

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Bridgwater

LEA area: Somerset

Unique Reference Number: 123846

Inspection Number: 186677

Headteacher: Mr. Ian Gouge

Reporting inspector: Natalie Moss
22685

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707761

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Avenue Bridgwater Somerset TA6 7EE
Telephone number:	01278 422786
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Roy Hunter
Date of previous inspection:	January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Natalie Moss, Rgl	English	Attainment and progress
	Art	Teaching
	Geography	Leadership and management
	History	
Brian Sampson, Lay Inspector		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		The efficiency of the school
		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Brian Downes	Science	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Design and technology	
	Physical education	
	Areas of learning for children under five	
	Special educational needs	
Andrew Hicks	Mathematics	Curriculum and assessment
	Information technology	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Music	
	Equality of opportunity	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The progress and attainment of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 in mathematics and science are good.
- The school promotes moral excellence in its pupils.
- Relationships within the school between pupils and staff are very good.
- The school consistently implements procedures which ensure a high rate of attendance.
- The school provides its pupils with a very pleasant and caring environment.
- Value for money provided by the school is good.
- The ethos of the school is good.
- The behaviour of pupils is very good.
- The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The standards of attainment in English are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 in writing and reading for comprehension.
- II. Schemes of work are not organised to ensure steady progress in history, geography, art and music.
- III. The role of the deputy headteacher is too wide and there is insufficient responsibility taken by subject co-ordinators.
- IV. The school has not yet sufficiently developed the provision for multicultural education.
- V. The school does not ensure consistency in the allocation of teaching time for all subjects and between classes.

This is a good school. What the school does well far outweighs its weaknesses. However, these weaknesses are in significant aspects of the school's work. They will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has overcome most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report and the improvement made since that report is good.

- The school has significantly raised levels of attainment in mathematics and science at both key stages and in English in Key Stage 2.
- The teaching of investigative skills in science has shown a good level of improvement.
- An information technology suite has recently been installed, which is helping to raise the level of attainment in information technology.
- The school is now providing suitable extension work and clear targets for higher attaining pupils.
- There are policies and schemes of work in the core subjects that identify clearly what is to be taught in each year throughout the school. These schemes ensure that National Curriculum Programmes of Study are effectively covered and overall standards are improving.
- The school has addressed and developed the role of subject co-ordinators in the core subjects. The quality of leadership of the school has significantly improved.

The school is well placed to make further improvements and has the vision and energy to do so.

· **Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	C
Mathematics	B	A
Science	B	B

<i>well above average</i> A <i>above</i>
--

This information shows that standards at Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science in 1999 are at least in line with the national average. They are above the average in mathematics and science compared with all schools, above average in science compared with all schools of a similar type and mathematics is well above average when compared with schools of a similar type. Currently, pupils are making good progress in mathematics and science, but satisfactory progress in English. The lower standards of attainment in English are more pronounced at Key Stage 1.

Pupils' attainment by the age of five is in line with the national expectations in all areas of learning. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is in line with the national average but attainment in English is below. In information technology standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1 but are below average by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs achieve the targets set for them in their individual educational plans.

· **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

All aspects of religious education are included in a separate report produced by the diocese.

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	Very good; the school is an orderly, delightful community. Pupils are well mannered, both to each other and to adults. They are very well behaved in lessons and around the school. The procedures for promoting good discipline are very good.
Attendance	Very good; above the national average. Punctuality is very good and so are the procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance.
Ethos*	Very good. Pupils have good attitudes towards their work. Relationships in the school are very good. The school displays a good level of commitment to raising standards.
Leadership and management	Good overall. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are good and ensure that the school has a clear sense of purpose and direction. The governors provide satisfactory leadership and management and they undertake their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. The deputy headteacher has too many curriculum responsibilities to complement the role of the headteacher as effectively as he might.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum for the children under five years of age is good and is broad and balanced. There are inconsistencies in the time allocated to subject areas and across years in both key stages and not all subjects have yet ensured progression through the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and there is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. They are good in the core subjects, where they are effectively used to inform future planning.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is satisfactory and pupils make good progress, especially in Key Stage 2. Classroom support staff, learning support staff and teachers provide effective support.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good. Provision for spiritual and social development is good, while that for moral development is excellent. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory, but there is too little provision for multicultural experiences.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory expertise and experience. There is a sufficient number of support staff, who are deployed well. Learning resources are good in core subjects, but unsatisfactory in some foundation subjects. The accommodation is satisfactory.
Value for money	The school provides good value for money.

* *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	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. ●. The school is approachable. ●. The school handles complaints well. ●. The school gives a clear picture of what is taught. ●. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. ●. The standards achieved by the school. ●. The values and attitudes promoted by the school have a positive effect on children. ●. The high standards of behaviour. ●. Their children enjoy going to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●. A minority of parents are concerned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - . speed of response to complaints - . the amount of homework - . the current focus on literacy and numeracy - . large class sizes - . too many petty rules for behaviour

The inspector's judgements support the positive views of the school held by the majority of parents. Inspectors judge that the school's response to complaints is thoughtful, fair and considered. The homework provided is in line with the national recommendations and inspectors feel that any inconsistency in its provision is between classes, rather than as a result of the school's policy. The current focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy is in complete accord with national recommendations for the raising of standards nationally. Inspectors also judge that teachers, with the assistance of classroom and learning support staff, respond very effectively to the large class sizes in Key Stages 1 and 2. No examples of petty rules for behaviour were observed; in fact, behaviour is so good that its management often seems almost effortless and pupils are happy and relaxed in their relationships with staff and each other.

- KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors and staff should address the following matters in writing their action plan, in order to raise standards and improve still further the provision made by the school.

- ◆. Improve the level of attainment in English, by:
 - . ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities, across the curriculum, to undertake extended and sustained writing activities; (see paragraphs 7, 10, 18, 104, 106, 107, 108 and 109).
 - . ensuring teachers' expectations of the amount of written work achieved during the time allocated to group work in the literacy hour is realistically high; (see paragraphs 10, 18, 107, and 109).
 - . providing staff with appropriate training focused on developing strategies to raise the quality of monitoring and evaluation of teaching in the subject; (see paragraphs 39 and 113).
 - . undertaking specific tasks aimed at developing pupils' reading skills in understanding, comprehension, prediction and inference; (see paragraphs 10 and 106).
- ◆. Develop the role of the senior management team and increase its members' participation in the management of the school by:
 - . re-assessing the role and duties of the deputy headteacher; (see paragraphs 76, 77 and 91).
 - . training and empowering key stage and subject co-ordinators to assume more responsibility in the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

(see paragraphs 76, 78, 80 and 91).

In addition to the key issues above, there are some less important weaknesses which should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are:

- the lack of schemes of work to ensure progress in some foundation subjects (see paragraph 52).
- the present level of provision for multicultural education (see paragraph 62).
- the inconsistent allocation of teaching time between subjects and years. (see paragraph 47).

• **INTRODUCTION**

• **Characteristics of the school**

1.St. Joseph's is a primary school providing education for both sexes and all abilities from age 4 to 11 years. The school is situated in Bridgwater and was part of the Quantock ward at the time of the most recent Census of Population.

2.St. Joseph's is an average sized primary school, though large for Somerset, with 242 pupils on roll. This is almost exactly the same number of pupils as at the time of the school's last inspection in 1996. Numbers are larger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 classes. All pupils are taught in single age classes, apart from one Reception / Year 1 class and one Year 1 / 2 class. There are two classes in each of Years 1 and 2 with approximately 26 in each class, while there is one class of approximately 35 pupils in each of Years 3, 4, 5, and 6. The numbers of boys and girls are broadly balanced. There is a small percentage of pupils from ethnic minorities.

3.Most of the pupils come from homes in which there is an adult working, and approximately 11 per cent are eligible for a free school meal. This is below the national average. The school has identified, using a survey of post-codes, that less than forty per cent of pupils come from the immediate Quantock ward. The pupil population comes from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences and from all over Bridgwater and beyond. Approximately 53% of pupils are Catholic and 47% non-Catholic. The school has very recently become a part of the Education Action Zone for the Bridgwater area.

4.The attainment of the pupils who enter the school covers a range of levels, but overall the attainment on entry is average. The vast majority of the pupils enter as under fives, and there is little significant movement of pupils in and out of the school. 43 pupils (14.7 %) in the school have special educational needs. This is lower than the national average. The vast majority of these pupils have been identified as having specific learning difficulties, including speech and communication difficulties. No pupils have identified behavioural problems. 2 pupils have statements of educational needs.

5.The school has a comprehensive list of aims which cover areas such as the curriculum including academic, spiritual, moral, social, cultural, creative, physical and emotional development, partnership with families, equality of opportunity and respect for those with beliefs other than their own. The school's Mission statement reflects the teachings of Jesus Christ and gives direction to all policies and undertakings of the school, which are set within a Catholic framework.

6.The school's development plan is currently focused on the introduction of the national numeracy strategy, updating schemes of work for all subjects, monitoring the curriculum and developing the use of assessment to inform the teachers' planning. It is also concentrated on literacy throughout the school, providing suitable extension work for more able pupils and the development of information technology.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	18	18	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	13	17
	Girls	11	15	17
	Total	22	28	34
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	61 (69)	78 (75)	94 (81)
	National	85 (77)	86 (81)	90 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	16	18	18
	Total	31	35	35
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (81)	97 (89)	98 (100)
	National	82 (80)	86 (84)	91 (85)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	12	16
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	27	26	30
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (61)	79 (55)	91 (61)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	27	25	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (61)	76 (61)	85 (70)
	National	68 (69)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.5
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:	%
Very good or better	6
Satisfactory or better	91
Less than satisfactory	9

6. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

6. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

6. Attainment and progress

7. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests taken by Year 2 pupils, the number reaching the expected level for their age was below the national average in English and above it in mathematics and science. The number achieving a higher level was close to the national average in reading, but below it in writing, science and mathematics. These results represent a maintenance of 1998 standards in English, when results were below the national average. They represent a rise in standards in science and mathematics, in which standards were above average. In the three years from 1996 to 1998, results in the National Curriculum tests indicate that standards attained by pupils improved more than in all schools nationally. The 1999 results reversed this trend in English, but results rose even higher in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are on course to achieve the school's stated target

for 2000 in this key stage in mathematics and science, but weaknesses in English suggest that they are unlikely to achieve the targets in this subject.

8. In the National Curriculum tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 1999, the number of pupils reaching the expected level was broadly in line with the national average in English and above it in mathematics and science. The number of pupils achieving a higher level was below average in English and above average in mathematics and science. This represents a rise in standards

on 1998, in mathematics and science and also in English, though results in this subject were a little lower at the higher level. In the three years since 1996, results indicate that standards attained improved more than in all schools nationally in mathematics and science, but not in English. The 1999 results endorsed this trend, with results rising even higher in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are on course to achieve much of the school's target for this Key Stage in 2000.

9. Compared with the data about the performance of schools in a similar category to St. Joseph's, pupils' performance in 1999 was average in English and above average in mathematics and science. There was no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls at either key stage, whether at the expected or at the higher levels.

10. Results in English in 1999 show a significant variation at Key Stage 1 between the standards of speaking and listening and reading, where they were average and in writing, where they were much lower. Inspectors' lesson observations, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work indicate the following. Standards of speaking and listening are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1. The majority of pupils begin to show confidence in speaking and most explain their ideas, using a satisfactory range of vocabulary, but not always speaking in a sustained manner. Reading skills are growing in strength as a result of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and most pupils can read with a good grasp of phonic skills. However, there has been a decline in standards in writing since the last inspection, when writing skills were judged to develop well at this stage. This is attributable to the insufficient opportunity provided for sustained and extended writing. At Key Stage 2, also, standards of reading were higher than standards in writing. Inspectors judge that overall standards are below the national average at Key Stage 1, and in line with it at Key Stage 2. In this key stage, reading for comprehension and the writing of extended pieces of work are below average. Pupils are not provided with sufficient practice in the skills needed to write at length, either within the literacy hour or outside it. The school has, however, made satisfactory progress in the introduction of the national literacy strategy and this is helping to raise standards in reading, particularly for less able pupils, where the additional literacy lessons are

developing their phonic skills. A wide range of writing activities is provided within lessons, although pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length.

11. Standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages, and also with that of pupils from similar backgrounds. This reflects similar standards reported in the previous inspection. The results of national end of key stage tests show some variation from year to year, with no clear trend. In 1998 the average level attained by pupils was below the average level attained nationally. However, in 1999, pupils' performance improved, to reach average national levels overall. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above national averages, and is well above that of pupils from similar backgrounds. Results in the national end of key stage tests have gradually improved since 1996, but until 1998, results were still consistently below national levels overall. However, in 1999 the overall average level of attainment rose to above the national average level. Pupils' attainment, especially that of higher attaining pupils, has improved since the previous inspection. The school has made good progress in introducing the national numeracy strategy, which is helping to improve the pupils' ability to do mental calculations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure grasp of number, they are beginning to develop the skills of mental calculation and use their knowledge of place value well to look at patterns in number when taking the same number away from different multiples of ten. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils calculate accurately with all sizes of numbers, use decimals with ease and show good mental agility, as well as understanding fractions and percentages.

12. In science, standards of attainment are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils were at the average of Level 2. These results were above the national average at Level 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the areas they have studied, such as work on food chains and the properties of different materials. They develop sound skills of scientific investigation and are able to predict sensibly when asked what might happen when investigating sources of light. They study physical processes and can compare the effects of brightness on different surfaces. In the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, where results were above average, nearly all pupils achieved the average of Level 4. Attainment is above the level for similar schools. Pupils have a good range of skills in investigative science, are able to recognise the principle of setting up fair tests and can record their results when, for example, testing the effect of different drinks on teeth. They have a good understanding of physical processes and can understand the use of circuits.

13. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations at the ends of both key stages, although there has been some improvement since the last inspection. Until very recently, computer access has been confined to a single class computer for the vast majority of pupils, which has restricted pupils' time and opportunities to develop higher order skills at each key stage. However, in the very short time that the school's new computer suite has been available, pupils are already showing signs of making good progress, which should lead to higher levels of attainment.

14. Attainment in the arts throughout the school is satisfactory, with art and music featuring strongly in extra-curricular, as well as curricular activities.

15. Overall, standards are satisfactory and are good in many areas. There is no reason why they should not become good or very good and the Key Issues of this inspection focus on the pursuit of academic excellence to take this good school further.

16. When pupils enter the school at four, they have average attainment overall in most of the six areas of learning for pupils of this age. These pupils settle quickly to the demands of early education and make satisfactory progress. They soon start work on the National Curriculum, and by the age of five their attainment is satisfactory in all desirable outcomes. Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress overall. The rate of progress accelerates to

become good overall through Key Stage 2. Progress is judged as satisfactory overall because pupils develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding in nearly every subject of the curriculum and the provision for the all round development of pupils is good. By the age of eleven, most pupils are well rounded, mature learners who benefit much from the experiences provided and make a strong contribution to their own learning. Pupils are well prepared for their next step in education and for life outside school in the wider community.

17. Overall the pupils make sound progress in lessons and over time. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. They are on course to leave with above average standards in mathematics and science, though with only average standards in English. This is broadly in line with their progress at the time of the last inspection, although there are some changes in the strengths and weaknesses of various subjects, particularly in English, which has improved since then.

18. In English, the pupils make sound progress in all aspects except writing and reading for comprehension, where progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. This is because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write longer and more extended stories and accounts. Pupils now make better progress in speaking and listening and in the technical skills of reading. At Key Stage 2, pupils progress far more rapidly, and progress is good in many areas, but not in extended writing.

19. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 1 have benefited from smaller teaching groups this year and have made good progress since the start of the school year. They are already achieving levels of attainment higher than would be expected at this stage. However, Year 2 pupils do not yet show the same rate of progress and progress overall is therefore satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 pupils in all classes make good progress over the course of the school year, which is in line with the progress seen in lessons during the inspection.

20. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. They develop a good scientific knowledge and are able to use scientific vocabulary to explain what they are doing and why. Progress is also sound in the quality and quantity of experimental and investigative work, judged as a weakness in the last inspection.

21. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets in Key Stage 1 and achieve appropriate standards. Where they are given extra support, it is effective and they make good progress. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress overall. There are no significant differences in progress between girls and boys or across the different levels of attainment in the school.

22. Progress in design and technology is now good, whereas at the time of the last inspection a significant minority of pupils were underachieving. Progress in physical education is now good in Key Stage 2, rather than sound, as at the previous inspection. In all other subjects pupils make satisfactory progress.

23. Information technology skills and knowledge have improved since the last inspection. At that time they were not well practised and standards were below average. Today, attainment is at the expected level for pupils aged seven, although still below the expected level at eleven. The provision of the new information technology room and sufficient equipment to enable a whole class to work at the same time is having a strong impact on the rate of progress.

24. At the time of the last inspection, pupils with special educational needs were making good progress. They now make satisfactory progress overall. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to pupils' progress within the group sessions of the literacy and numeracy hours. Where support staff withdraw pupils for the phonic work programme, pupils make good

progress. Whilst the results of standardised tests undertaken by pupils in Year 6 indicates higher attaining pupils achieve lower levels of attainment in some years, the current pupils are making appropriate progress, except in English. There is no significant variation in the progress made by boys or girls.

24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

25. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good and compare well with judgements made at the previous inspection. The vast majority of pupils concentrate well in lessons and show much interest in what they are being taught. They are very keen to learn and there is evidence of some good individual work in literacy, mathematics and science. This was most evident in literacy, when a boy from Class 3 confidently read a story to the class, 'The Happy Pig', that he had composed and illustrated on his own initiative. A group of older pupils was seen doing a collaborative play reading in the foyer late one afternoon. The majority of pupils are alert, attentive and show enjoyment of their learning by their cheerful and outgoing demeanour. Many are self-motivated, keen to be involved and set to work with interest and diligence. Pupils are willing conversationalists and are ready to speak up and explain their answers and illustrate their ideas. Pupil representatives on the School Council discuss things in an animated and mature way.

26. Behaviour of pupils, in class, at lunch and playtimes, in and around the school, is almost invariably very good. This is an improvement on the favourable judgement of the last inspection and is a definite strength of the school. The pupils are very courteous, opening doors and volunteering to guide inspectors round the school. Their self-discipline is, in most cases, good. They are very aware of school and classroom rules, can appreciate the reason behind them and follow them with willing acceptance. They are open, happy children, who enjoy positive play at break and lunchtimes, but who know and understand the importance of good social behaviour.

27. Behaviour in lessons is also good, except in a very few cases where teachers fail to manage a class effectively or do not set sufficiently challenging tasks, when pupils can be bored. Even then, they are always polite and do what is asked of them. The school is a very clean and tidy place and pupils very evidently help to keep it so. Although, before the inspection, some parents expressed their concerns about bullying at the school, the inspection was unable to find any evidence to support this assertion. Discussions on this subject with parents, governors, staff and children proved negative and no bullying whatsoever was witnessed by any member of the inspection team. No pupils have been excluded during the past twelve months and the school's rate of exclusions remains static as it was at the previous inspection.

28. Pupils' relationships with staff are also very good and this is another strength of the school. Pupils are supportive of each other, for instance, after minor playground accidents. Pupils show respect and confidence when helping visitors around the school. Many show growing maturity with adults, replying courteously to questions and carrying on meaningful conversations. Boys and girls get on very well together. They sit together in classes, at lunchtime and in assemblies. Boys and girls were also seen practising football and rugby together on the sports field. The pupils like their teachers and, although well disciplined by them, they appreciate the reasons why such discipline is necessary and respect the teachers for it.

29. The personal development of pupils is good and compares well with the previous inspection. Pupils respond willingly to opportunities during the school day to take on responsibilities. They are keen to be school council representatives. They respect school property, readily tidy up their classrooms and replace equipment at the end of lessons. Many pupils take the initiative in becoming involved in school clubs and extra-curricular activities. Their enthusiastic accounts of residential and other educational visits indicates that they gain

positively from these experiences. Pupils show great respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. They are very generous in their charitable collections for less fortunate peoples around the world. For example, at an assembly, one boy asked if he could arrange a bring and buy sale for medical equipment for poor children in Africa.

30. Pupils with special educational needs show very good attitudes to work and behave very well in class and around the school. Where individual targets concern improvements in behaviour, pupils make good progress. Personal development of pupils with special educational needs is good.

31. The good standards of behaviour and discipline noted during the last inspection have been not only maintained, but also enhanced. The positive attitudes, the sensible and responsible behaviour and the pleasant and committed attitudes of the pupils towards school life contributes significantly to their own progress and personal development.

31.

31. **Attendance**

32. Attendance at the school is very good and a significant strength of the school. The figures are virtually the same as at the previous inspection and are well above national levels. Both authorised and unauthorised absences are well below national levels and the school has no unexplained absences. The pupils come to school and into classes on time and the majority of lessons commence promptly.

32. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

Teaching

33. The quality of teaching overall in the school is good. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in nine-tenths of lessons observed; it was unsatisfactory in the other tenth, particularly in Key Stage 1. It was good or better in over half of the lessons and very good or excellent in three lessons. The quality of teaching in the Reception classes is of a good standard. In Key Stage 1, although teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in the vast majority of lessons seen, about half of the lessons were good, but only one lesson was very good and some lessons were unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the majority of teaching was again almost all satisfactory or better, but two-thirds of lessons were good and over a tenth were very good or better. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 results in pupils making good progress in the majority of lessons and in raising standards of attainment by the end of Year 6.

34. Throughout the Reception classes teaching is good. In Key Stage 1, the inspection team judged the quality of teaching overall to be satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good overall. In English and mathematics the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages in science, physical education and information technology. It was not possible to make a judgement of the quality of teaching in geography or design and technology because too few lessons were observed in these subjects during the week of the inspection.

35. Teachers in Key Stage 1 generally have secure subject knowledge and expertise. In Key Stage 2 they have a good knowledge and understanding of most subjects, although there are weaknesses in the knowledge and understanding of information technology. Teachers show a good awareness of the areas of learning for the under fives and ensure that their planning reflects the early stages of the National Curriculum programmes of study for the older or higher attaining children. Consequently, children have good foundations for future learning, based on their previous attainment. Teachers' lesson planning, based on the good framework provided by the schemes of work, is good throughout the school. Teachers plan for the literacy hour and the numeracy strategy using the recommended format. Their use of the

planning sheets is good and results in lessons having a good structure with stimulating activities based on pupils' respective previous attainment. There is very good liaison between the special needs co-ordinator, teachers, classroom and learning support assistants to ensure that planning for pupils with special educational needs is based securely on their individual education plans.

36.The quality of teaching in English and science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Teaching in mathematics is good overall. There was good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2. Teaching in all three subjects has improved since the previous inspection when there were shortcomings in many lessons. There are strengths in the teaching of literacy and all teachers have a clear understanding of the strategy. This makes a good contribution to pupils' progress. Similarly there were strengths in the teaching of experimental and investigative science with strong leadership from the co-ordinator and pupils progress well in this area. Teaching of numeracy is also good.

37.The quality of teaching in information technology is satisfactory, which is a significant improvement from the last inspection, when teaching had shortcomings in important areas of the subject. Previously the information technology curriculum was not fully covered. The school has worked hard and successfully to address this key issue. Throughout the key stages, activities are being clearly planned to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Staff are sensibly taking advantage of the information technology curriculum from the scheme presented by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. While there are still some teachers who are insecure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject, they are well supported by the co-ordinator and by careful time-tabling. At present there are still insufficient links with other subjects.

38.Satisfactory teaching was seen in physical education, but also some very good or excellent lessons. Good teaching was observed in history.

39.In the majority of lessons, throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils. However, in Key Stage 1, teachers have an insufficiently high expectation of pupils' progress and attainment in English. High teacher expectations are evident when there is a good match of work to pupils' previous attainment and teachers' skilful and challenging questioning ensures pupils have to concentrate. It is also seen when the positive management of pupils allows the teacher to concentrate on enhancing learning whilst other pupils work independently for appropriate lengths of time. All of these factors were evident in a mathematics lesson on co-ordinates. A brisk question and answer session introduced the lesson and this ensured pupils' full attention and concentration. Pupils were happily engrossed in stimulating activities, which were selected to match the pupils' abilities. The teacher maintained a close watch on the progress of all pupils, but was able to provide all groups in turn with focused attention that resulted in very good progress being made.

40.Throughout the school, but especially in Key Stage 2, a good range of teaching strategies is used and this contributes significantly to pupils' positive attitudes and good progress in the subject. The most frequent way of working, as in the literacy hour and the numeracy strategy, is a whole class introduction, followed by pupils working on various tasks and a plenary session to check and challenge pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding. Although this structure is consistent throughout the school, teachers use their professional judgement well to vary the pace and timing of different parts of the lesson to match the learning intentions and maintain pupils' interest and motivation. For example, in mental and oral mathematics the pace is often brisk, in science appropriate opportunities are provided for reflection and in some lessons sufficient time is provided to ensure extended periods of concentration for complex tasks to be undertaken well. Resources are carefully selected to interest pupils. Their use to challenge pupils' understanding is good. Teachers, classroom and learning support staff use teaching strategies appropriately to ensure good progress for all pupils. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. They contain

sufficiently clear and realistic targets. Teachers know the pupils well and there is good liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator and other teachers. There are strong formal and informal procedures for discussion about special educational needs that are much to pupils' benefit. Teaching, overall, is good and pupils with special educational needs benefit from the good support they receive in class. Teachers' use of attainment groups in lessons also benefits these pupils. Where pupils with special educational needs receive additional support in class, it is effective and contributes to further raising attainment.

41. Teachers select appropriate teaching strategies. Most teachers have good questioning skills and focused discussion helps the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Very occasionally, teachers' organisation lets them down and pupils are not gainfully employed. Pupils are well managed and teachers have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils respond very well to these and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Expectations for work are satisfactory but not always consistent. Teachers use the well organised resources successfully to help pupils' learning. There were some good examples in mathematics with the use of mathematical puzzles, number lines and number squares. However, some teachers' use of time is not consistent and a significant theme which runs through teaching is that too often lessons lack vigour and pace. This lack of energy and stimulation can mean that higher attainers are not fully challenged and that pupils' imaginations and faculties for problem solving are not always fully developed. Teachers' marking is broadly satisfactory. Marking of written work is regularly undertaken, though not always fully targeted to direct the pupil in future development. Every opportunity is taken to give pupils oral feedback in lessons so they can tell how to improve their work. Teachers have evolved an effective home/school book for reading and this, together with better reading resources, is making a good contribution to improved standards in reading.

42. Overall, the management of pupils' behaviour is good. It is very good in the Reception classes and good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The behaviour policy is securely in place and is consistently applied in all classrooms and around the school. Classroom practices and procedures are clearly established and pupils adhere to them for the majority of the time. There are good relationships between staff and pupils that contribute significantly to the positive ethos in each classroom. Staff are supportive of pupils, clearly respect them as individuals and value the contribution each makes. Teachers make their expectations clear over acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and are firm in ensuring they are met. Staff effectively manage the few pupils in each class who display challenging behaviour.

43. The consistent procedures for the day to day assessment of pupils' progress and attainment are good throughout the school. The daily assessment of children who are under five and pupils in both key stages is very good. It is regularly, consistently and comprehensively undertaken and informs teachers' future lesson planning effectively. Throughout the school teachers constantly provide verbal feedbacks to pupils which values their efforts and informs them of how to improve their work. They quickly correct mistakes in lessons and then check to ensure pupils have a clear understanding. Marking is consistently undertaken throughout the school in line with school policy. However, teachers' comments are used insufficiently to improve the quality of pupils' work. Just occasionally teachers do not fully include all pupils in lessons. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson a group of pupils took no part in the oral discussion at the beginning of the lesson.

44. Teaching in both the literacy and numeracy lessons is very good in the Reception classes and good in Key Stages 1 and 2. The literacy hour has been monitored and developments undertaken to improve teaching.

45. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Lesson plans provide well adapted tasks for these pupils. Teachers make an effort to work closely with the pupils to ensure that they understand and can complete the same tasks as their classmates. Specialist teaching of groups of special educational needs pupils who have difficulties in

reading is good and is based on carefully thought out and staged approaches. Pupils are sympathetically and sensitively encouraged to develop skills of word building. Groups are carefully timetabled to make sure they do not miss any other subject teaching. Not enough use is made yet of information technology to help reading and writing skills for pupils with literacy difficulties or to offer them opportunities to produce written work in which they can take pride.

46. Homework is set regularly and consistently throughout the school, in line with the national recommendations and is appropriate to the work being undertaken in the classroom.

46. **The curriculum and assessment**

47. The school's curriculum is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection, where the lack of subject policies and schemes of work was identified as a weakness. It meets statutory requirements. The curricular aims set out in the school's prospectus are appropriate and are implemented well in practice. The curriculum is broad, and is very relevant to pupils' needs. There is a strong emphasis on the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have both been smoothly implemented and increased time for English and mathematics has been given to promote the raising of standards in both subjects. Overall, a satisfactory balance between these and other subjects has been maintained. However, class timetables show some variations in the time given to English and mathematics teaching in different years throughout the school. These variations affect the time available for other subjects.

48. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development, and prepares them well for transfer to secondary education. Pupils visit the secondary school for a two day induction period, and staff and students from the secondary school come to talk to Year 6 pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to develop independent learning skills through activities such as an inter-school mathematics challenge, research activities in Year 6, and the increased emphasis in Literacy and Numeracy lessons on sustained independent and group work.

49. The school makes good provision for sex, health and drug awareness education. Topics are taught appropriately in the science, physical education and humanities curriculum throughout the school. Older pupils receive extra visits specifically to raise their awareness of drug misuse and for sex education, which is sensitively taught in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith.

50. All pupils have good access to the curriculum. The equal opportunities policy makes clear the school's commitment to high standards for all pupils and to provide a curriculum which reflects the diversity of cultures in society at large. Good provision is made for pupils of different abilities. Work is set at appropriate levels of difficulty, especially in English and mathematics. A new policy for more able pupils is in place. Last year the school identified higher attaining pupils in both key stages and also provided Year 6 pupils with specially planned, more challenging work throughout the school year. This bore fruit in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, where more than one third of pupils in mathematics, and nearly one third in science, reached Level 5, which is above the expected level of attainment for eleven-year-olds. This initiative has now become part of the school's strategy for raising attainment. As part of its programme to raise standards, the school provides satisfactory extra support for pupils in Years 3 and 4 who only just reached the national expectation in English at the end of Key Stage 1 last year. In Key Stage 1, the need to teach mixed year classes in English, science, mathematics and information technology has been alleviated by the employment of an additional teacher. This enables teachers to plan more effectively for pupils in each year, and provides the additional benefit of reduced class sizes. Pupils in the mixed Year 1 / 2 class follow the same learning objectives as those in the Year 2 class, to avoid repetition of topics.

51. Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. They receive appropriate support in class, and are taught in suitable ability groups. Where their needs are specifically identified in planning they achieve good standards in relation to the targets set out in their individual education plans. The curriculum arrangements provide equal access to pupils with special educational needs and there is a comprehensive policy document that covers all arrangements for them.

52. Suitable policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects except history, geography and art, which are awaiting new National Curriculum directives. With these exceptions the school has improved in this respect since the last inspection. The curriculum for children under five is well planned, according to the national recommended curriculum "Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning". It leads well into early learning in Key Stage 1 as pupils move from part time to full time education. Schemes of work in most subjects ensure satisfactory progression of learning throughout the school. Progression between years is good in English, mathematics and science. In some subjects, such as geography, schemes of work rely on modules chosen from a nationally developed framework. These modules are good in themselves, but subject co-ordinators have not yet identified the learning objectives appropriate for each year, nor adapted the modules of work to suit. Consequently, it is not yet possible to ensure that pupils' learning develops systematically on what has gone before.

53. The school's system of medium and short term lesson planning is good. Half term and weekly plans are set out for all subjects. Daily plans are developed for English and mathematics. All levels of planning are very detailed. Plans include clear learning objectives taken directly from schemes of work, and work at different levels of ability is set in English and mathematics. Plans are displayed in the staffroom, which allows co-ordinators, senior staff and the Governing Body to monitor curriculum plans over the year. Although monitoring by governors is still informal, the Governing Body receives regular feedback from subject co-ordinators during the year.

54. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available to pupils. Seasonal sporting activities such as netball, rugby and football are well supported in after school practices and matches. Other activities such as chess, art club, line-dancing, sewing, inter-school mathematics challenges, prayer group and French take place in lunch times and after school. Some pupils learn to play a range of musical instruments, and productions such as "Star and the Animals" give pupils good opportunities to perform in front of an audience. Extra-curricular activities contribute well to pupils' personal development and their growing awareness of their own and other cultures.

55. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and recording their progress have improved since the last inspection, and are satisfactory overall. They are good for children under five. New procedures in English focus on reading and spelling, especially in Key Stage 1 where recent attainment has been lower than in other subjects, and a portfolio of graded written work is being developed throughout the school to promote the raising of standards in writing. Assessment procedures in geography and art have yet to be established. For most other subjects, including mathematics and science, pupils are assessed against the planned key learning objectives at the end of each module of work. Class lists are completed to show which pupils do and which do not meet the expected levels of learning. Arrangements for assessment of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory overall.

56. Standardised reading, mathematics and science tests are taken each year and results are collated onto class lists. Each pupil has a record card for English, mathematics and science. Levels of attainment in each strand of each subject are recorded annually. Taken together, these two recording systems provide teachers with a good picture of pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects. When added to other subjects, records do show how pupils make progress as they pass through the school, but the system is cumbersome, since it requires teachers to refer to many different lists and forms for each pupil.

57.The school makes satisfactory, and growing, use of assessment information in the core subjects. Results in standardised tests taken at all stages in the school are used to identify pupils with special educational needs, and to establish broad ability groups for English and mathematics. Particular attention has recently been paid to identifying the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 and a register of more able children has been established. Reports include individual targets for pupils derived from general assessment procedures over the year. Long term curriculum plans are adjusted in the light of analysis of test results, to reflect increased emphases on those areas where pupils have weaknesses. In the short term, teachers modify future lesson plans especially to provide further practice where pupils experience difficulties in mastering new skills.

57. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

58.Overall the school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's aims place a strong emphasis on these aspects of pupils' development.

59.There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. A thoughtful, reflective atmosphere for prayer and meditation is created in assembly and in class prayers. Each classroom has an area that has a crucifix or statues and some written prayers. These are reinforced by displays in all the open areas of the school. There is a spiritual element in lessons such as English, where pupils are encouraged to express their feelings about texts they have read and in music, where older pupils express their feelings about the music they are studying. A spiritual element can also be found in lessons such as science, geography and art, where pupils are encouraged to reflect on values and beliefs, appreciate the world and develop a respect for the environment.

60.The provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. A very strong moral dimension runs through the school, supporting its aims of a sense of family and of honesty, truth and respect for each other. This is supported by many of the displays in the school. All the adults in the school provide very good role models and show their care for the pupils by providing such extra curricular activities as line dancing, run by lunch time supervisors, and netball run by the school secretary. The school has a well-developed behaviour policy and there are systematic procedures in place for rewarding good work and behaviour that make a good contribution to raising standards. This is evident in the achievement tree in reception, the use of house points and merit awards and Headteacher commendations. Older pupils support younger ones at lunch times by helping them and caring for them. The pupils know right from wrong and the school is a happy, orderly community.

61.There is good provision for pupils' social development. They have good opportunities in lessons for developing social skills such as working together, taking turns and sharing. There are good opportunities for taking responsibility, such as tidying up the classroom, helping in assembly and looking after younger pupils by those in Year 6. The school has a school council that has a very positive effect on pupils' social development. There is a residential trip each year and a number of visits that also make an effective contribution. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and sport that further enhance pupils' social skills.

62.Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There is, naturally, a strong emphasis on Catholic culture in the school. There is also a cultural contribution made by the study of other world religions in religious education lessons. Some emphasis on the multicultural element of music is also evident in displays of musical instruments from around the world. There is a limited, though useful, cultural element in subjects such as geography and history. In general, pupils have limited opportunities to celebrate the richness and diversity of their own or other cultures. This gives limited preparation for living in a culturally diverse

society. This was an issue raised in the previous report that has not yet been successfully addressed.

62. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

63. The support, guidance and attention to pupils' well being provided by the school are good and compare well with the time of the last inspection. The school has a very strong ethos of care and consideration. This is promoted by the headteacher and staff and is well recognised by parents. All staff demonstrate care and concern for the pupils and provide good pastoral support. The school has daily routines which provide an orderly and secure environment in which pupils are able to make progress.

64. The provision for monitoring academic progress is satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and encourage them to be fully involved in classroom and other activities. They do their best to foster a sense of self-confidence, as well as self-discipline and responsibility. Homework is regularly set and is generally appropriate in amount and challenge. Marking is generally good and good records are kept on pupils as they progress through the school, though analysis of their progress is still in its infancy. The school's overall monitoring and support for pupils with special educational needs is good, as are those for monitoring personal development.

65. The provision for monitoring the pupils' personal development is good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour within the school are very good and a real strength of the school. These show an improvement over the good standards of the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to work well together, with a spirit of co-operation and shared achievement. They are encouraged to consider aspects of friendship, family, relationships and responsibility and they receive guidance on health and sex education and drug awareness. The participation of pupils in the school council provides them with valuable experience of taking on responsibilities and acting on agreed decisions. Pupils display insight and maturity in their discussions in the council and have a strong sense of right and wrong in various situations.

66. The monitoring of behaviour is good. The school trusts its pupils to act sensibly and responsibly and it is seldom disappointed. The school has a detailed and comprehensive behaviour policy, complete with a very sensible list of rewards and sanctions, as well as a section on how to deal with bullying. All children are aware of both these rules and their own well displayed class rules and most of the time they abide by them. The pre-inspection documentation showed that some parents were worried about rules being petty and pupils being over-organised within playtime and at lunch. From observation and talking to many parents and children, the inspectors can find no substance whatsoever for these anxieties. In the majority of classes teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively and it is a pleasure to walk around the school during pupils' playtimes.

67. The school has very good attendance and this is due mainly to the very good procedures, which the school has put in place. These procedures are another strength, of which the school can be proud. The attendance and punctuality records of all pupils are closely monitored and incidents of unexpected absence are followed up promptly on the day. The intervention of the Educational Welfare Officer is very rarely required but is used when necessary.

68. Procedures for ensuring pupils' wellbeing, health and safety are also good within the school. The highly trained nominated staff member for child protection has working links with outside authorities and staff have appropriate guidance in case of need. Health and safety at the school is well maintained by the school's trained representative and a very enthusiastic and well informed specialist governor. There is a detailed health and safety policy and an up to date risk assessment. Fire exercises are carried out every half term and all equipment is date tested. Escape routes are well marked and easily accessible. Both portable electrical

equipment and physical exercise equipment are date tested and all dangerous chemicals are well locked away. The school has ensured that all of its staff have been trained in first aid. There are very good and sensitive systems for children first starting school and moving on to secondary education.

68. Partnership with parents and the community

69. Overall, the school's partnership with its parents and the community are good and compare well with judgements made at the previous inspection. Parents are very supportive of the school and its aims and values. The vast majority find the school welcoming and approachable. Many parents respond to the school's invitation to help in the classroom and they are well integrated into lessons by teachers.

70. The school provides good information for parents and involves them in their children's learning from the outset. The comprehensive prospectus includes much useful information. New parents are sent copies of 'Enjoying Books', 'Starting School' and 'Choosing a School'. An annual governors' report keeps parents well informed and both this and the school prospectus comply with statutory requirements. The last inspection stated that parents would have liked more curriculum information from the school. The quality and quantity of this information is now very good. At the start of the autumn term teachers discuss the curriculum for the next year with parents and suggest how they can be involved. Also, the school has recently had curriculum evenings for English, mathematics and science. A similar evening for information control technology is planned for next term.

71. Annual school reports are of good quality and generally comply with statutory requirements. Parents said that they were most appreciative of school newsletters, particularly a coloured one warning parents of local prowlers. All parents are invited to school and class liturgies, Christmas productions, concerts, Harvest Festivals and special assemblies. The school has an open door policy and most parents like the way that either the headteacher or the deputy head are inevitably at the school gate at leaving time, as well as other members of staff. Before the inspection some parents aired concerns that their complaints were not taken into account. The inspection has revealed quite the opposite. The school has a very good and efficient complaints procedure and all parents interviewed stated that they were very satisfied with the way that their complaints and suggestions were handled.

72. Parental involvement in their children's learning is also good. Parent links are very well covered in the school's development plan. Most parents really appreciate the home/school diaries and find them a very good method of communication. Within school, parents help with school administration, visits and all subjects of the curriculum. During the inspection parents were seen helping children to bake bread. The school has recently formed a Home/School Resource Library which is well appreciated and used by parents. All parents have now accepted the Home/School Agreement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are always very keen to attend pupil reviews and support individual education plans. The school has a very energetic Parent Teachers' Association, which raises greatly appreciated funds for the school through social evenings and other events. Where pupils are identified as having special educational needs, there is good liaison with parents and they are invited to be involved at all stages.

73. The school's links with the community are good and the school's work is considerably enriched by such contacts. The school is very involved with local playgroups, nurseries and pre school groups well before pupils join the school. There are now better ties with secondary schools and arrangements for pupil transfers are efficient and sensitive. Sporting links with other schools are strong, and in 1998 the school's football team won the local Worsley Cup. Currently teams are at the top of their respective leagues in football, netball and chess. The school is used on most nights of the week by the local community, such as Brownies and a choral society who are involving pupils in one of their forthcoming productions. There are good

links with local business and industry. These have produced paintings for the school from a national supermarket, a set of football shirts for the team and two computers. The pupils are very enthusiastic about supporting charities such as CAFOD, UNICEF, Flood victims in Bangladesh, as well as local causes. Overall, the partnership with the school's parents and the community are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and development.

73.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

73. Leadership and management

74. The overall leadership and management of the school is good. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has successfully identified the need to put in place common systems and procedures for school development, curriculum co-ordination, planning and assessment. While these are not all yet consistently established, particularly in the area of curriculum co-ordination, good progress has been made. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully responded to most of the weaknesses identified. There is now effective management in most areas of the curriculum. The headteacher, deputy and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator work closely together to ensure there is appropriate coverage of the curriculum. Curriculum monitoring has been introduced and the English co-ordinator and mathematics co-ordinator have undertaken thorough reviews of the new strategies. The schools' development plan and its action plan following the last inspection have been appropriately monitored by the senior management and the governing body. Other aspects requiring development have also been appropriately tackled. The new information technology suite is enabling more effective teaching of all aspects of the subject and standards are already beginning to rise. Most schemes of work have been completed and these are helping teachers to plan effectively and for progress through the school. Art and geography schemes of work remain underdeveloped, awaiting the new National Curriculum directives. The arrangements for assessment have been improved, particularly the use of assessment to inform future planning in the core subjects. This improvement is particularly evident in the good teaching, the broad curriculum and the very good social development of the pupils. However, the school's overall response to the key issues for action identified in its last inspection has not been fully satisfactory in the provision of multicultural development for pupils. Nevertheless, when the pupils' attainment and progress, the good teaching and the improvements in management and organisation are taken into account, overall improvement since the last inspection is good. The school has good capacity for continued improvement.

75. The headteacher provides strong pastoral, as well as academic, leadership, contributing significantly to the supportive, caring ethos of the school. He is well supported by the governing body, especially by the chair of governors, who plays a very active role in the life of the school. The headteacher and governors have a good, clear rationale for the management structure of the school. This is yet to be fully realised, largely because of unforeseen turbulence in staffing in the last eighteen months. The appointment of a deputy headteacher has moved the school closer to achieving its desired management structure. There is a good system of curriculum teams for literacy and numeracy, special educational needs and information and communication technology, involving teachers from each year group.

76. Leadership and management of the school is good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership. He has been astute and diligent in recognising and dealing with the priorities of the school's development and in addressing many of the issues identified in the last inspection report. Since that inspection, the school has suffered from some staff disruption which provided a challenge in raising standards of attainment and progress. The headteacher has succeeded in maintaining the former level of attainment and the school is now exceeding it. He is resourceful at dealing with issues at all levels, from providing support to more able pupils as part of the school's target setting initiative, to raising the school profile and very effectively raising the level of behaviour in the school. He is well supported by the energetic and enthusiastic deputy headteacher, who works closely with him and together they provide a

supportive core for the rest of the school. However, the deputy headteacher's role is, at the moment, fragmented and his workload too heavy and wide in scope for him to be able to take full charge of curriculum development. Because the deputy headteacher is also Key Stage 2 co-ordinator and special needs co-ordinator, the senior management team is limited to three people and most subject co-ordinators have little overall grasp of the curriculum or ownership of its direction. The governing body is effectively organised into committees and provides support for the headteacher and his vision of the school, especially through the active, energetic and positive help of the chair of governors. Governors do not, as yet, have a great deal of involvement in curriculum monitoring and evaluation, but they are aware of their role as 'critical friend' and hold the school to account for the standards it achieves. The school's aims and values, as expressed in its mission statement, are evident in its everyday life.

77. There are designated governors for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy. They are satisfactorily informed about their respective roles, though sometimes insufficiently aware of the need for monitoring standards. The day to day management of special needs is energetic and committed. There is a clear policy which meets national requirements and gives guidance on the involvement of parents at all stages in the special educational needs Code of Practice. There is a comprehensive register of pupils, which is regularly updated as required by national legislation. Pupils are fostered in academic, social and pastoral ways and staff are helped and supported extensively in their planning and teaching. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and management in identifying and preparing individual education plans and in contacting parents and external agencies where necessary. However, since he is also Deputy Head of the school, this is an additional burden to add to his whole school responsibilities.

78. Support and monitoring of curriculum development are satisfactory overall. The school has devised and set in place a strong system to implement the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. Most subject leadership is now satisfactory or good, although subject development plans are still variable in quality. There is strong support for both teaching and curriculum development. These are of necessity governed at the moment by communal priorities. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' work is sufficiently focused to ensure improvement. Procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and the sharing of good practice are only undertaken by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and some core co-ordinators. Monitoring of teaching in mathematics and science has been effective in raising standards of pupils' achievement. Most curriculum co-ordinators have some opportunity to monitor their subjects during lessons. Some appraisal has taken place, promoting sound professional development in line with the school's priorities. Effective consultation and communication through a regular cycle of meetings is now taking place.

79. The school has effective strategies for the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, and a recent policy for the teaching and learning of the able child has been successfully implemented. The school ensures good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils in all areas of school life.

80. School improvement is supported efficiently by a range of documents indicating future planning, policy making and review processes. The school development plan is a clear document and identifies priorities with objectives and clear targets up to 2001. The process of development planning is now sound and is cross-referenced to the school's aims. The school has set clear and realistic targets for improvement in the National Curriculum tests and is already beginning to meet the challenge. Staff are working hard to meet these targets. As yet, there is inconsistency between subjects for the setting and sharing of targets for the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils. The school has already begun to address this issue and inspectors saw some good practice in the use of such targets, where it is well developed. The development of target setting is having a positive impact on the degree of challenge provided for higher achieving pupils. In general the level of expectation of these

pupils has risen since the last inspection and work is now much more demanding, but the very highest achievers would rise even higher with more challenge, especially in their written work.

81.A comprehensive range of policies guides the work of the school. Statutory requirements are met in all respects. The school has made, and is continuing to make, improvements in both the quality of education it provides and in the achievements of its pupils, both in academic standards and in the wide, high quality range of extra-curricular activities available. Relationships between pupils and staff are good, as is the learning environment created. The ethos of the school is very good. Relationships between pupils and pupils' behaviour are very good. The headteacher has accomplished much in his time at the school to raise standards in all areas. The capacity for improvement is judged to be good.

81. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

82.The school has sufficient well-qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. All staff have detailed, appropriate job descriptions. In response to national initiatives, an extra teacher is employed to reduce class sizes for English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 1. This enables teachers to plan better for pupils in Years 1 and 2, since it removes the need for pupils to be taught in mixed year groups, and provides greater flexibility in teaching arrangements for pupils of different abilities and special needs. Several subject and management responsibilities have, of necessity, recently been reallocated amongst the staff. Whilst the allocation of responsibilities is satisfactory overall, some co-ordinators require training to improve their effectiveness, for example in developing schemes of work.

83.Teachers are well supported by a satisfactory number of support staff. The role of support staff has recently been modified, and a more clearly defined focus to their activities has been established, particularly to raise standards through increased support for English and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and Year 3. However, the lack of a full time assistant in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class makes it hard for the teacher to plan and teach a balanced programme for pupils in both year groups in the afternoons. Where necessary, pupils receive individual support, and overall support provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.

84.Arrangements for staff professional development are satisfactory. The system of appraisal used in the past is currently suspended, pending new government initiatives. However, appraisal requirements are met by annual staff development interviews. These are wide ranging and address both individual and school needs. A wide range of courses is available to all staff, from both local and national organisations. Arrangements for the induction of new staff is satisfactory. No newly qualified teachers have been employed in the school for several years, but a satisfactory local support scheme is in place. A very good staff handbook and support from a school mentor enables more experienced new colleagues to settle quickly into the school. The effectiveness of staff development is not formally evaluated, but staff training for teachers and support staff has contributed well to the effective implementation of both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy.

85.The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. The welcoming atmosphere in the school's entrance hall and library area, and good quality displays of pupils' work, contribute well to the stimulating environment throughout the school. The large hall easily accommodates the whole school for assembly, and is well equipped for physical education lessons. Classrooms are appropriately furnished for pupils of different ages, but Key Stage 2 classes are large, and rooms feel cramped, especially for practical work such as science investigations. Good use is made of corridor space for teaching small groups of pupils with special educational needs and for English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 1. The school is carpeted throughout, which adds to the warmth of the building and reduces noise. A redundant kitchen has been redeveloped into a new computer suite, which provides very good

support for information technology. However, large classes again make the room feel small, and air conditioning is required to prevent the room becoming excessively hot.

86.The single storey building and outside areas are on a flat site, which allows good access for pupils with physical disabilities. The playground and playing field are large and provide good facilities for both recreational play and physical education lessons. This is further enhanced by a secure outdoor swimming pool. The play area for children under five is satisfactory, although access to large play equipment is restricted through the need to store it in a hut when not required in lessons. The whole site is well maintained. The interior of the school building is cleaned to a high standard and well decorated. The caretaker ensures that the school begins each day in a sparkling and pristine condition, as well being most supportive towards both pupils and staff.

87.The school has sufficient learning resources to support all areas of the curriculum, except in some aspects of history, geography and art. The quality and range of fiction books in the library and classroom collections has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory. Reference books are also of satisfactory quality, and the library is well organised to make them accessible to pupils when needed. The range of reference books gives satisfactory support for the development of pupils' knowledge of other cultures and the arts. Learning resources for investigative aspects of science are good. There is a good range of both large and small apparatus to support physical education and new computer equipment provides very good support both for information technology and other curriculum subject areas. New purchases for English and mathematics contribute well to the smooth implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy, and resources are satisfactory overall. The school has insufficient up to date maps for use in geography. The quality and range of musical instruments, the provision of artefacts in history and the range of resources to support the study of different artists' work are all inadequate to support pupils' multicultural education. Weaknesses in resources for history and geography still persist from the previous inspection.

87. The efficiency of the school

88.Overall, the efficiency of the school is good and therefore compares well with the last inspection.

89.Financial planning is good overall. The school has an effective and detailed three-year development plan and an updated development plan summary for every year. The school finds that it is a very effective document. Financial decisions are driven by the school development plan and a focus on improving the quality of education is always paramount. Each department now has a budget. The budget allocation is set through a thorough process of consultation and based upon the priorities of the school. It is closely monitored and comprehensive information is provided regularly to the governing body. The budget is frequently supplemented by additional funding from the parent teacher association. Special educational needs funding is very well targeted and funds to support pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately.

90.The governors are now fully involved in financial planning and the monitoring of the school budget. Teachers talk to governors regularly at meetings and cost effectiveness, which was mentioned at the last inspection as requiring formal steps towards its evaluation, is now being administered efficiently. The school realises that it still has some way to go but is satisfied with what it has achieved since the new headteacher's arrival, two years ago. Both the headteacher and the governors have ensured prudent spending within the last financial year and the school now has a very healthy balance to carry forward to next April. Money has been very well spent, to good effect, on support staff to reduce class sizes in Key Stage 1 and the school would like to extend this kind of support. The school has also done well to have had new teaching bays built on the sides of the corridor, thus avoiding pupils having to sit in a

draughty corridor, as mentioned at the last inspection. The school's new Information Technology Suite is a major achievement of which they can be justifiably proud. Both of the latter are starting to have a positive effect on teaching and learning.

91. The school's use of its teaching staff generally promotes satisfactory standards and quality. Year groups are sited close to each other and this makes working as a year team easier. The restructuring of the senior management team, since the last inspection, is gradually leading to greater effectiveness in the school. As part of this team the school now has a new deputy head teacher who has also taken on the role of Special Needs Co-ordinator, Key Stage 2 co-ordinator and co-ordinator for physical education. These duties fragment his role and make it difficult for him to complement the role of the headteacher as efficiently as he might. Further re-assessment of the structure of the senior management team is needed. The development of the management role of subject co-ordinators, a key issue at the last inspection, has now taken place. However, as a comparatively new experience, some members of staff are still finding difficulty in coming to terms with it.

92. Support staff are made good use of by the school. They are deployed well particularly in working with pupils having special educational needs.

93. The school makes good use of its accommodation and resources, both within classrooms and also in the playground and on the playing field. The school has a large hall which it utilises very well for assemblies, lunchtimes, physical education and after school events. However, the school does not possess a proper library, although it makes very effective use of the present one in the foyer, facilities are not really conducive to quiet, personal study. Since arriving at the school the head teacher has spent liberally on resources. This year's budget is understandably high, as when he arrived at the school resources were in quite short supply. Next year's forecast is even higher.

94. The school has just received its latest audit report and most of the few recommendations made have now been acted upon. The school's very efficient administration staff ensure that financial information is always available for the headteacher and the governors. A finance income and expenditure report is released at the end of every month.

95. Although some class sizes are high and the school has had to accomplish much in the last two years, the school provides a good education for its pupils. Considering the standards achieved and the good progress made over time, the school provides good value for money.

95. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

95. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

96. Children are admitted to the reception or reception/Year 1 class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. By the time they reach the age of five, children's levels of attainment, in terms of the desirable outcomes for learning, are in line with those expected nationally for children of the same age, and they have made satisfactory progress.

96. ***Personal and social development***

97. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Generally, they mix and play well together, showing they are able to take turns and share without dispute. Children demonstrate a clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable and behave well. They show good attitudes to their work and are eager to undertake tasks, sustaining concentration for long enough to complete them. They show developing levels of maturity, for example, in the way they organise their belongings, settle to work and observe classroom routines. They attend school assembly, entering and leaving the hall sensibly and sitting still throughout. Teachers and classroom assistants show a high level of teamwork in their consistent approach to encouraging children to work and play together.

97. ***Language and literacy***

98. Children work with increasing confidence and make satisfactory progress in the area of language and literacy. They enjoy stories and listen well to classroom discussions. Their ability to respond appropriately to questions and to follow instructions develops well. They begin to develop the use of vocabulary to describe the size, shape and features of objects such as leaves that they are using for a display. Children are building their knowledge of letter sounds and a sight vocabulary. They are able to copy words and recall words that start with the same letter. Most are able to write their names correctly. Many opportunities to expand and develop children's vocabulary are incorporated into daily routines and their contributions are encouraged. The teachers have a secure knowledge of this area of learning and plan activities well to support the objectives of the lessons.

98. ***Mathematics and numeracy***

99. Children under five make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Lessons provide a range of experiences and ensure that children learn to use mathematical language to support their understanding. By the age of five they achieve the standards expected for their age. Some children have better developed numeracy skills and begin to work within the first level of the National Curriculum. They are able to count confidently to ten, and by the time they are five most can write numbers accurately. Children can identify shapes such as cones and cubes and order these shapes by size. In lessons such as food technology, children learn to measure accurately and carefully.

99. ***Knowledge and understanding of the world***

100. Children attain the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes for children of this age. Most know the days of the week and months of the year and are aware of seasons. By the age of five, most have developed initial computer skills. They enjoy construction toys and play with sand and water purposefully and work well together. When making models, they are able to use a range of basic tools with safety and confidence under close adult supervision. Carefully prepared activities and resources successfully stimulate children's interest, imagination and learning.

100. **Physical development**

101.Children make at least satisfactory progress in their physical development. By the time they are five their skills are in line with those expected for their age. Most make satisfactory progress in pencil control and using scissors and small tools well, for example, when cutting out and sticking. They move and run around with balance and an awareness of space and each other. They understand fast and slow movements and big and little steps. They have opportunities to develop the skills of manipulation and co-ordination, using a range of construction equipment and materials. There is a good balance between formal skills of teaching and allowing children to experiment and carry out their own ideas.

101. **Creative development**

102.Children work with sustained concentration in practical activities. They successfully use paint, crayons, modelling clay, paper and cutting and gluing materials. In assembly and music lessons they learn to sing a range of songs increasingly from memory. They develop an ability to use their imagination and express ideas in a range of situations, for example in the classroom 'house'. Careful planning ensures that children are presented with a range of relevant opportunities, enabling them to represent their ideas in a variety of ways.

103.Children are well prepared for the transition to Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching is good in relation to each of the areas of learning. Baseline assessments are undertaken on entry to the school and the information is used to address the individual needs of the children. The curriculum covers all the elements of the Early Years programme. Staff work well together. Relationships are very good and children are well supported in a caring environment by adults who have high expectations of behaviour. The previous report on Early Years provision stated that provision overall was good. This is still the case, particularly in the very important areas of social development and preparation of children for school routines.

103. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

103. **English**

104.Tests administered by the school on entry show that the standard of English at this stage is broadly in line with that of national expectations. Taking into account the results of the 1999 national tests, as well as pupils' work and reading observed during the inspection, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected national standard in English is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. In the test results, speaking and listening were in line with the national average, reading was in line with it and writing was below it, as was the case in

the 1998 tests. In comparison with schools of a similar nature, English results at this key stage were well below average. At Key Stage 2, 1999 results were close to the national average in reading, but below it in writing. In comparison with schools of a similar nature, they were below average. Overall, English by the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with the national average, again, the same as in 1998 tests. The number of pupils achieving the higher grades was below the national average at both key stages. There is little significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys, except in the higher grades. At the time of the last inspection, attainment and progress were both judged to be sound, as they are now, but there is evidence that the standards of writing in Key Stage 1 have fallen in the intervening period, though they have begun to rise again over the last three years.

105.In relation to their attainment on entry, under five children in the reception class make satisfactory progress in language and literacy skills. On entry many children communicate without full clarity, but their speaking and listening skills develop rapidly. They listen attentively and with enjoyment to stories and rhymes, joining in where appropriate. They develop confidence in speaking when re-telling stories or offering their own ideas. By the time they are five, most children are well in line to attain national expectations for the desirable learning outcome in literacy.

106. The school recognises the need for emphasis on the skills of speaking and listening. In Key Stage 1, pupils speak willingly and relevantly but many lack the ability to structure their speech well and to illustrate their ideas fluently. They listen well and respond to teachers and to each other readily, but not always in a sustained manner. Generally, pupils read with interest and some motivation. Most acquire adequate phonic skills by the end of Key Stage 1 to enable them to correct their own mistakes and to approach unfamiliar words with ease. With the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, more pupils are acquiring these phonic skills and reading is showing signs of rapid improvement throughout the school. Pupils generally read aloud with expression, with the encouragement of teachers, but not all pupils read with understanding and inference. The fluency in the technical aspects of reading often masks the lack of comprehension of what is being read, as when a Year 2 pupil read a difficult text maturely and expressively, but was subsequently unable to explain the vocabulary or give an account of what had been read. Some are able to reason sensibly from evidence, as seen in a Year 2 class in which pupils were examining information from their reading of instructions how to make a zig-zag book. Pupils write with interest, showing a desire to communicate their ideas and by the end of the key stage most pupils communicate coherently and sensibly in writing, though too infrequently in a sustained manner.

107. In Key Stage 2, pupils begin to acquire a range of styles to cover formal and informal modes of question and answer and many strive hard to acquire the skills of clarity of communication. Most pupils read with some degree of comprehension and some appreciation of different styles and genres, for example, the study of an extract from 'David Copperfield'. Library skills are well developed. By the end of the key stage, though, writing is not well developed. Although a wide range of written activities is practised, units of work are too often short, limited to the minimum asked for and lacking illustration and a sense of specific styles. Pupils and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what should or could be accomplished during the group or individual work section of the literacy hour. Little good literature is used to promote skills in understanding, inference and prediction, so that pupils' experiences are often limited to factual comprehension skills. Pupils with special educational needs attain in line with other pupils, with the help of the special needs and learning support staff.

108. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in writing at Key Stage 1, though speaking and listening skills and reading techniques are satisfactory. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has accelerated the acquisition of good reading skills and some pupils are now entering Key Stage 1 with good phonic knowledge. Pupils in this key stage learn to speak at increasing length and in a variety of situations. Their listening skills are developed through regular small group discussions and the skilful use of question and answer by their teachers. They make steady progress in reading, learning letter-sound combinations and developing the habit of reading for enjoyment and for information. They make progress in spelling skills through regular practice and their writing develops from simple sentences to planned stories and clear factual accounts of events.

109. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' progress in speaking and listening is further developed through more challenging discussion. They read increasingly widely, from 'The BFG' by Roald Dahl to 'The Hobbit' by J.R. Tolkien in Year 6, and their knowledge and comprehension of non-fiction also develops. Many pupils read texts confidently, accurately and with good comprehension, and the additional learning support offered in Years 3 and 4 is proving successful in enhancing reading skills. Some higher attaining pupils use reference books with ease. These fluent readers are encouraged to progress onto a wider range of fiction and non-fiction from the class and school libraries, which are well stocked and used. Pupils' ability to talk about characterisation and plot in the books they have read, however, is rarely well developed. In writing in Key Stage 2, pupils too rarely plan, draft, revise, proffered and present a final copy. Too little sustained writing is practised and the amount of written work accomplished is below what is expected at this age. Pupils write in a wide variety of forms,

including letters, interviews, play scripts, creative writing and non-fiction, but units of work are generally too short and sometimes unfinished. Pupils do not reach the level of fluency in writing appropriate for their age group. Insufficient use is made of the opportunities included in the curriculum for extended writing and of writing for research purposes offered by many other subjects of the curriculum. It is noticeable that the progress of boys' writing is much slower than that of girls at this key stage. Pupils discuss their own and others' written work. They learn the use of captions, the importance of capital letters, full stops, the use of speech marks and the power of persuasive language. Progress is limited when tasks set are insufficiently challenging, for example, when pupils are not expected to extend their written work to include interesting detail. Satisfactory standards attained in handwriting lessons by a substantial majority of pupils are not always carried over into everyday writing. There has been no significant improvement in writing at this key stage since the previous inspection. High attaining pupils do not always make satisfactory progress, at both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs in both key stages make sound progress in reading, as well as in developing speaking and listening and writing skills because their learning targets carefully address their difficulties in these areas.

110. In other subjects across the school's curriculum, skills in literacy are being consolidated in a satisfactory way in speaking and listening and in reading. Many lessons allow pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and science, history and religious education enhance the use of reading research skills. However, pupils are not often encouraged to write at length on the topics under study or to focus on the skills demanded by factual and informative writing in them. The range of activities covered in the schemes of work are not being fully used to enhance the English curriculum and to have an impact on the standards and richness of opportunities offered to all the pupils.

111. Pupils' response to English lessons is nearly always good. They enjoy group discussion and listen carefully to instructions. In most lessons, they settle to work rapidly and eagerly. They write readily and with concentration, for the most part, though the amount they write is insufficient for what is expected of them during this part of the literacy hour. They show eagerness to enlarge their vocabulary and enjoy the shared reading which allows them to exchange ideas and contribute their own opinions. This was very evident in a Year 4 lesson using an article on 'Fossil Hunters' as a text for shared reading and discussion. Pupils' attitudes towards lessons are also good. They work well in pairs and groups, are almost always polite and courteous and they co-operate well with their teachers. Pupils take great pleasure and pride in presenting their work to the whole class.

112. All teaching observed in English lessons was satisfactory or better, three-quarters was good or better and one-third was very good. Teaching in the majority of lessons is good in Key Stage 1, but it is inconsistent. This is a contributory factor to the underachievement of pupils in the subject in this key stage. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and occasionally very good. It is in this key stage that more consistent progress is made, enabling pupils to reach the national average by the end of the key stage. Most teachers have clear knowledge and grasp of the subject and this enables them to plan work to target the full range of pupils' abilities. Teachers are skilful in using questions which encourage pupils to discuss and explore their ideas and opinions, clarifying their understanding of the task in hand. Class control is usually good and sensitive to pupils' needs. Teachers' planning is thorough, both for individual lessons and over the course of time, using schemes of work set out by the National Literacy Strategy. Lessons are well managed, with clear introductions and appropriately set tasks for pupils of different abilities. Good use is often made of end of lesson reviews to draw together what has been learnt. Where teaching is weaker, it is because it lacks energy and pace and does not challenge pupils to independent thought and work. Pupils too often feel able to do only what is asked of them and are not fired by enthusiastic teaching to do more. Additional literacy support and teaching for pupils with special educational needs serves well to develop pupils' reading skills. Some good examples were seen of class teachers and other staff supporting pupils with special educational needs by working alongside them in class.

Graded work is used well to suit the needs of all levels of attainment in many classes, though higher attaining pupils are not always stretched to their full potential, especially in writing. Teachers' feedback to pupils during lessons consists of evaluative and positive comments which foster and encourage pupils to improve and extend their learning. Marking of written work is sometimes inconsistent, not always providing ideas for development or progress, although it is always kept up to date. Pupils with special educational needs are able to participate fully in lessons.

113. The subject fully meets National Curriculum requirements in breadth and coverage of all the targets of speaking and listening, reading and writing. A firm policy and detailed scheme of work, tailored and reviewed to meet the demands of the National Literacy Strategy, ensure clarity of aims and objectives throughout the school. There is a further scheme of work to provide a focus on writing skills, especially sustained writing, but time allocated to English lessons outside the literacy strategy is not always used consistently or to best advantage. Yearly, termly and weekly plans ensure the continuous progress of pupils, though there is not a secure link between the two key stages as yet. Day to day plans set out clear aims and objectives. Teachers make regular informed assessment of pupils' progress and attainment. For example, all pupils undertake an unaided piece of writing which is assessed for quality and accuracy and informs teachers of pupils' progress. National test results are analysed to identify trends in pupil performance and aid in future planning. Daily assessment of pupils' work informs teachers' plans. Homework is not always set in a consistent manner, except for regular reading and the learning of spellings. This inconsistency contributes to the lack of extended and sustained writing in Key Stage 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. Appropriate targets have been set, aimed at raising standards in the National curriculum tests.

114. Curriculum management of English is satisfactory. Recent changes have included improvements in the curriculum and teaching and learning methods through the inclusion of the National Literacy Strategy and much attention has been given to training needs for the changes in literacy teaching. The co-ordinator has done some monitoring of the teaching and monitors the learning in the subject regularly. Review of the curriculum is constantly taking place and staff receive appropriate help and advice. Support staff are well deployed to support learning, and their work is having a positive effect on standards of attainment and pupils' progress. The school has implemented the literacy initiative comprehensively. Teachers and other staff promote good social skills in speech and behaviour and act as good role models for moral and social conduct. Accommodation is adequate to support the subject. The main school library and classroom libraries are well stocked and provide pupils with good opportunities to extend their reading. Resources in the classrooms are also good, though pupils do not yet use word-processors regularly to draft and improve their work and information technology is still insufficiently integrated into the teaching of the subject as a whole.

114. **Mathematics**

115. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national averages, and also with that of pupils from similar backgrounds. This reflects similar standards reported in the previous inspection. The results of national end of key stage tests show some variation from year to year, with no clear trend. In 1998 the average level attained by pupils was below the average level attained nationally. However, in 1999, pupils' performance improved, to reach average national levels overall. Pupils currently in Key Stage 1 benefit from additional teacher provision to reduce teaching group sizes. They are working at levels expected for pupils of their age at this stage of the school year, but it is too early to assess whether the extra teaching provision is having an impact on raising standards.

116. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above national averages, and is well above that of pupils from similar backgrounds. Results in the national end of key stage tests

have gradually improved since 1996, but until 1998, results were still consistently below national levels overall. However, in 1999, the school took action to identify higher attaining pupils and to raise their standards of attainment. As a result, more than one third of pupils reached Level 5, above the level expected for eleven-year-olds. The performance of lower attaining pupils also improved, and the overall average level of attainment rose markedly, to be above the national average level. All current Year 6 pupils are working towards the level expected by the end of the school year, and some are working at higher levels, which demonstrates above average levels of attainment. Pupils' attainment, especially that of higher attaining pupils, has improved since the previous inspection.

117. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a secure grasp of number. They mentally add and subtract numbers to 100, and are beginning to explain their methods. In a lesson seen, pupils used a 100 square to help explain, for example, that 'subtract 11' is the same as 'subtract 10' followed by subtract 1'. They use their knowledge of place value to describe patterns such as counting on and backwards in 10's, often working with numbers larger than 100. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers, although lower attaining pupils are only secure when the numbers are small. Pupils use their knowledge of number in everyday tasks such as shopping. They add up simple shopping bills, and calculate small amounts of change. Higher attaining pupils use decimal notation, for example writing '98p + 51p = £1.49'. Pupils know the names of common two and three dimensional shapes such as 'rectangle' and 'cylinder', which they can also identify from their descriptions. They measure common classroom objects in metres or centimetres. Although pupils work at the levels expected for their age and ability, work is sometimes untidy.

118. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils calculate accurately with numbers of all sizes, including decimals. They have good mental strategies for calculating, for example rounding numbers to first obtain an estimate of the answer. In the Year 6 lesson seen, pupils demonstrated good mental agility in doubling numbers such as 5.27, and explained a range of methods to show how they arrived at the answer. Higher attaining pupils solve algebraic equations mentally, drawing on their knowledge of all the common arithmetical processes. Nearly all pupils have a good, developing understanding of negative numbers. For example, they add and subtract them in the context of rises and falls in temperature, although lower attaining pupils do make some mistakes in this work. Pupils understand fractions, decimals and percentages. Higher attaining pupils also add fractions. Pupils apply their knowledge of number to measurement of all kinds. They have a good grasp of the metric system, and express results in different forms, such as 1352mm or 1.352 m. They calculate the area and perimeter of two dimensional shapes. Pupils use protractors to measure and draw angles, and they use compasses to construct triangles and angle bisectors. Pupils understand probability, and can identify equally likely outcomes in an experiment using dice. They also explore graphs.

119. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Progress in most lessons is good in both key stages. Pupils in Year 1 have benefited from smaller teaching groups this year and have made good progress since the start of the school year. They are already achieving levels of attainment higher than would be expected at this stage. However, Year 2 pupils do not yet show the same rate of progress and progress overall is therefore only satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, pupils in all classes make good progress over the course of the school year, which is in line with the good lesson progress seen during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2, as a result of effective support from classroom assistants and the smaller group sizes possible in Key Stage 1 at present. As they get older, pupils systematically develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils work with increasing confidence and they make steady gains in their knowledge. They extend their knowledge of the number system and progress in other strands of the subject shows similar development. Early work on identifying shapes is followed by work on symmetry and pupils learn to measure with increasing precision as they get older.

120. Pupils make satisfactory use of their knowledge of number in other subjects. For example, they measure materials when carrying out science investigations, and they illustrate the results using tables and graphs. Pupils of all ages weigh ingredients when cooking, and they measure materials in design and technology. In history, pupils use time lines to develop their sense of chronology.

121. Pupils have good attitudes to learning mathematics and behave well. They join in enthusiastically in oral work, and put up their hands to answer questions. However, when pupils are not actively engaged in the discussion, or the lesson is slow in pace, they begin to fidget and lose attention. This was noticed particularly in a Year 2 lesson where pupils never really settled to work at the beginning of the lesson, and the teacher did not involve all pupils in the discussion. Many pupils in all years have good powers of concentration and perseverance in written work. For example a group of Year 1 pupils worked diligently on subtraction sums for more than 20 minutes. Pupils have good relationships with each other and all adults. They collaborate well, for example, when checking each other's answers. Many pupils are self-motivated and well organised, which contributes to the positive and busy ethos of lessons.

122. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, and two thirds of all lessons were of good quality. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain work well, and question pupils effectively to develop their understanding. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on fractions, the teacher used pupils' existing knowledge of halves, tables and odd and even numbers to develop further their ability to find a half of numbers such as 38, and to find other fractions. Teachers have a good understanding of the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, and follow it closely. Weekly and daily lesson plans are well prepared, although occasionally work is insufficiently demanding for a small number of higher attaining pupils. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Just occasionally, the pace in whole class oral work is too slow. This reduces the amount of time for other work, sometimes leads to loss of pupil concentration, and reduces the progress which would otherwise have been possible. Classes are managed well. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and ensure good behaviour. Teachers make good use of classroom support staff, who are fully involved in lessons and give good support to less able pupils and those with special educational needs, enabling them to take a full part in lessons and to make progress. Teachers discuss work with pupils and continuously assess how well they understand. When necessary, teachers modify future-teaching plans in the light of the assessment of work in lessons so far.

123. Mathematics is well led by an experienced co-ordinator. A new policy for mathematics has been written and the National Numeracy Strategy has been smoothly implemented. The co-ordinator has led staff training, monitored teaching and developed the school's scheme of work over several years. New assessment procedures that take account of the National Numeracy Strategy are under development, and assessment records show clearly pupils' levels of attainment in mathematics and the progress they make each year. Good use is made of tests in Key Stage 2 to identify more able pupils and detailed analysis of test results has helped modify the curriculum to address weaknesses. Both of these measures have contributed well to raising levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. New resources have been purchased to support the National Numeracy Strategy, and the school has a satisfactory range of texts and equipment to support the subject. The school makes good use of support staff and funds for an extra teacher in Key Stage 1. This allows single age classes to be taught, which has contributed well to the good progress in mathematics of Year 1 pupils.

123. **Science**

124. Attainment in science is in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils were at the average of Level 2 and nearly one-fifth

were above the average. These results were above the national average at Level 2 and in line with it at Level 3 and above. This was an improvement on the 1998 results, in which experimental and investigative science, life and living processes and physical processes were below the national average, though results were in line with the average for materials and their properties and very high in comparison with the average. In the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, nearly all pupils achieved the average of Level 4 and nearly one-third was above this level. Attainment is above the level for similar schools. This was an improvement on 1998, when results for those pupils reaching Level 4 or above were below the national average. Trends over the last three years show that pupils' performance in science has risen from being in line with national average to exceeding it. The previous report judged that few pupils achieved Level 3 or above at Key Stage 1, or Level 5 and above at Key Stage 2. There has been a marked improvement since that report. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls, or across the four attainment targets of the subject. Test results and inspection evidence indicate that attainment is rising over time.

125. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out basic investigations and can use simple equipment in order to do so. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, can investigate various sources of light and judge which are the brightest. Most pupils make simple predictions about what will happen in experiments and write up their results on pre-prepared worksheets. They develop a satisfactory knowledge of life processes and living things, starting with pictures of themselves growing up as the basis for work on food chains. Pupils identify different food groups and explain the main features of a healthy diet, as well as the benefits of regular exercise. They sort articles into groups according to their properties. Year 1 pupils, for example, classify food products according to their flavour. Year 2 pupils carry out experiments on how properties can change by experimenting on the amount of stretching in various types of socks made from different materials. Pupils study some physical processes and Year 1 pupils recognise and name sources of light. They compare the effects of brightness and colour on different surfaces.

126. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good range of skills in experimental and investigative science. They recognise the principle of setting up fair tests and describe the range of factors involved in this exercise. For example, Year 6 pupils decided what equipment to use for an experiment in dissolving solids and could identify the range of factors involved in setting up their tests. Pupils are able to use a variety of methods for recording results. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, write up their results at length and in detail and this makes a good contribution to their literacy development. All pupils use different types of measures, thus contributing to their standard of numeracy. As part of their work in life processes and living things, pupils describe changes in living organisms. This was seen in Year 3, where pupils were setting up tests and discussing the effects on teeth of a variety of drinks. Pupils identify the major organs of the human body and explain how food chains work. In their work in materials and their properties, the pupils work on basic circuits, study evaporation and condensation and explain why changes occur. They have completed comparisons of different types of metals and the properties of different types of wood. They have a good understanding of the various physical processes studied and can, for instance, construct a variety of circuits to make models work.

127. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. They develop a good scientific knowledge and use scientific vocabulary to explain what they are doing and why. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets in Key Stage 1 and achieve appropriate standards. Where they are given extra support, it is effective and they make good progress. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall.

128. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They enjoy science and carry out investigations with enthusiasm, paying careful attention to safety when necessary. Pupils sustain concentration well. They are keen to discuss their work, and older pupils, particularly,

are thoughtful about their conclusions. Pupils work very well together in groups and discussions, show respect for the views of others, and are courteous and polite to visitors.

129.Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is good teaching in four-tenths of the lessons and this is mainly in Key Stage 2. There is a small minority of unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1. Very good management of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, is a strong feature of the majority of the teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use support staff effectively. Satisfactory use is made of assessment to measure pupils' attainment and the school is now developing the use of portfolios of pupils' work to set more precise targets and consistent recording across both key stages. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, the delivery of the main points of the lesson is very slow and the teacher has to keep stopping to recover the interest of a number of pupils who are not paying attention. Most of the pupils in these lessons are not actively involved for a long period of time and boredom sets in for some, which explains their inattention to the lesson. Where the teaching is good, there is good balance between teacher explanation and pupil involvement and the teacher makes good use of questions and discussion to ensure that all pupils are fully involved and are made to think about and develop the theme of the lesson. The pace of these lessons is brisk and the teacher has high expectations of pupils. This was well demonstrated in a Year 3 lesson, where pupils were expected to use great care when measuring quantities of liquids and to set up a control under the same conditions.

130.The subject has a good range of resources that are well deployed and managed. The curriculum has been revised and provides a detailed scheme of work that builds progressively upon pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. There is good teamwork between teachers and support staff, who provide effective assistance, and this contributes to standards in science. The use of measuring and of graphs to record information makes a satisfactory contribution to mathematics. The accommodation is adequate, although sometimes cramped when the larger classes are doing practical work. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and has a clear view of the priorities for the subject. There are trips to zoos and other places of interest, and a number of visitors come to the school. All these factors help to enhance and enrich the curriculum. Those issues that were raised in the previous report have been addressed and the subject has made good progress since then.

130. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

130. Information technology

131.Pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations at the ends of both key stages, although there has been some improvement since the last inspection. Until very recently, computer access has been confined to a single class computer for the vast majority of pupils, which has restricted pupils' time and opportunities to develop higher order skills at each key stage. All pupils make some progress in both key stages, but overall progress is unsatisfactory, since pupils do not reach high enough levels of attainment and many pupils under-achieve in relation to their ability. However, in the very short time that the school's new computer suite has been available, pupils are already showing signs of good progress.

132.By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers to write short descriptions of themselves. They practise simple editing skills, such as inserting capital letters and full stops. Pupils give commands to a floor "Roamer" to make it negotiate a simple course, and they operate class listening stations independently. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their general ability to operate computers, and have skills appropriate for their age and experience. Throughout the key stage, they learn how to use the computer mouse, using it, for example, to select colours when 'painting' fireworks pictures, and in assembling pictures on the computer screen using given components, such as when "dressing Teddy". In the Year 1 lesson seen in the new computer suite, pupils began to experiment with a new word processing program. They typed in their names, drew a very simple picture, and printed out their work. They made good progress in the short time available, as a result of a well focused practical activity.

133. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident independent computer users. In a Year 6 lesson in the new computer suite, pupils began work on the newspapers which they are creating in their study of the Ancient Greeks. They loaded a word processing program, typed in the newspaper title and headline, and experimented very confidently and successfully in selecting different font styles, colours and sizes. Pupils have a good working knowledge of the new computer system, for example, logging on and off the network, loading programs and selecting editing 'tools', using the computer mouse independently of adult support. They have made good progress in the short time the suite has been operational. Similarly pupils in other years have learned to 'log on' and 'log off', to run programs and to save work and they have satisfactory general operating skills appropriate to their age. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils began to experiment with a screen based 'turtle graphics' program. They used knowledge from earlier work using a floor "Roamer" in Key Stage 1 to suggest how the program worked and they successfully gave instructions to the 'turtle' to draw a square. Older pupils have carried out similar tasks in the past on their classroom computers. In work on data handling, pupils enter personal data into a database, from which they then draw graphs. They know how to select information from the database, such as choosing all those children with birthdays in February, and how to sort it into order, but they have had insufficient opportunities to consolidate their understanding and to develop their ability to follow their own lines of enquiry. Pupils have had no opportunities to work in monitoring activities, such as the automatic collection of weather data using sensors, although this is planned for this academic year.

134. Pupils clearly enjoy using computers, and have very positive attitudes to information technology. In the four lessons seen, they were very enthusiastic and older pupils especially work with good concentration and collaboration with others in their group. Pupils pay good attention and try hard to follow instructions.

135. Four short lessons were seen, one in Key Stage 1 and three in Key Stage 2. All were at least satisfactory and two were good overall. Teachers are clearly coming to grips with the new computer suite, and in all lessons they were able to demonstrate satisfactorily so that pupils could then follow their instructions. Lessons are well planned and in the lessons seen teachers made good use of the time available to consolidate pupils' understanding of how to use the system and to develop their basic operational skills with new software.

136. The school's new computer room is very well equipped, with a wide range of high quality hardware and software to support the whole curriculum. The room provides a very good facility to promote the development of information technology in future years. However, large class sizes make the room feel small, especially for older pupils, and pupils are rather squashed together when working at the computers. Other computer equipment around the school is satisfactory. The information technology curriculum is very detailed, and covers all the strands of the subject very well. However, it is new, and has not yet been fully implemented. The co-ordinator is skilled, and gives good leadership and support to colleagues. An audit of staff skills has been carried out and training requirements have been identified to improve teachers' expertise.

136. **Art**

137. Progress is sound overall and is good in some lessons. Through Key Stage 1, pupils develop satisfactory basic skills in colour mixing, line drawing and various forms of collage and texture. In Year 1, pupils are given sketch books and make sound observational drawings of everyday objects, such as a slug or an orange. In Year 2, there is a concentration on mixing colours, this term on the mixing of autumn colours to match autumn leaves. In Key Stage 2, the range of skills extends as pupils move through the school. Some observational drawings of landscapes done in charcoal by Year 4 were impressive and in Year 5 there were some attractive paintings in the style of Gauguin and Hockney. A little three-dimensional work is done with clay. A weakness of the provision is the lack of emphasis given to the study of the work of a good range of well-known artists. There are good examples of pupils carrying out a project

through several stages, and the progress made in these activities leads to some above average achievement by a sizeable minority in each key stage. For instance, some Year 2 pupils produced vibrant and fluid line paintings, influenced by what they had seen of Van Gogh's work.

138. Progress over time is satisfactory. The absence of a comprehensive scheme of work that sets out a balanced and detailed programme of study inhibits a fully cohesive development of skills. Such a scheme is in process of being written and, like the present draft policy, awaits ratification by staff and governors' committees.

139. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and, although it was only possible to observe a few lessons, it was satisfactory or good in both key stages. Individual lessons are well planned and the clear learning objectives make for purposeful learning conditions. Most projects are open ended, allowing the higher attaining pupils a good level of challenge. There is a good balance of activities. The detailed exposition given by some teachers not only gives clear and high expectations, but also conveys enthusiasm for the subject.

140. In contrast to the last inspection's findings, pupils' response is very positive. Quality of learning is good, characterised by careful listening to instructions, enjoyment and often intense concentration, with independence in following individual lines of experiment. Pupils with special educational needs can work as well as, and sometimes to a better standard, than mainstream pupils.

141. Provision for the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is good equality of access for boys and girls. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is in process of drawing up a coherent scheme of work. Although there is no formal assessment procedure, the careful collection and display of pupils' finished products is a start to the creation of a portfolio of annotated work. Pupils' work is well displayed throughout the school. Resources are adequate in terms of materials, but there are few reference texts and few examples of the work of artists of different periods and cultures to aid pupils' appreciation.

141. **Design and technology**

142. During the inspection it was possible to observe only two lessons of design and technology. Judgements are based on the two lessons and on scrutiny of work, discussions with staff and discussions with pupils.

143. In each key stage, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriate standards. There are no significant differences in attainment between girls and boys.

144. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the design, make and style of objects and evaluation strategies used in the subject. Pupils in the Year 1/2 class, for instance, design and produce glove puppets as part of their work in history on The Gunpowder Plot. They also carry out simple evaluations of products. Pupils in Year 2 produced some quite good evaluations of the taste of different yoghurts. Pupils in Year 1 design and make some interesting model vehicles, using a range of materials and tools.

145. In Key Stage 2, there are a variety of activities, some of which are linked to other curriculum areas. Pupils in the science club, for example, produce good models of robots with lights that switch on and off and pupils in Year 3 are able to design and make a range of printed bags in cloth. Pupils in Year 5 do interesting work in food technology, such as baking bread and evaluating its taste.

146. Pupils show good attitudes to work and make good progress in both key stages. They

develop skills of sensible and realistic design and learn to use a variety of tools and materials with increasing skill. Behaviour in class is very good and there is good social development in the subject through collaborative working, helping each other and sharing tools and resources.

147. Coverage of the National Curriculum is ensured by the progression set out in the scheme of work. The previous report judged that the school did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. This is not now the case. Assessment procedures for the subject are inconsistent across classes and do not provide a complete picture of pupils' skills and development. The co-ordinator for the subject has been in post for only a short time, and has had little time to establish herself as a leader and manager of the subject. The subject has good resources that are well deployed and managed.

147. Geography

148. In both Key Stages 1 and 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall, with more rapid progress being made in Key Stage 2. This matches the findings for the subject at the time of the last inspection.

149. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can name some world countries. They can describe and compare places locally and draw simple maps. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use some information sources to inform their work, as seen in their work on the four stages of a river and on erosion and deposition. They conduct a study of another locality, in this case, Lanidloes, which is well linked with a trip to North Wales for practical experience. They write well about environmental issues, such as power stations, irrigation, sewage and caring for the water system. They study the formation of physical features, such as glaciers.

150. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. The presentation of their work is usually satisfactory and shows evidence of interest and the beginnings of independent research in Key Stage 2.

151. As geography was not observed during the inspection, it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, evidence was gained from looking at pupils' written work and discussions with pupils and it was clear that teachers are successful in communicating their knowledge to pupils.

152. The policy and schemes of work for geography are not yet well organised or adapted to ensure steady progress in pupils' work throughout the school. They do not yet offer a broad and balanced introduction to the subject or a good level of challenge. Use is made of visits and other resources to ensure that pupils enjoy their studies. There is as yet little system for recording pupils' coverage of topics and aspects of the National Curriculum. Teachers do not regularly record individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses in the subject in order to aid future planning.

153. Curriculum management of geography has been subject to much disruption and the present co-ordinator has only been in post since the beginning of this term and is a temporary teacher, job-sharing with a permanent teacher. The subject is in need of development and consideration of the way in which the study of the subject can be sustained and achieve continuity through future changes in the National Curriculum. There is little monitoring of pupils' work as yet.

153. History

154. Taking into account lesson observations, pupils' workbooks and evidence from displays and teachers' documentation, pupils' achievements in history are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. In Reception and in Years 1 and 2, pupils learn from evidence of their own past and that of their families. They begin to grasp the concepts of

growing and changing and to identify differences between everyday objects and their earlier equivalents. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils study a range of historical periods, including Ancient Greece and the Saxon and Victorian periods in England. They describe the way of life of rich and poor people in each period, their leisure habits and their beliefs and interests. They study the history of their own and other localities. They begin to learn how historians present each period. During the inspection, a class studying the Second World War showed impressive knowledge of the events and lifestyle of people at that time, the ability to develop their own feelings and to use source material well.

155. Pupils make satisfactory progress in history, a similar judgement to that of the last inspection report. They move from simple observations to learning to note and describe objects and features of earlier ways of life. They learn to draw on an increasing range of contemporary sources, pictures and written accounts and to develop some appreciation of historical methodology. Coverage of targets in the subject is promoted by teachers, particularly the use of historical resources and it is clear that Key Stage 2 pupils now have a grasp of the use of both primary and secondary sources of information. By the time they leave the school, they have acquired some insight into the ways in which historical studies can illuminate the present.

156. Pupils enjoy history. They particularly welcome opportunities to investigate historical artefacts and sites at first hand, such as a visit. They also enjoy handling real and replica artefacts at school when they have the opportunity.

157. The teaching in all lessons observed was satisfactory or better and in most lessons observed it was good. Scrutiny of written work, too, shows that carefully thought out medium term planning ensures that pupils often cover a balance of background information, investigation of sources and tasks of interpretation in each lesson. This was very clear in the units of work done on the Ancient Greeks and the Ancient Egyptians. Resources are selected in order to help bring alive the periods studied, often by links with other subjects, such as art or design and technology, as in the Year 3 lesson where pupils were designing jewellery modelled on that of Ancient Egypt. Teachers provide for a range of abilities, so that pupils with special educational needs do not feel left behind. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, though often without advice on how they can improve their work.

158. The policy and schemes of work for history are not yet well organised or adapted to ensure secure progress in pupils' work throughout the school. They do not yet offer a broad and balanced introduction to the subject or a good level of challenge. Use is made of visits, artefacts and other resources to ensure that pupils are intrigued by and enjoy their studies. There is as yet little system for recording pupils' coverage of topics and aspects of the National Curriculum. Although assessment activities are highlighted in the schemes of work, teachers do not regularly record individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses in the subject in order to aid future progress.

159. Curriculum management of history has been subject to much disruption and the present co-ordinator has only been in post since the beginning of this term and is a temporary teacher, job-sharing with a permanent teacher. The subject is in need of development and consideration of the way in which the quality of studies can be sustained through future changes in the National Curriculum. There is little monitoring of pupils' work as yet. The school has a small supply of sets of replica artefacts and resource packs for each period studied. Reference books purchased lately have helped to make history more interesting and accessible to pupils, though there is a need for more.

159. **Music**

160. For all pupils, including those with special educational needs, standards of singing and playing are satisfactory, and pupils perform at levels expected for their age. This is similar to

the judgement made at the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. A significant number of pupils are learning to play a range of woodwind, brass and string instruments, and the

piano. These pupils make good progress and achieve satisfactory levels of performance by the time they leave school.

161. Pupils sing well in school assemblies and in school productions such as “Star and the Animals”, performed at Christmas in 1998 and observed on video by inspectors. They sing songs such as “We are Climbing” in tune and with good attention to dynamics. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils sang particularly well. They adopted an appropriate style for different types of song, and joined in with suitable actions, for example when singing ‘Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines’. Several pupils in this class also played instruments such as the violin, trumpet and saxophone for the benefit of the whole class, in order to aid the development of their knowledge of different instrument groups. The quality of pupils’ performance is directly related to the teacher’s musical expertise. In a lesson where the teacher’s expertise was poor, the class were unable to maintain a regular beat in time with the music, and singing was very listless, with little attention to detail or quality of sound. Pupils in Key Stage 1 recognise differences between loud and soft sounds, fast and slow music, and are beginning to identify instruments such as cymbals and triangles. Older pupils have a more developed sense of sound, and can, for example, when listening to a recording of “Peter and the Wolf”, pick out the sounds of a violin and double bass and explain why they are different.

162. Pupils enjoy music. They have good attitudes to learning and respond well to teaching. Older pupils especially are enthusiastic and join in singing and performing readily. In a Key Stage 1 lesson seen, some pupils’ lack of social skills led to restlessness and snatching of instruments from others in the class. Pupils in Key Stage 2 behave particularly well in lessons. Pupils in most classes concentrate well, and take a full part in lesson activities.

163. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but varies between excellent and poor. Lessons are well planned. Activities are suitable for pupils’ age and ability, and lessons proceed at a satisfactory, and sometimes brisk pace. Teachers make good use of the tape recorders, instruments and other resources available. All of these factors contribute well to productive lessons, where pupils make at least satisfactory progress. However, the overall quality of teaching in individual lessons is directly related to the teacher’s musical expertise. Where it is good, lessons are good, but they are not when the teacher is unable to demonstrate satisfactorily the skills being taught. Consequently, the class makes little, if any, progress towards the objectives of the lesson.

164. The music co-ordinator is very experienced, and is suitably qualified for the post. The scheme of work has not been modified in the light of changing emphases in whole school curriculum planning, and consequently is over full. Insufficient guidance is given to teachers when selecting a range of activities which provide a balanced musical experience and ensure that pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding in a systematic way. The hall is well equipped for whole school music, and classrooms are satisfactory. There are sufficient good quality tape and CD players in the school. However, the range of recorded music is only adequate and there are insufficient percussion instruments of all kinds to support satisfactorily pupils’ multi-cultural musical education.

164. **Physical education**

165. During the inspection week, pupils were observed in dance, gymnastics, games and swimming lessons. Athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities are taught at a different time in the school year. All pupils go to the local swimming pool at some time during the year and this is supplemented by use of the school’s own pool when possible.

166. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils’ attainment in physical education is in line with that expected of pupils of the same age. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above that expected, an improvement on attainment at this Key Stage in the last inspection report. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils with

special educational needs achieve the same standards and make the same progress as their peers.

167. Pupils in the reception class understand the benefits of warm-up exercises, as well as some terms associated with them, such as jogging and skipping. They also understand the benefits of regular exercise. All move safely on apparatus and jump off from low heights. A minority show a good level of imagination when moving in and out of climbing frames or under and through other apparatus.

168. In Year 1 pupils demonstrate a sense of time when working with music and find and use space for their work. All perform basic movements such as stretching, running and skipping. A minority of pupils show good imagination in their work in dance.

169. During Key Stage 2, pupils extend the satisfactory range of skills acquired in Key Stage 1, and by the end of the key stage they incorporate them into games which involve a variety of striking and catching skills. The vast majority of pupils in Year 6 have good catching and throwing techniques and satisfactory hand-eye co-ordination. They learn how to attack and defend in team games. In most physical education lessons, pupils have opportunities to refine their own performance and to evaluate those of other pupils. Pupils learn to swim in the town and school pools, and most attain good standards. Many swim confidently, using a range of strokes.

170. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good and they behave very well in lessons and at the swimming pool. They listen attentively and make a good, concentrated effort. They try hard at activities and work hard to 'get it right.' Where pupils work in groups, they do so very well and very good relationships are a strong feature of the lessons. Pupils understand the need for safety.

171. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is some very good teaching and a minority that is unsatisfactory. All of the teachers have good pupil control. Teachers plan suitable warm up and cool down activities and emphasise health and safety factors. Where the teaching is very good, the teacher has very good subject knowledge and plans lessons carefully to provide a variety of activities at an appropriate skill level for the pupils. A high level of pupil and teacher coaching and guidance are also strong features of the best lessons. In these lessons the equipment is well organised and the pace is brisk. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, the teacher misses some of the fundamentals of the techniques involved in the skills and pupils make limited progress. There are weaknesses in the organisation of equipment, so that, for example, pupils are scrambling together to extract it from a box. There are also deficiencies in the organisation of small-side team games that reduce the outcomes for the pupils in terms of gains in skills.

172. The scheme of work for physical education has been reviewed and revised and now provides planning for progressive skill development. A good variety of extra curricular sporting activities are offered, which is well supported by parents, teachers and other school assistants. The subject has good resources which are well managed and deployed. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

172. **Swimming**

173.The inspection of the school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.

174.Observations from the two lessons and from the arrangements for the teaching of swimming indicate that all pupils are likely to have achieved or exceeded the requirements by the end of the Key Stage 2. Pupils start swimming in Reception class, when they enter the school. Years 1 to 4 swim in the school pool in the summer term every week. Years 5 and 6 swim in the local pool in the autumn term, as well as in the school pool in the summer term. The school specifically targets those pupils who have not achieved the expected level to have swimming lessons. Pupils are taught a comprehensive water skills programme. This provision continues until such time as each of the pupils in the school has achieved the 25 metres and they then receive a local authority/school certificate. For pupils who have not achieved the required standard near to the end of Key Stage 2, individual help is given in the school pool as extra lessons.

175.Pupils make satisfactory progress in their swimming lessons. In one of the lessons provided for Years 6, pupils in a lower attaining group made satisfactory progress. They were able to float with confidence and some were beginning to tread water successfully. They were successfully learning basic strokes. More able pupils also made satisfactory progress, some swimming in their clothes, all able to manage in deep water and all with a wide range of techniques, such as floating and treading water. By the end of the lesson, at least two-thirds of the pupils in the group could swim 25 metres.

176.Pupils enjoy going swimming. They have positive attitudes and respond well to the opportunities provided. They try hard with all activities, showing a good level of perseverance and effort. They listen well when instructions are being given and behave sensibly in and around the swimming pool.

177.During the two lessons observed in the course of the inspection, the quality of teaching provided by the qualified swimming instructors was satisfactory. One instructor is a male teacher and the other a female instructor. They display clear subject knowledge as they give instructions and demonstrations. Instructors provide the pupils with a good range of activities to challenge them and extend their skills and ensure that lessons generally move at a brisk pace. They set high expectations of effort and concentration during the time that pupils are in the pool. They manage the pupils well, showing a good level of control. They know the pupils' names and are supportive in their approach.

178.The quality of provision is good. The school pool is an outdoor, heated pool, while the local authority pool is close to the school, indoor and heated. Good procedures are in place for ensuring that all pupils travel to and return from the pool safely. There is good adult/pupils supervision ratio throughout the time that pupils are away from school. The coach collects them some pupils from the school and takes them directly to the outside of the swimming pool. The coach has seat belts and the class teacher ensures that all pupils are strapped in. Other pupils go directly from home to the pool, where they are supervised until the coach arrives. However, pupils walk back from the pool to the school, which takes up time. The pool is well maintained and arrangements for changing are good. The water is at an appropriate temperature for the pupils to gain in confidence and the pool is well patrolled. The ratio of instructors to pupils is good. The swimming instructors and the class teacher undertake targeting and monitoring of progress. Pupils are provided with sufficient time and good quality support to achieve the expected levels.

178. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

178. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

179. The inspection was carried out over a period of four days for a total of 14 inspector days. A parents' meeting was held prior to the inspection and 24 parents attended. 96 families returned a questionnaire about their school. Information from parents was used to guide the inspectors' work. For the majority of time in the school, the inspectors visited classes and talked with individuals and groups of pupils. In total 48 lessons or parts of lessons were observed, taking over 34 hours. Samples of pupils' work from each year group from this and the previous academic year were evaluated. Pupils from each year group were heard reading. Planned discussions were held with teachers, other staff, the headteacher and several governors. Many documents, including teachers' planning and assessment records and the school development plan, were scrutinised.

180.DATA AND INDICATORS

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
YR – Y6	242	2	43	23

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week	176

Average class size:	30
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/1999
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	£
Total Income	390 334
Total Expenditure	396 020
Expenditure per pupil	1 622
Balance brought forward from previous year	55 157
Balance carried forward to next year	49 471

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

178

Number of questionnaires returned:

96

Responses (percentage 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	49	46	3	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	47	50	0	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	20	46	25	6	4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	26	64	9	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	30	55	14	1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	58	7	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	42	49	6	2	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26	59	11	4	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	49	4	1	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	42	53	3	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	42	4	1	0