in context and understand how its performance compares with that of others. The governing body considers the results of annual tests and assessments and takes appropriate action to raise standards. For example, concern about test results in 1999 informed their setting of some of the headteacher's performance targets for the subsequent year. Their clear understanding of the school and commitment to school improvement means that they are well placed to make further improvements in the quality of education provided and the standards achieved.
53. Overall the staffing, the accommodation and the learning resources are good. There are sufficient teachers with relevant qualifications and experience to match the demands of the curriculum and meet the needs of all pupils. The school has the potential to be an appropriate institution for the training of new teachers. Learning support staff give very good support, especially to those pupils who have special educational needs, helping them to make very good progress towards the learning targets set for them. Except for information and communication technology, there are sufficient resources at the school's disposal to meet the needs of the curriculum, and these are of good quality. The accommodation is well maintained and it is sufficiently spacious to allow the full curriculum to be taught effectively, including the full physical education curriculum.
54. There is an appropriately constituted finance committee of the governing body. This committee reviews, controls and monitors the budget and reports at least once each term to the full governing body. Appropriate use is made of funds provided by the Bliss Charitable Trust, for example to support pupils' instrumental music tuition and the annual residential visit for the oldest pupils. Educational priorities are supported through effective financial planning and funds, including specific grants, are used efficiently to match the school's intended development. For example, the employment of the learning support assistant for special educational needs arose from the issues raised in the previous inspection report. The school has devoted funds specifically to such initiatives with the purpose of meeting pupils' needs and raising standards and the quality of its provision. However, the school has only just started to determine the principles of 'best value' upon which the benefits of initiatives may be judged. Similarly, the school's strategy for staff appraisal and performance management is at an early stage of development. It has appropriately begun with the headteacher for whom the governing body has set suitable performance targets.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. To improve the quality of education and raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- Put in place regular systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher of the quality of teaching, leading to developmental feedback to teachers, to improve the quality of teaching and so raise standards (paragraph 49)
- Plan for and provide pupils with regular opportunities to use their skills in information and communication technology in other subjects (paragraph 26)
- Ensure that work, especially in mathematics and science, is appropriately matched to the needs and capabilities of all pupils, particularly the most able (paragraphs 22, 23)
- Ensure that full use is made of the school's systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and that assessment information is used to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching (paragraph 43)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that pupils pay greater attention to the careful use of handwriting and the presentation of their work in all subjects. (paragraph 65)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

37

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	22	53	17	8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR– Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	129
--	-----

Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	1
---	---

Special educational needs

YR– Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
---	---

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33
---	----

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
---	---

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
--	---

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4
--	---

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	10	11	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (88)	100 (94)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (88)	100 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. As the school has fewer than 11 boys or girls in the year group, the table omits totals for boys and girls.

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	14	9	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (80)	87 (53)	91 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
-----------------------	--	---------	-------------	---------

Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	21	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (80)	87 (67)	91 (73)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. As the school has fewer than 11 boys or girls in the year group, the table omits totals for boys and girls.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	102
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	228,865
Total expenditure	218,182
Expenditure per pupil	1,692
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,950
Balance carried forward to next year	10,683

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires returned

129
55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	44	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	47	13	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	56	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	29	22	15	2
The teaching is good.	35	40	22	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	35	25	16	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	31	5	15	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	40	16	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	42	18	15	0
The school is well led and managed.	24	55	9	9	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	42	15	5	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	4	29	29	31	7

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

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

56. The children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well and children are well on course to reach the early learning goals in this area by the end of their year in the reception class. Most children speak confidently in a group, for example as they discuss and read together the story of Goldilocks and as they tell one another their 'news' on Monday morning, for instance about where they have been and about their family's preparations for Christmas. They concentrate well and listen carefully, for example as the teacher reads a story and as they learn about the number five and count out five objects together from a picture. There are very good opportunities for the children to be independent and take responsibility. They change their clothes ready for physical education sessions, with a minimum of adult help and get their own aprons on for painting and water play. Snack time gives the children very good opportunities for independence and responsibility. They take it in turns to get the snack ready and hand it round, confidently cutting up cheese and pineapple, for example, and fixing it on cocktail sticks. They take themselves to the toilet unaided and wash their hands, taking responsibility for registering the fact that they have left the room by attaching their photograph to a board by the door. They follow a similar routine when going outside to play. The children are good at choosing an activity independently and settling to work without direct supervision, seen for example as children played in the water tray, painted and made hand puppets. They are getting the idea that they need to put their hand up and wait their turn before speaking. They are learning to share and take turns well, for instance sharing scissors and glue sensibly. Children are managed well and behaviour is good and this helps them to get on with their work well, concentrate and persevere and make good progress in their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

57. The teacher promotes communication, language and literacy well and children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. A few will reach this point before the end of the year. Children mostly speak clearly and confidently. They enjoy stories and rhymes, listening with fascination, for example, to story tapes on the tape recorder. They enjoy good opportunities to make up their own stories as, for instance, when they finish in their own way the story of Goldilocks, drawing the pictures and telling the teacher what to write. They then enjoy sharing their own version of the story with the rest of the class. The children make a good start on learning to read. They all know that print carries meaning, that pages turn and that we read from left to right and from the front of a book to the back in English. They learn about letters of the alphabet, their names and especially their sounds and this is promoted well through the 'letter of the week'. During the inspection the letter of the week was 'G' and the children had all made a good attempt at writing the letter for themselves, saying its sound and they had enjoyed collecting things which start with that sound, such as 'golf' pictures and 'grass'. All the children recognise their own name and some recognise the names of some of their friends. They mostly write their own name independently, without the need to copy. Speaking skills are developed well, for example as the children use the puppets they have made to act out the story of the 'Runaway Chapati'.

MATHEMATICS

58. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals for mathematics. They mostly know the numbers one to ten and the order in which they come. They greatly enjoy putting the 'naughty numbers' in order as they muddle themselves up on the number line when the children are out of the room. All the children know the numbers one to five and can confidently count five objects, such as teddy bears. They can add numbers in a practical setting, for instance working out what the total number is if they add one more bear. Some children can subtract practically as well, working out the number left if they take away one or more bears. The children learn to use appropriate mathematical language, for example they talk about 'big' and 'small' objects and make a collection, for instance bottles, to illustrate the meaning of these terms.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

59. The teacher promotes knowledge and understanding of the world well and the children are well on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. They know about some of the everyday uses of technology and they have good practical experience, for example using the computer to help develop early number and letter recognition skills and using the tape recorder to listen to taped stories. They control the computer using the mouse and adjust the volume on the tape player using a sliding control mechanism. The children have very good opportunities to find out about past and present events in their own lives and those of others, for example through the topic, 'Me, my family and my surroundings'. They enjoy looking at photographs of themselves and members of staff as babies and trying to work out who is who. They learn about growth and development from infancy, through childhood to adulthood. They understand that they can do things when they are grown up that they could not do as babies. They find out about and identify features of their surroundings, for example as they go for a walk round the village and look at the different buildings, including their home.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

60. Physical development is promoted well and children are securely on course to reach the early learning goals by the age of five. They learn to move safely and with growing confidence and skill, for example as they use the large toys in the outdoor area. Their small muscle development and control is promoted well through many good opportunities, for example to cut, stick, join and build as they make hand puppets and tissue paper flowers. There are good regular opportunities for the children to travel around, under, over and through the balancing and climbing equipment in the school hall.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

61. Creative development is promoted well. The children are well on course to reach the early learning goals by the age of five. There are many good opportunities for the children to explore paint, malleable materials such as play dough, water, glue and many different types of card and paper. They have good regular opportunities to make music, to listen to sounds and try to identify them, to sing, clap and beat rhythms. They have good opportunities to develop their imagination, for example as they make up and act out puppet plays and there are some good opportunities for imaginative role play, for instance in the 'house'. There are very good opportunities to respond to what they feel, smell and taste, for example as they think and talk about the sensations of their senses as they eat their snack, identifying things which are crunchy, juicy, sticky and so on.

ENGLISH

62. The findings of the previous inspection in 1996 indicated that the standards achieved in English by seven and 11 year-olds were good. This position has not changed significantly. Pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests is good, and a higher than average level has been maintained over a substantial period of time. The standards achieved by pupils aged seven are better than those usually found in similar schools. Standards at 11 are average when compared to those found in similar schools.
63. The standards noted during the current inspection are good overall. Some attainment is very good. For example, pupils develop very good reading skills at all stages and their general enjoyment of books is evident. The youngest pupils apply their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds successfully when tackling unfamiliar words and, by the age of seven, can readily discuss the characters and events in stories. Older pupils use books well for both general reading enjoyment, and for finding out information. Most have knowledge of a wide range of authors and, by the age of 11, can discuss the characters and plots of stories, expressing their likes and dislikes. Pupils' reference skills are very good by the time they leave the school at the age of 11. These are developed very effectively from an early stage, and pupils of all ages use the school's library resources with familiar ease when looking for information on the topics they are studying.
64. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are usually well developed by the time they are seven. Their confidence in answering teachers' questions and in expressing their ideas and views develops well as they move through the school. Most are articulate and eager to contribute in lessons. This aspect is developed effectively at all stages.
65. Pupils' writing skills are average overall. What they say in their writing is often imaginative and interesting at all ages. Their grammar and punctuation skills are satisfactory. They write diaries, accounts of events, reports, and letters, for example, using their skills effectively across the wide range of the curriculum. The school promotes pupils' skills in writing poetry very well. Pupils of seven and 11 write well, for example constructing thoughtful pieces to illustrate themes such as the senses or feelings. However, in two important aspects of English the standards are only average. These are in spelling and in handwriting. Pupils have a good understanding of the sounds of letters and letter combinations. This feature permeates much of their spelling. For example, words that include 'tion', as in 'competition', are often spelled with the similar sounding 'shone' and sometimes 'shun'. Insufficient attention is paid to ensuring that pupils' develop good spelling skills at each stage. Similarly, even pupils who have developed a neat, cursive, joined handwriting style are not encouraged sufficiently to use it at all times. Both these factors and the general lack of good quality presentation of work detract significantly from the overall quality of the work. Good ideas and imaginative work therefore have an undeservedly lesser quality about them. The school has recognised that these aspects are in need of further development, but better standards need to be encouraged by all the teaching staff, if these are to improve.
66. The teaching of English is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and most was good. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and the teachers are using it effectively. This is having a beneficial effect in ensuring that pupils encounter a wide and challenging programme of work, and standards are improving.
67. Teachers plan well for lessons and organise and manage the activities efficiently. They take good account of the needs of different groups of pupils when planning work, so that pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and those with the potential for higher attainment are often given extension work. The pace of lessons is usually brisk and the teachers' expectations for thoughtful work and good endeavour are

appropriately high. Teachers use a wide and rich vocabulary to encourage pupils' interest in new words. They also stress the accurate use of vocabulary when pupils use descriptive words, for example, in describing the smell of a favourite place or in using verbs and adverbs to describe how characters say things. On occasions, the length of teachers' introductions to lessons is too long. The amount of time the pupils have to spend on the activities is, consequently, shortened. This curtails the vital plenary periods at the end of the lessons, when what has been learned is discussed. A further aspect that requires attention is the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in English. While some good work was noted here, the use of computers is generally insufficient and important opportunities for the pupils to create, redraft, and publish their work, with high standards of presentation, are missed.

68. The good teaching promotes the pupils' interest in language effectively. Pupils respond well to the tasks set. They work hard, behave well in lessons, and share ideas confidently and beneficially. The very good support given to those with special educational needs allows them to work effectively in the normal classroom situation and reach the standards of which they are capable. Good additional support is provided here in the development of literacy skills – often with the aid of a computer! Pupils with English as an additional language experience no significant difficulties. They are very effectively assimilated into the general pattern of learning and consequently achieve well.
69. The co-ordinator for English is knowledgeable and skilful. She promotes the subject well, and has a firm grasp of the needs of the English curriculum and the strengths and current weaknesses of the school's provision. The school is taking positive action to remedy the latter. Its resources for the development of English and in particular pupils' literacy skills, are very good. There is a library of good quality. Pupils use this well, and often independently.

MATHEMATICS

70. In the Year 2000 national tests and assessments for 11 year olds standards in mathematics were average compared to all schools nationally but below average compared to similar schools. That standards are average compared to all schools nationally is confirmed by inspection evidence. The fact that they are below average compared to similar schools means that these pupils should do better. They do not do as well as they should because there are not enough challenging tasks for pupils of average and above average ability. In the mixed age classes at this school teachers concentrate well on matching tasks to different age groups, but they are not so good at matching tasks to pupils' ability levels in the upper part of the school.
71. By the time they are 11 most pupils know about many of the properties of common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, such as a triangle, rhombus, kite, cylinder and sphere. They use compasses and protractors to construct shapes such as a rectangle, equilateral triangle and isosceles triangle. They know that a polyomino is a shape made up of many squares. Pupils know that a square corner measures 90 degrees. They measure accurately in centimetres, for example as they construct 5 centimetre squares. They all know what parallel lines are and what 'perpendicular' means. Pupils use coordinates to find locations on a map. They know about probability in simple terms – that there is no chance of some things happening, that others are likely and that others are certain. In work which links well with their studies in history pupils learn about the Egyptian number system. They recognise square numbers to 12x12 and start to learn about Pythagoras's Theorem.
72. In the most recent national tests and assessments for seven year olds standards in mathematics were well above average compared to all schools nationally and also

compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are above average by the age of seven. Most pupils measure using standard and non-standard units of length, for example they measure the teddy bear's arm length, head, tummy and so on in centimetres and they measure the blackboard, door and radiator in hand spans and digits. They know the names of some common two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, rectangle and pentagon and they identify simple fractions in a practical way, for example shading in half a circle or a square. Most know the number of days in a week, in two weeks and four weeks. They know the number of minutes in an hour and half an hour, the number of months in a year and the number of seconds in a minute. They tell the time to the hour and most understand that the minute hand has moved half way round the clock when it reaches the figure six.

73. Teaching and learning are good for the pupils aged from five to seven and satisfactory for pupils aged from seven to 11. The weakness in teaching the oldest pupils lies in the failure to match tasks closely enough to pupils' needs, especially to help the most able fulfil their potential. The National Numeracy Strategy is used well by all teachers. Its use has helped raise standards satisfactorily since the last inspection, the trend in improvement being similar to the national trend. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and this helps them explain and demonstrate things clearly and so promote good learning. This was seen, for example, in a lesson in Year 2 on telling the time, where the teacher gave a very clear explanation and demonstration of the hour hand moving 'past' the hour as the minute hand moved on to the figure six. The teacher related this very well to the pupils' understanding of fractions to help them understand 'half-past' and this helped them learn and understand.
74. The subject is managed well by the headteacher who has undertaken appropriate recent training on numeracy. There has been some monitoring of the quality of teaching, but it is not yet evaluative and developmental enough.

SCIENCE

75. By the time the pupils are seven the proportion of them assessed by their teachers as attaining the nationally expected level in science is very high when compared with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools their performance is still very high. The proportion judged to be reaching the higher level, Level 3, when compared with other schools nationally is found to be well above average and is still above the average when compared with similar schools.
76. These high standards are not maintained throughout the school. The results of the most recent national tests show that when pupils leave the school at the age of 11 years standards are in line with the national average for all schools but below that of similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in science are average by the age of 11. The school has phased in a new scheme of work for science over the past few years, based on national recommendations from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This new scheme is now operative through all four years for pupils aged from seven to 11 and it is having an effect in raising standards. This scheme of work pays more attention to scientific thinking than the accumulation of scientific information and enables the pupils to become scientifically aware. The school's analysis of test results suggested that some pupils lacked confidence and accuracy in interpreting the intention of some of the questions in tests. The new scheme has been adopted with this problem in mind. The closer attention paid to the development of a more extensive scientific vocabulary provides the pupils with the means both to understand and communicate scientific ideas accurately.

77. Pupils aged from five to seven years demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding of what they and other living things need to survive, and they know about their senses. They find out about plants and how they grow making use of the environmental area in the school grounds. Pupils accurately sort everyday objects into categories depending on what they are made of, and they know about the special properties of various materials. They study the use of electricity, and its dangers. This work is linked with design and technology as they include simple circuits to light up models they make. The natural curiosity of the pupils is fostered well as they are helped to pose questions, collect evidence and consider it carefully as they study the various aspects of science that are covered.
78. This range of subjects and the depth at which they are studied continues to develop throughout Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Pupils understand and use the notion of 'fair testing' as they devise experiments in, for example, methods for separating different substances. They recognise the need to make systematic observations and to record them accurately, although their enthusiasm sometimes overwhelms their neatness and hence accuracy. In developing their understanding of the human body they devise experiments dealing with the effects of exercise, and recognise well the demands of 'healthy eating' based on a clear analysis and categorisation of different foods. The science programme includes an effective section on the dangers of drug misuse and the pupils have a sound understanding of this. Good use is made of work done in literacy and numeracy to improve the quality of science and links with other subjects are made so that the education the pupils receive has a unity about it. Standards in science have been maintained since the last inspection. Progress over the past four years, which has varied from year to year as the abilities of the groups of pupils have changed, has been in line with national trends. Suggestions for improvement made in the last inspection, such as the improvement in coherence and consistency of assessment have been tackled with some success, while standards in teaching have improved.
79. The teaching of pupils aged five to seven years of age is good overall, while that of pupils aged from eight to 11 is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching of science was observed. All the teachers demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subject and of how it should be taught. The planning of lessons is generally satisfactory, but particularly imaginative and effective for the younger pupils. The creation of four single-year classes for the teaching of science for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 makes for good progress and higher standards as the work is more closely matched to the varying abilities of the pupils. Teachers' use of assessment in science is inconsistent. The best examples of assessment of pupils' work include clear targets for them to improve their results. The use of homework is a positive element in the teaching and learning of science.
80. The quality of learning in science is generally good and never less than satisfactory. Pupils enjoy the subject and work hard at it. When the higher attaining older pupils are challenged by the work they make good progress, but the work is not always matched specifically to their levels of ability.
81. The provision of science for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress throughout the school.
82. The subject is well managed; the scheme of work adapted for the particular situation of the school ensures a good range of experiences for the pupils and good quality learning. The National Curriculum is covered for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Standards in the subject have been maintained and provision for improvement set in place during a period when the pressure to meet conflicting demands has been great, especially in a small school where staff carry several curriculum responsibilities.

ART

83. By the time they are seven pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with what is usual at that age. They use their sketch books to record observations of what they see. They are encouraged to experiment with colour, mixing paints to achieve different tones and shades. The work they are set also develops their imagination through the use of good resources. For example they are encouraged to draw and paint portraits using the work of a wide range of well-known painters as a stimulus. This development has met one of the criticisms of the previous inspection. Pupils become aware of the work not only of painters like Van Gogh, but also a wider range including Giacometti, Chagall, Picasso and Modigliani. The older pupils in the school also develop paintings in the style of Australian Aboriginal painters.
84. Three-dimensional work is also included in the curriculum and good use is made of the kiln. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have made, fired and glazed pottery relief pictures of houses which are very imaginative and well produced. Art and craft and design and technology are closely linked in the curriculum for example in the work on portraits in art associated with the design of photograph frames in craft, design technology. Appropriate provision is made in art lessons for pupils with varying levels of attainment to achieve success; this applies particularly to those with special educational needs.
85. The pupils of 11 years of age also attain standards which are similar to those found nationally at that age. They develop their skills in observing what they see and use their sketchbooks effectively. They make pictures using a variety of media for example developing work on silhouettes of each other into arresting silhouette pictures of evening townscapes using sunset coloured tissue papers along with black paper outlines of buildings. They also explore the making of pictures with restricted colour ranges such as a series of black and white designs. Pupils continue to explore colour mixing so that they can more readily express themselves.
86. Art is used to broaden pupils' experience in association with other areas of the curriculum; for example a series of photographs of the same tree over the course of a year provided not only a scientific record, but also an imaginative picture. Work on the ancient Egyptians in history has included the use of a wide range of interesting media to reproduce good quality examples of Egyptian art. Pupils of all levels of attainment develop their artistic skills appropriately, including those with special educational needs. When pupils talk about their work in art and how they can improve it they use appropriate terms and express themselves effectively.
87. The previous inspection report noted that there was too limited a choice of materials for pupils' art. This has been rectified as has also the fact that there was too narrow a range of artists whose work was looked at.
88. The teaching of art to pupils aged from seven to 11 that was observed was generally satisfactory. However, there was some weakness in the organisation of materials leading to rushed activities and inappropriate classroom management in one, untypical, lesson. Otherwise the teaching throughout the school displayed a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of how pupils develop in art. The work scrutinised of pupils aged from five to seven indicated that the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory and on occasions good. Generally the expectations of what the pupils would achieve were set at appropriate levels and the pupils responded well. Lessons are well planned and the resources made available are of a good quality. This enhances the quality of work that the pupils produce. Support staff are well deployed, especially to help pupils with special

educational needs. Knowledgeable parents are also used effectively to support pupils' learning in this subject.

89. The current scheme of work for art is an adaptation of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's recommendations and this ensures that the range of art opportunities is wide enough to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
90. The pupils enjoy art and are co-operative with one another in sharing resources and equipment. They are creative and, when well taught, work hard to produce pictures and objects of which they can be proud. The style of teaching throughout the school encourages a good degree of independence among the pupils and this encourages them to persevere with their work. Art plays a significant role in the provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. The good standards achieved by pupils at the ages of seven and 11 are both in advance of what is typical of pupils of those ages. Their designing methods and skills are better than is usually found and these are supported by equally good skills in making.
92. The work undertaken in design and technology throughout the school is marked by the pride pupils take in their work and the high standards of finish that the teachers draw from them. Pupils respond very well to the challenges with which they are presented, for example as the seven year olds design and make suitable photograph frames as presents. The structures are accurately and strongly made using a variety of methods of joining while the decorations are imaginative ranging from embossed and raised silver foil to a fluffy pink fur fabric finish. The older pupils in the top class used their historical knowledge to support their designs for a game derived from ancient Egyptian models. They drew their designs, selected materials and discussed methods of joining the parts of the board carefully, working very well individually with the class teacher or in pairs or trios. The discussions were serious and yet good-humoured with a good level of co-operative give and take leading effectively to well designed artefacts.
93. The good quality of pupils' designs for their products was evidenced by the good use that was made of the designs to which the pupils referred as the work progressed. The materials to be used in the construction of the frames or games were carefully measured and then checked before they were cut. Materials were shared generously and maturely even by the younger pupils. A further good feature of the work was the careful self-assessment of both their designs and the resultant creations, made by the pupils in all parts of the school. The good standards observed in the current inspection represent good progress in the subject since the last one. The quality of the design process is improved and the objects are made with increased care over presentation and finish.
94. The scheme of work is a careful and specific adaptation of the national recommendations from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority produced by the co-ordinator who is an enthusiast. The resulting support provided for the staff is of a good quality and this enhances the standards in the school well.
95. The teaching of design and technology is good overall and often very good. The subject is well planned and successfully related to other areas of the curriculum. This maintains and strengthens pupils' interest and motivation. The designing element is improved as the pupils take note of more information derived from other subjects, such as history, for their designs. The close links with art improve pupils' attention to the finish they give to their

creations. Lessons are well planned so that no time is wasted and a good pace of learning is maintained. This helps the pupils to succeed and produce things of which they can be proud in the time that is allocated to the subject. This applies to all the pupils whatever their levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs who are provided with good levels of support. The good quality learning opportunities enjoyed by pupils encourages them to work hard and imaginatively. They recall past work and use their experience to develop what they are currently doing. They respond well to the limitations placed on the structure and nature of the game they are designing, recognising that this increases the element of challenge, to which they respond well. The good quality of classroom management enables the pupils to develop their ideas and skills effectively. Design and technology plays a significant role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the co-operative and creative nature of the work linked with a number of subject areas.

GEOGRAPHY

96. The school's timetabling arrangements for the humanities subjects means that these are taught at particular periods during the year. It was not possible to observe lessons in geography during the inspection. Consequently, it is not possible to make judgements on the quality of the teaching in the subject. Evidence was taken from the scrutiny of work in wall displays and from teachers' planning.
97. There is sound evidence that pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of geographical terms, weather patterns, and the human and physical features of different localities. They also carry out fieldwork, for example, with studies based in their local area, and they make comparisons between their own environment and those of other places. This indicates that there is a full programme of appropriate work that matches the National Curriculum requirements, and that the overall attainment of the pupils is in line with that found nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

HISTORY

98. Standards in history were similar to those found nationally at the time of the last inspection. This position has not changed significantly.
99. By the age of seven pupils have an increasingly sound knowledge of some of the important events of the past. Through studies of their own families they gain an understanding of how things change. They are aware of the lives of some famous people, and gradually gain a sense of chronology by sequencing events and comparing objects used in the past with their equivalents today. By the age of 11 pupils show a clear understanding of the ways of life of people of different times. They can discuss these, distinguish differences and ask and respond to questions about the past. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 can, for example, explain what papyrus is and what it was used for by the peoples of Ancient Egypt. They learn hieroglyphics and can compose their own messages using a code and tools equivalent to those used in the historical period. Similar study work was noted for Viking history and for work on Victorian Britain. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of chronology is satisfactorily extended.
100. Lessons in history are often exciting. They frequently involve 'hands-on' activities where artefacts are made available for study as well as the secondary sources of books and illustrations. For example, good use is made of role-play at Years 5 and 6. In a drama lesson, the pupils were expected to enact the attempted assassination of Tutenkhamun, acting as guards, ordinary people, and would-be assassins. This deepened the pupils' knowledge and consequences of possible events and the manners and culture of the time.

101. Teaching is often very good. Lessons are planned efficiently, and the objectives for the lessons are well met. Teachers ask pertinent questions and try to ensure that pupils can distinguish between fact and opinion. They mostly provide appropriate situations and resources for pupils to learn effectively. In the best lessons pupils are constantly challenged. They show interest and excitement in their learning. In other lessons, the teaching is satisfactory, but does not ensure that the learning is sufficiently linked to previous work. For example, work on an historical survey of the local area missed valuable opportunities to use previously gained information on houses in the village, and work was not sufficiently matched to the pupils' different stages of development. Consequently, the pupils' overall progress was slower than expected, considering their potential.
102. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning. While there is firm evidence that a number of the pupils voluntarily use their own CD ROMs to help them in their researches, this is not a regular feature of the school's day-to-day provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are similar to those found nationally at the ages of seven and 11. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use their ICT skills to support their learning in other subjects. There are some examples of good practice, for example as pupils with special educational needs use computers to help them learn literacy and numeracy skills. In Years 5 and 6 some good use is made of ICT for example as pupils produce word-processed 'newspaper reports' of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. There is some use of ICT in Years 3 and 4 as pupils collect and analyse data. But, overall, too little use is made of ICT skills.
104. By the time they are 11 pupils use word-processing software successfully, for example to produce labels for their work and to produce accounts of what they have learned, sometimes skilfully adding graphics. They use the mouse to draw pictures which they save and print. Pupils use a camera, for example, to take autumn pictures and photographs of one another and they design and print Christmas cards. They use the computer to draw maps in connection with their work in geography and they have experience of the use of 'clip art'. There is some good work to support their studies in history, for example using software on Ancient Greece. Pupils edit and re-draft their work making use of appropriate word-processing software. They use ICT to support their work in science on heating and cooling and on pulse rates. Year 6 pupils take part in a very helpful residential activity/ICT visit during the spring term and this provides the stimulus for further ICT work in school. Pupils make use of email in their researches. They learn to use the computer for work on control, for example programming the 'roamer' and the screen 'turtle' to move in a pre-determined sequence of movements.
105. Only one lesson in ICT was observed during the inspection and so it is not possible to give a judgement on the quality of teaching. In the one lesson seen the teaching of keyboard skills was unsatisfactory as it had little to do with ICT skills and was not well planned or managed.
106. The equipment for teaching and learning ICT is limited and this does not encourage teachers or pupils to make as much use of ICT in other subjects as they might. There has been no systematic monitoring of the teaching and learning.

MUSIC

107. Standards in music are similar to those found nationally at the ages of seven and 11. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
108. While standards in singing are satisfactory for the pupils aged from five to seven, they are modest. The youngest children have many opportunities for singing and chanting rhymes and simple songs. They sing with some enthusiasm, but elsewhere in the school, the quality of the singing is poor. Insufficient attention is given to correct posture, to breathing correctly, and to the development of situations where pupils can experience pleasure in using the voice in a communal activity. For the older pupils, singing activities rely too heavily on following hymn texts, rather than learning songs by heart and for enjoyment. Little is done to develop and encourage their enthusiasm and expertise. This significantly depresses the spiritual nature of their musical experiences and it adds little to the overall cultural ethos of the school.
109. Some lessons are more vibrant. One seen at Years 5 and 6 was very good. The pupils were encouraged to listen to music following particular themes, for example, related to winter. They had opportunities for careful listening, which they made good use of. They were invited to express opinions about it and to say which instruments best represent cold or snow, or have a wintry feel. Having listened, the pupils then, in self-chosen groups, engaged in working out a pattern of sounds of their own to illustrate a similar theme. They used sounds made with their mouths and bodies effectively, combining these with the playing of percussion instruments. They used these instruments thoughtfully and to good effect, and showed evident enjoyment. Their listening and performing skills were advanced.
110. There is a range of extra-curricular opportunities for music, with tuition in guitar and other stringed instruments, and woodwind, taught by peripatetic teachers. None of these activities were observed during the inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make judgements on the standards and the quality of the activities.
111. There is a music policy, but the school has not adopted an appropriate scheme of work for the subject to support the teachers efficiently in their planning and provision. This was so at the time of the last inspection, and the situation is unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress is disjointed and uneven in consequence. Their progress depends on the confidence of individual teachers in providing for the subject, which not all of them have, and whether the pupils take advantage of the extra tuition available.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Standards in physical education are typical of those found nationally by the age of seven. No judgement can be made about standards at the age of 11, as no lessons for this age group were seen. Although it was possible to observe only gymnastics lessons, it is clear from teachers' planning that the full physical education programme is planned for and that it meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.
113. Pupils aged seven show good body control and co-ordination as they move around the floor and the apparatus using curling and stretching movements. They use their body skilfully to create good symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes. The teaching seen was good, with teachers making good use of pupils to demonstrate their performance, so encouraging the others to try harder and improve what they do. Class control was good, so that pupils behaved well and worked hard. Teachers pay good attention to safety and ensure that pupils understand the rules for safe working, for example that they observe simple rules about the number of pupils allowed on the apparatus at any one time.

114. Resources for physical education are good, with particularly good quality gymnastics equipment. There has not yet been any systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching in physical education, the school's emphasis quite rightly being on literacy and numeracy.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. Standards in religious education are generally in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabuses in use. The school's scheme of work is based on the Northamptonshire and Cornwall Agreed Syllabuses of religious education which the governing body has adopted for the school. While the pupils are introduced to religions other than Christianity which are found in Britain in general as well as in Northampton and in nearby urban areas, the main thrust of the pupils' studies are Christian in character.
116. The pupils from five to seven years of age make satisfactory progress in religious education. They are familiar with a number of stories from the Christian Bible and recognise the religious teaching contained within them. They confidently identify the New Testament as being principally about Jesus and his teaching. In learning the story of St. Nicholas, and the festivities associated with his day in the Netherlands from one of the pupils, they made clear links between the story and the giving of presents associated with Christmas. The pupils spoke well about the importance of giving as well as receiving presents in the Christian view of the celebration of Christmas. In a mixed class of Year 2 and Year 3 pupils all of them demonstrated a good range of knowledge about the season of Advent and its relation to Christmas as they identified and used 'advent' words to complete an advent calendar. The same group made intelligent and knowledgeable links between advent candles and the other celebrations of light which they had studied such as Diwali and Hanukah.
117. The pupils aged from seven to 11 also make satisfactory progress. In their work on Advent they were less secure in their knowledge about New Testament stories supporting the teaching, but they recognised its link with the other festivals of light they have learnt about. Occasionally, in the cycle of topics studied in religious education, the pupils visit a Sikh Gurdwara and a Jewish Synagogue as part of their study of places of worship. They are also familiar with local churches and chapels not only as places in which they participate in celebrations but as examples of places of worship for differing groups of Christians.
118. The teaching of religious education for the younger pupils is good; the teachers have a good grasp of the subject and of how the pupils respond to their teaching. The work is well planned and imaginatively delivered so that the interest of the pupils is maintained. The teachers' management of both the subject and the classes is good, the pupils are motivated well and the work they are set to do, often taking the form of discussion, is well managed so that they are all involved.
119. The teaching of religious education to the older pupils is generally satisfactory, though there is some unsatisfactory teaching where the work has not been planned effectively with the pupils' abilities and range of interests properly catered for. Also where the teaching is less satisfactory the pace of the lessons is slower and the interest of the pupils is not maintained. Elsewhere the teachers' knowledge of the subject, methods of teaching and management of the class enable the pupils to make satisfactory progress and to achieve satisfactory standards. The teachers' expectations of what the pupils will accomplish in this subject are not as high as in others.

120. Throughout the school there is a tendency to follow up teaching by discussion rather than by making a written record of what is learnt. This makes reporting on what the pupils know, understand and can do in religious education harder to accomplish. Although a method of assessing religious education against national levels has been introduced to the staff, there was no evidence of it being used extensively.
121. The co-ordination of the subject is sound. The two syllabuses currently used are due for renewal in the near future this will inevitably affect the development of the subject, and will provide opportunities to review what is currently done.
122. The class assemblies include teaching as well as worship elements so that the pupils are able to make the links between beliefs and behaviour satisfactorily. This has a significant part to play in their spiritual, moral and cultural development.