

INSPECTION REPORT

WIGLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wigley, Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112514

Headteacher: Mr J Crawford

Reporting inspector: Mrs R Grant
16447

Dates of inspection: 22 – 25 January 2001

Inspection number: 193200

Full 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: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Old Brampton
Chesterfield
Derbyshire

Postcode: S42 7JJ

Telephone number: 01246 566432

Fax number: n/a

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs L Vickers

Date of previous inspection: 7 March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16447	Mrs R Grant	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Music Physical Education Religious Education Special Educational Needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) the school's results and achievements b) pupil's attitudes, values and personal development How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13448	Mrs D Lloyd	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2616	Mr P Cole	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information Technology Art Design and Technology Equal Opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Peak Education Partnership
19 Huddersfield Road
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S70 2LT

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 Complaints Manager
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	7
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?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This very small, rural primary school is on the outskirts of Chesterfield, towards Baslow in Derbyshire. A few of the 51 children on roll come from the immediate area, others from nearby villages and farms. The school is popular with parents and has a waiting list for admittance to the reception class. There is no nursery, and children have had a range of pre-school experiences prior to entry; some none at all. Most, however, are well supported by parents and begin school ready to learn. Their attainment on entry varies from year to year; there are so few children that it is difficult to detect a consistent pattern. Their language, communication and social skills are within the usual range for pupils of this age, and are sometimes good. Overall, pupils come from favourable backgrounds; the proportion eligible for free school meals, for example, is well below the national average. No pupils are from ethnic minority groups. Only two pupils have been identified with special educational needs that require the involvement of outside specialists; one of these has a formal statement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring school with a family atmosphere that is valued by parents. In it, pupils are helped to become secure and confident. Teachers mainly meet the challenge of teaching several age groups in one class well, and pupils make satisfactory progress, overall. Standards attained by 11 year olds are mainly average. Leadership and management are sound. The headteacher, governors and staff work well together. All are committed to the school, and work hard to overcome the difficulties imposed by the very cramped accommodation. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Reading standards are good, and the brighter juniors develop good problem solving skills in mathematics and science;
- Teaching, particularly for the infants, where good standards are achieved in English, mathematics and music;
- Sets a climate where pupils learn to trust and how to be co-operative and independent;
- Promotes very good relationships between and amongst pupils and adults;
- Makes very good use of the community to extend pupils' learning and to develop citizenship.

What could be improved

- Writing in the junior class, notably spelling and punctuation;
- Standards in information and communication technology to raise them from slightly below average to average or above;
- Opportunities for art and design and technology in the junior class;
- The very cramped accommodation.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved satisfactorily since it was last inspected in May 1996. Standards in English, mathematics and science are similar to those reported at that time. They varied in the intervening years, largely due to differences in the year groups, reaching a high point in 1998, the last time that

there were enough pupils for the results to be reported. Positive aspects of the school, including pastoral care and parental involvement, have been maintained. Provision for the youngest children has improved; they now have more opportunities for play-based activity. The difficulties of implementing the national literacy and numeracy strategies in the mixed-age classes have been addressed well, and are particularly effective in numeracy.

Issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. Provision for physical education has been strengthened. There are more opportunities for information and communication technology (ICT) and an improvement in standards, though they do not yet meet the national expectations, partly because of delays in equipping the school with a modern networked system. Provision for cultural development has improved well, with increased emphasis on cultural diversity. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, though in need of further refinement. Standards in design and technology in the juniors are still unsatisfactory and standards in art are lower than last time, mainly because the school has put most of its effort into implementing national initiatives.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	-	-	-
mathematics	A	-	-	-
science	A*	-	-	-

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In accordance with national guidance, the test results for 1999 and 2000 have not been reported as fewer than 11 pupils took the tests. When such small numbers are involved, the interpretation of results is very unreliable. The inclusion of one or two children with special educational needs, for example, can have a very marked effect on the overall results. When considered over a period of three years, pupils' performance marginally exceeded the national average in each subject, most notably in mathematics. During this time, however, girls did less well than boys, particularly in English and science. This difference was not noticeable amongst the current pupils in school. Targets for 2001 are not high, but realistic, reflecting the range of ability within the Year 6 group.

By the age of 11, pupils read well and write willingly, but their spelling and punctuation are often inaccurate, and not as good as they should be. They achieve satisfactorily in mathematics, working out answers in their heads with speed and accuracy. Able pupils have good problem solving skills. Standards in science are similar to those found in most primary schools. Pupils of average and high ability have good understanding of how to conduct experiments. Standards in ICT are slightly below expected levels. They are not high enough in design and technology and art, mainly because pupils have too little experience of these subjects. Standards in swimming are much higher than usual, reflecting the strong provision.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils work hard and show interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well at all times. Lunchtimes are pleasant experiences. Pupils of different ages play very well together at breaks.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development; pupils show initiative and independence. Moral and social development are very good. Relationships are a strength.
Attendance	Good. Almost all absences are for genuine medical reasons.

This is an area where the school does very well. Attitudes are particularly strong in the infant class. A few juniors occasionally mark time if they can get away with it. When they are well motivated, older pupils have good problem solving skills. Pupils of different ages are tolerant of one another, and work well together when required to do so.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good for the youngest children, who benefit from the warmth and security of the infant class. Learning is well planned to meet their needs, though some restrictions are placed on their learning by the very cramped accommodation. Teaching is very good for the infants. Careful planning ensures that they make good progress. A strength is the incidental teaching that takes place, for example when pupils walk back from the village hall. Teaching is good for the juniors, particularly in mathematics and science where they all achieve appropriately, and where the brighter pupils develop good problem solving skills. It is satisfactory in English, where it is not yet addressing the need to improve the accuracy of pupils' writing.

Overall, 17 per cent of teaching is very good; 55 percent is good and the rest is satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, overall. Good for the infants and children in the reception year. Some lack of balance in the junior class, where too little time is given to art and design and technology. Provision for ICT is improving, but skills are not yet taught systematically enough to ensure good progress. Very good use of the community to enhance learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Mainly good. The statemented pupil is very well supported by the class teacher. Additional teaching for individuals and groups is good. Pupils usually progress satisfactorily when they are left to get on unaided in class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good for social and moral development: a strength. Good opportunities for spiritual development, notably in assemblies and religious education. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is promoted well, particularly in religious education and geography.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff know the pupils well and have their welfare at heart. Assessment of their progress is satisfactory, but information is not always easily accessible, and is only just beginning to be used for setting individual targets.

The school works well in partnership with parents, who support the school well, for example through extensive fund-raising.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory, with good features. Promotes the social and pastoral aims of the school well; encourages good team work. Beginning to use test data to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils in order to raise standards. Could expect more of the older pupils in some aspects of work, notably writing.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Committed and interested, but several are new and just starting to develop their roles. Involved well in financial and building matters. Less active in shaping the direction of the school through

	monitoring and evaluation.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Some useful self-review, but some targets in the school development plan are rather broad, and not easily evaluated, making it difficult for the school to see how well it is doing.
The strategic use of resources	Mainly good. Careful use of funds and monitoring of expenditure. 'Best value' principles applied. Appropriate plans to fund building improvements.

Sufficient staff; part-time teachers and support staff contribute well to the pupils' learning. Occasionally, staffing is not targeted where there is the greatest need, for example to the youngest children and literacy and numeracy lessons. **Adequate resources for learning;** about to improve significantly for ICT. **Very poor accommodation;** staff do their very best: nevertheless, it has a negative impact. Very cramped infant classroom, with too little space for play-based activities for the youngest children. Lack of a hall limits the range of work possible in physical education. Poor working conditions for staff, with no space for confidential discussions with parents or other adults.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family atmosphere of the school; • The way that children mix, care for one another and accept responsibility; • The good teaching and the expectation that children will work hard; • Children's good behaviour; • The success that children achieve in sporting competitions and swimming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority feel that the school could work more closely with them; • About a quarter would like more extracurricular activities; • The very limited accommodation.

The inspectors agree with the positive comments, and that the accommodation is inadequate. The vast majority of parents report that staff are approachable, and it is difficult to see why a minority feel that working relationships could be closer. Inspectors feel that relationships are good. Extracurricular provision is satisfactory for the size of the school, and includes opportunities for two residential visits each year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. There are usually too few children to detect a consistent pattern. Most pupils are well supported by parents and begin school ready to learn. Their language, communication and social skills, for example, are usually typical of pupils of this age, and are sometimes good. Their pre-school experience also varies. Not all have had the early reading and writing experiences usual in nursery classes, leaving them more to learn when they start school. All pupils make good progress in the reception class as a result of good teaching. By the end of the year, most will achieve the early learning goals set out for this age group, and one or two individuals will exceed them.

2. Test results do not give a reliable picture of the pupils' performance from year to year as too few pupils take the tests. Results are very easily influenced by differences between the year groups, for example the number of pupils with special educational needs. Taking results over three years irons out some of the differences, and gives a better indication of performance compared with the national average. The seven-year-olds' performance in reading, writing and mathematics over the last three years has exceeded the national average, with girls and boys doing equally well. The current Year 2 group is the largest in the school and current assessments indicate that this pattern of attainment will continue. Taking three years (1998-2000) together, the 11-year-olds marginally exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. Boys outperformed girls in all subjects. In 2000, results were disappointing, with girls in particular failing to live up to their teacher's expectations in mathematics and science. Inspection findings suggest higher standards than those recorded in last year's tests in these two subjects as a result of more focused group teaching for the Year 6 pupils in science and good quality planning and teaching in mathematics. Results for 2001 are more likely to reflect the individual abilities of the pupils involved.

2. The current group of seven-year-olds achieve standards that are above average in all aspects of English. They make good progress as a result of good teaching and support from parents. They listen very well to their teacher and speak confidently, asking as well as answering questions. Many read fluently for their age. About half of the group read, comment and answer questions about their

books well. Most of the others recognise key words and the sounds of letters appropriately for their age. Individuals who find learning to read harder than usual receive good support that helps them to do as well as they can. Most seven-year-olds write simple sentences independently. The brightest pupils are able to use commas to separate items in a list.

3. Standards achieved by the 11-year-olds in English are average, overall. They are higher in speaking and listening and reading, than in writing, notably in spelling and punctuation. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and reading. They join in class discussion and express their ideas and opinions clearly. They read and understand increasingly difficult books as they move through the junior class. Progress in writing is less satisfactory, and some pupils do not achieve as well as they might in the technical aspects. This is because there are not enough well planned opportunities for them to write at length and not enough encouragement, through marking and target setting, for them to learn from their mistakes. Pupils are taught spelling and punctuation rules, but they do not apply them consistently in their own work.

4. Standards achieved in mathematics by the seven-year-olds are above average in all aspects of the subject, due to good planning and teaching. This year group includes a higher proportion of able pupils than the current Year 6, where standards achieved by the 11-year-olds are average overall. All pupils achieve satisfactorily. By Year 2, most pupils have good recall of number facts, can double and halve numbers, and identify patterns of odd and even numbers. They describe simple flat shapes, measure carefully and present information in simple graphs. By Year 6, most pupils use a range of mental strategies well, and calculate quickly and accurately. They have a sound understanding of shapes, including symmetry and the more able pupils understand about different types of angles. The able pupils have good problem solving skills. A weakness is their lack of understanding of mathematical terms, including factors, perimeter and circumference. This reflects a shortcoming in teaching, which is good in almost every other respect.

5. Standards achieved in science are average for both seven and 11-year-olds. Year 2 pupils have sound knowledge of plants and animals. They observe well, sort and classify appropriately for their age and record their work in a variety of ways. Year 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and physical processes are satisfactory. Their grasp of information about life and living processes is less evident, but more of this work is planned later in the year. Most understand how to conduct a scientific experiment, taking care to ensure that tests are fair, and recording their results well. Able pupils have good problem solving skills. Lesson planning and teaching for science are good, and would normally be associated with higher results in national tests for 11-year-olds. Factors that work against this may be the lack of regular revision of topics and preparation for the tests.

6. Standards are similar to those usually found in infant classes in religious education, art and design and technology. They are higher than usual in music, due to the teacher's expertise and the good quality of teaching and planning. It is not possible to make confident judgements about standards achieved by the infants in either history or geography, though the limited amount of evidence seen indicates that they are well within the usual range. Standards in religious education, history and geography are typical in the junior class. There is not enough evidence to judge the overall standards in music in the juniors or physical education for either infant or junior pupils. The standard of swimming, however, is high. Standards in information and communication technology are below nationally expected levels in both age groups, though they are improving and will receive another boost when the networked computer system is up and running. Standards achieved in art and design and technology are too low in the juniors, because they are insufficiently emphasised within the curriculum, with too little time given to them.

7. Infants with special educational needs achieve well, due to the class teacher's careful planning and good quality assistance from support staff. Sensitive support from school staff has led to improvements in the behaviour and social skills of the statemented pupil. Juniors who need extra help do well when they are taught as individuals or groups, and mainly progress satisfactorily when they are left to get on unaided in class.

8. Standards are similar in most subjects to those reported at the last inspection. Standards achieved by the juniors have not improved in design and technology, however, and standards in art are lower than reported last time. This is partly because staff have put most of their effort in recent years into implementing the national strategies in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all good. Relationships are very good. This aspect of the school's work remains a strength, as it was at the last inspection.

10. Reception and infant pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They respond very well to the teacher's kindly approach. The youngest children soon settle into the class and take their place confidently amongst the older ones. All the pupils behave well, coping with the very cramped conditions in which they work without dissent. They show good levels of independence and co-operation. All 12 Year 2 pupils, for example, settled themselves round a long piece of paper on the floor and worked together to draw a picture of Chesterfield, using different kinds of plastic materials to decorate it. They make sensible choices and are willing to experiment, as they showed when they tried out different methods of fastening materials together. The younger, reception children work alongside one another, and interact well with different adults. They worked hard with a student nursery nurse, feeling and identifying a series of coins hidden in a box. The pupil with a statement of educational needs benefits from the warm and secure ethos created by the teacher.

11. Pupils in the junior class usually show interest in their work and try hard. Occasionally, a few slack off and mark time, particularly if the teacher is engaged in work with other pupils. When this happens, it affects the pace of their learning and their achievement. When they are well motivated, for example when working on the computer, they show good levels of independence and problem solving skills, thinking of ways of doing things for themselves. Behaviour is invariably good. Although one parent reported an incident of bullying, this surprised other parents. Pupils say that they feel safe in school, confident that adults will deal with anything that upsets them. There have never been any exclusions. Pupils mainly work in age-related groups, but are tolerant of one another. When required, they work well together. An example is the geography lesson when pupils discussed life in an Indian village in mixed-age groups. The younger pupils held their own, and the older ones listened to them respectfully.

12. Pupils behave very well during lunchtimes and breaks. Lunchtimes are pleasant experiences, with tables laid with cloths and prayers said. In the yard, juniors often play together in one large ball game. Reception children play well on the tricycles and larger pieces of equipment designed to promote their physical development.

13. Attendance is good. There are few absences for reasons other than medical ones, except when parents take their children on holiday in term time. Punctuality is good, with only one or two pupils having a tendency to be late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is good, overall, as it was at the last inspection. It is good for the youngest children, who benefit from the warmth and security of the infant class. It is very good for the infants and good, overall, for the juniors.

15. Work is carefully planned for the youngest children in the reception year. When it is appropriate, they join in work with the infants, for example in music, but the teacher is very sensitive to their particular needs. Even when all the class is together, the teacher involves the children by asking them appropriate questions, and modifying work for them so that they can join in. The teacher is very conscious of their attention span, and does not expect them to spend lengthy periods listening to work that is not planned for them. They are quickly moved into a group, for example in literacy and numeracy, where they are usually supervised by an adult. Sometimes, this support is of good quality, but as it comes from a variety of sources, this is not reliably so. When the support is not fully effective, the children do not learn as much as at other times, or as much as they might.

16. Teaching for the infants is very good, overall. It is meticulously planned to meet individual needs, with appropriately high expectations for pupils in the different year groups. Reading and writing are taught well. Incidental teaching is very good. The teacher uses every opportunity to base learning on pupils' experiences. Counting, addition, subtraction and division are practised daily, based on the number of pupils attending school. The walk from the village hall to school provides rich opportunities for learning, as the pupils observe their environment and talk to local people. The teacher's support for pupils with special educational needs is exemplary, but the additional external support for the pupil with a formal statement does not have much impact. Additional support in reading and writing provided by the part-time teacher and continued by the support assistant is effective. Resources and the very limited accommodation are used very well.

17. Teaching for the juniors is good, overall. Teachers meet the challenge of teaching four age groups in one class well, on the whole. This is generally done well in mathematics, where teaching helps all pupils to make appropriate progress. Planning for group work is a strength in mathematics, matching the needs of pupils in the different age groups well. Teaching was also good in lessons seen in science and religious education. A particularly good lesson involved a group of Year 6 pupils working on an experiment about viscosity. They had high levels of adult attention, were encouraged to ask and answer questions, to predict and to give reasons for their suggestions. They made very good progress as a result of this high quality learning experience.

18. Teaching is satisfactory in English, leading to satisfactory progress overall, though this is better in speaking and listening and reading than in writing. The amount of adult support available to pupils in English lessons varies. Where there is not enough support for all age groups, the teacher is over-stretched and some pupils mark time. The best teaching in English occurred when the class was split into two parallel groups with two teachers. The teacher working with the Year 3 and 4 group captured the pupils' interest and kept them working very hard through a well sequenced series of activities, pitched at just the right level for them. In this lesson, good attention was also paid to accuracy in spelling and punctuation. Each pupil had a personal target to achieve, and their mistakes were picked up and corrected immediately. There is not always enough attention paid to accuracy in writing in other lessons, so that pupils do not learn sufficiently well from their mistakes. Marking is done conscientiously and is supportive, but does not always help pupils to improve.

19. All teachers have good basic teaching skills. They explain well, ask appropriate questions, manage behaviour well and have positive relationships with their pupils. More could be done to encourage the usage of technical language in some subjects, notably mathematics in the junior class, in order to raise pupils' attainment.

20. Homework is given, often effectively. This is particularly so in relation to extending classroom learning by finding out more at home. This motivates pupils and encourages parental involvement. Some parents, however, would like more formally organised work that is returned to the school for marking. This would be helpful, particularly for the older pupils, and for practising specific skills in English and mathematics.

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

21. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for its pupils and the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Teachers face considerable difficulties ensuring that they meet the needs of all pupils because there are only two classes covering the whole of the primary phase. Nevertheless their planning of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science mostly takes effective account of the wide range of ages and learning needs in each class. It is most successful in mathematics and science where planning leads to learning that is well matched to the different groups in both classes. Planning is flexible enough to provide opportunities that stretch the more able and to allow pupils who find learning more difficult to make steady progress. In English, the needs of the different groups are met well in the infant class, and in the junior class when sufficient help is available. On other occasions, planning is not finely tuned enough to ensure that pupils are fully engaged and challenged throughout the whole lesson. Given the constraints imposed by the size of the school, teachers have made great strides in the implementation of both literacy and numeracy strategies, though there is still some further work needed in the junior class.

22. The balance of the curriculum is better in the reception and infant class than it is in the juniors. The planning for the younger pupils takes full account of the requirements of the new foundation stage and of National Curriculum subjects, and provides a good range of learning opportunities for them. In the juniors, there are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to develop their skills in art and design and technology. As a result, standards in these subjects are too low. Weaknesses in the provision made for design and technology was a key issue in the last inspection and not enough progress has been made in putting this right. Better progress has been made in addressing the key issue to improve pupils' learning in information and communication technology. Pupils now have many opportunities to use computers and programmable toys and their learning is satisfactorily balanced across the different requirements for the subject. There is still a need, though, to plan learning so that it builds systematically on the skills that the pupils have already acquired. Provision is also very much stronger for physical education, and now meets legal requirements.

23. A realistic number of extracurricular activities are provided and over the last couple of years, teams have achieved well in local sporting competitions. The provision of French lessons during school time to those pupils whose parents make a voluntary contribution, however, does not provide equality of opportunity for all pupils. The programmes for sex and drugs education and for 'circle time', when pupils discuss personal issues, provide a sound basis for pupils' personal, social and health education.

24. Pupils who have special educational needs are provided for well, on the whole. Teachers assess their needs carefully and develop appropriate programmes to promote their learning. The part-time teacher working within the family of small schools plans well for individuals and groups. Arrangements for this work to be continued by the support assistant are good.

25. One of the real strengths of the school is the positive effect on pupils' learning made by its very good links with the local community. Good use is made of the village hall to support learning in

physical education, local farms and places of interest are visited regularly and these experiences often result in rich learning opportunities. Pupils' sporting achievements are significantly enhanced by the links the school enjoys with the family of local schools.

26. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are given time to reflect on spiritual matters during collective worship and are encouraged, for example, to explore their emotions during 'circle time' and to consider the nature of God in religious education lessons. The weaknesses identified in promoting pupils' understanding of cultural diversity at the last inspection have been addressed well. Improved planning and teaching of religious education has led to many opportunities for pupils to learn about major world faiths. Pupils have learnt about Hinduism, for example, and extended their understanding during their work on India in geography. Email links with people working in developing countries in Latin America, a school in Canada and visits by missionaries have all enhanced pupils' understanding of other cultures.

27. Pupils' moral and social development is fostered very successfully. Moral development is promoted through the very good examples set by adults in the school, the teaching of moral values in assemblies, considering issues in 'circle time' and by encouraging pupils to think how they can improve the lot of others. When asked how they would like to improve the school, two Year 6 pupils said that they would like better wheel chair access in the school. One of the benefits of being a small school is the opportunity for pupils to work with pupils of different ages and abilities on joint tasks. Teachers provide many occasions when pupils are encouraged to work together, such as solving problems in mathematics, undertaking investigations in science and discussing topics together in geography. Year 2 pupils are encouraged to eat with the older children. Meal times are very pleasant social occasions where pupils enjoy each other's company in very civilised surroundings. The older pupils' social development is also enhanced by the two residential visits they make while in the junior class. All pupils' social skills benefit from the visits they make, both locally and further afield in support of their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good. In this small, village school staff know all the pupils and their families very well and are therefore able to respond immediately and appropriately to any personal needs that may arise. The warm, caring atmosphere noted in the last inspection is still clearly evident, and is much appreciated by parents and by the pupils themselves.

29. Written procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating any form of bullying emphasise mutual respect and consideration for others. Children understand and observe the school's code of conduct, which motivates them to work at gaining rewards for good behaviour and effort. There is keen competition for the award of the conduct cup. The good role models that children see in all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are effective in creating a happy environment in which children feel secure. Parents agree that children like coming to school, which in itself is sufficient to ensure good attendance. There is a simple monitoring procedure for absences, but because parents are clear about the procedures to be followed, the school seldom needs to use it.

30. The school has satisfactory arrangements for assessing the effectiveness of pupils' learning and is beginning to use this information to plan what pupils will learn. The more formal assessments that are made are realistic. They provide sound information on the progress that pupils make in the reception year, in the infant class and in English, mathematics and science in the junior class. Pupils are regularly assessed through tasks at the end of topics and non-statutory national tests

are used in the juniors. Work is assessed against the learning goals in the National Curriculum and retained as evidence of learning in pupils' portfolios. The valuable information collected is not easily accessible, however. It is buried in individual pupils' files and does not summarise the strengths and weaknesses in their learning or that of groups of pupils. Recently, positive steps have been taken to address this problem in the infant class, where group records are beginning to be kept of pupils' achievement. The records that have been started for the young children in the reception year are a good example of effective and efficient recording, identifying what has been learnt and what needs to be taught next.

31. Another positive step has been the start of more detailed tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics, based on information from national tests taken by the juniors. This is enabling the teachers to group pupils effectively and is alerting them to any emerging problems. Targets are being set for individual pupils in writing, but the benefits of these have yet to be seen in improved standards. The arrangements for assessing pupils who have special educational needs are good and the information gained is mainly used well to plan work that meets their individual needs.

32. Children's personal development is monitored routinely and staff make sure that they are encouraged to work to their full potential. Where necessary, the school calls on a range of external agencies, such as the educational psychologist, school nurse, social services and education welfare service, to give support and guidance to individual children and their families. Achievement and effort are valued and individual successes celebrated at weekly assemblies. The practice of making birthdays a special event in school is welcomed by the children and contributes to their sense of belonging to an extended family.

33. The written policy on health and safety is under review and the staff and governors are aware of some issues to do with the accommodation that need to be improved. Daily practices, however, ensure that children are well cared for. They are closely supervised at all times, with particular attention paid to issues such as road safety and the way trips and other activities outside school are organised and conducted. The school has suitable arrangements for routine first aid and medical care. Comprehensive child protection procedures follow the guidance issued by the local education authority.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its good partnership with parents, who appreciate its achievements and play an active part in their children's education.

35. From the good response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the views expressed at the meeting, it is clear that parents are very happy with most aspects of school life. The majority believe that their children enjoy coming to school. They agree that teaching is good, pupils are expected to work hard and are making good progress. They feel that behaviour is good and children are learning to become mature and responsible. There is some concern about the amount of homework and the way it is set, and some parents are not satisfied with the range of extracurricular activities provided. Although most parents find the school approachable, a minority do not feel that it works closely enough with them.

36. The inspection confirms that parents' positive views of the school are well founded. There is some justification for their dissatisfaction with the arrangements for homework, which is not always returned to school for marking. The extracurricular provision is satisfactory. There is a range of sporting and musical activities, and the children benefit from a good variety of visits to places of educational interest, as well as the residential trips that widen their experience and teach them

independence and sociability. It is difficult to see why some parents feel that the school does not work closely with them. Parents are welcome to engage in daily informal discussions with staff, and the school makes sure they are kept informed of new developments as well as seeking their views on specific issues.

37. There is a good range of written information for parents about the school, including the prospectus and regular newsletters. Formal open nights, when work is on display, are held twice a year and parents receive written reports annually. The quality of reports is good; the infant reports, for example, give parents a very rounded view of their child. Most contain detailed information about what children know, understand and can do, and their attitudes to learning, as well as setting targets for improvement. To help parents understand what is taught, special curricular meetings have been held, explaining the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

38. Parents are closely involved in their children's education, both at school and at home. A number of parents give regular help in the classroom, listening to children read and helping with number work. Others accompany the children on trips and to sports matches and give practical assistance with school productions. Reading records show that parents are keen to support children's learning at home by listening to them read and a number have already undertaken specific training for the 'Better Reading Partnership', which is soon to be introduced. Many parents help with research projects. The school often consults with parents before making changes, for example, a questionnaire about homework was returned by the majority of parents and showed that most supported the school's procedures. A flourishing Parents and Friends' Association organises social and fundraising events, which enable the school to purchase additional resources to enhance the children's education, as well as promoting a strong sense of community for pupils, staff and parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. Leadership and management are satisfactory, overall, with some good features. The quality of relationships is a strength. The headteacher, governors and staff work very well together. All are committed to the school, and staff morale is high, in spite of the additional workload associated with working in a small school and the inadequacies of the building.

40. The headteacher has a complex role, involving teaching, leadership and management. He has good knowledge of the strengths and weakness of staff from both formal and informal monitoring. A useful self-review exercise earlier in the school year highlighted areas of the school requiring further development. One area which is beginning to be addressed is the need to develop more precise ways of tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. This is particularly important, as a comparison of annual test results gives little indication of the school's performance from year to year. There is not enough information yet to identify specific areas of weakness that need to be addressed. This is evident in the school development plan, which though organised helpfully, tends to identify broad areas for improvement, for example 'the quality of literacy provision' without saying precisely which aspects, and without linking these specifically to aspects of the pupils' performance. These broad priorities are not easily evaluated, and make it too difficult for the school to see how well it is doing. Lack of detailed information results in some complacency about standards that might be achieved, especially by the older pupils.

41. Governors are committed, and want to do their best for the school. Few have long term experience. Those who have joined the governing body this year are taking up training opportunities to extend their understanding of the role, or to enable them to take up particular responsibilities, for example health and safety. They play a good part in the financial management of the school. The

Chair of finance has accountancy skills which are used to the benefit of the school and all governors receive and discuss regular financial monitoring reports. Governors are informed appropriately about the different areas of the school's work and are beginning to be involved in review and evaluation. They have agreed a protocol for observing lessons but this, and other more formal monitoring of standards, is not yet embedded firmly in their role.

42. The school's finances are managed effectively. Priorities are identified clearly. Appropriate use is made of additional finances from external funds and parental fundraising. Necessary expenditure for the repair and maintenance of the building is considered carefully. A sensible decision has been taken to retain a small surplus to fund the much needed extension of the infant classroom.

43. The number of teaching and support staff has increased in recent years, and there are sufficient, overall. Part-time teachers and permanent support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning in lessons. However, staffing arrangements are somewhat fragmented, with different staff supporting pupils at different times, and this affects continuity. Support is not always targeted where there is the greatest need, for example for the reception children and for literacy and numeracy lessons in the junior class. This results in groups of pupils doing less well than they might in some lessons.

44. The accommodation is very poor and, in spite of the excellent effort made by the staff, has a significant impact on the curriculum. The infant classroom is so cramped that it is difficult for adults and pupils to move around freely. The youngest children in the reception year have very limited space for imaginative and creative play, using the small area outside the classroom when this is available. This area is not easily supervised by the teacher. Equipment cannot be left out, and storage space is at a premium and inconveniently situated. There is no dedicated outdoor play space for the youngest children. These limitations make it more difficult for the teacher to provide opportunities for physical and practical activities. Lack of a hall adversely affects provision for gymnastics and apparatus work in physical education. The school does the best it can, using the limited space available in the village hall for movement and dance to complement provision for games and swimming. The limited accommodation creates other problems. There is no staff room and working conditions for staff are poor. It is difficult to find private space to discuss sensitive issues with parents, for example, as the very small headteacher's room is also the base for the secretary. On wet days, pupils are confined to their classroom all day, having assemblies, lessons and lunch there. Understandably, this can lead to some restlessness during the afternoons. One significant improvement since the last inspection is the installation of indoor toilets for pupils and staff. The headteacher and governors are aware of the pressing need to extend the building to create more space for the infants, have set aside money and are considering its viability.

45. Lessons are resourced adequately. The school has a good arrangement with the family of small schools to share resources where this is possible. Storage of larger items is difficult for the school, and sensible use is made of temporary loans from the museum service. There is a high ratio of computers for the number of pupils, but some of these are more useful than others. Installation of a networked bank of computers is imminent. Library stock is quite good for the size of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. To raise standards at the end of the junior phase further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve standards of spelling and punctuation by:
 - providing more opportunities for writing in other subjects;

- ensuring that additional adult support is targeted at literacy lessons;
 - setting individual targets for pupils and ensuring that these are met;
 - helping pupils to learn from their mistakes through marking and the correction of errors;
 - making better use of dictionaries and spell checkers;
 - consolidating learning through more effective use of classroom displays;
 - enlisting support from parents through work done at home.
(paragraphs: 3,18,63,64)
- (2) Improve standards in ICT by teaching a programme of skills and ensuring that they are practised in other subjects.
(paragraphs: 22,80)
- (3) Improve standards in art and design and technology by including more systematically planned opportunities within the curriculum, and updating teachers' skills and extending resources as necessary;
(paragraphs: 22,76,77)
- (4) Take all reasonable steps to improve the accommodation.
(paragraph: 44)

Governors should also consider incorporating the more minor issues listed below in their action plan.

- use of technical language in mathematics (paragraph 68);
- summarising assessment information (paragraph 30);
- further developing the use of assessment information (paragraph 31);
- providing more support for the reception children (paragraphs 43, 54);
- provision for French (paragraph.23).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	56	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	51
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
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 and Key Stage 2

In accordance with government guidance, the 1999/2000 national test results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 have been omitted since fewer than 11 pupils took the tests. Results based on small numbers of pupils are too unreliable to report.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	46
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.2
Average class size	25.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	38.3

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	109,412
Total expenditure	111,152
Expenditure per pupil	2,138
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,674
Balance carried forward to next year	13,934

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	51
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	27	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	41	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	51	8	5	0
The teaching is good.	68	32	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	38	8	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	32	16	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	35	57	5	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	41	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	43	19	8	0

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents praised the family atmosphere of the school. They felt the school coped very well with the limited accommodation.

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

47. Of the five children in the reception year, two were only admitted this term. They have all settled happily into the school and are making good progress. Most are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the year, a few of them comfortably.

48. The infant class provides a warm and secure environment in which the children's personal, social and emotional development is catered for well. The teacher is very sensitive to the needs of the youngest children and makes sure that they feel part of the class, whilst also providing for them as a separate group. These young children listen and respond to their teacher very well. It is sometimes hard to pick them out from the older pupils when they are all seated together, listening to a story for example. They happily talk about their feelings, as when the teacher read the story of a child who was having a bad day. They work together as a group, playing alongside one another in the sand. They are able to make choices and play independently, outside on the tricycles and indoors with home corner equipment in the very small area adjacent to the classroom.

Communication, language and literacy

49. Children's skills of communication, language and literacy are developed well. They listen and join in with simple language and number rhymes. They talk confidently to adults, asking questions and making comments. A bright reception child, for example, watching a support assistant drop coloured liquid onto a piece of paper towel, predicted that it would spread out. "I was right, wasn't I?" she responded, when it did. The children like books, choosing them and bringing them to share with adults. The older reception children are beginning to read simple books, and to write independently. All the children recognise and write some letters, though not all have well developed pencil control as yet. Teaching of these early skills is good. Work is planned carefully, so that the children spend a few minutes at the beginning of the literacy hour with the whole class, before moving into a group to work at their own level. This is most successful when the adult support provided is of good quality. There is no full time classroom support, and the teacher has to rely on support from a range of other adults; this is not always of the highest quality.

Mathematical development

50. The children's mathematical skills develop well. The teacher is very skilled at using situations that arise in the classroom to promote counting, addition and subtraction. For example, she provides each child with a cushion to sit on in the village hall, and asks the children to count the ones that are being used and the ones that are not. Occasionally, a reception child is able to answer a question aimed at an older age group. One, for example, knew that four is an even number. Most of the younger pupils count, match and write numbers up to six, and the most able child can go beyond this. They

recognise shapes. Children in a group that was well supported by a student nursery nurse could describe the edge of coins hidden in a box, and were beginning to recognise some of them. Many have a clear understanding of size. One boy was very excited by the tall tower he was building from construction material, and could change it, making it bigger and smaller. Other children were keen to measure themselves against it.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted well through many activities. Opportunities for the children to learn about their locality are used well, especially as they walk back from the village hall to the school. Here, they are encouraged to learn about village life. The previous week they had been to see the newly born lambs at one of the farms. In school, they begin to observe and think scientifically, as when they see which materials will absorb coloured liquids and which will repel them. They use construction materials to build things, making a good range of objects, including a train, a model of bunk beds and a tower. Work is planned to meet their particular needs, and well supervised by the teacher and, when she is available, by the teaching assistant.

Physical development

52. Opportunities for physical development are provided during playtimes, when tricycles, stilts etc are available outside, and during lessons at the village hall. Children use these opportunities well, moving around the restricted outside space in a controlled way. The very limited accommodation restricts the range of work that can be provided, particularly opportunities for climbing and balancing.

Creative development

53. Children's creative development is promoted well through a range of work, including music, art and imaginative play. In music, the young children joined in percussion work, playing their instruments with great enthusiasm. They played imaginatively with dressing up clothes and home corner equipment, acting out different roles.

54. Teaching for this age group is good. Planning is very good, but its implementation occasionally suffers through lack of effective teaching support. Through ingenuity and skill, the teacher overcomes the unsuitability of the accommodation to a great extent, though this still restricts opportunities for creative and imaginative play and for physical development. Provision has improved, however, since the last inspection when this was reported as an area for development.

ENGLISH

55. There are too few pupils in most year groups to discuss results from national tests in a meaningful way. Standards of work in the infant class are good. The Year 2 group is the largest in the school, and pupils are on course to achieve well in the next round of national tests. Reading and writing standards are above average. Standards of work in the junior class are satisfactory, overall. Standards of speaking and listening and reading are good, but the quality of pupils' written work is sometimes let down by weak spelling and punctuation.

56. The picture is a little different from that reported at the last inspection, though this may be no more than a reflection of the differences expected between small groups of pupils from year to year. Standards in the infant class are higher than those reported previously. Standards in the juniors are similar in most respects, with the exception of spelling and punctuation which are lower.

57. Pupils in the infant class listen to their teacher very well and most speak confidently. They use a good range of vocabulary for their age, and are able to give simple explanations and to express their opinions.

58. The more able pupils in Year 2, about half, read well with good understanding for their age. They are observant, commenting on the pictures and special features of the text, such as the way that the colour of the print changed in the story of the Owl Babies to reflect the change from night to day. They notice words that rhyme, and concentrate well whilst reading with their teacher. Other pupils read satisfactorily. The four with the weakest skills receive good weekly support from a visiting teacher, backed up by additional support from the teaching assistant. They are learning to listen carefully to words and to recognise their sounds. The combination of good classroom teaching, additional support and regular parental help leads to high standards.

59. By Year 2, most pupils write independently. Pupils of average and high ability write at reasonable length for their age. They spell many common words accurately, and are coming to terms with simple punctuation. The more able pupils are learning how to use commas in a list. One boy explained this very clearly. He said that instead of putting the words in a list down the page, he was writing them across and putting a comma in-between each one. He did this correctly. Other pupils, who found this more difficult, received good individual help from the teacher. An examination of pupils' work shows that they make good progress from Year 1 to Year 2, moving, for example, from writing a few legible words at the beginning of Year 1 to independent writing about Guy Fawkes at Year 2.

60. The good progress that the pupils make in the infant class is due to the good teaching they receive. This is planned meticulously to meet individual needs. In a single literacy lesson, the teacher plans and teaches work at three different levels, for the reception year, Year 1 and Year 2. This requires great organisational and management skills and is particularly effective when additional and good quality support is available. The quality of teaching is remarkable given the extremely cramped conditions that the teacher works in.

61. Standards in the junior class are satisfactory, overall. They are good in speaking and listening and reading, where pupils continue to make appropriate progress. By Year 6, most pupils are articulate. They are able to explain, make suggestions and predictions, as they did whilst conducting a science experiment on viscosity. They can take part in discussions, expressing different points of view. In geography, for example, they were able to say why they thought some aspects of village life in India were good and some were bad.

62. Almost all of the pupils in Year 6 read fluently and with a good level of understanding. Most pupils show interest in reading. Year 3 pupils, for example, organised themselves into pairs and threes and read a simplified version of Hansel and Gretel. Stronger readers helped those still experiencing difficulty with harder words. The younger pupils are prepared to 'have a go' even when working with the older ones. They wanted to take their turn with reading whilst working with older pupils in geography. Pupils' reading ability helps them in their work in all other subjects. They are also able to use the reference skills they learn in English to find out information from books and other sources.

63. Standards in writing are not as high, and some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in the technical aspects. By Year 6, most pupils can express their ideas in writing satisfactorily and are beginning to make a reasonable attempt at note-taking. In the limited writing done in other subjects, they use some interesting phrases, for instance when writing about Roman soldiers in battle. They complete formal exercises satisfactorily, and when asked, they can explain what they are doing. They

know the difference, for example, between nouns and verbs. Similarly, they can explain spelling rules. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 know, for instance, what should happen when 'es' is added to a word ending in 'y'. They do not always remember to apply the rule when writing independently, however, and do not make enough use of dictionaries or other devices to check their work. Although many older pupils can use complex punctuation, including speech marks, in formal exercises, they do not always remember to use capital letters and full stops accurately in their own writing. These weaknesses are linked to aspects of the teaching, when too little is expected of the pupils. There is not enough consistent emphasis on pupils checking their work, or learning from their own mistakes. Marking is done regularly and praises effort, but does not always identify areas for improvement. Similarly, target setting is not used consistently. When it is, as in lesson for Year 3 and 4 pupils, it is very effective, with pupils producing far better quality work. More use could also be made of classroom displays to remind pupils of the rules they are currently learning.

64. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory for this age group. Planning and teaching the literacy hour for four age groups are very demanding, and staff are working hard to find the best methods. It is most straightforward, as happens once a week, when two teachers are available and pupils are put into upper and lower age groups for the whole lesson. At other times, there is no other support available and the teacher is stretched trying to meet the needs of all age groups. Although most pupils try to get on independently, a few give up when there is not enough adult support at the right time. Strengths of the teaching lie in the relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves, and in the pleasant atmosphere generated in the classroom. A teacher used a cricketing metaphor, for example, to make the feedback session fun for the pupils.

MATHEMATICS

65. Too few pupils are tested at the end of each key stage for comparisons with national results and those achieved in similar school to be meaningful. Nevertheless, in the most recent national tests, seven-year-olds achieved appropriately, with brighter pupils reaching the higher levels. The results for the 11-year-olds were disappointing, with several pupils, particularly girls, not achieving as well as their teachers expected. Evidence from lessons, pupils' work and on going assessments indicate that all of the infants and juniors are now achieving as well as they should. Almost all achieve in line with expectations, and those who are capable of it work above the levels usually expected for their age. This reflects the careful planning of work and good teaching that meet the needs of the different age groups and abilities in each class. The performance of pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 classes reflects the ability range within the two groups. Pupils' performance is high in Year 2, where it is above average. It is within the usual range and average in the current Year 6.

66. Both infant and junior pupils demonstrate secure knowledge, skills and understanding across almost all aspects of the subject (number skills, algebra, shapes, measures and data handling). Year 2 pupils have good recall of number facts, such as number bonds to 20. They can double and halve numbers and use this knowledge and understanding to help when they are calculating with larger numbers. They have a good understanding of place value and the more able have extended this understanding to numbers larger than 100. All can recognise and continue number patterns and can identify odd and even numbers. They can describe the properties of common flat shapes but have not yet learnt about solid shapes. Pupils measure competently, using units such as hand spans, and they confidently compare the sizes of objects. They produce simple bar charts to present information that they have collected.

67. By Year 6, pupils can use and explain a range of strategies, such as partitioning, when performing both mental and paper calculations. As in the infants, they work quickly and accurately in

their heads and calculate large numbers, fractions and decimals confidently when working on paper. Pupils of average and high ability develop a good understanding of algebra and are beginning to work out simple formula to explain what they have found when investigating number patterns. They persist with investigational work and problem solving and higher attainers can, for example, make generalisations to help them work out all the possible cuboids of a specific capacity. All pupils have a sound understanding of flat shapes, including symmetry, and higher attainers understand about different types of angles. In mathematics lessons and also in other subjects, such as science, pupils use a variety of graphs to present information, for example the results of an investigation into the viscosity of liquids. In this particular example, the pupils were also able to average out repeated measurements to improve the accuracy of their results.

68. One area of weakness in the junior pupils' learning is their knowledge of mathematical terms. This is because teachers do not consistently use, or insist that pupils use, the correct mathematical terminology when talking about their work. Pupils often have a good understanding of concepts, such as area and multiplication, but rarely use the correct terminology when talking about them. For example, when they were working out how many different rectangles could be made from 36 square centimetres, pupils did not use the word 'factors' when talking about multiplication pairs. When they were being quizzed by the computer about shapes, they did not know important words, including perimeter and circumference. This gap in their knowledge may result in them not achieving as well in the end of key stage tests as their understanding of mathematics would suggest they should.

69. In other respects, teaching and learning in mathematics are good in both key stages. All lessons are carefully planned to take account of the needs of the different age groups and, wherever possible, the different abilities within each of these groups. In each lesson, a theme is successfully developed at a variety of levels to meet the needs of the different groups within the class. In the junior class, for example, the Year 3 and 4 pupils who find mathematics more difficult were estimating and then counting centimetre squares to find the area of shapes. The other Year 4 and the less able Year 5 pupils were working out methods to calculate the area of rectangles. The more mathematically able Year 5 pupils were working with the Year 6 pupils to work out all the possible different cuboids of a certain capacity. The highest attaining, older pupils were challenged to work out a method to calculate the different permutations. This approach works well and stretches all the pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which enables them to explain new learning clearly. They also check that all pupils understand what they have to do in their different tasks. This ensures that little time is wasted and that the planned work is achieved.

70. Occasionally, the wide range of attainment and needs is not met successfully in the mental sessions. Older and more able junior pupils, for example, were not sufficiently challenged when a teacher asked all the pupils in the class to work out different ways to make the same number by multiplying other numbers together. The pace of this session was also too slow to improve the speed of these pupils' mental calculations. The pace and challenge within the other parts of this lesson, and across each of the other lessons, were good. Competition between pupils was used well to motivate and improve the concentration of pupils in the mental session of a lesson in the infant class. In all lessons, teachers use a range of materials and apparatus well to promote and support learning, for example coins to aid addition and take away when 'shopping' in the infant class and calculators in Year 6. Teachers are careful to encourage pupils to check their work and to estimate answers and this helps them to develop good working habits. Teachers make good use of available help in the classroom. Assistants and other teachers are used well to support identified groups. They have clear guidance as to what they have to do. As a result, the pupils they are working with often make good progress. This is particularly the case when special needs support assistants are working with individuals and small groups.

71. The teachers have adopted and refined an effective approach to delivering the numeracy strategy in a small school. This is working very well and is supporting the good progress that is often being made in both classes. Regular assessments are made of pupils' progress and these are used to fine tune groupings. A recent development has been the tracking of pupils as they move through the school. The levels they achieve in national tests are used as the basis for this and helps teachers to identify problems that need addressing. Information from assessments are not yet used to identify targets for individual pupils to work towards. The restrictions on space, particularly in the infant class, creates problems for teachers and this sometimes affects pupils' learning adversely. This was so in a lesson when inadequate storage resulted in materials that had been carefully collected together for a mathematics game being lost. As a consequence, a group of pupils was not able to achieve all that had been planned for them in the lesson.

SCIENCE

72. As in English and mathematics, the small number of pupils entered for the tests at the end of Year 6 make comparisons with other schools in the 2000 tests inappropriate. The results in science were similar to those in mathematics, with the boys achieving better than the girls. The girls did less well than their teacher had predicted, and the results were disappointing. The findings from the inspection are more positive, with pupils in both the infant and junior classes working consistently at, and sometimes slightly above, the expected levels for their age. The school has recognised the weakness in the results last year and has arranged additional support, through a part-time teacher, for the Year 6 pupils. This arrangement is working well and is enabling more focused and challenging work to be undertaken by these pupils.

73. Pupils in the infant class have been mainly learning about life and living things. They demonstrate sound knowledge of the main parts of flowers and human beings and they can describe the life cycle of plants and understand that they need light and water to grow. They understand that all animals eat, drink, move and have senses, but that other characteristics, such as colour, fur and number of legs, vary from animal to animal. When they are finding out about aspects of living things and materials and their properties, they observe carefully. They measure and record what they see well, using diagrams, including Venn diagrams, for sorting and simple bar charts. When sorting materials, they are able to explain their decisions by referring to particular properties.

74. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties and of physical processes. Their learning about life and living processes is currently less well developed, but this is an aspect of science that is planned for later in the year. A strength is their understanding of how to conduct scientific investigations. They are able to make sensible hypotheses based on their existing knowledge. Their understanding of a fair test is good. They appreciate the need to control variables and to repeat observations and measurements in order to improve the accuracy of their results, for example the time it takes a weight to pass through liquids of different viscosity. When presenting their findings, they make effective use of graphs and charts. They understand the concept of conductivity and can give examples of materials that are good conductors of electricity. They have good knowledge of electrical circuits and the effects of adding cells or increasing the load by, for example, adding more bulbs or motors. They are also able to draw and interpret circuit diagrams. They understand about the nature of sound and how sounds can be made louder or quieter. They have a secure basic understanding of forces and a more detailed understanding of the effect of friction on the movement of objects.

75. Overall, the teaching of science is good. A sensible approach, involving class and group work, enables teachers to plan effectively for the different age and ability groups in each of the classes. The

whole class lessons that were observed, one in each class, were well taught with work being appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils. A strong emphasis is placed on practical work which captures the pupils' interest, and helps to develop their grasp of scientific investigations, as well as their knowledge and understanding. In both lessons, teachers made good use of available equipment and materials. Year 5 pupils, however, struggled to use inappropriate weights when trying to work out the water content of wet socks at the start of the investigation into evaporation rates. The pupils' positive attitudes to science were seen in the persistence with which they addressed this problem, and the imaginative solutions that higher attaining pupils used to solve it. In the infant class, the wide range of carefully selected objects provided by the teacher enabled her to encourage pupils to observe carefully and to provide detailed answers about the properties of different materials. A group of Year 6 pupils, withdrawn from the class, was very well taught, with particular strengths in the quality of discussion that the teacher maintained throughout the session. She challenged the pupils to hypothesise, to refine their work and to pay close attention to detail. The development of the pupils' understanding of investigational work was very good in this lesson. In all lessons, teachers managed the pupils well and encouraged good co-operation. This led to little time being wasted and to pupils' working productively.

76. Planning for science is effective. Over time, it provides good balance across the different aspects, and appropriate progression in pupils' learning as they move through the infant and junior classes. However, there is often a considerable time before each aspect of the subject is revisited. Without regular revision of what has been learnt earlier, Year 6 pupils may not achieve as well in the national tests as their understanding and knowledge of their current work would suggest. Although regular assessments are made of pupils' learning at the end of each unit of work, methods for recording progress lack consistency. It is not easy enough for teachers to monitor and respond to the progress made by individuals or groups. Little has been done to identify strengths and weaknesses in the learning across year groups through, for example, the analysis of test papers.

ART AND DESIGN

77. Pupils in the infant class have more regular opportunities to develop their skills in art than those in the junior class. Standards are broadly in line with expectations in the infant class, but are not as high as they should be in the juniors. This is because pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in the subject. No teaching of art was seen during the inspection. Analysis of pupils' work shows that infant pupils regularly engage in art activities. They can paint, although their skills in mixing paint are weak, draw detailed pictures and produce three-dimensional work using for example, paper sculpture and box construction. The latter was a relative weakness identified in the last inspection and in the infant class it has been successfully addressed. In the junior class, pupils rarely have art lessons and there is very little evidence of development in their painting, drawing and construction skills or in their understanding and knowledge of different media. There is little guidance for teachers to follow that would help them to implement lessons to National Curriculum requirements. Planning for art is satisfactory in the infant class, but inadequate for the juniors.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

78. The picture in design and technology is similar to that in art. Infant pupils have more opportunities to develop their skills and their achievement is broadly in line with expectations. In the juniors, pupils' achievement is below expectations although on occasion they do produce some good work. Infant pupils are able to produce detailed drawings when designing objects, such as a device to reach something out of reach. They use simple tools carefully. In a well taught lesson, the teacher

provided a good range of materials and skilfully encouraged the pupils to develop ways of joining materials. In the junior class, pupils have had exciting opportunities to develop their skills through involvement in a young engineers' initiative, and they responded well to the challenge of producing a model of a swimming pool as part of an urban development. However, design and technology is not taught very often and their learning is too haphazard. No scheme of work has been developed for the subject and overall the weaknesses found in the last inspection have not been addressed sufficiently.

GEOGRAPHY & HISTORY

79. Provision for geography and history is satisfactory for both infants and juniors. No teaching was seen in the infant class. No overall judgement can be made about standards from the limited amount of work seen, though this was at least satisfactory. Pupils wrote, for example, their own accounts of Guy Fawkes in history. Very good use is made of the locality, particularly when pupils walk back to school from the village hall. Their map of the walk shows good observational skills.

80. A significant amount of geography and history is taught to the juniors. During their last term's topic on the Romans, they explored different elements of the period, with a strong emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. Pupils recall what they learnt well, and in this respect standards achieved are within the usual range found in primary schools. There is less evidence of pupils developing enquiry skills, though they had the opportunity to learn at first-hand from artefacts on loan from the museum service. Most topics also include an opportunity for pupils to learn by visiting a site or centre, sometimes dressing up and acting out the part of historical characters. These provide very good opportunities for learning. Too few opportunities are provided for independent writing in the subject.

81. Standards achieved in geography are typical for the junior age group. Pupils develop mapping skills satisfactorily. Year 3 pupils, for example, are beginning to interpret maps. They know that the rivers on a map of India are coloured blue and, with a little help, they can find the countries around its border. By Year 6, pupils work on their map of India confidently, colouring in physical features and identifying them on a key. They find out geographical facts competently on the computer. The current topic on an Indian village provides good opportunities for pupils to develop appropriate skills, comparing and contrasting life with their own, and to develop sensitivity towards the needs of an economically developing country. Only a short period of teaching was seen, and this helped pupils to make satisfactory progress. A good feature of the lesson was the opportunity for pupils to work in mixed-age groups for discussion. All took part: the younger pupils were not left out. Pupils expressed their own points of view confidently. A good range of resources was used, an improvement since the last inspection when there was a shortage of resources for geography. Standards in both geography and history are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Both subjects make a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

82. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly based across the requirements for this key skill, but are slightly below expectations in both key stages. Pupils in the infant class confidently set up and use programs that develop their knowledge in English and mathematics, such as spelling and knowledge of numbers. They can also enter text into a word processing program to produce well set out letters and use 'painting' tools to create pictures on a computer. However, they are unsure about saving and printing their work. They talk confidently and enthusiastically about giving instructions to the Roamer, a programmable toy, and they can make it turn

and move forwards and backwards. By Year 6, junior pupils have had a wide range of ICT experiences. They are able to use data handling programs to produce a variety of graphs using information they have collected in mathematics or science lessons and wordprocessing programs to produce different types of texts, such as lists of instructions. Pupils are able to launch the programs they need, save their work and print it out. They have used the school's Internet access to send and receive emails from a school in Canada and from a friend of the school who works in Guatemala. They understand that the Internet is a useful source of information and have accessed World Wide Web sites to support their topic work. They talk confidently about exploring historical situations using CD ROM simulation programmes and can gain information from databases contained on CD ROMs. They understand how computers can be used to control devices, such as sets of lights in a house; they can write simple sets of instructions to make a screen turtle draw various geometrical shapes. Pupils have yet to develop the more sophisticated skills, such as using a scanner, importing and resizing their own pictures in documents or devising their own data files. The school has made satisfactory progress in dealing with the weaknesses in ICT identified in the last report. Pupils now have many more opportunities to use computers and planning for the subject has improved. There is still a need to ensure that skills are developed systematically and built upon as pupils move through the school. The plans for improvements in equipment and training of teachers will provide a firm foundation on which these developments can be achieved.

MUSIC

83. Music was only seen in the infant class. The lesson was very well taught, and resulted in pupils achieving higher standards than expected for their age. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The teacher has good subject knowledge and integrates different aspects of music teaching well. Pupils sing enthusiastically with a good sense of time and tune. Year 2 pupils keep a steady beat on the triangles and wooden blocks. With some support, they compose and perform a simple tune confidently, incorporating two rhythms. Pupils of all ages listen extremely well and follow the teacher's directions. They copy clapping patterns and make loud and soft sounds using a good range of percussion instruments. The plentiful opportunities for singing and playing keep all age groups interested throughout. Very skilful teaching meets the needs of all pupils. Older ones are given more challenge. Individual pupils conduct the others, using the signals demonstrated by the teacher. Very good planning and sensitive management of the pupils help them all to give of their best. Music is integrated into other lessons effectively. The teacher sings the children's names in French during registration, for example, and they respond well, repeating the tune that she sings.

84. The same teacher takes the junior class for music, so her expertise is used well. No overall judgement can be made on the standards achieved by the juniors, though they sang well in assembly, with good expression of feelings.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

85. No physical education lessons were seen, but other evidence indicates that provision has improved significantly since the last inspection, when National Curriculum requirements were not met in the junior class. The school has no hall and this has a detrimental effect on provision. Arrangements for teaching in the infant class have continued, with pupils visiting the village hall for dance and movement and using the outside areas for developing games skills. Juniors now use the amenity provided by the village hall also. Although the work that can be done is limited by the available space, it is the best response that the school can make. There is still no opportunity for pupils to work with large apparatus. To compensate, junior pupils have regular opportunities for swimming and achieve

high standards. All the current Year 6 pupils can swim more than 50 metres, some as far as 1,500 metres. They can swim with two different strokes, one on their back and some have survival skills. Opportunities for games have also improved. As well as lessons, sport features strongly in the extracurricular provision. The headteacher has expertise in football and the school has been awarded the Football Association's Charter Standard, a national award. Coaches for other sports visit the school and contribute their expertise. Residential visits also provide older pupils with opportunities to take part in outdoor pursuits.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

86. Provision for religious education is good. Planning is detailed and covers Christianity and the major faiths well. As at the last inspection, standards achieved are typical for both infant and junior pupils. The infant pupils speak confidently about their visit to Brampton church, and have an appropriate understanding of the Christian traditions that take place there. The juniors are developing good knowledge of Hinduism, due to good teaching, and the strong links that are made with work in assemblies. Pupils are beginning to see the similarities between religions, and understand the importance of symbolism. Questioning is used well to make pupils think. More could be expected of the pupils, however, when recording their work, with increased emphasis on independent writing and research.

87. Provision for religious education is good. Planning is detailed and covers Christianity and the major faiths well. As at the last inspection, standards achieved are typical for both infant and junior pupils. The infant pupils speak confidently about their visit to Brampton church, and have an appropriate understanding of the Christian traditions that take place there. The juniors are developing good knowledge of Hinduism, due to good teaching, and the strong links that are made with work in assemblies. Pupils are beginning to see the similarities between religions, and understand the importance of symbolism. Questioning is used well to make pupils think. More could be expected of the pupils, however, when recording their work, with increased emphasis on independent writing and research.