

INSPECTION REPORT

Fairfield Endowed CE (Controlled) Junior School

Buxton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique Reference Number: 112806

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Buckley

Reporting inspector: Ms Joyce Taylor

Dates of inspection: 4-7 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 182673

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	Controlled
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Boarstone Lane Fairfield Buxton SK17 7NA
Telephone number:	01298 22551
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	The Reverend Colin Craven
Date of previous inspection:	3-6 July 1995

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Ms Jane Chesterfield Lay Inspector		Leadership and Management Efficiency Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mr David Dodds Team Inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology Religious education	The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Learning resources
Mr Mike Carter Team Inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Equal opportunities	The curriculum Staffing
Mrs Sylvia Oultram Team Inspector	Music Art Geography Special educational needs	The accommodation

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership and direction for the school.
- There is good teaching in English and mathematics.
- The pupils reach good standards in art and geography.
- The teaching is good in almost all of the lessons in Year 3.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and the children make good progress in their learning.
- Good opportunities are well taken by the pupils to learn in sport and music outside lessons.
- The school provides well for the pupils' moral and social development.
- The pupils show positive attitudes to work and good standards of behaviour.
- Relationships within the school community are good; the staff are co-operative and caring and the children are confident and polite.
- The school is well liked by the pupils.
- There are good links with the community.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards of writing achieved by the pupils are below average.
- II. Standards are below average in information technology and design technology.
- III. The leadership and management of the school are not effective enough in ensuring that all teachers work in similar ways and that curriculum leaders ensure that all teachers benefit from the best information about their subjects.
- IV. The outside of the building and parts of the playground are in serious need of repair.
- V. Procedures for checking and increasing the rate of the pupils' progress are not good enough.
- VI. The more able pupils do not reach sufficiently high standards.

The school has significant strengths in teaching and in its good relations between the pupils, the teachers and the community. In addition to the strengths, many aspects of school life are satisfactory. The weaknesses in aspects of management and in checking the rate of progress made by the children, including the more able, are outweighed by the strengths. The weaknesses identified will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or carers of the children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made improvements since the last inspection in aspects of all the previous recommendations. The curriculum has been reviewed and many policies have been usefully updated. The school has adopted the literacy and numeracy recommendations and these are already improving standards. There are no effective policies for information technology and design and technology and the standards in both of these subjects are below average. There are appropriately advanced plans to use the National Grid for Learning to improve information technology but these have not yet become effective. Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum have improved but some teachers are still making their own decisions about organising the

curriculum rather than following the school policy. There are improvements in the assessments of the children's achievements and a satisfactory amount of information is collected. This is appropriately evaluated in general terms but there is insufficient attention given to the evaluation of the progress of individual children. The school has not responded effectively to the previous inspection recommendation regarding the raising of standards for the more able pupils. Cultural development is improved and now is satisfactory with some good features. The act of collective worship meets statutory requirements and appropriate improvements have been made to the accommodation.

The school has expressed a commitment to raising standards and has already demonstrated some early success through the improved performance in the 1999 national test results. This, together with the developments in curriculum policies and the initial work in monitoring, lead to the judgement that the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> <i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i> <i>B</i>
			<i>Average</i> <i>C</i>
English	D	E	<i>Below average</i> <i>D</i>
Mathematics	E	E	<i>well below average</i> <i>E</i>
Science	E	E	

The table shows that the pupils leaving the school in 1998 reached levels of attainment that were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. When compared with the results for similar schools, the results were well below average in all three subjects.

The test results for 1999 show a satisfactory improvement in English and a significant improvement in both mathematics and science for the proportion of children reaching the average standard. They also show a slight improvement in the proportion of children reaching a higher standard than average. Inspectors judge the present pupils' attainment in Year 6 to be below average in the writing aspect of English, in design and technology and in information technology. When compared with all schools, an appropriate proportion of the children reach average standards in reading, mathematics and science. A below average proportion of the children, in all three subjects, reach higher levels of attainment. These judgements are based on a wider range of evidence than test results. The long-term picture is that standards fluctuate each year but are fairly static in writing. In reading, mathematics and science they are improving. Pupils begin at the school with standards that are barely average and their overall progress in these subjects is sound. Standards in art and geography are good but design and technology is weak. In religious education and all other subjects standards are average.

· **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English			Good
Mathematics			Good
Science			Satisfactory
Information technology			Unsatisfactory
Religious education			Satisfactory
Other subjects			Satisfactory

The teaching in almost all lessons is of at least satisfactory quality. Almost half of the lessons show good quality and nearly one in fifteen very good quality. One lesson in twenty is unsatisfactory. Overall, the children are supported well by the teachers who understand the subjects and prepare lessons appropriately, are good at managing the children during lessons and have satisfactorily introduced the new national initiatives linked to literacy and numeracy. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of children with special educational needs is good.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good in all lessons and around the school. Most pupils show good self-discipline.
Attendance	Good; above the national average.
Ethos*	Good; better than average in relationships and the children's attitudes to their work and each other. There is a less clear commitment to high standards of achievement.
Leadership and management	The headteacher gives a clear direction to the school. Good in implementing the school's aims concerning behaviour, relationships, values and beliefs. Not enough checks on the school's performance by headteacher, deputy and senior teachers.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced except for information technology and design technology. Planning satisfactory. Beyond lessons, strong activities in sport and music promote some good achievement.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision results in good progress. All the staff work together well to ensure good provision.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, especially moral and social development. The children are beginning to identify aspects of life they find moving. They clearly know the difference between right and wrong, form good relationships and are developing an appreciation of their home town and the wider environment.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing is adequate. Tight accommodation restricts the opportunities for Year 5. Resources for English are unsatisfactory. All other resources are sound.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

• **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- VII. Parents find the school approachable and feel that any complaints they have are handled well.
- VIII. The school encourages children to get involved in more than just lessons.
- IX. The school keeps parents well informed.
- X. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the school life.
- XI. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on the children.
- XII. The children like school.

What some parents are not happy about

- XIII. Some parents feel the school does
- XIV. Some parents are dissatisfied with
- XV. Some parents want more detailed have achieved.

- 12% of parents returned the questionnaire and 7 parents attended the meeting before the inspection. Inspection judgements support the parents' positive views and support the view
- that more detail should be included in the children's reports.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards, especially in writing, information technology and design and technology, the school governors, the headteacher and senior management team should work closely together to:

- ◆. Provide more rigorous management structures to influence school improvement by:
 - . monitoring and evaluating standards of attainment in each core subject where the pupils have weaknesses and in design and technology; evaluating improvements by setting precise targets, both for the short and the long-term, for raised levels of the pupils' attainment (paragraphs: 7, 37, 93, 95);
 - . identifying in the job descriptions the tasks to be carried out by all the curriculum co-ordinators in order to maintain their subjects adequately (paragraph 61).

- ◆. Improve the direct, regular and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and senior staff and subject co-ordinators to:
 - . ensure all staff follow the school policies and manage the curriculum according to whole school decisions (paragraphs 32, 62, 93);
 - . raise the teachers' expectations of the more able children and improve the standards the children achieve (paragraphs 6, 33, 98).

- ◆. Measure progress made towards targets by precise assessment of the children's attainment, particularly in English and information technology, and use this information to assess accurately the Year 6 children who are to take national tests (paragraphs 37, 38).

- ◆. As a means of safeguarding the children's safety and well-being, seek to secure improvements to the paint-work on the outside of the school building, to the leaking roof and the crumbling surface of the playgrounds, by making further representations to the LEA (paragraph 74).

- ◆. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
 - . involving parents more closely in supporting pupils learning to read (paragraph 94);
 - . reviewing and strengthening the roles and responsibilities of the deputy head (paragraph 60, 61);
 - . implementing the marking policy more consistently (paragraph 39);
 - . improving the reports to parents to provide them with more specific information (paragraph 57);
 - . identifying and evaluating more rigorously the outcomes of spending as a means of monitoring effective use of the budget (paragraphs 60, 63).

INTRODUCTION

§ Characteristics of the school

- 1 Fairfield Endowed Church of England Junior School is a large school of 335 pupils aged between seven and eleven. The school serves a community of two large housing estates on the north-west edge of Buxton. The area is one of below average social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils who take free school meals, 20.5 %, is average. This is broadly the same as when the school was previously inspected.
- 2 There is one child from a minority ethnic group who speaks English very well. Most schools have more children from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- 3 24.7% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and 5% have statements of special educational needs. Both of these proportions are well above the national average for junior schools. On entry to the school, according to the national tests for seven year olds, about 60% of the children attain securely at a level typical for their age. The remaining children reach a level that is barely average or reach a below average level.

4The school's published aims are:

with the parents;	to work in partnership
environment, which is happy, secure, caring and stimulating;	to provide an
equal access to the curriculum;	for the children to have
needs for adult life;	to meet the children's
behaviour and for the pupils to respect each other and to become involved in the community.	to foster appropriate

- 5 Priorities in the school's plan for development are to introduce the national initiative for numeracy and improve the provision for information technology.

5 Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

		Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:			
		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1998	34	44	78
5	National Curriculum Test Results	English	Mathematics	Science	
	Number of pupils At NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	13	7	13
		Girls	26	14	20
		Total	39	21	33
	Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	51	27	43
		National	65	59	69
5	Teacher Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science	
	Number of pupils At NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	17	15	19
		Girls	28	28	28
		Total	45	43	47
	Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	58	56	61
		National	65	65	72

In 1999 the test results improved slightly in English and improved significantly in mathematics and science. Inspection findings indicate that in English the standards reached by the children in Year 6 are still below average but in mathematics and science they are attaining standards which are average for their age. Very few of the Year 6 children attain standards that exceed the average.

5 Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised	School	4.9
Absence	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised	School	1.1
Absence	National comparative	0.5

data

5 **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

Number

Fixed period	33
Permanent	0

5 **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

%

Very good or better	6.6
Satisfactory or better	95.1
Less than satisfactory	4.9

5 **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

5 **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

5 **Attainment and progress**

6 The pupils approaching the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998 were shown by the National Curriculum tests to have below average attainment in English and well below average attainment in mathematics and science. Results in all three subjects were well below average when compared with similar schools. Just over half of the children reached the level of attainment (Level 4) expected of them in English and just over a quarter did so in mathematics. In science less than half (43%) reached the expected level. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level (Level 5) in all three subjects was well below the national average. The proportion was also below the average for similar schools. Test results for 1996 to 1998 show standards in these subjects fluctuating but the long-term trend appears to be one of static standards compared with other schools.

7In 1999 the proportion of children reaching Level 4 in National Curriculum tests has increased in all three subjects. In English the improvement is fairly modest but in mathematics and science about two thirds of the children reached the expected level. This is a good improvement, particularly in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level remains lower than expected. Inspection judgements of present attainment are based on a broader spread of evidence than test results and relate to a different group of pupils. These judgements show overall standards for the Year 6 children to be below average in English and average in mathematics and science. The number of children reaching higher standards continues to be too low, suggesting that the school has a continuing weakness, as identified in the previous inspection, in promoting the progress of its more able pupils. The most recent results show a continuing fluctuation in standards, suggesting that the attainment of the children in each year group is insufficiently influenced by targeted interventions by their teachers. Additionally the inspectors judge the teachers' own assessments of the Year 6 pupils' attainment to be generally too high. Insufficient information is used by teachers to identify accurately the level achieved or expected for individual children.

8 In English, in Year 6, the children show skills in speaking and listening which are approaching the level expected for their ages. They listen very carefully and with understanding and their speaking is confident and clear, although few comments show a depth of meaning or are extensive in vocabulary. These skills soundly support the pupils' work across the curriculum. For example, in physical education the children comment constructively on the performance of others and use similar comments to improve their own work. Standards of fluency and accuracy in reading are average and appropriately support work in other subjects, for example, in religious education where the children read the names of the books of the Bible and transfer them onto a chart. In writing, many of the children show a good deal of inaccuracy in the grammatical construction of their sentences and show weaknesses in punctuation and in the choice of interesting and unusual vocabulary. The proportion of pupils producing writing of the quality expected at their age is lower than in the average school and very few of the children exceed this standard.

9 In mathematics most of the children develop a sound grasp for their age of the basic

number skills and sometimes use these to support learning successfully in other subjects. In history, for example, the pupils in Year 6 use numeracy skills to collate data from a census report. The depth of the pupils' mathematical understanding and the proportion of pupils reaching the level of attainment expected for their age is sound. In science the children develop appropriate knowledge and skills for their age but their understanding is underdeveloped because there is a lack of opportunity to investigate and experiment. In mathematics and science too few of the pupils exceed average standards.

- 10 In English, mathematics and science many of the pupils start at the school with attainment that is below average in relation to the national standard. While an appropriate number reach Level 2, few of the children attain at an above average level and many (over a third) only manage the lowest part of level 2 or below this level. In English over a third of the pupils also complete their time at the school with below average attainment. During the past year, since the Literacy Strategy was implemented, the pupils' attainment has improved in English and they make steady progress. In mathematics and science the evidence from the lessons observed and from the examination of past work, supports the judgement that progress is sound in both subjects and sometimes the progress is good. The pupils are making gains in their skills, understanding and knowledge at a rate which matches, and sometimes slightly exceeds, the rate of their previous learning. In all three subjects, however, the school makes insufficient impact on the levels of attainment. The proportion of children with below average attainment has not been reduced during their time in the school. The rate of progress is fairly even, apart from an increased rate in Year 3 where the progress children make is generally good.
- 11 The progress made by the children in information technology is unsatisfactory and their attainments at the end of the key stage are below the national standard. Most of the pupils are able to use a computer to record their work but their knowledge, skills and understanding lack depth and breadth. Similarly, the children's progress in design and technology is unsatisfactory and they have insufficient opportunity to develop their learning to a level that is expected for their age.
- 12 There is good progress in art with the children showing a good range of skills and understanding. Additionally the pupils' progress in geography is good and in both of these subjects the pupils' work exceeds the level expected for their age. Good progress is also made in history.
- 13 The children's progress in religious education, physical education and music is satisfactory throughout the school and, overall, their work matches the expected levels at each age.
- 14 In several subjects there are lessons when the children's attainment and progress are good and sometimes very good. This most often occurred when the subject co-ordinator was taking the lesson.
- 15 The children with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their past attainment but in several classes and lessons the higher-attaining children make unsatisfactory progress. There is no current significant difference in the progress of boys and girls, although this has been the case in the past, or for children of different social groups.

16 Comparing the present inspection judgements with those made at the previous inspection, it is apparent that standards have slightly improved across the curriculum.

16
personal development

Attitudes, behaviour and

17 The school has successfully maintained its high standards in these aspects since the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, most of the pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work and listen attentively to their teachers. Most are keen to answer questions and contribute to discussions in class. They settle quickly to their tasks, enjoy what they are doing and try hard to complete their work as well as they can. Most of the children work productively and co-operatively with others, sharing ideas when required and taking turns to use equipment. When they are given the opportunity, they are able to use their initiative to take responsibility for their own learning but this does not happen regularly. Sometimes a few pupils display more negative attitudes in lessons. They may be passive and unresponsive or easily distracted, fidgeting and chattering in lessons. These pupils are effectively handled by the staff so that they do not disrupt others. The pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to work. They are steadily developing skills of concentration and independence, thanks to the efforts of the staff supporting them.

18 The pupils' behaviour is usually good across the school, both in class and around the buildings. Most pupils obey their teachers and follow instructions readily in lessons so that little time is wasted in establishing control. They move around the school in a sensible and orderly way, particularly when they need to walk through other classes to reach their destination. In the playground, most pupils play safely and with consideration for others, although some are boisterous in their activities. They show respect for their surroundings and the property of others but a lack of waste bins in the playground means that litter is often a problem after breaktimes. The level of short-term exclusions is very high. There were thirty-three during the last school year, reflecting the school's firm approach to misbehaviour which is likely to put the learning and well-being of other pupils at risk. Permanent exclusions are rare.

19 Relationships in the school are good. The pupils are polite and open towards adults and are confident enough to tell them about any problems they experience in the classroom or the playground. Pupils get on well with one another, working and playing together without fuss. They easily accept those who are different from themselves and treat them equally. They listen well to one another's ideas and are appreciative of the efforts and achievements of others.

20 The children respond well to the good opportunities they are given to take responsibility for duties in class and around the school. They contribute wholeheartedly to the life of the school community as, for example, teachers' assistants, school council representatives or lunchtime monitors. The pupils take these duties seriously and carry them out responsibly. School council representatives, for example, earnestly discuss the suggestions put forward by their peers and have realistic expectations about what they can achieve. Lunchtime monitors distribute and collect playground equipment in a sensible and trustworthy way. The children are also happy to represent the school as members of

the choir or of its sports teams.

20 **Attendance**

21 The level of the pupils' attendance at the school is good. It is just above the national average and has consistently reached a similar level each year since the last inspection. Most absence is caused by illness. Although unauthorised absence is above the national average, it has decreased over the last year and the school is working hard to reduce it still further.

22 Punctuality is also good. The pupils are keen to be at school and almost all arrive on time each day so that the morning session can begin promptly. These good standards of attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

20

20 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

20

Teaching

23 The quality of teaching is very satisfactory overall. During the inspection almost all of the lessons were of at least satisfactory quality: one lesson in twenty proved to be unsatisfactory. A quarter of the lessons showed good quality and about one in fifteen very good quality. Examples of good practice were seen in all year groups but there was rather more in Years 3 and 4 than in Years 5 and 6.

24 The most consistently positive feature of teaching in the school is the effective management of the pupils. In almost all lessons the teachers manage the pupils' behaviour calmly and effectively to promote good attitudes and conduct. As a result, the lessons proceed in a co-operative and purposeful atmosphere, providing a very good environment in which learning may proceed. This good start is developed in an effective and satisfactory manner in most lessons, particularly in the support of those children with special educational needs. While all the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour, there is a range of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching which influence how much the children learn. The better teachers set more challenging, open-ended tasks than others and ask wide-ranging and probing questions to gain an understanding of how much all of the children have understood. In relation to the potentially higher-attaining children the teachers' expectations are often too low.

25 In the important areas of literacy and numeracy the teaching is good overall, although there are some inconsistencies in the approach. This is seen in mathematics when, in some classes, too little time is given to the discussion of mental calculation strategies and in English specific areas for development are not always identified as a means of speeding progress. Although the pupils' progress in individual lessons is often good, in the long-term there is much work to be done to ensure that their attainment is sound overall. Each year is beginning to build on the pupils' previous learning through use of the national optional tests and this is strengthening the quality of the teaching.

- 26 The quality of the teachers' planning is generally sound and reflects appropriate knowledge of the subjects. Again though, there is some variation in the detail with which teachers identify exactly what the children are to learn. There are, however, some very good examples of clear and precise planning which identify the focus for learning effectively. Examples of good planning are found in each year group but are particularly linked to Year 3.
- 27 The best lessons seen during the inspection combined good questioning of both individuals and the whole class with clearly identified learning objectives, high expectations, good subject knowledge and very good quality management of the children. These lessons promoted good progress by the pupils. A mathematics lesson in Year 3, for example, challenged the children's thinking by applying previous learning of place value to higher numbers through an imaginative range of activities. A music lesson in Year 4 set high expectations of the children's thinking by using unfamiliar and complex music for the children to analyse and used resources creatively to ensure the task was successful. In Year 5 in literacy, the children were questioned in a manner that tested their understanding. They were given time to respond fully and their answers were probed further if necessary. In Year 6 the children were prompted to think of more unusual words and the quality of their work was monitored within a very good-humoured environment. The pupils' good responses in these lessons reflected their concentration and perseverance with a challenging task.
- 28 The teachers plan appropriately and give good support to the children with special educational needs. In literacy lessons, support is very good where intensive small group teaching by a support teacher or assistant promotes good progress.
- 29 The setting of homework is generally a sound feature of the teaching, with the exception that pupils are given insufficient encouragement and support in extending their ability to read at home. Parents are generally content with homework arrangements.
- 30 The few unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection showed no common characteristic weakness. However, a considerable proportion of all lessons suffer from the weakness that teachers do not keep a close enough check on the progress individual pupils are making. This is reflected in the range of tasks provided which sometimes provide insufficient challenge for the more capable children. Additional tasks are provided on occasion for the children who are able to complete their work early but these pupils would be better served by more challenging tasks at the outset. This was also a weakness identified at the previous inspection. Sometimes the tasks are very similar in expectation for several different groups of children providing inappropriate challenge. Sometimes the marking gives no advice to the children on how to improve their work.
- 31 The quality of teaching has improved overall since the last inspection and the monitoring strategies already introduced have positively supported the teachers in implementing initiatives and raising attainment. However, the presence of inconsistencies and the lack of improvement in raising the attainment of the more able children reflect insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and insufficient support for improvement by the headteacher, deputy head and subject co-ordinators.

32 The curriculum is appropriately planned. It is broad, fairly well balanced and relevant to the pupils. It provides a sound educational experience with appropriate provision for the pupils' social, intellectual, physical and personal development. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science have appropriate schemes of work and sufficient time is allocated. However, in practice there are anomalies in the provision for other subjects. In Year 6, music, religious education and personal and social education are taught alternately and have too small an allocation of time. Several classes have various amounts of time for pupils to read that are not formally planned. Both these sessions and the time spent on aspects of personal and social education affect the balance for other subjects. Consequently, over a year, each teacher may have too little time to teach all of the planned curriculum. In several classes, art and design and technology are taught in rotation and insufficient time is allocated to design and technology. The curriculum balance is not managed well enough.

33 The school's equal opportunities policy is helpful in guiding teachers to ensure that each child has access to the full curriculum. This is generally done well and teachers are aware of the appropriate factors. The pupils are seldom withdrawn from lessons and only when it is in their best interests overall. Sound efforts are made, for example, to restrict the loss of lessons for those pupils having instrumental tuition. This curriculum entitlement issue is monitored by the headteacher. The children with special educational needs are usually given extra support within the classroom so that they can still follow the main lesson's progress. All of them follow the full curriculum. The curriculum provision for these pupils is good and positively enhanced by the targets set for each in their individual education plans. The appropriate code of practice is complied with fully and there are annual reviews to promote progression through the curriculum. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. Their programme of work is suitably modified and they are fully integrated into school life. There are some occasions when the work is too easy for the potentially higher-attaining pupils and their progress is restricted. However, there are plans within the school's development priorities to improve the challenge for these pupils.

34 The schemes of work and the planning carried out by year group teachers are effective in promoting the continuity and progression of the content of most subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Target setting is at an early stage of development but is already helping learning in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum provides less guidance for teachers about how to help the pupils gain skills and competence, such as designing scientific tests, planning a model or evaluating historical evidence. Many of the teachers, particularly of the younger children, appropriately include such learning in their plans but recording systems seldom help the next teacher to know each of the pupils' attainments in these aspects of learning. The curriculum is enriched by a number of appropriate extra-curricular activities, some of which involve sport. They are effective, popular with the pupils and their parents and of good quality. Some activities are located in the nearby sports hall. For example, a choir meets weekly, produces good quality singing and often represents the school in external performances. A number of educational visits are also provided, including a residential visit. These support the quality of the pupils' experience, enhancing their learning.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and includes religious education and sex education, as decided by the governors. Teaching about substance abuse is included in medium-term planning for Year 6 but was not observed during the inspection.

- 36 Assessment arrangements have improved since the last inspection. The school now effectively collects data relating to National Curriculum levels once each year showing the stage attained by each child. This practice began in the summer of 1999 and there is not yet enough data to analyse productively. Additionally there are useful records of achievement for each child, which contain annually up-dated comments in all curriculum areas and brief targets usually relating to English and mathematics. The National Curriculum tests taken by the children in Year 2 before they leave the infant school provide data that the school has been collecting for several years. This range of data indicates clearly the children's overall level of attainment at the end of the school year. The school plans to use this information to track the children's attainment as they move through the year groups. Test results are analysed and used to identify areas of weakness. This has resulted in increased attention to the teaching of writing and the purchase of fiction and non-fiction books to tempt the boys into greater effort in reading.
- 37 As yet there is no analysis of the progress made by individual children through the National Curriculum levels by comparing their attainment within each year. The school has no strategy to assess the smaller steps in the pupils' learning or the rate of their progress during the school year. As a result, there are no systems to collect and use data that can direct the specific teaching and learning targets for individual children or small groups of pupils. This makes it difficult for teachers routinely to note specific weaknesses and make them the focus of a work programme as a means of raising attainment and speeding progress. Reading records are kept but these contain little data relating to children's competencies in reading and give no information on skills they need to improve.
- 38 The assessments teachers make in Year 6 to identify the attainment of the children who will take National Curriculum tests are sometimes very different from the final test results. For example, in the 1999 test, the assessments for higher attainers in English indicated that the school expected 50% more success than was achieved. In science the expectation was 15% higher than the number of children who reached the expected national average. The strategies for calculating the expected level attained by the Year 6 children are insufficiently linked to National Curriculum levels.
- 39 There is a clear and instructive marking policy but this is implemented inconsistently and the teachers' comments written in the children's books do not provide constructive feedback on how to improve. The assessment policy is brief but it includes appropriate principles. There is, however, insufficient detail on the practical strategies for assessment that would give the teachers expertise and confidence in collecting and evaluating regular and accurate data.

20 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 40 The standards of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school are good, overall. The spiritual dimension is sound with some good features. The moral and social aspects are good. The cultural aspect is good for the pupils' experience of their own cultures but needs further development of their experience of other cultures.
- 41 The findings of the previous inspection required the school to make minor adjustments to the provision for collective worship to ensure that it meets fully legal requirements and to widen the pupils' awareness of different cultural traditions, including greater celebration of those within their own experience. The adjustments to the acts of worship have been achieved but the raising of awareness of other cultural traditions requires further attention.
- 42 Effective provision is made for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the school's strong links with the church, aspects of the curriculum, out of school activities and through the daily act of collective worship. Throughout the school the staff work hard to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through sound relationships, specific class work and individual support. Their work is guided and supported by effective policies and schemes, which include a school ethos statement, a policy for spiritual and moral development, a behaviour policy and policies to support the act of worship and religious education. These policies are implemented consistently and well.
- 43 The pupils' spiritual development is promoted effectively through the daily act of collective worship. The majority of assemblies are Christian in character and emphasise values such as caring, sharing and respect. Children are provided with opportunities to reflect on their values and beliefs and to apply them to their daily lives. Time for reflection is being developed well in the assembly and Act of Worship. For example, the story of Nelson Mandela was used very effectively to enable pupils to reflect upon feelings of anger, revenge and reconciliation. During the inspection the school was presented with a wooden crucifix made by a grandparent to promote a reflective area of the school hall and this occasion was managed very successfully. Some teachers effectively use opportunities in lessons to develop moments of emotional awareness through readings of literature and through events such as the finding of a fossil in a rock sample in a science lesson. The strong and effective links which the school has developed with the local church make a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
- 44 The fostering of moral rules is well developed throughout the school by an effective behaviour code that is promoted and reinforced consistently. The rewards for appropriate behaviour and consequences of misbehaviour are fairly and consistently applied. This resulted in a very high number of exclusions initially. The emphasis is upon positive reinforcement of good behaviour and pupils enjoy taking home certificates for improved behaviour and having good work and acts acknowledged. The religious education and the personal and social education programmes are structured well to teach the children about moral issues, fairness and justice. Within the context of religious education lessons the children are given many opportunities to reflect upon good behaviour and to apply Christian principles to their daily lives.
- 45 The pupils' behaviour and their relationships with each other and with adults are a strength of the school. Through their behaviour in class and around the school, as well as in discussion of moral issues, the children show that they understand the differences

between right and wrong. They treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. They co-operate well. They respect the fabric of the school. Staff foster this caring ethos through carefully created displays in classrooms and the public areas around school and staff relationships with the pupils are good. The influence of whole-school projects, such as the anti-bullying week, has had positive and wide-reaching effects. The school is a community where all children are valued and the staff work hard to build positive self-images and to give pupils high self-esteem.

- 46 The pupils' social development is promoted and developed through a broad range of school activities. Pupils are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as helping with jobs around school, organising playground activities and through membership of the school council. They have the opportunity to participate in residential visits. There is an appropriate range of after-school clubs that is popular and well supported. The school runs various seasonal sports teams. The broad range of groupings employed by teachers in the classroom is used successfully to promote social and co-operative skills. Each year the children are actively involved in supporting charitable organisations through activities and functions to raise money.
- 47 The pupils' cultural experience is provided for effectively by the school. They visit and perform, with success, at the local Buxton Festival. They participate in local traditional events, such as maypole dancing and seeing the well-dressing. They perform in concerts associated with the church and local charity events. They visit the theatre, the Opera House, the museum and art gallery. They visit the library for events such as a poet in residence and story-telling. Visitors and events coming to the school include musicians, the local brass band, the community art group, art exhibitions and local artists.
- 48 The school is developing the provision for other cultural traditions. Assemblies include the celebration of some of the festivals from other world religions and cultures and a display board has been created in the hall to illustrate the beliefs, traditions and religious artefacts from other faiths. The school's resources for multi-cultural education and other world religions are being extended. Some opportunities are provided for the pupils' cultural development through aspects of religious education where other world religions are studied but the children's awareness of the range of cultures represented in our society is under-developed and this aspect is under-resourced.

20 **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

49 The school has successfully maintained its high standards of pastoral care since the time of the last inspection. This is still a strength of the school.

50 Personal support for pupils is very good. The large number and good quality of policies covering this aspect of school life provide a framework for the pupils' welfare, which offers them security and stability. The headteacher has a very good overview of the children's backgrounds and problems. The school makes very good use of specialist health and care services to meet the individual needs of the pupils as closely as possible. Daily routines, such as lunchtimes, run smoothly. There are adequate numbers of midday supervisors and they have a consistent approach to the well-being of the pupils.

51 Educational guidance for the children is sound. The teachers know their pupils well and are attentive to their needs in lessons. They usually give them work which is generally matched to their abilities. However the higher attainers are not often fully challenged by their tasks and all of the children would make faster progress if more of their tasks related to more precise targets. Those pupils with special educational needs are supported well, both in class and in their withdrawal sessions. There are good procedures for identifying special needs and preparing individual education plans, which are specific and detailed. The pupils with behavioural needs are provided with counselling where necessary.

52 Discipline is promoted very well in the school. The good policy for behaviour is consistently applied by teachers and support staff throughout the school. Good behaviour is constantly praised and reinforced, whilst unacceptable behaviour is handled firmly. Rewards and sanctions are well-known to the pupils and applied fairly. The school does not shy away from using short-term exclusions where necessary and has successfully used this strategy to reinforce the importance of good behaviour. As a result, the number of short-term exclusions is reducing. There is a good emphasis on tackling any instances of bullying and the children are not afraid to come forward if they have any worries.

53 The school monitors absence well. In response to the last inspection report, the marking of registers is now done to a uniform standard across the school. Reasons for absence are chased up daily by administrative staff and the registers are checked weekly for patterns of absence. Any concerns are referred appropriately to the education welfare service.

54 There are good procedures for child protection. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for this and there is a good policy which is linked to local guidelines. The pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe, through their planned programme of personal and social education.

55 Health and safety issues are managed well in the school. The good policy clearly identifies responsibilities and makes provision for frequent inspections. Fire drills are regularly undertaken and risk assessments are carried out. Arrangements for administering first aid are satisfactory. The pupils are cared for well and their parents are notified of any significant incidents. However, records of treatment are not kept fully in accordance with the latest government guidelines for schools. The needs of the pupils with particular medical conditions are met well. The well-being of the pupils is of paramount importance in the school at all times.

20

20 **Partnership with parents and the community**

56 The school keeps the parents satisfactorily informed about its everyday life and organisation through its prospectus, the governors' report to parents and regular newsletters. The prospectus and the governors' annual report omit a number of items required by law. Some curriculum information is provided in the prospectus and in newsletters. However, this is not sufficiently detailed or extensive to be helpful to parents in supporting their children's learning at home.

57 Reports to parents on their children's progress are not of good enough quality to provide parents with a full picture of their children's achievements in relation to national expectations. The format of the reports is too cramped to enable teachers to write substantial and meaningful comments. As a result, the balance of the reports tends to focus on the pupils' attitudes to their work and areas that have been covered rather than on what children can or cannot do. Comments are often vague and do not refer to the skills which pupils have acquired in each subject. The concerns of some parents about the quality of reports are justified. Liaison with parents about any problems the children may have is good and the parents' appreciate the school's approachability. Parents of the pupils with special educational needs are kept well-informed about their children's progress. They are encouraged to come to their children's annual reviews, although not all take advantage of this opportunity.

58 The parents are supportive of the school and the work it does for their children. They uphold its values and feel welcome to play a part in the life of the school community. Many support their children's learning at home, ensuring that homework is completed. A significant number are able to act as classroom helpers on a regular basis. Events such as class assemblies are well attended and the Friends of Fairfield Association is thriving, raising valued additional funds for equipment and resources. The parents make a worthwhile contribution to the work of the school, which is grateful for all their efforts.

59 The school has a good range of links with the community, which help to enrich the curriculum and enhance the pupils' personal development. The school's work is underpinned by its connection with the church which provides the cornerstone for its ethos and values. There are also close links with the local infant and secondary schools, enabling the pupils to transfer easily from one stage of their education to the next. The school makes effective use of amenities in the town and music links with the town are good. Visitors to the school from the community help to enliven the personal and social education programme. The pupils have the opportunity to participate in a sound range of local events. Contact with businesses in the area provides support for pupils' learning, through visits to different companies and extra resources for the school donated by various organisations. These good links all have a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

20 THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

20 Leadership and management

60 The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership for the school. She has established very good pastoral systems for the pupils and a good structure for communication and consultation with staff and governors. The role of the deputy head and the senior management team has not been fully developed to provide the appropriate support to the headteacher and management of the curriculum is not sufficiently well co-ordinated for there to be a clear overview of the developments needed. The governors are hard-working and committed to the school and are kept well-informed by the headteacher. They are aware of their responsibilities and take a long-term view of the need for improvement in standards in the school. They do not yet have strategies in place for evaluating the impact and success of their decisions.

61 Since the time of the last inspection, the school has made some progress in setting up processes for monitoring, evaluating and supporting teaching and curriculum development, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. As a result, some weaknesses in these areas have been identified and targeted for improvement. Elsewhere in the curriculum, monitoring and evaluation processes have not been satisfactorily set up on a consistent basis, partly because expectations of the subject co-ordinators' role have not been adequately defined. The work required of the co-ordinator is made explicit when their subject is a priority in the school development plan. The tasks to be carried out at other times in order to maintain the subject adequately are not made clear in job descriptions and some subject co-ordinators are less effective in supporting other teachers than is appropriate.

62 The school successfully meets most of its aims, which are set out in the prospectus and are mainly pastoral in nature. A commitment to high standards and high expectations of the pupils' attainment is not included in the aims. The school's Christian values are strongly reflected in its life and work. This is greatly appreciated by parents, who feel that their children benefit from the values the school promotes. Policies for the various aspects of school life, such as behaviour, are good. They are detailed and comprehensive and provide a secure framework for the smooth daily running of the school and the fair treatment of pupils. Curriculum policies are satisfactory overall in quality but are not implemented consistently and so do not provide a sound structure for curriculum development and improvement in standards.

63 The development planning process is well managed in the school through a system of consultation and discussion which ensures that everyone's views are heard. The plan itself is well formulated, with full costings and an appropriate focus on a limited number of targets. It does not try unrealistically to improve all areas of the school simultaneously. However, it lacks sharply defined success criteria and opportunities for evaluation of its impact.

64 The school has a good, positive ethos which permeates its daily life. Relationships in the school are good and most pupils behave well and are respectful to adults. The staff work well as a team, with a common sense of purpose and a desire to do their best for their pupils. Good communications and a good structure for meetings help to foster this team

spirit. It creates a productive learning environment for the pupils, where hard work is expected.

65 There is a good policy for equal opportunities that outlines most of the factors with which teachers and others should be familiar. The school is very concerned to offer equal opportunities to all and largely achieves this both for pupils and adults. Appropriate legislation is complied with fully and the school's management promotes achievement for all. However, some minor anomalies remain. For example, a few pupils are withdrawn from lessons for instrumental tuition. Teachers try to ensure they do not miss the same subject each week but such issues are not sufficiently rigorously monitored, although the headteacher does have an overview. The more capable pupils sometimes lack the challenge they need to make sufficient progress.

66 There is strong leadership for special educational needs and an effective policy that positively supports the provision. The headteacher works closely with the special needs co-ordinator and class teachers are supported well in effectively implementing the policy. The school is successful in promoting the learning of the children with special educational needs.

67 The governors meet all their statutory obligations, other than the provision of all the information required by law in the school prospectus and in their annual report to parents.

20 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

20 **Staffing**

68 The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers for the number of registered pupils. There are presently large classes in Year 5 mainly because there is no further available classroom. However, the school successfully endeavours to reduce these numbers through some pupils being taught separately in the mornings by another teacher employed for the purpose. While there are some teachers who are relatively new to the school, others have long service. The teachers bring a range of qualifications from their initial training and although weaker in mathematics, an appropriate spread has been achieved through further training. Each National Curriculum subject has a co-ordinator and there is also a co-ordinator for the provision made for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have job descriptions, which help to provide a base for their annual appraisal but the curriculum co-ordinators' job descriptions are insufficiently detailed.

69 There is good provision of appropriately qualified support staff and most are employed to support the high number of pupils with statements of special educational need. There is a good degree of collaboration between teachers and these staff and, consequently, the needs of such pupils are met well.

70 A comprehensive and detailed staff handbook supplies clear guidance for teachers and other staff. Their views about school development and the teachers' own professional development are collected annually and used both to identify issues for the school development plan and to identify teachers' training needs. These views are separate from

the appraisal programme, which meets requirements. Much training has recently been concerned with literacy and numeracy while staff meetings often include elements of training about a range of areas. There are sound arrangements for the induction of new staff and the mentoring of newly qualified teachers. Overall, the arrangements for staff development are sound and in most cases have been effective in developing the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons.

20 **Accommodation**

71 Overall the accommodation is satisfactory and has improved considerably since the previous inspection. However, there are still a number of significant weaknesses.

72 Since the previous inspection, the building of two new classrooms and the erection of internal walls, creating class bases, has improved the learning environment for the pupils and the school feels this has reduced the noise level and the visual distractions considerably. Every available space is used and the accommodation for special educational needs pupils is now satisfactory.

73 Inside, the school is well maintained, clean and in sound decorative order. Attractive displays help to make the building a stimulating environment for the pupils. Whilst most classrooms are sufficient in size for lessons, three classrooms are overcrowded. These are in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 6. Although this overcrowding causes difficulties in some curriculum areas, such as design and technology, art and music, the pupils' attainment in art and music is satisfactory and sometimes good. During the afternoons Year 5 classes are also overcrowded when three teaching groups become two. This overcrowding sometimes negatively affects the quality of learning for those pupils. For example, in one music lesson the pupils had difficulty isolating their group's sounds due to the close proximity of other groups. Some classrooms do not have easy access to water, which also has a negative effect on the art curriculum. The library is too small and is not easily accessible. Consequently, it is rarely used. The previous inspection report commented on the school's plan to move the library to this less suitable location and the adverse effect on the provision for pupils to use the library as a resource to develop research skills. This has proved to be the case.

74 Whilst the inside of the building is stimulating, the outside is not. Some areas of the outside of the building are in need of repair and redecoration. There is very little paint left on external windows and doors and one area of the roof is leaking, allowing water to enter the inside of the building. The playground is somewhat bare and uninteresting and a lack of litter bins causes litter to accumulate during the day.

75 There is sufficient space for games and for the pupils to play and a good range of small apparatus is available during the lunchtime. The system of allocating equipment to individual pupils is well organised by small groups of pupils. This provides good opportunities for social development.

76 The school suffers from vandalism and has difficulty in reducing it as the site is open to all. However, there are plans to erect security fencing in the near future. The governors are fully aware of the difficulties which the school has with accommodation and will

continue to seek help from the Local Education Authority. There are plans to build more houses in the area and it will be difficult to accommodate a rising school roll without extensions.

20 **Learning Resources**

77 There are adequate learning resources to support the majority of subjects. The mathematics, religious education, history and information technology provision has been extended through recent spending and resources for music are good. There are some shortfalls, for example, in history there are insufficient artefacts and in geography there are too few up-to-date atlases and globes.

78 The information technology curriculum is disadvantaged through having some old equipment that is prone to breakdown, a range of computer makes and models that makes continuity and progression difficult and insufficient software.

79 The school has relocated the library and this has resulted in poor central provision. The library is under-used and pupils do not have appropriate book retrieval skills. Books are dispersed around the school and are now difficult to locate. Many non-fiction books remaining in the library are out of date or in poor condition. Sets of books for group reading are often shared between participating pupils. Overall, the resources for English are unsatisfactory.

80 Some equipment, particularly for design and technology, is under-used. Most resources are distributed around the classrooms and are appropriately located and organised for convenience of access. The lack of cataloguing presents difficulties in locating some resources when needed by teachers or pupils. The school's development planning includes an annual review of each subject's resource needs and funds are allocated to co-ordinators for acquisition. This is, for the most part, an effective strategy.

81 The school makes effective use of the environment with visits to the local church, local resources for learning, such as the museum and distant locations, including a residential visit. Some visitors to school are used as a learning resource but this is under-developed.

20 **The efficiency of the school**

82 Financial planning in the school is well targeted to promote educational development. The budget planning cycle is well organised and closely linked to the school development plan. This is fully costed, in line with the recommendations of the previous inspection report. Staff are consulted in the planning and prioritising process and professional development is considered and included where appropriate. Money from the standards fund is spent well in this way. The school makes careful use of its finances and, although it expects a small deficit at the end of this financial year, it has achievable plans to balance its books the following year. The governing body adhere strictly to their financial control policy in their spending decisions and take seriously their responsibilities for setting and monitoring the budget. They are aware of the need to consider the implications of their expenditure but are not yet evaluating this in relation to its impact on standards of

attainment in the school.

- 83 Teachers and other staff are deployed effectively across the school. Pupils with special educational needs get the help that they require from their educational care officers. Funding for special needs is suitably spent to provide the necessary staff and resources for the pupils concerned. The best possible use is made of the school's complicated accommodation so that no space is wasted. Resources are generally employed appropriately across the curriculum to promote and support the pupils' learning.
- 84 Financial control and school administration are good. There are well ordered procedures for ordering of goods and payment of invoices and a proper system for authorising expenditure. The recent audit found only minor issues to address and these are in hand. Appropriate reports are regularly produced to enable the headteacher and the governors to monitor the budget efficiently. Administrative staff provide unobtrusive and helpful support to the headteacher and other staff, enabling the school to run smoothly.
- 85 The pupils' standards of attainment are below national expectations when they enter the school and in line with expectations in most subjects by the time they leave, although attainment in writing, design and technology and information technology is still below expectations and too few children exceed the national average. They make satisfactory progress through the school in most subjects and have good attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching in the school is very satisfactory overall and costs per pupil are average. Taking these factors into consideration, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

20 ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

20 English

86 The children entering the school in Year 3 have average skills in reading but their writing skills are below the national average. Their progress in literacy is sound overall with good progress in Years 3 and 5. Below average standards in writing hinder the progress of a significant minority of the children across the curriculum.

87 In National Curriculum tests in English, taken by pupils approaching the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998, results were below the national average. Compared with similar schools, results were well below average. Results were lower in 1996 but were in line with the national average in 1997. In the present Year 6 class there is a high number of children with special educational needs, including ten pupils who have a statement of learning difficulty. Inspection judgements of the present Year 6 pupils, based on a wider range of evidence, indicate that the children are of average attainment in reading. The proportion of pupils reaching the National Curriculum level of writing expected for their age (Level 4) is lower than the national average and the pupils are, overall, working at a level usually achieved a school year earlier. In 1998 6% of the Year 6 pupils exceeded level 4 in English compared with 17% nationally. In 1999 there was a one percent increase and inspection findings indicate that again there will probably be another slight increase in 2000. Although there are considerable year-to-year fluctuations, standards in the long-term are judged to be improving for most children but the standard of those pupils reaching the higher level is static.

Speaking and Listening

88 In this aspect of the subject sound progress is made with the pupils extending their ability to listen closely and with understanding and then to explain or discuss clearly what they have heard. In most instances few comments include unusual vocabulary but an example of good progress was seen in Year 4 when the children listened intently to their teacher read a play script and then discussed, clearly and with appropriate language, information they extracted from the script. They also used examples from the text to justify their decisions. The vast majority of the children in Year 6 listen properly and an appropriate proportion of them speak with a level of skill approaching the national standard for their age.

Reading

89 The pupils' progress in reading is satisfactory. There is a steady improvement in fluency and accuracy and in the ability to tackle more difficult words and sentences. Understanding of what has been read is generally sound, although a minority of the children read mistakes without noticing. The children make sound progress in their appreciation of text, all are required to record their ideas about their reading books when they have completed them and they do this with increasing competence. In Year 6 almost seven out of ten of the pupils can read with the level of accuracy expected for their age

and can talk about books they have read and favourite authors. The range of books they choose is wide and includes fiction and non-fiction. The school library is small and inconveniently situated. It is not used regularly by the classes but the teachers have taught the children effectively the skills of researching information in non-fiction books. Knowledge of using the library is weak, although about half of the children use the town library. The pupils' skills in locating information in books is satisfactory.

Writing

- 90 There is sound progress overall in writing and progress in Years 3 and 5 is good. In Year 3 the children's work in literacy lessons is at the nationally expected level but their unaided writing reveals weaknesses in sentence structure and in spelling and punctuation. In Year 4 there is some good progress but overall their progress is sound and the children still show some confusion in the structure of their text. Spelling is satisfactory but punctuation is often weak. In Year 5 the pupils' attainment in writing is below average for almost half of the children in lessons and although the children's rate of progress is steady overall, this is maintaining the level of attainment rather than lifting it to an average level. In Year 6 attainment is average for about six out of ten of the children. This proportion is unlikely to reach the nationally expected figure when the children take their tests at the end of the year. The children's progress in writing is sound with some good progress in aspects of independent writing. They show some good ideas about the content of what they write and try to use unusual vocabulary to create atmosphere and excitement. The grammatical structure of their work and their ability to write in a range of styles are limited and this deprives much of the writing of impact and interest. The quality of handwriting is below average with many pupils not producing consistently joined script. The children write in pencil until part-way through Year 5 rather than tackling the basic skill of using a pen at a much younger age. Writing is the weakest area of attainment in the subject. There is a significant difference between national test results and teacher assessment, which indicates the need to review assessment procedures.
- 91 Almost all of the children respond well to lessons in English and show a satisfactory level of interest in the subject. They listen attentively to their teachers and concentrate well on their tasks even when these become more difficult. In some classes the children are very keen to read aloud and eagerly volunteer information while in other classes there is a less enthusiastic response, reflecting the methods and expectations of the teachers. The pupils show an interest in reading and are enthusiastic about their books. They usually listen well to each other and are respectful of each other's views and opinions. They are well-behaved and form good relationships.
- 92 The good response of the children to the lessons and the sound and sometimes good progress during the literacy lessons are reflections of teaching that has many good features. During the inspection, all the lessons showed teaching of at least satisfactory quality and just over half showed good teaching. The strongest feature of the teaching is the effective management of the children which promotes positive attitudes and a readiness to work. The good teaching includes well-designed tasks that interest the children and also challenge them. The tasks are usually suited to the different attainment groups in the class, including, on several occasions, more capable children.
- 93 The teachers' own knowledge of the subject is sound and the methods of teaching spelling and reading are secure. All the teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy,

although on some occasions there is insufficient attention given during the final session of the lesson to an evaluation of what has been learned. All of the teachers use time in the afternoons to teach reading. Usually this time is used properly but some lessons are too long and this session is inconsistently taught throughout the school. All lessons identify targets, although in some cases the targets are not sufficiently specific or detailed. In a few classes the teachers have identified individual literacy targets for some of the children but this is not common practice and long periods of time are allocated before the targets are to be met. As a result of an analysis of test results, greater attention is being given to guided writing and all teachers focus directly on the basic skills of writing for some lessons each week. This is positively influencing attainment in writing. A flaw in many otherwise sound lessons is that the teachers do not check closely enough the progress that individual pupils are making. As a result, specific weaknesses in the children's development are not always identified and improved rapidly enough. Less able pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given appropriate work and extra help both by their class teacher and by members of the support staff. This is done effectively in small groups usually within the classroom.

- 94 Sound homework is set including the learning of spellings. Encouragement for the children to extend their progress in reading by taking books home and reading is poorly supported.
- 95 Although much of the teaching in English is good, there are some inconsistencies in the methods of teaching used and in the expectations of what the more capable pupils can achieve. In Year 6, the lack of specific targets to improve the learning of individual children is a main reason why a substantial minority fail to reach the level of attainment expected nationally and why few pupils surpass it. In all classes the pupils are given regular and systematic reminders about spelling. Reminders about punctuation are less rigorous and this area is weaker. Some of the pupils are allowed to write inaccurately without sufficient comment from the teacher and the teachers' marking in books does not point out strengths and weaknesses in a useful and diagnostic way. Assessment strategies to chart accurately the children's progress in English are under-developed.
- 96 Classroom assistants strongly support the teaching in the subject. They are trained and guide the children effectively. In Years 3 and 4, literacy support assistants work with children identified as working at a level just below average. In Year 5, groups of children are withdrawn from the two large classes for similar support. This range of support work is carried out well and is improving the attainment of the children.
- 97 The co-ordinator for the subject is supportive of colleagues and has overseen the introduction of the literacy strategy effectively. She has undertaken some monitoring of work in classes and each term scrutinises the teachers' planning for English. Since the last inspection the quality of weekly planning has improved and the quality of the teaching is significantly improved. Information technology is used to support the English curriculum but this is insufficiently developed.

20 **Mathematics**

- 98 The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds showed that attainment was well below average and that this had fallen since the previous year. Less than half the pupils achieved the expected standard and less than a quarter of the usual number achieved a higher level. These 1998 results were also well below the average for schools having pupils from similar backgrounds. The attainment of boys was lower than that of girls and this difference was slightly more than the national trend. The results of the 1999 tests indicate significantly improved standards with nearly two thirds of the pupils reaching the appropriate level and an increased proportion of high attainment. The number of pupils attaining the expected standard is now higher than in 1995, when the last inspection took place.
- 99 Inspection evidence paints a generally positive picture and indicates satisfactory attainment overall. In three-quarters of lessons the pupils' attainment is satisfactory, while in the remaining quarter it is lower than expected. The Year 6 pupils have a sound range of knowledge and understanding and are quickly developing their skills of mental calculation, which are presently only just satisfactory. At least two thirds of this year group have satisfactory standards in the subject overall for their age. Their calculating skills are adequate and, for example, most know how to work out change from five pounds and can explain their methods. Many of the pupils have a working knowledge of multiplication facts and the higher-attaining pupils recall and use them quickly. Throughout the school, the pupils have work from each of the aspects of the subject. For example, the pupils from Year 3 are learning about the properties of three-dimensional shapes; the pupils of Year 4 are finding appropriate units for measuring different lengths; the pupils from Year 5 are learning about percentages and some from Year 6 are learning to round decimal numbers. However, only the higher-attaining children in Year 6 are secure in their knowledge of decimals and, for example, identify the largest of 1, 0.1 and 0.19 correctly. There is little work that shows the pupils' use and application of their knowledge of aspects of the subject.
- 100 When they enter the school in Year 3, the children's attainment over the past four years has been barely satisfactory with only two thirds of them reaching average standards. The progress made by the pupils is satisfactory overall and good in some areas. For example, the children in Year 3 make good progress in most lessons and this is reflected in the work in their books for this term. There is a good quantity of work about numbers, money and shapes and the work for the higher-attaining pupils is often harder. Progress in other years is satisfactory with some good features, such as the pupils' growing understanding of the number system. Overall, the progress that the pupils are making in extending their mental calculation and the range of strategies they use is good. However, some areas are weaker, such as data handling, where there is too little progress in the pupils' skills of more complex graph making. Their use and application of skills and knowledge is also under-developed. Those pupils with special educational needs make sound and often good progress. Their needs are appropriately considered in the teachers' planning, extra help is offered in lessons and the children are supported well by classroom assistants. Higher attaining pupils are often not afforded this attention and in a quarter of lessons their progress is limited. The proportion of pupils maintaining high attainment is similarly low throughout the school. The average overall gain of National Curriculum levels during the junior years is close to that expected and this reflects the sound progress

observed during the inspection.

- 101 The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are often keen to answer the teachers' questions and in most lessons concentrate and work well at the tasks set. The pupils' behaviour is almost always good. In a few classes they talk loudly during group-work but this is usually about the tasks. They try to use terminology correctly and are generally articulate and confident in replying to the teachers' questions. Many of the pupils are not afraid of being wrong and will make sensible guesses. Work in books is neat in most classes, although not always dated or properly titled. In some lessons the children become noisy when they are very keen to answer questions but they are always quickly responsive to the teacher's instructions. Throughout the school, the pupils are generally co-operative and in many classes they collaborate and discuss work together. In a small minority of lessons the higher-attaining pupils become bored. The pupils with special educational needs are included in class discussions and this helps them to take a full part in class lessons, despite the fact that they are often withdrawn to form groups at the side of the class.
- 102 The quality of the teaching is good overall. In over half the lessons the teaching is good with a small amount of very good teaching. In the remaining lessons, the teaching is satisfactory. This is a slightly better picture than in the last inspection. All teachers have had some training for the numeracy lessons which have recently been introduced in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. This training is incomplete and more is planned. While a few teachers still feel insecure about their own knowledge of mental calculation and how to teach it, many help pupils effectively to gain skills and the multiplication tables receive appropriate attention. For example, a few lessons offer too little discussion of mental calculation strategies but correct terminology is well taught. Overall, the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is sound. Planning usually reflects clear intentions for what the pupils will learn and satisfactorily guides the lessons. For the most part, teachers' expectations of the pupils' work are appropriate. Occasionally, the tasks set are insufficiently different for pupils of varied attainment and here the higher attainers are not appropriately challenged. Most lessons have an appropriate pace and in the best, the teachers explain how long the pupils have to complete tasks, timing the lesson to provide a final section that consolidates the lesson's objectives. The pupils are well managed and organised and this helps to gain good behaviour. Most lessons have appropriate methods and a variety of activities, which are particularly needed when lessons are long. In view of the relatively short training that teachers have received for numeracy lessons, the methods and organisation are effective. However, there is little evidence that assessments have helped to plan the correct level of work. While many teachers find out how much their children know through questioning and marking, few specifically identify tasks that will help them judge the pupils' knowledge and plan the next lessons at appropriate levels. Homework plays an appropriate part in supporting the pupils' learning.
- 103 A little more than a year ago the school introduced a publisher's mathematics scheme which helped the teachers adopt a more rigorous approach to their teaching. This scheme is now being used to support the teaching and learning of lessons planned from the numeracy framework, which forms the school's present adopted scheme of work. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked hard to promote the Strategy throughout the school and has helped in training teachers in its methods. Some further intensive support from a

local education authority consultant is planned and this is likely to help individual teachers. Although some time has been spent on monitoring planning, some teaching and the work of some pupils', the information gained from monitoring and from assessments is not yet used in sufficient detail to identify strengths and weaknesses and make improvements. However, teachers' views are collected and strongly contribute to the action plan formed for the subject. The co-ordinator ensures that there are adequate resources and these are easily available in classrooms. Some mathematics programs are used effectively but there is presently a shortage of computer software to support the lessons. Mathematics is a priority for development this year and the school is well-situated for further improvements in standards.

20 Science

104 At the end of the Key Stage, the pupils' attainments in science are in line with nationally expected standards and their progress is satisfactory. The average and below average pupils are supported well but the more able pupils are insufficiently challenged, and the tasks are not sufficiently matched to the children's abilities to enable more pupils to reach the higher attainment levels.

105 The previous inspection reported that standards in science were sound but that the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged. The findings of the current inspection indicate that the situation is unchanged.

106 Analysis of the national tests results for the past three years reveal that the standards in science have fluctuated between being well above average in 1997, well below average in 1998 and at about the national expectation for 1999. The improvement between 1998 and 1999 saw 52% of pupils achieving level 4 in 1999 as opposed to 39% achieving level 4 in 1998. The percentage of pupils achieving level 5 is consistently below average. The boys achieve slightly less well than the girls. There is considerable variance between national test results and teacher assessment, which indicates the need to review assessment procedures.

107 An examination of the pupils' previous work, the teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils show that coverage of all the attainment targets is sound, with the exception of aspects of experimental and investigative science. Overall, most of the children make sound progress but the more able pupils are often not sufficiently challenged to achieve higher standards. In some lessons the children are not given sufficient opportunities to devise their own tests or demonstrate their ability to set out their findings in an appropriate manner. Where this occurs the investigation or reporting on findings is over-prescribed by the teacher and the pupils' progress is restricted.

108 The children enjoy science. They like the practical approach. They concentrate well and work with an appropriate pace but in several classes participation in practical activities is too noisy. The pupils generally collaborate well in practical tasks. They are learning to use apparatus accurately and where they handle live creatures they are taught care and respect of living things. The children's recording of knowledge and investigations is generally good and they take care to write up the findings and present illustrations and charts well. They are learning to set out their findings from investigations in an

appropriate manner. Those pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported in class by well targeted planning and good special needs teaching and they make good progress.

- 109 The knowledge and understanding in science is taught securely and the detailed medium-term planning ensures coverage. The work is often based on practical activities. The pupils are taught appropriate scientific language and the scientific method of setting down investigation methods and findings is generally taught well. The children are taught to use apparatus and equipment correctly and some measure with precision. The knowledge and skills are clearly identified and the pupils know the purpose of the session. The activity is clearly defined with a time-target and the plenary session clarifies learning and consolidates understanding. This approach is contributing successfully to the raising of standards.
- 110 There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers for information retrieval and for collecting, storing, retrieving and presenting scientific information.
- 111 The school's detailed medium-term planning for science is effective and is adhered to by all staff thus ensuring continuity and progression. The policy and planning lacks guidance on the development of the use and application of scientific skills and knowledge and, in consequence, this area is unsatisfactory. The science resources are adequate and equipment is stored in classrooms for each year group. They are well stored in labelled containers relevant to the scientific topics. This facilitates access but the lack of an inventory means that the pupils are not supported in self resourcing for investigations. The use of resources is often too prescriptive and the children are not offered opportunities to select the equipment they will use in their work.
- 112 There is currently no co-ordinator for science. The in-service training being given to the designated co-ordinator is sound and will benefit the subject when he takes up his role and responsibilities at the completion of his first year's teaching. There is some staff training but this is currently insufficient at the whole-school level to develop a consistent approach to experimental and investigative science. The school has rightly included staff training in science as part of its development plan. Assessment opportunities are being developed but whilst day-to-day assessments support appropriate teacher intervention, they are not used to inform future lesson planning. Assessment procedures do not identify the most able pupils and levels of attainment are not sufficiently assessed to indicate national test performance or identify ways of raising standards.

20 **OTHER SUBJECTS**

20 **Art**

- 113 The pupils reach good standards in art. They use a range of media effectively. Year 3 pupils show a good level of competence in their observational drawings of plants, using their knowledge of line and tone well. They show a keen awareness of colour when reproducing paintings in the style of other artists, such as Van Gogh. In Year 4, pupils have a good awareness of the overall visual effect of their work. They respond to designs from magazines showing a good knowledge of the importance of design when creating

their own posters, for example, to save wildlife. The pupils produce imaginative work and demonstrate a good sense of colour in their mini-beast work. Year 5 pupils show a good understanding of techniques as they create texture using acrylic paint and collages with different papers, wools and fabrics, such as in their three dimensional moon-scapes. Their weavings, based on shapes and colours in the natural world, are particularly effective. As part of their work following a residential visit to Saltburn, the pupils in Year 6 worked together to create detailed collages of the seaside and of the town, incorporating different media and a good range of techniques. They show a good understanding of pattern in their work based on a study of William Morris. Drawing with pencils, pastels and paint, the pupils have produced high quality portraits of classmates, showing good attention to detail. Throughout the school, the pupils make good use of sketchbooks to develop their ideas and techniques.

114 The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. They increase the range of media and gain greater awareness of the visual impact of their work. Their progress in drawing and painting is good. They increase their awareness of colour and gain an understanding of its importance in communicating mood. Satisfactory progress is made in their knowledge of famous artists and styles and in experimenting when producing their own work in the style of these artists.

115 The pupils' attitudes to art are good and they enjoy their work. They concentrate well and take great care with their work. Resources are shared amicably. They listen well to the teacher during the introductions to lessons or if stopped while working. They are enthusiastic and proud when talking about their work. Behaviour in art lessons is good.

116 A scrutiny of artwork indicates that the teaching is usually good. The teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall and in two of the lessons, the teaching was good. In the best lessons, the teachers provide an effective balance of high expectations and good support for the children, with opportunity for individual ideas. This helps the pupils to make good progress but when lessons are over-directed by the teacher, the pupils do not make as much progress. The teachers have secure knowledge of how to develop the pupils' skills using a range of media. Art lessons are well organised, with resources prepared in advance. Activities in individual lessons are well selected for their purpose and the learning objectives are clear in the planning.

117 The co-ordinator has had responsibility for art only since September 1999 and is approaching the role with enthusiasm. He receives teachers' planning but is not yet involved in the direct monitoring or evaluation of the teaching of art. Comprehensive collections of the pupils' artwork are kept. These record the work covered by pupils but no records are kept of the standards the pupils attained. Several classrooms are small and some do not have easy access to water. This presents difficulties when pupils are experiencing some aspects of the art curriculum, such as painting and three-dimensional work. There are attractive displays of art throughout the school and there is a particularly impressive gallery of art from all ages of pupils in the entrance hall. These displays make a very positive statement about the importance the school places on the art curriculum.

20 **Design and Technology**

118 During the inspection there was no opportunity to observe any design and technology

lessons. Evidence from an examination of the children's previous work, the school's medium and short-term planning and interviews with teachers and pupils indicates that the children's standards in design and technology are below those expected for their age and their progress is unsatisfactory. The previous inspection reported sound attainment and satisfactory progress in design and technology. These standards have not been maintained.

119 The processes of design are not securely taught. Pupils are given few opportunities to design artefacts, either prior to the making activity or as a follow up. They find it difficult to describe how a construction might be improved. Some disassembly tasks are planned by the teacher but these are generally insufficient to influence the design process. The design and make activities are often too over-prescribed by the teacher to allow for the development of individual design skills.

120 More attention is given to making activities. These are often purposefully linked to other subjects and school events to provide a context for the activity. This work is sound and sometimes good. However, there is a tendency for teachers to be over-supportive. The tasks are often over-prescribed, with too much direction over method, choice of materials and construction. The teachers are often not clear about the difference between a design and make activity, where pupils demonstrate their capability and a focused practical task where skills are specifically taught.

121 The children have a good attitude to design and technology. They enjoy the practical nature of the tasks and they work with care and precision often making artefacts to a high standard. They enjoy discussing the things they have made and are often knowledgeable about the purpose of the task and the link to the subject from which the task was derived. In this way design and technology supports learning in other subjects.

122 The co-ordinator for design and technology is providing insufficient guidance for the teaching of the subject. There is no scheme of work and the policy is insufficiently detailed. Overall there is a lack of continuity and progression. The resources for design and technology are generally satisfactory with the exception of food technology where limited access to a cooker means that pupils are not always involved appropriately in the whole process. Resources are well stored and carefully maintained but an absence of an inventory inhibits pupils' opportunities to select appropriate tools and materials for themselves. Insufficient time is allocated to the subject, especially in Year 6.

20 **Geography**

123 During the inspection it was only possible to observe two geography lessons. Evidence from the scrutiny of work, together with the teachers' planning and discussions with the pupils, indicates that the children reach good standards. The pupils in Year 3 show good understanding when drawing plans of simple objects showing the side and bird's eye view. They can identify familiar features on maps such as buildings, roads and zebra crossings. Through their farm study they are able to describe different types of farming, detailing the different features. The pupils in Year 4 show good understanding of different landscapes and seascapes. Through their work on Derbyshire rivers, they know about a river's source and tributaries. The pupils' knowledge of the problems of flooding is good. This is seen

in their work on methods to reduce the risks of flooding. The Year 5 pupils know about the different continents and oceans and can interpret information from a globe and an atlas. They have a good understanding of eco systems and can describe conditions at the poles and at the equator. The pupils describe in detail the effects that hurricanes, earthquakes and bushfires have on locations and people's lives. They are developing an understanding of what causes these to occur. By the time they are in Year 6, the pupils can compare and contrast different locations such as Fairfield, Buxton, Saltburn, Whitby and Mozambique. They are able to describe the main physical features, transport systems, schooling, work and health.

- 124 The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They increase their understanding of the locality in which they live and of contrasting localities. They improve their ability to identify and describe features of the different localities. They develop their understanding of co-ordinates and gain confidence in using more complex maps. They become more aware of environmental issues, such as pollution. The pupils make good progress in understanding how rivers are formed, the importance of the water cycle and effects of different weather systems. A residential visit to Saltburn contributes to the good progress that the pupils make.
- 125 In the two lessons observed in Year 3, the pupils' responses were at least satisfactory but in one of the lessons they were excellent. In that lesson, all the pupils were completely focused on their work and their behaviour was faultless. The pupils were interested in their work and eager to ask and answer questions. They worked effectively together when required, relating well to one another and to adults. The children's books show that most demonstrate pride in their work.
- 126 The quality of work in books indicates that the teachers' expectations are appropriate. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was at least satisfactory and in one it was very good. In the lesson on co-ordinates which was judged to be very good, the teacher was knowledgeable and perceptive. Well-prepared, high quality resources were used well and the teachers' enthusiasm was conveyed to the pupils. Very good relationships provided a positive atmosphere in which the pupils made very good progress. Links were made with other subjects such as science, history and information technology.
- 127 Throughout the school, geography is planned well to support the pupils' progress. The policy and scheme of work are helpful to teachers in ensuring that each year's work builds on that covered in the previous year. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She monitors the teachers' planning and has collected a useful selection of the pupils' work, including some assessments, which the pupils undertake at the end of units of work. Resources for geography are satisfactory overall. However, there are too few globes and atlases.

20 **History**

- 128 The standards achieved by the children are sound and their progress is good overall. The subject has improved since the last inspection. Lessons offer exciting learning opportunities and the pupils are able to observe, be involved and evaluate evidence for themselves. The children in Year 3 have a good knowledge of some aspects of the Roman invasion of Britain. They know about soldiers, centurions and emperors. Most can make reasonable deductions about such matters as the building of roads and how we know what Roman roads were like. Their sense of chronology is less assured but they know people in the past had reasons for their actions. By Year 6, the pupils have gained a better sense of time and know about the relative proximity of the Victorian era. They are aware of events and people who were influential in the period and how many aspects of social life contrast with today's situation. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils worked with entries from the 1851 census, fitting these with the pattern of social situations they knew existed.
- 129 More often than not the pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They enjoy the lessons and are interested to find out more. When video or role-play are used they gain extra motivation. However, on a few occasions when pupils lose interest they fail to listen to instructions well. This is usually if the lessons involve work that is insufficiently challenging. Mostly, the pupils are keen to answer the teacher's questions and through this extend their thinking. The quality of presentation of work varies considerably from class to class and in many books there is incomplete work. Most work is at least of an acceptable presentation standard and often good. Those pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons, although they are often not supported in this subject.
- 130 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and help to plan exciting lessons that involve the pupils well, with several different activities. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, the pupils made segments of Roman road using different grades of stones. In a lesson with Year 4 pupils, following a video, the teacher used personal experience to illustrate aspects of evidence about Tudor buildings. Challenging questions were then asked that required the pupils to make deductions. In these ways the teaching methods and expectations of pupils are good. Planning is sound and lessons usually have a good pace with interesting resources. However, the pupils' learning in the subject is seldom recorded or used to indicate what the pupils know already.
- 131 The curriculum policy supports a scheme of work that outlines which National Curriculum core study units are to be taught. The policy also outlines the importance of the key elements of history such as the evaluation of historical evidence but there is little guidance about how to integrate these with the content of the core study units. Nevertheless, in all the good lessons, teachers did this well and the pupils made good progress in these key elements as well as the content of the study units. The co-ordinator has provided test papers for each study unit but these assess only factual knowledge from the study unit and do not include the key historical concepts. There is no assessment of the key elements of the subject.

Information technology

- 132 Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory in both the pupils' attainment and in their progress. The previous inspection reported that standards in information technology were satisfactory but with a narrow range of activities. A significant amount of the requirements of the information technology curriculum is currently not being covered. The pupils are often taught skills that are currently below the level of those expected for their ages. The work of the older pupils generally shows a unsatisfactory level of attainment, with word-processing, data-handling and graphical work underdeveloped.
- 133 During the inspection only one information technology lesson was observed. Generally teachers' daily planning does not include specific reference to work in information technology. No lessons were planned where teachers taught skills or knowledge as lesson content. Where work was observed, most of the pupils were left to use applications without appropriate intervention and the planning did not identify the skills being acquired or practised. In one Year 3 class, the work was effectively and regularly monitored and the teacher intervened appropriately. Some emphasis is placed upon programs that support learning in other subjects. Some mathematics and literacy skills programs are used effectively in some lessons. However, the requirements of the information technology programme of study are not being met through the use of these programs and the strands of communicating and handling information and controlling, monitoring and modelling are not given due attention. The teachers' knowledge of the subject is variable and some is very basic. Some staff training has been arranged. Overall, insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of skills in information technology.
- 134 The pupils enjoy information technology. The younger children are developing their confidence through using information technology in a variety of subjects but the older pupils' confidence in information technology varies, according to the capability they bring from home. Throughout the school, when provided with the opportunity, the pupils work with concentration and enjoyment. They work well collaboratively and some demonstrate a very supportive attitude to their peers.
- 135 The resources are neither used well nor are of a sufficiently high standard. Whilst there is a sufficient proportion of computers to each class, some are very old and some are of an insufficiently up-to-date specification. Some pieces of essential peripheral equipment, such as printers, are unreliable. The school experiences difficulties with the wide range of computer makes, which leads to discontinuities in software programs and operating skills. The school has an insufficient range of appropriate software to meet the requirements of the information technology curriculum. New resources are being acquired through the government initiative, the National Grid for Learning, and the school is beginning to develop the use of the Internet.
- 136 The co-ordinator's role for information technology is underdeveloped in supporting the work of the teachers throughout the school. There is no scheme of work to provide the basis for continuity and progression and the policy gives too little guidance to teachers on how to use information technology effectively in the classroom. Class teachers maintain records of usage and frequency diligently, but there is no framework for assessing skill development or the effectiveness of information technology in the subjects.

Music

- 137 Only three music lessons were observed. In the limited amount of music seen, the pupils' overall attainment is satisfactory. Year 3 pupils have a sound understanding of rhythm and can repeat a pattern accurately. The pupils in Year 4 can create a rhythmic composition as part of a small group. In this lesson the pupils attained higher standards than is typical. In Year 5, the children can develop a short rhythmic melody, which shows that they understand repeating patterns. The pupils show well-developed skills when appraising and evaluating the quality of sounds produced by other groups. In the three lessons observed, all the pupils responded appropriately to a conductor and showed good awareness of performance. No lessons were seen in Year 6. During assemblies and in hymn practice, the pupils sing tunefully and with confidence.
- 138 The children in Years 3 and 5 and those with special educational needs make good progress. They make very good progress in Year 4 where lessons are taught by the music co-ordinator. The pupils increase their repertoire of songs and gain a wider knowledge of musical terminology. They make good progress in composition and they are given regular opportunities to do so. Progress is slower in listening to and appraising the work of composers from other times and places. There are variations in progress within individual lessons, directly linked to the quality of teaching.
- 139 The pupils have positive attitudes to music and respond enthusiastically to practical group work. They listen well to their teachers and to the suggestions of other pupils. The pupils in Year 5 show a high level of sensitivity when commenting on the quality of the work of other children. They organise themselves efficiently into groups and handle musical instruments with care. They also share instruments well. Behaviour in music lessons is good.
- 140 From all the available evidence, including the teachers' planning, the overall quality of the teaching is good. In the three lessons observed, one was satisfactory, one was good and the teaching in Year 4 was very good. Where the teaching is most effective, the teacher is very knowledgeable, activities are clearly explained and questioning is used to focus and develop the pupils' thinking. The management of the pupils is very good and the lesson is paced and structured well. In all the lessons the teachers show that the pupils' responses are valued and this has a positive impact on their progress.
- 141 The co-ordinator leads the subject well and gives good support to other staff. She has begun to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. There is a good scheme of work. The curriculum for music is broad and balanced except for Year 6 where the low time allocation and the decision to teach music in blocks instead of weekly restricts the pupils' access.
- 142 Resources for music are good. The availability of a wide range of instruments supports the pupils in making good progress. The accommodation in some classes is very small for musical activities. The close proximity of working groups means it is difficult for the pupils to discriminate adequately between the sounds they are making and those of the other groups. The curriculum is substantially enriched by extra-curricular clubs such as

the 'Sing-along' club and recorders. The choir competes regularly at the Buxton Music Festival and enjoyed the success of coming second and third in two of the classes this summer. The choir regularly performs at events and is invited to sing at Sunday services. The subject contributes well to the school's links with the community and provides good opportunities for personal development.

20 Physical education

143 The children's standards are average for their age and the progress they make is sound overall and good in some areas. The pupils quickly gain physical confidence and when still in the lower part of the school and many move with agility and good control in gymnastics lessons. They are inventive with new movements and keen to extend their repertoire. By the time they are in Year 6, most of the children appraise their own and others' performances appropriately and have developed a sound set of criteria for this. They move with appropriate precision and agility and refine the quality of their movements. In the hall, pupils of all ages are conscious of safety issues and, with proper supervision, they help to prepare and put away the large apparatus. In skills for team games most pupils gain a reasonable competence but only about half the pupils learned to swim 25 metres during the lessons provided in Year 5 last year. This is below national expectations. Other aspects of the curriculum were not taking place during the inspection.

144 Attitudes and behaviour are good in three-quarters of lessons. Only in one lesson did misbehaviour interrupt progress. Usually the pupils are eager to take part and to follow the teacher's instructions. In nearly all cases if pupils become noisy they are quickly responsive to the teacher's instruction and listen politely. In teams they usually work well and collaborate effectively. Often they are very helpful and supportive of one another. Most of the pupils are properly attired for the activity and show a good regard for its value. Most sustain effort and maintain energetic activity for a good period. The pupils are also keen to demonstrate their movement.

145 The teaching is good overall with a small amount of very good teaching and a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Lesson planning is effective and it often follows a published scheme. The teachers show good knowledge and understanding of the subject through their own explanations and occasionally through demonstration. They often use pupils to demonstrate good practice. In most cases discipline is well kept despite the exciting nature of some activities. If the pupils become over-excited, the teachers quickly regain order. The expectations that the teachers have of the quality of movement are not always sufficiently communicated to the pupils but organisational requirements are clearly expressed. Most lessons have a good pace and variety of activities but occasionally the timing allows too little time for practice or for discussion. Apparatus is used well.

146 The subject is enthusiastically led by two skilled co-ordinators. There is some confusion of roles but one co-ordinator concentrates on the enriching activities, such as the popular after-school clubs. There is a sound policy and most teachers know which parts of the curriculum are taught in each term. As yet the school lacks a written long-term plan. Teachers are aware of the safety issues concerning apparatus in the subject but new staff lack written guidance in its safe use.

20 **Religious education**

147 At the end of the Key Stage the standards in religious education are in line with the Local Agreed Syllabus and the pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Although standards have remained the same since the previous inspection, the school has begun to use its contacts with the local church more effectively and to enrich the curriculum with opportunities for reflection. The pupils are able to recount stories they have been told and can relate learning in religious education to their daily lives.

148 The quality of teaching is generally sound and sometimes good. Knowledge and understanding of religious aspects are securely taught and the best lessons are well supported by appropriate illustrations and artefacts. The knowledge of the Christian religion and the major world faiths is taught soundly and the teachers generally have a secure knowledge of the Christian faith and are developing their knowledge of the other major world faiths. Planning is thorough and the less able pupils are supported well. In some lessons there is a tendency to impart the facts with insufficient time for pupils to reflect upon the content and there are some missed opportunities for wonder to be drawn from the content. In the majority of lessons knowledge is imparted and recorded without recourse to a stimulating or imaginative use of artefacts, firsthand experience or dramatisation to enliven the subject. In one Year 3 class the children became engrossed by the skilful use of a range of uniforms and special clothes in a lesson about belonging and the quality of the subsequent follow-up work was good. The teachers' marking of the pupils' work is varied. In the best instances the comments are developmental but in most cases the work is only corrected.

149 The pupils have a good attitude to the subject. Their work is carefully presented and they contribute readily to discussion. The regular use of a subject exercise book allows pupils to recall previous work and to build upon it. They enjoy the religious education lessons, especially when artefacts, symbols and illustrations are employed. When given the opportunity, they will express their own beliefs and values and they respond with reflection and sensitivity to the opinions of others.

150 The resources for religious education are being extended with the acquisition of artefacts, photographs and posters of good quality, with sound supportive notes. The range is in the process of being further extended. The resources are carefully stored. Visitors and visits to places of worship are under-used to support learning in religious education, with the exception of contact with the local church, which is used well. The use of information communication technology is under-developed for this subject.

151 The co-ordinator is making a sound contribution to the development of the religious education curriculum. There is an effective scheme of work to support the continuity and coverage of the curriculum. Resources have been improved and the spiritual dimension to the subject is being developed. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need for further training for staff.

20 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

20 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

152 The school was inspected by a team of five inspectors who completed a total of 19

inspection days.

Inspectors made 64 observations of lessons, talked with individuals and groups of children and evaluated the work they had done. A total of 47.33 hours was spent on these activities. In addition, interviews and discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers with additional responsibilities, support staff and members of the governing body, totalling an additional 45.5 hours.

A group of nearly 10% of the pupils, selected by the school, was heard to read.

The school's curriculum planning and other documentation, pupils' records, attendance registers, financial information and documents from governors' meetings were studied.

Before the inspection a meeting was held at the school to hear the views of the parents and all parents were provided with a questionnaire which related to the work of the school.

20 **DATA AND INDICATORS**

20 **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	335	17	83	63

20 **Teachers and classes**

20 **Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	24.75

20 **Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	112

20 **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998
	£
Total Income	412788
Total Expenditure	420669
Expenditure per pupil	1298.36
Balance brought forward from previous year	12050
Balance carried forward to next year	4169

Number of questionnaires sent out: 271
 Number of questionnaires returned: 34

Responses (rounded percentages of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	35	62	3	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	47	47	0	6	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	20	59	9	12	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	15	73	9	3	0
The school keeps me well-informed about my child(ren)'s progress	30	67	0	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	29	68	3	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	35	56	9	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	20	62	3	9	6
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	42	41	11	6	0
The school achieves a high standard of good behaviour	21	50	20	9	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	38	50	3	6	3