

INSPECTION REPORT

St Thomas More RC Primary School
Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique Reference Number: 107119

Headteacher: Mrs M D Kay

Reporting inspector: Mrs R Grant

Dates of inspection: 29 November to 2 December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 705358

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Creswick Lane Grenoside Sheffield S35 8NN
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Collumbine
Date of last inspection:	29 January to 2 February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs R Grant, Registered Inspector	English	Attainment and progress
	Art	Teaching
	Design and Technology	Leadership and management
	Physical Education	Staffing, accommodation and resources
Mrs D Lloyd, Lay Inspector	Equal Opportunities	Attendance
		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		Partnership with parents and the community
		The efficiency of the school
		Curriculum and assessment
Mr A McGregor	Mathematics	
	Science	
	Information Technology	
	History	
	Geography	
	Special Educational Needs	
Mrs V Hitchings-Davis	Under fives	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
	Music	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Paragraph
MAIN FINDINGS	
What the school does well	
Where the school has weaknesses	
How the school has improved since the last inspection	
Standards in subjects	
Quality of teaching	
Other aspects of the school	
The parents' views of the school	
KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION	
INTRODUCTION	1 - 9
Characteristics of the school	
Key indicators	
PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL	
Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school	10- 32
Attainment and progress	
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development	
Attendance	
Quality of education provided	33- 61
Teaching	
The curriculum and assessment	
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	
Partnership with parents and the community	
The management and efficiency of the school	62- 77
Leadership and management	
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	
The efficiency of the school	
PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS	78-136
Areas of learning for children under five	
English, mathematics and science	
Other subjects	
PART C: INSPECTION DATA	137-140
Summary of inspection evidence	
Data and indicators	

MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- .The school is very well led; its strengths and weaknesses are well known and good plans have been prepared to deal with any weaknesses; governors are committed and contribute well;
- .Pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy, achieving higher levels than pupils in similar schools by the time they leave; boys do particularly well;
- .Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and they make good progress, especially at Key Stage 2;
- .Pupils behave well, work hard and get on well with adults and one another;
- .Good use is made of visits and visitors to make learning interesting for the pupils;
- .Good track is kept of pupils' progress;
- .Provision for the pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good; they are helped to grow up to think of others and to be responsible and trustworthy;
- .Parents are encouraged to support the school, and many do so well;
- .The school uses the funding it receives well.

· WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I.For the youngest children, the quality of planning, organisation and monitoring of lessons varies; it is satisfactory for the literacy and numeracy hours, but not always good enough in other lessons;
- II.Pupils do not have enough opportunity to write at length in other subjects, or to plan, draft and edit their work;
- III.Work in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 is often good, but the brightest pupils are not always stretched enough;
- IV.Staff changes have hindered plans to develop work in information and communication technology;
- V.The hard play area for the under-fives and Key Stage 1 pupils is unsuitable and inadequate and impedes the development of appropriate outdoor work for the youngest pupils;
- VI.Lack of accommodation means that one class is taught literacy and numeracy in the hall in far from ideal conditions.

The school's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses, most of which have already been identified and included in school development planning. The weaknesses, however, 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 improved well since the last inspection in 1996. Some significant weaknesses in teaching and management have been tackled effectively. Weaknesses in classroom management in some classrooms have been largely overcome at Key Stage 1, partly through the good implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours. There is still room for improvement in some lessons in the early years to ensure that all children do as well as possible. Planning for the subjects of the curriculum has improved. There is a good overall framework and co-ordinators are much more involved in developing and monitoring work. Emphasis has rightly been given to national initiatives, particularly literacy and numeracy, and there is work still to do in some subjects, including art, design and technology, history and geography, to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills develop systematically. Good progress in information technology has been affected recently by staff changes. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy are now good, and staff often use this information well to see how the curriculum can be improved in order to raise standards. All areas of leadership and management are better. The school development plan includes planning for the longer term appropriately, as well as accurately identifying areas for immediate improvement. Realistic targets for improving standards have been met. Given the headteacher's strong leadership and the whole-hearted support of governors, the school's capacity for further improvement is very good.

· **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	Key
English	C	B	<i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>Average</i> C
Mathematics	C	B	<i>below average</i> D
Science	B	A	<i>well below average</i> E

The information shows, for example, that whilst the 1999 National test results for English were average, they were higher than those in similar schools (identified according to the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals).

Test results in small schools are likely to vary from year to year due to differences in the make up of the Year 6 class. Results for 1999 are not as high as in the previous year, but are particularly creditable, given the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that year group. The good science results reflect the high proportion of pupils achieving levels above that expected for their age. Boys do particularly well, achieving more than boys nationally.

Achievement in the current Year 6 is within the average range in English, mathematics, science and information technology. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 have been lower than expected, but good

teaching of the literacy and numeracy hours and the organisation of classes into single-aged groups for these lessons are having a positive effect and standards are improving.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Not inspected	Not inspected
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons. A high proportion of teaching is good and six per cent is very good. In the early years, teaching is satisfactory overall, but better planned and organised for literacy and numeracy than for other lessons. At Key stage 1, teaching is predominantly satisfactory, with many good lessons. At Key Stage 2, teaching is consistently good, and occasionally very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good, ensuring that pupils work hard and get on well together.
Attendance	Satisfactory; similar to that found nationally, but there is less absence than usual for reasons other than genuine illness.
*Ethos	Good; purposeful; helps all pupils, but particularly boys, to make good progress.
Leadership and management	Very good; good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses; good plans for improvement; committed governors.
Curriculum	Satisfactory, with room for improvement in the early years. Good overall at Key Stages 1 and 2, especially for literacy and numeracy. Schemes still needed for some subjects, notably information technology, art, design and

	technology, history and geography. Good extracurricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision generally, very good at Key Stage 2; well planned, appropriate work helps pupils to make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good spiritual and moral provision firmly rooted in the school's Catholic ethos; good social and cultural provision.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Sufficient staff, mainly enough resources, well kept but limited accommodation - pupils have to be taught in the hall; play space for the early years and Key Stage 1 pupils is unsuitable and inadequate.
Value for money	Good; spending is well directed towards improving standards and accounted for well.

* *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"> • Being encouraged to play an active part; • Good standard of work achieved; • The range of extracurricular work; • Homework; • The school's values and attitudes; • Standards of behaviour; • Support for pupils with special educational needs; • That their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few don't feel encouraged to play an active • A few don't feel complaints are always handled • A few don't feel well informed about the

The inspection confirms the positive views that parents have of the school. Provision for extracurricular work, homework and special educational needs is good. A positive partnership exists with parents, though one or two clearly do not feel included in this. Behaviour is good, pupils like school and the standard of work is always at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, particularly towards the end of the school. Sufficient information is provided about the curriculum.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to ensure continuing improvement, the school should address the following issues, most of which are already included in its school development plan:

- Further develop planning, organisation and monitoring of work in the early years to ensure that all pupils, of whatever ability, make as much progress as possible in all the desirable learning outcomes, especially when working individually and in groups in lessons other than the literacy and numeracy hours.
(paragraphs 11,22,36,40,64,78-85);
- Ensure that the good action plan to promote pupils' skills in writing is implemented fully, paying particular regard to the opportunities provided for pupils to write at length in the different subjects and to plan, draft and edit their work.
(paragraphs 14,34,64,89);
- Ensure that the action plan for information and communication technology is implemented fully by improving co-ordination, preparing the proposed scheme of work, ensuring enough time is given to the subject at Key Stage 1 and updating equipment as funds allow.
(paragraphs 19,39,65,71,106-108);
- Ensure that work fully stretches the higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1.
(paragraphs 12,35,39,97,103);
- When financial circumstances allow, take action to improve the inadequate and unsuitable hard play area for early years and Key Stage 1 pupils.
(paragraphs 70,83).

In addition to the key issues above, the following should be considered for inclusion in the school's longer term plan:

- Preparation of schemes for art, design and technology, history and geography;
(paragraphs 20,38,64,113,114,118,123);
- Take steps to raise the comparative achievement of girls to that of the boys;
(paragraphs 17, 95, 97,101);
- Pursue feasible plans to extend the accommodation;
(paragraphs 63,70,72,94).

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

1 The school is situated in the north of Sheffield and, as a Catholic school, draws some pupils from outside its immediate catchment area. The school's neighbourhood is very mixed and includes private housing, as well as a large council estate where residents experience higher than average levels of unemployment and social disadvantage. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, and that is at the high end of average.

2 The school is smaller than usual with 155 infant and junior school pupils on roll. There are similar numbers of boys and girls and very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, none of whom has English as an additional language. The school is beginning to grow and governors are keen to expand to ensure the school's viability and safeguard Catholic primary education in the area. Children are admitted to the beginning of the term in which they become five. About half have nursery experience and some of the rest have attended playgroups. Their attainment on entry is broadly average in relation to local benchmarks, and that is likely to be slightly lower than the average found nationally. This term, there are 17 pupils who are not yet of compulsory school age in the reception class. During the mornings, they are taught on their own. During the afternoons, they are taught in a mixed-age class with younger Year 1 pupils.

4 Thirty-two per cent of pupils are entered on the school's register as having special educational needs. Although this is higher than at the last inspection, most pupils are at the lower stages indicating a concern and the need for their work to be carefully adapted to meet their needs. One pupil has recently received a formal statement of educational need.

5 The school aims to develop all aspects of the school community, based on the Gospel values, in order to meet the unique requirements of each child and help them to develop their full potential. Main priorities set out in the current school's development plan include further work on literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology. A number of staff changes since the last inspection includes the promotion of the deputy to the headship of the school and the appointment of a new deputy headteacher.

Key indicators

6 Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key

Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15	12	27

• National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	7	10	11
	Total	17	22	23
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	63 (70)	81 (74)	85 (78)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

• Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	7	8	11
	Total	17	20	23
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	63 (67)	74 (74)	85 (85)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key

Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	12	8	20

• National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	14	16	16
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70 (84)	80 (63)	80 (70)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

• Teacher Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
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Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	11	11
	Girls	4	5	6
	Total	12	16	17
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	60 (63)	80 (47)	85 (74)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

• **7 Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence			%
for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	6.1
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.2
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

• **8 Exclusions**

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

• **9 Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	6
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

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

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

- **Attainment and progress**

10 As at the time of the last inspection, pupils in the early years make satisfactory progress. Baseline assessment indicates that pupils' attainment is about average for the local authority area when they start in the reception class. This is likely to be slightly below the national average. By the time they enter compulsory education, the majority will have achieved the desirable learning outcomes and a few will have progressed beyond them. Progress in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics is satisfactory with an observable difference between the attainment of the under-fives and the older pupils in the reception class.

11 The under-fives develop appropriate personal and social skills, playing in groups successfully and learning to share and take turns. They behave appropriately and show satisfactory levels of concentration and perseverance, although adults do not always require enough of them and do not always encourage them to be sufficiently independent. Early reading and writing skills develop satisfactorily, helped by the more focused teaching included in the literacy hour. By compulsory school age, many children read a few familiar words and name, sound out and form some of the letters of the alphabet, particularly those in their own names. They begin to communicate through 'writing', for example taking messages down from the telephone. There are too few chances, however, for children to practise reading and writing outside of the literacy hour. Many show a satisfactory grasp of early mathematical skills, counting to 10 and comparing, sorting and matching at an appropriate level for their age. They learn number work best during the numeracy hour; in other situations, opportunities are sometimes lost for incidental learning and planning does not fully meet the needs of individuals and groups. Children progress satisfactorily in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development. Some gaps are found in the children's physical development. There is not enough specific teaching of the skills needed to use tools, including pencils and scissors, and some children's co-ordination is slow to develop. Although the under-fives take part in physical education lessons with older reception and Year 1 pupils, they do not have sufficient daily opportunities for outside play, to enable them to develop climbing and balancing skills for example, at an appropriate level and pace for their age.

12 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills are about average for their age. This, however, takes account of recent improvements to the curriculum and teaching that are helping to speed pupils' progress. Results in the national reading and writing tests over recent years have been very variable. In 1998, results were above average in reading, but in 1999 they were well below. Conversely, results in writing were low in 1998 and closer to average levels in 1999. When compared to similar schools, no significant pattern has emerged, results have sometimes been above and sometimes below average. Taken over a period of three years, between 1996 and 1998, results have been below the national average in reading and well below average in writing. Differences are partly explained by the make-up of these fairly small year groups, but a more general problem, highlighted by the last inspection, has been lack of sufficient structure in the teaching. This has limited pupils' progress in the past, but now

has been addressed well. At Key Stage 1, pupils are taught in single-aged classes for both literacy and numeracy and the national, well-structured programmes of work are being implemented effectively. This is having a positive effect on pupils' progress which is currently good. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils' attainment in reading in the present Year 2 is about average. Pupils' knowledge of individual, and combinations of, letter sounds is developing well, and most are able to work out unfamiliar words. Class and guided reading group work during the literacy hour are effective. Pupils' attainment in writing is also within the average range, but at the lower end of this band. Lower attaining pupils do not always form their letters properly and high attaining pupils do not have enough chance to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Results in mathematics have been more consistent over recent years. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level or above has been about average (85 per cent in 1999 as against 87 per cent nationally), the results have been lower than usual when the balance of high and low achievers has been taken into account. They have, however, been average when compared to similar schools. By Year 2, most pupils use an appropriate range of mathematical language, recall number facts to 10, recognise simple sequences of numbers, describe some properties of shapes and estimate and measure appropriately for their age. Their ability to calculate numbers mentally is improving, due to the increased emphasis given to oral work during the daily numeracy lessons. Pupils are now making good progress in lessons, though more could sometimes be expected of those pupils capable of high achievement.

13 In recent years, pupils' progress has been good at Key Stage 2, helping them to catch up from the slower start made at Key Stage 1. This reflects the quality of teaching which has been, and continues to be, consistently good. In 1998, the last year for which fully analysed and validated data are available, pupils' overall attainments were above the national average and well above those in similar schools. Over a three year period, results improved in English and mathematics. The year group taking the tests is relatively small, however, and changes in its composition can have a marked effect on overall results. In 1999, two pupils out of a group of 20 had such profound special educational needs that they could not sit the papers. In spite of this, results in English mirror the national picture and are better than this in mathematics. When the proportions of pupils at the higher and lower levels are taken into account, results are average in both subjects, but above those found in similar schools. The current Year 6 class is an average group, with fewer high attaining pupils, and the inspection confirms the school's view that results are likely to be average again this year.

14 By Year 6, pupils read a range of texts satisfactorily and write short pieces reasonably accurately. Standards of spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting are satisfactory, overall. The school's own analysis, however, showed weaknesses in some pupils' ability to write in a lively, interesting and well-organised way, using language effectively, and this is confirmed by the inspection. With some notable exceptions, for example the poems and accounts about the Victorians written by pupils in Years 4 to 6, writing tends to lack complexity and is sometimes mundane. Much of the writing done in English and other subjects requires pupils to answer direct questions or compose short responses. There is not enough emphasis on extended writing or on drafting and editing text.

15 Achievement in mathematics is average by the end of Year 6. Mental calculation skills develop satisfactorily. By Years 5 and 6, many pupils use a range of different strategies very effectively in their mental and oral work. Most have at least a sound understanding of place value, find the perimeters and areas of shapes with confidence, understand decimals and fractions and use diagrams, tables and graphs appropriately. Most use and apply mathematics satisfactorily, an aspect that is being developed rapidly in school. Higher attainers are usually challenged sufficiently.

16 Pupils with special educational needs are supported well at Key Stage 1, largely through individual or group support in classrooms, and most make sound progress. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, a special needs' assistant helped a group of lower attaining pupils to develop their knowledge of letter sounds by working with them on a computer program. A statemented pupil was given very appropriate support in a physical education lesson that helped him to take part fully and improve his co-ordination. At Key Stage 2, there is more consistent individual and group support for pupils still experiencing difficulty, usually with reading, writing and spelling, outside of the classroom. A volunteer former teacher works through carefully planned programmes with individuals on a regular basis. A teaching assistant, trained to provide additional literacy support, works with a group of Year 4 pupils, mainly to improve their phonic knowledge and skills, and also targets individuals with specific learning difficulties. This well planned, relevant support, helps pupils to make consistently good progress.

17 Analysis of national test results shows that, contrary to the national picture, boys do better than boys nationally, and girls do about the same as other girls. Boys' attainment is higher than usual at both key stages, and whilst this might be explained by the firm discipline in the upper year groups at Key Stage 2 that ensures that boys work hard, this is unlikely to be the case at Key Stage 1, where discipline is satisfactory, but relaxed in some lessons. It may reflect the ethos of the school that values boys' achievement. The school now needs to explore ways of raising girls' achievement even more.

18 Attainment in science is average at the end of both key stages. In 1999, a high proportion of pupils achieved a level beyond that expected of 11 year olds. This had a positive impact on the school's results when the proportion of high and low achieving pupils was taken into account, making the results above average overall and well above those in similar schools. This higher attainment may reflect the attention paid to practical work. By Year 6, pupils have conducted a good range of experiments and have good skills in collecting data and recording them accurately in charts and tables. They use a range of scientific language appropriately in their discussions and writing.

19 Attainment in information technology is satisfactory at the end of both key stages, though more time is needed to ensure that skills are consolidated sufficiently at Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils word process their work appropriately, retrieving, editing and saving text. They combine text and graphics well. They use a range of equipment, including CD ROM, scanners and recently, the Internet. There is evidence of information and communication technology being used across the curriculum, but this could be greater. Whilst pupils' progress is satisfactory, it is currently being constrained by lack of planned progression in teaching and learning, due largely to lack of effective co-ordination, caused by recent staff changes.

20 Progress in all other subjects is satisfactory at both key stages. Strengths include the development of skills relating to close observation and the use of paints and pastels in art, pupils' abilities to learn from first-hand experience and a range of secondary sources in history, singing in music and swimming in physical education. Weaker areas in some subjects, including the development of design skills in design and technology, arise because of a lack of planned progression in the teaching of the subjects.

• **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

21 Pupils in the early years have good attitudes to their learning and display great interest in their work. They try hard, persevere and are eager to answer questions. Where work is inappropriately matched to ability, however, some pupils lose interest and do not achieve as much as they possibly could.

22 Behaviour in the early years is good, and encouraged through positive management techniques. Occasionally, children's concentration is affected, and silliness occurs, because there are too many table or carpet activities and few opportunities for play with large apparatus, so it is difficult for some pupils to 'let off steam'. When the children leave the early years, the programme has ensured that they are able to take turns, share and be sensitive to the feelings of others. As almost all the activities are directed by the teacher, however, it is difficult for the children to develop high levels of independence and initiative.

23 At Key Stages 1 and 2, most pupils have good attitudes to learning. They behave well, form positive relationships with one another and with adults and respond well to opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. The good features in this aspect of school life, which were identified in the last inspection have been maintained.

24 Most pupils are interested in their work, listen attentively and are keen to do well. They concentrate on their activities and persevere, even if they find the work difficult. Their enthusiasm is evident in the way they compete to answer questions and volunteer to read aloud or demonstrate things in class. They see learning as important, and quote the fact that "you learn a lot of things" as a reason for liking school. They try hard in lessons and most take care with the presentation of their work. In eight out of 10 lessons seen during the inspection, the pupils' response was good, and was satisfactory in the rest.

25 Behaviour in and around the school is consistently good. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful, showing thoughtfulness and consideration for the needs of other people, for example they always open doors for adults and offer chairs to visitors. Movement around the school is orderly and sensible. Behaviour in the dining hall is good. In the playground pupils know the routines and rules that have to be observed and they play happily together. The use of exclusion is extremely rare, and there was none in the school year prior to the inspection.

26 Behaviour in lessons is usually good and makes a positive contribution to children's learning, and in many lessons it is very good. Some pupils have the potential to be naughty, but staff work hard to contain this. In an occasional lesson where a teacher's discipline is not as firm, there is sometimes an undercurrent of noise, fidgeting and inattentiveness.

27 Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils work well together when given the opportunity to work in pairs or groups, for example when constructing parachutes in a science lesson, or passing footballs in physical education. A particularly good example of the way pupils support one another was seen in a lesson in a Year 1 and 2 class where groups moved from one activity to another and two boys asked their friend in the next group to complete the model they had started. Pupils listen respectfully to different viewpoints expressed during assembly and class discussions and appreciate that other cultures have customs that are different from their own.

28 At Key Stages 1 and 2, there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to become independent learners. They enjoy trying things out for themselves and are keen to continue their work at home, for example, using computers for research and completing a homework project on the Victorians. They know where resources are in classrooms and are prepared to fetch them and clear away without fuss. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for such tasks as looking after the library, answering the telephone at lunchtime and helping to clear the dining hall. Younger pupils are able to undertake simple tasks to help the teacher.

• **Attendance**

29 Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. It is broadly similar to that found in other schools. Unauthorised absence is below the national average and well below the average for schools in the area served by the local education authority.

30 The rate of authorised absence is inflated by the fact that an increasing number of parents take children on holiday in term time, in spite of the school's efforts to discourage this.

31 The school uses an electronic system for recording and analysing attendance, which makes it easy to identify any unexplained absences. Most parents are aware that they must inform the school of reasons for their child's absence, and there is little need for checks to be made by class teachers.

32 Punctuality is generally good. Pupils arrive early for school, registers are completed promptly and lessons start and end on time.

• **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

• **Teaching**

33 A high proportion of good teaching was observed during the inspection. Overall, 64 per cent of teaching was at least good. A small proportion of this, six per cent was very good. More of the good teaching, and all of the very good teaching was found at Key Stage 2. Eighty-five per cent of teaching at this key stage was judged to be at least good. Teaching was predominantly satisfactory at Key Stage 1, with good teaching in more than four out of 10 lessons. Teaching for the under-fives was consistently satisfactory. Although this picture broadly reflects that found at the last inspection, with better teaching linked to greater rates of progress at Key Stage 2, the difference between the key stages is not so marked. The weaker teaching reported last time, related to unsatisfactory classroom organisation and management in some Key Stage 1 and reception classes, is much reduced. There have been staff changes at both key stages, and the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours has introduced more structure into the teaching. The arrangement of pupils in single-aged classes during the morning has also been beneficial. Improvements also reflect the effectiveness of monitoring and of in-service training. Although strengths always outweigh weaknesses in teaching in reception and Key Stage 1 classes, there are weaker elements, notably more fragile control in the occasional lesson at Key Stage 1 and less effective planning for the full range of work for the under-fives in the reception class.

34 Within the subjects, most lessons were seen in English and mathematics, and these were almost all well taught. Teachers are implementing the national programmes well. In English, sufficient attention is being given to teaching phonic knowledge and skills and this is improving pupils' reading and spelling, especially at Key Stage 1. Teaching in the guided reading groups is good, and pupils' progress during these periods is carefully assessed, assisting them to make good progress. Where teaching engages pupils in extended writing at the top end of Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2, it is largely effective resulting in some sensitive and lively pieces, but it is not a sufficiently strong feature of the general curriculum. At Key Stage 2, individual and group teaching for pupils with special educational needs is organised by teachers, but implemented by support staff and other adults, and is of good quality. Work is planned well according to pupils' needs as identified in their educational plans and helps them to make good progress. Some very good teaching of oral and mental mathematics was seen, and practice in this aspect is at least satisfactory throughout the school, though occasionally, particularly at Key Stage 1, work does not always stretch the high attaining pupils enough. Planning for group work in literacy and numeracy takes sufficient account of the range of abilities within the class.

35 Teaching in science is good overall and especially at Key Stage 2, where the close attention given to experimental and investigative work significantly enhances pupils' motivation and their subsequent attainment. At Key Stage 1, teaching does not always enable the higher achieving pupils to make enough progress. Apart from these subjects, a significant amount of teaching was seen only in music and physical education. Teaching in the lessons seen in music was at the end of each key stage and was good, enabling pupils to achieve appropriately by the time they move on to the next stage of education. These lessons were mainly taken by staff with good levels of subject knowledge, however, and may not reflect the overall quality throughout the school. Teaching in physical education was mainly satisfactory. Teaching in the few lessons seen in history at Key Stage 2 was good, as was the small amount of direct teaching seen in information technology. Teaching in the two art lessons seen, one at each key stage, was satisfactory.

36 Teaching in the early years is consistently satisfactory. A satisfactory level of understanding of the curriculum for under-fives is demonstrated by the planning which links the desirable learning outcomes to the National Curriculum, though there is no check to ensure full coverage of all aspects of the six areas of learning. The most successful teaching was observed during carpet sessions when the whole class was brought together for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. At these times, objectives were clearly identified at an appropriate level, and short-term planning built appropriately on pupils' previous learning. Teaching was less successful when the children worked individually or in groups, because tasks were not focused on pupils' needs, were not at an appropriate level or were insufficiently supported by the skilled use of teaching materials or adults. Plenary sessions are occasionally used to consolidate new learning from the lesson, but often this time is used for an extra story or song, which is not always the best use of time to ensure progress.

37 Most teachers at Key Stage 1 and 2 share a range of general strengths. Learning objectives are identified clearly in the planning for most lessons and shared explicitly with pupils. Almost all teachers manage pupils well, achieve high standards of behaviour and do not allow pupils to waste time. Methods and organisation are usually appropriate. A manageable range of work is provided within individual lessons. Where more than one subject is taught during a single lesson, there are usually other adults available to support some of the different groups. Pupils are usually given good feedback on their work

during the lessons, so that they can learn from their mistakes. Marking is usually positive and encouraging and at best gives clear guidance to pupils about how they are getting on and how they can improve their work. Homework is used satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and well at Key Stage 2 where a good range of work assists pupils' progress in subjects including English, mathematics and history. A good feature of the homework at both key stages is the use of target books for mathematics that involve parents in helping their children to achieve specific targets identified by the school. An area where there is some variability from class to class includes the quality of planning for groups of pupils of different abilities in lessons other than literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils are sometimes supported appropriately by other adults and extension work is sometimes set for higher achieving pupils. Only occasionally, notably in the Year 4 and 5 class, is different work set that takes full account of the pupils' abilities ensuring that all make rapid progress.

• **The curriculum and assessment**

38 The school has carefully considered all the issues raised in the last inspection report relating to curriculum and assessment and acted effectively upon them. Improvements, particularly over the last 18 months, include: a significant strengthening of the role of co-ordinators; the development of a whole school framework for planning, including short and medium term planning with a clear long term view; production of policies for all subjects and most aspects which are clear and follow a useful common format; preparation of schemes of work for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science that take full advantage of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Schemes for other subjects are needed, but are being tied appropriately into the national documentation currently being published, starting with history. Significant improvements have been made to the quality of learning objectives for lessons. A substantial effort has been made to enhance progression and continuity, especially in English, mathematics and science. A clear, detailed and useful whole school assessment policy has been produced and subject policies include specific reference to the arrangements for assessment. A useful marking policy has been prepared, which is currently being updated in the light of developing practice. A number of effective strategies for monitoring and targeting have been developed, particularly in the core subjects, which are being refined and extended.

39 Overall, the school provides a broad curriculum and meets requirements to cover all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well. The curriculum is appropriately balanced, although more time is needed to develop information and communication technology at Key Stage 1. Personal, social and health education are provided for appropriately and include elements of sex and drug education linked in with other subjects of the curriculum. A whole school policy document for personal, social and health education is needed now to draw together the different strands of provision, many of which are already in place, and to give a clear basis for future planning and organisation. Good equality of access and opportunity for pupils are provided. Those with special educational needs are well provided for throughout the school, with very good provision being made for them at Key Stage 2. Their individual education plans are prepared carefully, implemented well and reviewed regularly. Such pupils are fully integrated into classes and often make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. Higher attaining pupils generally have appropriate access to the curriculum but sometimes they could be extended further at Key Stage 1, notably in aspects of mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils are provided with numerous challenging opportunities and make good progress at Key Stage 2, as reflected in the big rise in the number of pupils achieving higher levels in science in the 1999 national tests.

40 The curriculum for the under-fives is generally broad and balanced. It is planned with reference to the early stages of the National Curriculum, and the six areas of learning appropriate for the age group. The programme seems to promote all six areas of learning so that the majority of pupils will reach the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five, but it is difficult to be sure that they are all covered, as there is no overall check. The curriculum is fairly well balanced with priority given to language and literacy and mathematics through the literacy and numeracy strategies. Personal and social development, creative development and knowledge of the world are given equal weighting, but physical development is not given enough consideration in lessons other than through physical education. There is equal provision for girls and boys and for pupils of differing abilities, although differentiation for brighter pupils is not as carefully planned as that for children with learning difficulties. Monitoring of all pupils is not used tightly enough to inform teaching, planning and progression. Assessment is used to some extent to inform planning, but individuals are not continuously observed or monitored during activities so opportunities for responding to individual's needs are sometimes missed. There have been improvements in the structure of planning since the last inspection to ensure a closer match between the desirable learning outcomes and pupils' needs, especially in the whole class sessions for literacy and numeracy. Planning for individual and group work is not sufficiently well developed.

41 Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for their next stage of education. A clear and appropriate homework policy is implemented effectively, and closely linked to classroom work to enhance pupils' progress. Parents are actively involved in the process, very much to the benefit of their children.

42 The quality of planning at all levels has improved significantly since the last inspection, especially in English, mathematics and science. Considerable attention has been given to improving the quality of learning objectives for lessons and other planning to good effect, especially in the core subjects. On occasions, greater precision is still needed in relation to the match of tasks for different groups of pupils, such as some higher attaining pupils and those pupils aspiring to, but not yet reaching, expected levels. Some valuable monitoring of planning takes place involving the headteacher and co-ordinators, although it is recognised that this will need to be extended as new schemes are implemented. An increasing and effective emphasis is being placed on the careful targeting of work to raise individual and collective standards of progress and attainment. There is a good range of extracurricular activities for the size of school. Very good use is made of visits and the many visitors to the school, including high quality voluntary support for special educational needs pupils at Key Stage 2. Extracurricular activities and the use of visits and visitors all significantly enhance the curriculum and opportunities for pupils.

43 Substantial improvements have been made in the provision and arrangements for assessment since the last inspection. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the use of assessment to guide teachers' planning are both good. Continuous assessment and its use in planning have improved, particularly linked with the introduction of the national strategies in literacy and numeracy. Further monitoring strategies could usefully be developed for assessment to guide improvements in consistency and quality assurance. Some good practices are being developed in relation to planning for assessment and its use in guiding teaching and learning. The portfolios of work being developed in many subjects are particularly useful for helping teachers to reach the same judgements about pupils' attainments. Good strategies are being developed in the monitoring of assessment data, including National Curriculum results and the use of information in the careful targeting of work for groups and individual pupils. The

headteacher is giving a very strong lead in these developments, with the assessment co-ordinator providing positive support. Overall, the quality of assessment is good and it meets statutory requirements.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

44 Since the last inspection the school has strengthened its provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

45 Provision for spiritual development is very good. Through assemblies, acts of collective worship and through the Christian ethos that permeates the daily life of the school, pupils are given opportunities to explore their feelings and beliefs and to consider how these relate to the world around them. Pupils are very knowledgeable about Catholic symbolism and the principles of the Catholic faith. Prayers are an integral part of the school day. During the inspection, the Advent wreath was lit in classrooms at the end of the day, creating a real atmosphere of spiritual awareness in which children were encouraged to reflect upon their experiences.

46 The promotion of moral values is another strong element of the school's provision. Assemblies and class discussions address moral issues in a way that pupils understand, and through their answers they show that they are developing a moral sense. Most teachers have clear expectations of good behaviour and effort and pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They understand and observe the simple code of conduct and are aware of routines to be followed in lessons and at playtimes. The few pupils who were seen being rebuked for some misdemeanour knew what they had done wrong and were not resentful of criticism.

47 Pupils are encouraged to relate positively to one another and always to be kind and thoughtful. They work well together in pairs and groups, sharing equipment, taking turns fairly and listening carefully to the contributions of others. The recently introduced residential experience for pupils in Year 6 has proved particularly effective in widening children's horizons and giving them a chance to develop social skills and personal independence. In the dining hall and playground pupils relate well to one another and are often to be seen sharing crisps and sweets. In their approach to adults, pupils are always courteous, helpful and friendly.

48 Pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions through the subjects they study in school, through visits to places of interest and through the visitors who come into school. Topics such as World War II and the Tudors have been brought to life by visits to Eden Camp and Haddon Hall, while trips to Flamborough, the local library, shops and churches have provided first-hand experiences for teachers to build upon in the classroom. Pupils are taught to appreciate art, music and drama and have benefited from visits of professionals in all these fields who have either performed for them or worked alongside them to enable them to have their own experience of painting, dancing and acting.

49 The multi-cultural nature of society is emphasised appropriately through the study of different faiths in religious education and celebrated through displays and assemblies at times of the year that are special for other religions. The class prayer file contains prayers from around the world and the books used in school have a range of images of characters from different countries and backgrounds, helping children to become aware of the rich and varied nature of the world outside school.

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

50 The school's provision for support, guidance and pupils' welfare continues to be good. There are useful procedures in place for monitoring academic progress throughout the school particularly in English and mathematics, starting with baseline assessment in the reception class, followed by middle infant screening in Year 1. Both are used to identify special educational needs as soon as possible after entry to the school so that early action can be taken. Statutory and non-statutory assessment and recording are used well to monitor progress as children move through the rest of the primary school.

51 The procedures for personal support and advice for the pupils also continue to be good. Assemblies are based upon a strong Christian ethos and are effective for moral guidance. Pupils show that they are confident in asking for help from their teachers. Individual interviews are held twice each year where pupils can discuss their academic and personal development with their teachers. The induction programme for very young children is carefully and sensitively managed with home visits to exchange information about the child and the school, and a staggered entry so that new children can be given special attention. Parents feel that staff help the children to develop confidence and make them feel secure. Particularly effective is the weekly Rainbows group, which is co-ordinated by the headteacher, but run by two former teachers and two non-teaching staff. This group is for children who are experiencing difficulties at home, or have suffered a loss through parental separation, divorce or death. Eight children were helped last year and the same number are attending this year. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and other adults.

52 Parents are pleased with the values and attitudes taught, and feel that the school achieves a high standard of behaviour. There is a clear behaviour policy with graduated sanctions and effective procedures for encouragement and reward. There is also a strong anti-bullying policy and a system of discussion to ensure that children realise how their behaviour affects others.

53 Non-attendance is not a significant problem for the school, but attendance is monitored efficiently, using an electronic system. This makes it easy to identify any unexplained absences, and these are followed up appropriately.

54 Child protection arrangements are good and follow the local education authority's agreed procedures. All staff are aware and vigilant. First aid provision is satisfactory, with the headteacher and two members of staff being suitably qualified to administer first aid. A health and safety governor has particular expertise in the field and checks the whole school annually, returning later to ensure that the necessary action has been taken. No health and safety issues were identified during the inspection.

55 Pupils are happy at school. The staff know the children well and the care and concern given to them is of a good standard and makes a positive contribution to their academic achievement. This aspect continues to be as good as it was at the last inspection.

• **Partnership with parents and the community**

56 Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its good links with parents and the local community. There is a positive, fruitful partnership with parents, who appreciate the school's efforts and achievements and good use is made of the local community to extend and enhance children's learning. Links with industry have not yet been developed.

57 Information provided for parents is extensive and useful. It includes a prospectus which covers all practical details that parents need to know, regular newsletters and specific letters home, all written in a straightforward, friendly style. In addition, formal open evenings allow parents to discuss progress with class teachers and the school has held special meetings to explain the teaching of literacy and numeracy and what parents might do to help with these subjects at home. School reports are detailed and informative. They explain to parents what pupils know, understand and can do and set targets for improvement. The majority of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire agreed that they were kept well informed and that they felt able to approach the school at any time. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are closely involved with their children's work and progress and attend all the review meetings.

58 Parental involvement in classrooms is limited by other constraints on their time, but a small number of committed parents help regularly with reading and practical activities. There is no shortage of volunteers to accompany children on school trips and some parents even lend their expertise to help with maintenance jobs around the building. Most parents support their children's learning at home by listening to them read, helping with spellings, tables and the targeted mathematics activities. Almost all are satisfied with the work that children are given to do at home.

59 Parents have always helped with fundraising for resources that the school could not otherwise afford, such as carpets and extra computers, and the newly formed Friends' Association has already begun organising events to raise money for equipment that will be needed for the proposed new classroom.

60 The school makes good use of the local community as a curricular resource to supplement the work that is done in lessons. Subjects such as geography, history, English, science and art make use of the local environment by surveying the local shops, visiting the library, looking at paintings, statues and vestments in the church and examining how and where plants and trees grow. Children have read and reviewed books before attending the prize presentation of the Sheffield Book Awards. Sports teams take part in friendly inter-school competitions and pupils have enjoyed visits from professional football coaches. As their contribution to the life of the local community, pupils sing Christmas carols outside the supermarket and lead the singing in the parish church on Education Sunday, as well as raising funds for a variety of charities.

61 Links with the main receiving high school are good. There are appropriate arrangements for the transfer of documentation and a programme of visits for pupils ensures a smooth transition to the next stage of education. Curricular links are difficult to achieve because the secondary school is some distance away and receives pupils from a number of Catholic schools. There have been some limited initiatives, notably pupils visiting the secondary school's information technology suite.

· **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

· **Leadership and management**

62 The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and governors have a very clear sense of educational direction and are united in their efforts to provide the best quality of education for the pupils. In a relatively short time, the headteacher has set a very clear agenda for school improvement. The strengths and weaknesses within the school are well understood and form part of future development planning. The school's aims and values, for example in relation to the inclusive education of pupils with special educational needs, are shared by staff and governors and are implemented well.

63 School development planning provides a very useful tool for school improvement. Strategic planning has been improved considerably since the last inspection with the preparation of a long term plan. Governors have taken a long term view, for example in pursuing the possible expansion of the school, and have worked hard to prepare a detailed bid for Diocesan funding. The school development plan is supplemented by useful action plans for the subjects of the curriculum, buildings and so on. The plan is monitored by governors appropriately, mostly through the relevant sub-groups.

64 The headteacher has a very clear view of strengths and weaknesses within pupils' attainment, the curriculum and the expertise of staff. A key issue from the last inspection required the school to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning and this has been done very well. Annual and end-of-key stage tests are analysed carefully and the findings used well to improve provision and teaching. In response to the weaker results at Key Stage 1, for example, an additional teacher has been employed part-time so that classes can be taught in single-age groups in the mornings. This has enabled the national literacy and numeracy programmes to be implemented effectively, and there are clear indications that attainment, for example in reading, is improving. At Key Stage 2, weaknesses in writing confirmed by the inspection have already been identified by the school. Curricular planning is monitored well by the headteacher and by co-ordinators and issues are identified and discussed. The need for schemes of work to ensure that skills and knowledge are taught more systematically in some subjects, including design and technology and art, is recognised, and staff have begun to try out some of the recently published national materials with a view to developing schemes. Work to strengthen the curriculum for the under-fives is planned for the spring term. Teaching is monitored, both by the headteacher and by co-ordinators, so far principally in literacy and numeracy. Teachers' strengths and weaknesses are known, and appropriate action has been taken to improve teachers' skills where necessary by providing appropriate training and support. This has been largely effective, and the difference between the quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 has been reduced, though there is still a need to bring the quality of all of the teaching of the under-fives and infant pupils up to the best in the school. The range and quality of monitoring and evaluation are far better than those found in most primary schools.

65 A third key issue relating to management has been tackled effectively. The role of the co-ordinators is much better developed than at the last inspection. In this small school, some teachers have a number of responsibilities and priority has rightly been given to literacy and numeracy. The headteacher has begun a programme to release teachers so that they can take developments forward. The literacy co-

ordinator, for example, has been released on several occasions to observe colleagues teach, monitor planning, organise training and manage resources. This has had a positive effect on the implementation of the literacy hour. All co-ordinators are expected to monitor planning and are given an annual budget to ensure that resources for their subject are supplemented and renewed. Due to staff changes, some difficulties have been encountered in ensuring adequate co-ordination for all subjects. Currently, for example the co-ordination of information technology is not effective, though plans are afoot to address this. Special needs provision is very well co-ordinated and is good.

66 Governors are committed and generally knowledgeable about the work of the school. A good spread of expertise is available, for example in curriculum, finance, buildings and health and safety and this is put to good use in the sub-groups that meet regularly. The literacy, numeracy and special educational needs governors have visited the school to see provision for themselves. Governors are prepared to take the initiative, for instance in setting up a Friends' Association and actively marketing the school. A new governor remarked on the quality of debate during meetings and the professional manner in which governors approach their work. Legal requirements are met.

67 Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good. Given the effectiveness of the headteacher and the good support provided by the deputy, staff with key responsibilities and the governors, the school's capacity to improve further is very good.

· **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

68 There are sufficient appropriately trained teachers to provide a good quality of education. The range of expertise within the school is satisfactory, with some good expertise on the part of individuals in areas including information technology, physical education and music. Staff at both key stages have an opportunity to share their musical expertise in hymn singing, but not sufficiently during lessons. Similarly, a teacher with good expertise in information technology does not use this much outside his own classroom. Staff's skills in teaching the literacy and numeracy hour are mainly good and are being strengthened by appropriate training. Knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of the under-fives are satisfactory, though they could be usefully enhanced. The support assistant works effectively with young children, but is not specifically qualified through, for example, a nursery nurse qualification. Expertise in special educational needs is sufficient. The co-ordinator draws well on professional support from the local education authority and support staff play a useful role in implementing the programmes of work. The support assistant most actively involved has received good training for the additional literacy programme which is being put to good use. Voluntary help is effective.

69 Good attention is paid to staff's individual training needs, as well as those required to implement national and school priorities. Training is well linked to priorities identified in the school development plan. Useful appraisal interviews and classroom observation help to identify individual needs, for example in classroom organisation, and these are met. Induction arrangements for new staff are satisfactory. All staff, including part-time staff, are encouraged to take on subject responsibilities and contribute to curriculum development.

70 The accommodation is very well cared for and has some strengths, but also some important

weaknesses. The school is located in an attractive environment. Classrooms are of a good size, light and airy. The foyer is welcoming and the large hall is ideal for assemblies and physical education. Adaptations, including toilet facilities, make the building accessible to children and adults with physical disabilities. Limitations include the very small special needs room which is rather gloomy, a small, but attractive library, and limited storage space for resources. More important weaknesses include the inadequate and unsuitable hard play space for the under-fives and Key Stage 1 pupils and the limited space for the older pupils. Generous grassed areas can only be used for part of the year. Shortage of classrooms also means that a class is currently taught part-time for literacy and numeracy in the hall. Staff have done their best to make this temporary accommodation suitable and attractive, but the acoustics are difficult and the space is hard to heat. Pupils' learning is temporarily disrupted as they have to move out so that the hall can be prepared for dinners. This is done as efficiently as possible, but still has some adverse effect on pupils' learning. Governors are working hard to attract funding for an additional classroom to improve classroom provision and allow for expansion.

71 Resources are satisfactory overall. There are some shortages, notably in geography and outdoor equipment for the early years. Older computers are still being used at Key Stage 1 and are less than ideal. Resources for literacy, science and physical education are good. Reading books for Key Stage 1 pupils to take home to read with parents have recently been organised and banded according to their level of difficulty, a useful initiative. The small library is adequately stocked. The school is aware that more resources will be needed in subjects, including history, as the curriculum is revised and schemes prepared that take account of the national guidance. Visits and visitors are used very well, notably in history and geography.

• **The efficiency of the school**

72 The school has addressed the key issue identified in the last inspection report well by preparing a new development plan that identifies short, medium and long term priorities and ensures that strategic planning has manageable targets. Financial planning is now very good. In the school development plan and accompanying action plans, the governors and headteacher have identified a number of educational priorities which they aim to attain over the next three years. The plans include target dates, costs, and success criteria. Available money is allocated on the basis of these defined priorities. Members of the governors' finance committee have valuable, relevant experience in finance and industry which is an asset to the school. The committee meets regularly and monitors expenditure systematically. Governors receive reports from the headteacher, review examination results and visit the school regularly to ensure that money is being spent wisely and that children are benefiting from their spending decisions. Through careful planning the school has been able to create a healthy contingency fund, which governors plan to spend on furniture and equipment for the new classroom, if their bid for expansion is successful.

73 Any specific grants that the school receives are spent appropriately. Additional funding for pupils with special educational needs is supplemented from the school's own budget and is spent largely on employing classroom assistants to give personal support during lessons and withdrawal periods. Their contribution to children's learning is very effective. Other specific grants received in recent years were for alterations to the building, which have provided a disabled toilet, more office space and a small room used to withdraw pupils for special needs support. Money allocated to the school for staff development is spent appropriately according to the educational needs detailed in the school development plan.

74 Teaching and support staff are deployed effectively. The headteacher gives good support by covering classes in order to release subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate other teachers. Some teachers have curricular expertise that could be used more widely to encourage and support others. Particularly good use is made of education support staff. Their work is well planned; they constitute a valuable resource in school and have a real impact on children's learning. Support from volunteers, especially in the area of special needs, is also used very well.

75 The school's accommodation is used very well. There is very effective management of the multi-purpose hall, which serves as a space for teaching, collective worship, physical education and dining. Learning resources are used effectively.

76 Routine financial control and school administration are efficient and effective. The school secretary makes good use of her financial expertise and experience and provides valuable support for the headteacher and governors.

77 Taking into account the quality of education provided, the standards achieved by pupils and the effectiveness with which income and resources are managed, the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

78 There is one reception class, which caters for children under five. A teacher has been appointed to enable the infant children to be taught in separate year groups in the mornings. Children under five are taught by themselves every morning when the extra teacher is available, and together with just under half of the Year 1 children in the afternoon. This arrangement has meant that teaching is much more focused, which has begun to improve standards, though this is too recent to be reflected in the national test results. Staff at the school provide a suitable curriculum for all under-five children based on the early stages of the National Curriculum and the six areas of learning recommended nationally. The programme seems to promote the desirable learning outcomes, but it is difficult for staff to be sure that all aspects have been achieved by all children, because there is no overall check to ensure full coverage. Baseline assessments for all the reception children are administered within the first seven weeks of entry, and these are used to pinpoint any children with difficulties. They indicate that the majority of children are of average ability on entry in relation to local benchmarks. This is likely to be slightly lower than the average found nationally.

Personal and social development

79 Most of the children enter reception with average personal and social skills. Approximately half have nursery experience and others have attended play groups. Most are able to play successfully in groups, to share and take turns. The programme that is provided extends these aspects of personal and social development as well as encouraging the children to behave in appropriate ways and be aware of right and wrong. The staff provide good role models in the relationships they establish with the children and use positive behaviour management techniques. The majority of activities are directed by the teacher so the children are not always encouraged to be independent and take the initiative in their own learning. Specific skills are taught such as how to take care of living things such as fish and plants and each other. The children are sometimes encouraged to concentrate and persevere, for instance when working with an adult to sequence a series of numbers, but expectations are not always high enough. By the age of five, the majority of children have made satisfactory progress. They have a good attitude to learning and have achieved the desirable learning outcomes. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good teaching in the whole class situations. Some opportunities are seized for incidental teaching, for instance during carpet times. Where it is good, activities are well planned and questions used effectively to encourage the children to think about their behaviour and take responsibility for their actions.

Language and literacy

80 Attainment in language and literacy on entry is about average and the majority of children achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five; some achieve beyond that level, but not enough considering entry levels. Pupils develop a good attitude to the curriculum, displaying an interest in books, reading and writing, and eagerly expressing themselves. By the age of five, most children read familiar words and name, sound-out and form some of the letters of the alphabet, particularly those in their own names. They understand that writing conveys meaning and occasionally produce different pieces including telephone messages, but there are not enough opportunities provided for the children to read or write apart from those directed by the teacher. There is no attractive reading corner or permanent writing table, and very little print material available in the role play corner. The role play corner itself is unappealing and

little imaginative play occurs within it. The quality of teaching for language and literacy has been enhanced by the introduction of the literacy strategy, particularly in the whole class section of the hour. This part is well planned with clear objectives. Planning for individual and group work is less well planned, not enough support is given from visual aids and adults, and the activities do not focus well enough on individual needs.

Monitoring is used to assess needs and is effective for whole class teaching, but the work planned is not specifically focused enough for each child during individual and group work. Progress is made by all children but higher standards could be achieved, especially among the brighter children.

Mathematical development

81 Many pupils enter the school with average attainment in mathematics and make satisfactory progress, with the majority achieving the national expectations by the age of five. Reception children are assessed and grouped according to ability and work is then planned in response to the needs of each of the groups. However, activities are again more focused in the whole class situation than in individual and group work. By the age of five, the children count to at least 10, compare, sort and match, name a range of shapes and use mathematical language to describe size or position. They recognise and create patterns as when working on a special computer programme, and join in enthusiastically with games, rhymes and songs. Opportunities are missed for setting practical problems, for recording numbers, and for showing an awareness of number operations. Incidental teaching could encourage the children to talk about mathematics, for instance, adding one more or taking one away when working with everyday events such as the register. The numeracy strategy has raised standards, but more could be achieved if all desirable learning outcomes were included in the curriculum and if group and individual work were more tightly focused on needs.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82 The programme of activities promotes most aspects of this area of learning. By the age of five, the majority are likely to have achieved the desirable learning outcomes, but it is difficult to be sure as there is no long-term check and not all are listed in the planning documents. Staff encourage the children to talk about their families and events, for instance when compiling a diagram to show their family tree. They explore features of living things and the environment with fish and plants kept in the classroom so the children can be taught how to care for them. There are designated areas in the classroom where the children explore materials and equipment and use skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building but these activities are invariably directed by the teacher with few opportunities for the children to select for themselves. The children are introduced to technology such as tape recorders and computers with appropriate software. Teaching is satisfactory and progress is made but with more focused planning to ensure full coverage, the curriculum would be broader.

Physical development

83 The programme for physical development promotes some of the desirable learning outcomes but there are weaknesses, so the children will not have achieved all of them by the age of five. Children are given opportunities for the development of small physical movements in the classroom, and for larger movements in the three set physical educational (dance, gym and games) lessons in the hall each week. However, there are few opportunities for balancing and climbing and the use of a range of large apparatus either indoors or outside. The provision for outdoor activities is poor as there are very few resources to sustain it, and it is not included in the planning for each of the six areas of learning. Opportunities are provided for the children to handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials with

increasing control, for instance when using clay, paint, paper and card but more specific teaching of skills with tools such as scissors, pencils and paint brushes would improve co-ordination. The children make progress in some areas but planning for physical development does not have clear objectives linked to the children's needs. The majority of children will reach some of the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five but many could achieve all, and progress beyond that level with better planning and teaching supported by resources.

Creative development

84 The programme for creative development promotes the desirable outcomes so the majority of children will have achieved the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. Activities are organised which encourage the children to explore sound, sometimes with percussion instruments, and although they are not freely available, there is a range of materials and tools for the children to explore texture, colour, shape and space in two and three dimensions. There are opportunities for the children to express themselves in a variety of ways, for example, with paint, clay, junk model making or during imaginative play, though the role play corner is rather uninspiring. There are opportunities for the children to respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel, for instance when cutting up fruit and vegetables or listening to sounds in the corridor. The children work happily during the activities directed by the teacher and respond with enthusiasm to the tasks that are set.

85 Overall, the curriculum for under-fives has some strengths and some weaknesses. The pupils who attend make satisfactory progress, with the majority of them attaining most of the desirable learning outcomes in the six areas of learning by the age of five. However, although planning for whole class teaching is good, there are weaknesses in planning for individual and group work. Where teaching is most effective, objectives are clear and directly linked to monitoring and assessment, which means that no time is wasted and the children make rapid progress. The children enjoy their work and participate enthusiastically, but are not always well supported by the staff who miss opportunities for specific teaching of skills and knowledge. The programme caters for all stages and abilities including those with special educational needs but more attention should be given to those who are talented or gifted. The displays on the walls are attractive and reflect a range of good work, but there are other areas, such as the role-play corner, which are not aesthetically pleasing especially at child's eye level. Provision for children under five has improved since the last inspection. Smaller single-age classes in the mornings have resulted in more focused work, and more structure has been introduced to teaching especially during the whole class aspects of the literacy and numeracy hours; these changes are having an impact on attainment. Pupils are beginning to be challenged more often, though for brighter children, expectations are still sometimes too low. A system for monitoring and assessment is now in place which is used to inform planning, though more fine tuning is needed to ensure a good match of activity to individual needs. Since the last inspection a training programme has been instigated to address the issues that arose. Progress has been made, but the school has recognised that there is still room for further development, so the early years' department is to be targeted in the spring term.

· ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

· English

86 At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is above that found in similar schools. In previous years, it has also been above the national average, and showed steady improvement from 1996 to 1998. The number of pupils entered for the national tests is relatively small, however, and results are likely to vary from year to year, depending on the composition of the group and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In 1999, for example, two out of 20 pupils had such profound special educational needs that they could not attempt the tests. In spite of this, the school still achieved results in line with the national average, which is a commendable achievement. The current Year 6 is an average group, with fewer very able pupils than in some recent years. The inspection confirms the school's view that results in 2000 are likely to be average.

87 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read and respond to texts at a satisfactory level for their age. They read a play script for example with increasing expression, showing that they understand the format. The most able readers have an appetite for books, reading widely at home and school, whilst at the lower end, pupils mainly read at school. Pupils throughout the ability range are able to talk about what they have read and say why they have enjoyed particular stories. Provision for reading is generally good and helps pupils to make good progress. Guided reading group work within the literacy hour is well planned and taught and pupils' progress is carefully assessed. Pupils are encouraged to read at home and to review books that they have read. Pupils' interest in books is promoted, through for example attending special events organised by the local authority to promote reading. Additional help for pupils still experiencing difficulty with reading at Key Stage 2 is very good. Individuals receive regular teaching and support from a volunteer retired teacher and from the teaching assistant, both of whom implement the work specified in the pupils' individual education plans. A group of Year 4 pupils is receiving well planned additional literacy support from the trained assistant to improve their knowledge of sounds. All have a marked impact on the progress these pupils make.

88 Results in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 have been very variable in recent years, though below average overall. In 1998, for example, results were above the national average, whilst in 1999 they were well below. Differences are partly explained by the composition of year groups, but there has been a more general issue, identified in the last inspection, of lack of structure in the teaching. This has been recognised and addressed well by the school. The employment of an additional teacher means that pupils are taught in single-aged groups for literacy, and the implementation of the literacy hour is having a positive effect. There is, for example, good emphasis on teaching individual and combinations of letter sounds. Guided reading is well taught and monitored. A survey of about half the current pupils in Year 2, representing all levels of achievement, indicates that attainment in reading is about average, with most pupils making a good attempt to read unfamiliar words by sounding out and combining letters. Reading books have recently been banded so that the books used by parents to support their children at home are at an appropriate level of difficulty. Many parents provide good levels of support and this is beneficial.

89 Attainment in writing is broadly average, but is better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. An excellent analysis of recent national test papers showed that by the time they leave the schools, pupils' writing is satisfactory in terms of basic organisation, spelling, punctuation and grammar, but a significant

number find it more difficult to write in a lively, interesting and well organised way. This was borne out by the inspection. Although there are some notable examples of sensitive poetry writing and lively newspaper accounts by pupils in Years 4 to 6, they are not so commonplace. Teachers are aware of the need to improve the quality of pupils' writing and are beginning to address this, but currently there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write in the different subjects of the curriculum, or for them to draft and edit their work. By Year 6, handwriting is usually neat and legible. At the end of Key Stage 1, national test results in writing have been well below average in the three year period between 1996 to 1998, but showed a vast improvement in 1999 to be close to average levels. The inspection confirms that the improvement is genuine, but there is still work to be done to raise attainment further, particularly for pupils at each end of the attainment scale. Not enough is done in the earlier years to ensure that all pupils have adequate pencil control and form their letters correctly. As a result, some pupils in Year 2, still write letters incorrectly. Much more attention is being given to developing pupils' phonic knowledge and skills, and this is improving their spelling, as well as their reading. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of punctuation are developing satisfactorily, overall, but even the higher attaining Year 2 pupils sometimes forget to use capital letters and full stops. Lack of emphasis on basic skills in the past at Key Stage 1 means that some older pupils use the more complex punctuation that they are taught, but make mistakes with simple forms that they should have mastered earlier. There are not enough opportunities for Year 2 pupils, particularly, to write at any length.

90 Attainments in speaking and listening are satisfactory. At both key stages, pupils listen well and respond to questions appropriately. Where teaching is particularly well focused, as in the Year 4 and 5 class, pupils show a good recall of previously taught information in their answers. There are some limited opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas in groups during lessons in other subjects, but this is not a strong feature of provision, and there are few opportunities for drama.

91 Before the changes in organisation to single-aged classes for literacy and the implementation of the more structured teaching of the literacy hour, evidence suggests that Key Stage 1 pupils did not make enough progress. Since these changes, the quality of planning and teaching are such that most make good progress in most lessons, with the potential to make good progress over time. At Key Stage 2, where the tighter structure and good teaching have been in place for a number of years, progress has always been good, and continues to be so, enabling many pupils to catch up to average levels by the time they leave the school.

92 Teaching is mainly good in both key stages. Lessons are well planned with very clear learning objectives that are shared appropriately with the pupils. Sufficient emphasis is given to word level work at Key Stage 1, thus enabling pupils' knowledge of sounds to develop systematically. Many teachers read the big books or texts well, interesting pupils and encouraging them to take part. Almost all control pupils' behaviour well. Control is sometimes a little fragile in one Key Stage 1 class, and this allows a few pupils to waste time, albeit for short periods. Firm discipline is a feature of teaching in Years 4 to 6. Pupils are not allowed to sit back, and this may be one reason why boys do comparatively well in the school. Their results are higher than usual. Group work is usually well matched to the pupils' abilities, and helps them to make good progress. Additional support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs at Key Stage 1 is effective. In a Year 2 class, for example, a relevant computer program was used to help develop pupils' spelling. Additional teaching for individuals or small groups of pupils withdrawn from the classroom at Key Stage 2 is good. Planning for guided reading is good and pupils' progress is monitored well in many classes. Plenary sessions are satisfactory, and are usually used for checking understanding and consolidating knowledge appropriately.

93 Most pupils respond well to the teaching. They behave well and try hard, even on occasions when they find the work difficult, for example when Year 5 and 6 pupils were trying to make notes about a story being told very confusingly within their play script. All pupils, from Year 1 upwards, work well during group work, showing good levels of independence, and not interrupting the teacher unnecessarily. In all classes, teachers are able to give their attention to the guided reading group. Pupils of all ages work neatly. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where some pupils' work was found to be untidy and incomplete. In some classes, pupils really enjoy the big books. In Year 1, for example, pupils could hardly wait for the next lesson to continue the story.

94 The subject is well co-ordinated. Considerable advances have been made since the last inspection at Key Stage 1, where provision and teaching were found to have weaknesses. Attainment, provision and teaching are monitored well, and there is a very clear sense of direction about what to do next. The school's action plan to improve attainment in writing is helpful. Resources are good. The small library is used satisfactorily. Accommodation is a problem for the Year 2 class that is taught in the hall. Teachers do their best, but the environment is less than ideal.

Mathematics

95 Standards of attainment in mathematics are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 are close to the national average, with 85 per cent achieving the expected level (or above) as against 87 per cent nationally, but when the proportions of pupils at the higher and lower levels are taken into account, they are lower than usual. Results are average, however, when compared to those in similar schools. Equivalent results for Key Stage 2, taking account of the balance of high and low achievers, are similar to those found nationally, and above those found in similar schools. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 have not changed much in recent years. At the end of Key Stage 2, however, results have improved significantly year on year over the last four years. Results over a period of time are against the national trend, showing that boys generally do better than boys nationally, whilst girls do slightly less well than other girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, especially at Key Stage 2, and achieve appropriate levels of attainment. The school has successfully introduced the national numeracy strategy into the curriculum; teachers make good use of the range of strategies and approaches and has focused strongly, and to good effect, on raising standards of oral and mental work, together with using and applying mathematics, although the school also recognises that each aspect can be developed further and is working hard towards this end.

96 By Year 2, most pupils, but not all, use an appropriate range of mathematical language and vocabulary. The majority use sound recall of basic number facts accurately to 10 and some pupils work effectively with larger numbers, although some pupils could be stretched even further. Most can recognise simple sequences of numbers, including odd and even numbers and can count forwards and backwards using small numbers and complete missing numbers in a simple sequence. They know the mathematical names of many two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes and most can describe some of their properties. Pupils estimate and measure appropriately using an increasing range of standard units. Most pupils communicate satisfactorily using simple bar graphs and charts. By Year 6, the majority of pupils use mental recall appropriately and often well; in the mixed-age Year 5 and 6 class pupils used a range of different strategies very effectively in their mental and oral work, including rounding, to rapidly estimate

answers, for example in the multiplication of a range of two digit numbers. Doubling was used well by most pupils in the Year 4 and 5 class to work out the answers in relation to two and three digit numbers ending in 0 or five. Some pupils were able to handle repeated doubling. Many pupils have a sound and sometimes good understanding of place value in relation to their age. They find the perimeters and areas of regular shapes, mostly with confidence, and recognise different angles and measure them. Most pupils have a sound understanding of decimals and fractions. The majority use diagrams, arrays of data and graphs appropriately. Many pupils use and apply mathematics satisfactorily, and this aspect is being developed rapidly in the school. Most use an increasingly wide range of appropriate mathematical vocabulary and language, and close attention is being given by the school to improve this further.

97 Most pupils make good progress, overall, at Key Stage 1 and at least good progress at Key Stage 2. Those pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress throughout the school, and particularly at Key Stage 2. Progress in both key stages is improving, especially in the upper part of the school, and is increasingly assisted by careful targeting of weaker areas of work, of individuals and groups of pupils who could do better, and the effective use of national numeracy strategy methods and materials. The progress made by higher attaining pupils, although sound overall and sometimes good, is occasionally less well developed, particularly in Key Stage 1. However, the progress of these and other pupils is being greatly assisted by the school's emphasis on mental and oral work, a wider use of mathematical language and vocabulary and more opportunities to extend investigations and problem solving to enhance pupils' understanding, skills and precision. Strategies employed have improved the performance of boys, notably through the nature and quality of direct teaching, which have been particularly successful, and the school is now aware of the need to consider further strategies to enhance the attainment of girls.

98 Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics; they often enjoy the activities, work hard and sometimes exceptionally hard and see the subject as important. They usually listen attentively and many pupils see a number of activities, especially mental and oral work, number games and some investigations, as fun. They frequently enjoy the varied and challenging mental work and practical tasks which are often provided and take a pride in their achievements and the presentation of their work. On rare occasions, when pupils' attention wanders, this usually relates to the specific needs of individual pupils, less challenging work for some or simply tiredness at the end of a hard working lesson. Given the opportunity, pupils often collaborate well together on joint tasks. They behave well and take responsibility for different aspects of their own learning.

99 The quality of teaching is good overall at Key Stage 1. It is consistently good and sometimes very good at Key Stage 2. This represents a substantial improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection in both key stages, and parallels the equivalent improvements in pupils' progress across the school. Lessons are usually well structured, based on clear learning objectives which are well communicated and discussed with pupils, and are closely related to national strategies. Teachers' planning, overall, is good. Strong emphasis is being placed on stimulating and challenging oral and mental work, good quality direct teaching and carefully targeted group work. Increasing attention is being given to the match of work for different age groups and other groupings within classes; many examples were seen of the good match of tasks and provision for lower attaining pupils. Although there were some notable exceptions, further attention needs to be given in some lessons to fully extending the higher attaining pupils, and to providing more astutely matched tasks in mixed age classes. There is some clear evidence that this is beginning to happen, assisted by the increasing accuracy of assessment and monitoring. In many lessons, the pace is rapid and a great deal is achieved in a single lesson. Teachers often have a good, and sometimes very good

knowledge of the subject, exemplified by the high quality of questioning and rigorous demands made of the pupils. Teachers often have high expectations of behaviour and pupils' learning and attainment.

100 Teachers draw well on national numeracy strategy documentation and guidance to support planning and organisation. Arrangements for assessment are good, with increasingly effective use of continuous assessment to guide teachers' planning. Assessment results from a variety of sources are analysed effectively and often used well to target areas of weakness, and the needs of different groups of pupils. The co-ordinator is giving a very good lead in developments. Arrangements for staff development are good with valuable support from the local authority and other sources. Strategies for monitoring and evaluation are effective and contributing well to improvements in provision and pupils' progress. The school is generally well resourced for the subject although it is recognised that more will be needed to keep pace with developments. The school is strongly committed to the development of mathematics and all the staff are working hard to raise levels of attainment and progress, largely by implementing the national numeracy strategy effectively; already standards of progress and the quality of teaching have improved significantly and there is clear evidence that, increasingly, improvements are beginning to be made over time in pupils' attainment.

• **Science**

101 Standards of attainment, overall, are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In the 1999 national assessments, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are average in relation to national figures and similar schools. Equivalent results for Key Stage 2 are above average in relation to national figures and well above for similar schools, reflecting a big rise in the number of pupils reaching higher levels of attainment from the previous year. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress and achieve appropriate levels of attainment. Results over a period of time show that boys generally do better than boys nationally in the national assessments, whilst girls do about the same as other girls.

102 By Year 2, pupils can name accurately different parts of a plant, know what they need to grow and make simple comparisons between different plants. They can describe, sometimes in detail, the properties of materials and identify some of their similarities and differences. Most use simple equipment and make observations related to different tasks, as in looking at the effects of heat in changing different materials such as ice-cream and butter, and an investigation into factors affecting the growth of bean seeds. The majority of pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of a range of physical processes, such as light and magnetism. They also understand in simple terms, something about the nature and effects of friction, as seen in investigations using cars on ramps of different surfaces and heights. Pupils use scientific terms and language appropriately and describe what they see and what they think will happen. By Year 6, most pupils have an appropriate knowledge about different parts of common plants and animals and can name them. Many identify a number of organs in the human body, and use appropriate vocabulary for these in the context of body systems, such as the circulatory system; some identify the position of organs such as the heart and lungs and describe their main functions. Most pupils describe differences between the properties of different materials, such as solids, liquids and gases, and have carried out work on filtering and sieving, boiling and condensing, using appropriate scientific terminology. Some pupils suggest ways in which mixtures can be separated. Many have investigated how to clear muddy water and some have a good understanding about some reversible and irreversible processes, notably burning using different materials.

Good attention is paid to safety issues. Pupils have conducted a good range of experimental and investigative work by the end of Key Stage 2, including experiments to show the effects of air resistance and gravity on moving objects such as similar and different parachutes; the effects of exercise on pulse rate; heat conduction, permeability, and strengths of different materials; the effects of temperature on plant and seed growth; sorting objects by properties such as those which are translucent, transparent and opaque. Pupils often have good practical skills; they collect data and record it in charts and tables carefully. Many, but not all, draw various kinds of graphs accurately and use a range of appropriate scientific language and vocabulary, orally and in their writing and recording.

103 Overall, pupils make sound progress at Key Stage 1; sometimes it is good. At Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is consistently good. The good progress is characterised by science work which is challenging for all pupils, closely relates to the National Curriculum programmes of study and fosters rigorous scientific enquiry. Pupils with special educational needs, overall, make good progress, especially at Key Stage 2. Planning is often detailed with clear learning objectives for lessons. In the best planning, the work very closely matches the previous knowledge and understanding of all groups of pupils. At Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils make sound progress overall, but are not always fully stretched by the work provided. Higher attaining pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2. Boys, overall, make good progress, greatly assisted by the nature of the high quality direct teaching, especially in Years 4 to 6. Occasionally, some different examples and approaches could usefully be employed to further enhance the progress of girls.

104 Pupils have good attitudes to science and enjoy the variety of challenging lessons and tasks provided. Most listen carefully, work hard and safely and often show sustained concentration in the face of difficulties and problems. Given the opportunity, pupils frequently co-operate well together on joint tasks.

105 The quality of teaching is good, overall, and especially in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, pupils are very clear about what they have to do and what is expected of them and there is high quality direct teaching of the class and groups. Such lessons make significant demands on all pupils and include the rigorous use of a range of high quality questioning to extend and consolidate learning. The pace of these lessons is rapid and teachers' expectations of behaviour, progress and attainment are high. Teachers and pupils see the subject as important and valuable and all staff work hard to enhance pupils' understanding and grasp of key concepts. Planning is generally of good quality, and the increasingly close attention being given to experimental and investigative work across the programmes of study is significantly enhancing pupils' interest and learning. The arrangements for assessment are mainly sound and some aspects are good. A useful portfolio of pupils' work is being developed. Strategies for target setting are increasingly having a substantial effect on the quality, range and match of work provided for all pupils and improvements in standards of attainment. The co-ordinator is appropriately qualified and giving a positive lead in developments. Staff development is sound with some good features and the school is generally well resourced for the subject, although some aspects such as computer software could be developed further. A useful action plan for science has been drawn up which identifies important areas for development; if rigorously implemented, it will ensure further improvements in progress and standards. Some effective strategies for monitoring are beginning to be developed. Much is being achieved in science, which, as it is drawn together and extended, has the potential to have a marked effect on pupils' progress and attainment over time.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Information technology

106 Standards of attainment in information technology are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils use a mouse effectively for a number of functions and have acquired an appropriate range of information technology skills. They use a concept keyboard to produce writing about animals in connection with a forthcoming visit; draw self portraits using a 'paintbox' program and use word processing to produce writing about a visit which focused on the Victorians. Many pupils use correct technical language for their age and prior attainment and communicate ideas in different ways, such as pictures, text and tables. They use computers appropriately to present their findings and can talk confidently about what they are doing. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils add to, change and interrogate information that has been stored, showing appropriate awareness of audience, as seen in a range of writing for different purposes. They combine texts and graphics effectively to communicate information in a variety of ways as in surveys, graphical work, recipes and posters. Many pupils use a range of equipment and programs appropriately, including interrogating and down loading information, for example from encyclopaedias, cutting and pasting these and other relevant items from other CD-ROM materials into their own work. More recently they make use of a scanner, are beginning to access to web sites through the Internet and use the Discovery pack for programming and controlling, as for traffic lights. Appropriate, and sometimes good, use is made of information technology across the curriculum, although there is room for more use in science and other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs generally make sound progress and achieve appropriate levels of attainment. An active computer club is run for Year 3 pupils after school on one day each week.

107 Most pupils make sound progress, overall, in both key stages; on particular occasions, progress can often be good. Increasing use is now being made of nationally produced materials, which are providing valuable support for teachers and helping to improve progression and continuity of learning for pupils at a time of significant staff changes. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to information technology. They frequently enjoy the activities, showing motivation and sustained levels of concentration, not least, in the face of problems and challenges. Most pupils take pride in their work. Given the opportunity, most pupils work well together, often in pairs on joint tasks and take turns effectively; on some occasions this includes mixed groups of boys and girls.

108 The quality of teaching is sound, overall; occasionally it is good. Learning objectives are often, but not always, clear and although there is some variability, teachers' confidence and knowledge are generally sound. Several staff, however, have an interest and good working knowledge of the subject, including the deputy headteacher who, in the absence of the co-ordinator, has been providing valuable and well informed support for colleagues, having had responsibility for the subject in his previous school. A useful start has been made on assessing and recording pupils' progress and attainment, but it is recognised that further work is needed in this area. Useful documentation has been produced previously for the subject, including a clear action plan which is still in use. However, there is now an urgent need for effective co-ordination to ensure that planning and organisation provide better progression and continuity of teaching and learning. Plans to update the policy and implement schemes of work, linked to the nationally produced materials, have been delayed unhelpfully by lack of co-ordination due to staff changes and illness. Staff

expertise and confidence in some areas need to be supplemented, building on some good work that has already taken place. Not enough time is given to information technology at Key Stage 1. Monitoring of teaching, learning and attainment are not sufficiently developed. In spite of these points, the school and staff see information technology as being important, pupils are highly interested and motivated to improve their skills and there is much good practice for the school to build upon

· **Art**

109 The picture in art is similar to that reported at the last inspection. Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Strengths lie in work based on close observation, where pupils work with care and create good quality representations. Displays are used well to show what pupils can do and to set high expectations for others. A weakness, particularly at Key Stage 2, is that pupils tend to copy from the work of the artists, rather than create their own work based on their different styles.

110 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils work confidently with a range of media, for example as they draw steam engines or print out colourful, bold patterns. Techniques for drawing, painting and pastel work are taught well. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils create good effects, shading and mixing paints and pastels. They apply paint in different ways to produce a range of tones and textures. They understand something of the techniques of great artists, for example of the impressionist painters. There is less evidence of three-dimensional work being developed systematically in Key Stage 2, to build for instance on the clay work produced by the pupils in Years 1 and 2.

111 Only two lessons were seen, one in each key stage, and these were taught satisfactorily. A useful demonstration, followed by good support as they worked, enabled Years 1 and 2 pupils to make their own thumb pots which were turned into candle holders. In Year 5 and 6, the teacher had less parent help than expected and was over-stretched trying to teach both art and design and technology during the same lesson. As a result, pupils received limited advice and support as they worked. Evidence from the way they approached their work, however, indicates that skills have been taught well in the past.

112 Pupils respond well to the subject. They are keen to work with different materials, and try hard to produce a good end result. They apply their previously learnt knowledge and skills confidently. At Years 5 and 6, pupils make limited choices and organise their own work well, approaching it seriously.

113 The co-ordinator is recently appointed, and has not yet had time to make her mark on the subject. Although work is well planned in blocks for each term, the lack of a more detailed overall scheme prevents pupils' progress and achievement from being even higher. Lack of a skills' checklist makes it difficult for teachers to be sure how pupils are progressing. Visitors, including a former teacher, make a good contribution to the subject.

· **Design and technology**

114 Pupils' progress is similar to that found at the last inspection, and is broadly satisfactory, although

pupils' skills are not as well developed as in art. There has not been much change in the quality of provision since the last inspection, largely because of staff changes and priority given by the school to developing work in literacy and numeracy. Although planning for individual classes is satisfactory, the lack of a more detailed scheme of work is hindering the development of the subject.

115 Provision is slightly better at Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2, where pupils have a suitably wide range of experiences. The use of the national guidelines means that skills are being taught appropriately and more systematically, for example Year 1 pupils have fixed sliders to characters drawn on card and see how these can be made to move along a slit in paper. At Year 2, pupils have made carts from large construction material, with axles and wheels. Some useful links are made between science and design and technology, for example in testing how well vehicles move in different circumstances. The national guidelines are also starting to be used effectively at Key Stage 2, but their implementation is at an early stage. Currently, older pupils are following the scheme, baking biscuits, adapting a basic recipe and evaluating the results. Year 5 and 6 pupils worked in groups to plan, make and evaluate models following a visit to Dyson Factory. A good model of a steam engine and a carefully constructed water wheel, along with basic box models of buildings, have been produced.

116 Design and technology work was only seen as part of two lessons, one in each key stage. At Key Stage 1, Year 1 and 2 pupils made towers, which had to be stable, from a range of construction materials. Although an interesting range of models was made, planning did not identify different objectives for the two age groups, so did not take enough account of the greater potential of the Year 2 pupils. There was little direct teaching for this work as the teacher was occupied elsewhere. At Years 5 and 6, the organisation and planning for baking was satisfactory, and pupils usually received appropriate help from adults. Overall, teaching was satisfactory.

117 Pupils are enthusiastic and show good levels of involvement with their work. They work well together. In the Year 1 and 2 class, for example, two boys who had been making a tower were called away to other work, so they asked a third boy to finish it for them, which he did. All three were proud of the finished result. At Years 5 and 6, pupils worked well in groups, negotiating with one another about how to share out the work. Pupils talked enthusiastically about work they had done in the past, particularly when it involved model making.

118 Currently, there is no effective co-ordination and this impedes the development of the subject. An action plan prioritises the subject for development during the year 2000 and 2001, and includes the drawing up a scheme appropriately based on the national guidelines. A scheme is needed to ensure more systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills and to accelerate their progress.

• **Geography and History**

119 During the period of the inspection, only a few lessons were seen in history and none in geography which are consequently reported on together. Scrutiny of a range of pupils' work, including work samples and displays, teachers' planning and records and interviews with pupils, indicate that appropriate opportunities are being provided in each subject to develop knowledge, skills and understanding relating to programmes of study in the National Curriculum. On the basis of this evidence, pupils make sound

progress, overall, in both subjects and key stages; on occasions, good progress is made in history.

120 Younger pupils in the infants are learning about the present and past in their own and other people's lives and have looked at family trees and events in their parents' and grandparents' lives. Later on they are learning about how people made journeys in the past, the transport they used, and inventors of the steam train. In these and many other activities pupils show their emerging and developing sense of chronology by describing and using appropriate historical vocabulary, ordering events and objects, comparing aspects of their own lives with past times, and beginning to understand why people in the past acted as they did. Similarly, in geography younger pupils have looked at where they live, completed their own passports including their own addresses, plus other simple identification details, considered a range of people's jobs, such as those associated with hospitals and observed daily weather conditions and recorded the results simply. By the end of the key stage, they know about their own locality and can talk about significant features of a journey they have made, such as a walk to school, and use simple technical terms to describe geographical features such as types of houses, roads, amenities and land use. Many make simple comparisons between different localities, such as town and country. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 study a range of historical and geographical topics, some in considerable detail. Pupils in a Year 5 and 6 class have studied the lives of people at different levels of society in Victorian times. They know about ways in which they were affected by changes, such as those in transport and industry, having visited Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet and Kelham Island Museum. Most show real empathy for people in the past, clearly demonstrated in their writing and drawings about the life of children and families in rich and poor homes, including those in Sheffield. Pupils have also studied aspects of the second world war, conditions prevailing at the time, looked at causes and considered the effects on their own city. Pupils in the mixed-age Year 4 and 5 class have been using different sources of evidence in their studies about the Armada, both Spanish and English. Most pupils have been able to distinguish between the accounts, identify conditions, causes and the correct sequence of events. Many are developing an appropriate understanding about the use of evidence and issues such as the validity and some effects of value judgements. In geography, older pupils have the opportunity to carry out a range of different studies; they often have a detailed understanding about their own locality and have studied places further afield, including different countries such as Africa and tropical South America. They have studied settlements and understand how they differ and change. Through class work and visits, such as that to the Mayfield Valley and Stanton-in-the-Peak they find out about rivers and erosion, develop a sound working knowledge about maps and the use of keys and scale, and a number of contrasting localities in this country. Most use an appropriate range of geographical vocabulary and language to communicate their observations. They see the importance of location in understanding places and how they are changing. Many pupils identify and name an appropriate range of different countries and capitals on a world map or globe.

121 Evidence indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress; sometimes it is good. In the few lessons seen and from evidence elsewhere, pupils' progress is good where rigorous use is made of original and other sources of historical and geographical evidence, notably video, artefacts, documentary and other evidence, to develop specific skills, knowledge and understanding. Occasionally, however, too little use is made of such resources and there is an over-dependence on worksheets which fail to challenge pupils sufficiently in their learning about each subject and give them too little opportunity to develop their skills in writing. Conversely, there are lessons when judicious and effective use is made of good quality worksheets which are well matched to pupils' age and previous knowledge. Much of the work seen is challenging and interesting and builds effectively on pupils' previous learning.

122 Pupils' attitudes to both subjects are good; they often enjoy their work, especially that associated with first-hand experiences, including visits. They generally work hard, take pride in their work and confidently talk about what they have been doing. Pupils show a good recall of detail and often demonstrate sustained effort and concentration in their work. Displays of pupils' work are often of good quality.

123 From the evidence available the quality of teaching, overall, is at least sound and sometimes good in both key stages and subjects. In the best lessons, work is well planned and organised with clear and challenging learning objectives for lessons. Such lessons are characterised by high quality direct teaching, good use of questioning to consolidate and extend learning, effective use of a range of stimulating and good quality artefacts and other resources, with a lot being achieved in a single lesson. Policies and other information, including the increasing and valuable use of nationally published materials, for each subject are providing a useful basis for teachers' planning. New schemes of work linked to the national guidance are planned, and a useful start has already been made in history. The curriculum for each subject takes appropriate account of the National Curriculum. Assessment in both subjects meets statutory requirements but needs to be developed further in relation to planning for assessment and its use in guiding teachers' planning. A good start has been made in developing portfolios of pupils' work. The co-ordinators in each case have good knowledge and experience in their respective subjects and are providing a positive lead, as far as this has been currently possible, in their subjects. Resources are generally satisfactory in geography and history; although there are some limitations in each, such as maps and globes; more gaps will be identified as new schemes are developed. Although some aspects of monitoring and evaluation are being carried out, it is recognised by the school that, when time allows, further work would benefit developments in both subjects.

· **Music**

124 The quality of provision for music is satisfactory overall but there are inconsistencies across the school. Where individual teachers have musical abilities, teaching is good, particularly at the end of each key stage and where peripatetic musicians are involved.

125 Planning for music is linked to the National Curriculum attainment targets and, where possible, to the half-termly topics, for example Victorians. Music is taught in the classrooms by the class teachers, but there are also hymn and song practices in the hall taken by the music specialists in preparation for masses, liturgies and concerts. The policy for music refers to the National Curriculum and provision is broad and balanced.

126 Teaching continues to range from satisfactory to good, and is satisfactory overall. Where it is good, teachers display good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, with effective plans that include clear objectives at an appropriate level for the pupils. Good use is made of praise and encouragement and clear explanations are given using appropriate subject vocabulary. Although broadly satisfactory, the work is occasionally too easy and the children are not challenged, for instance when thinking about loud, but not soft sounds. In most lessons, the pupils respond enthusiastically to music and sustain concentration when singing or listening.

127 Attainment varies but generally is at the level to be expected of each age group. Pupils in the mixed-age reception and Year 1 class join in enthusiastically with songs and singing games and can clap simple rhythms. The quality of singing in the rest of the school is good with the pupils responding to specific teaching about techniques for voice production. As was stated in the last report, pupils have good control of pitch, tempo and dynamics.

128 Individual children are encouraged to play instruments, with music groups for recorders, keyboards and guitars taught by the co-ordinator or peripatetic staff. Although it is mostly girls who play the recorder, both girls and boys play keyboards and guitar.

129 Progress in musical knowledge is satisfactory with an observable difference in achievement between the end of each key stage. Composition could not be observed but singing, appraisal and appreciation are significantly more developed.

130 There are sufficient resources for music with a collection of tuned and untuned percussion and keyboards stored separately for each key stage. The co-ordinator and the school have been concentrating on the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies for the past two years, which has affected the provision for music, but now that these are in place, music is to be given higher priority. A qualified musician has been appointed in Key Stage 1 and peripatetic music teachers have started to visit the school. All make a good contribution to the quality of provision and the standards attained.

· **Physical education**

131 The pattern of attainment and progress is similar to that found at the last inspection when pupils were achieving appropriately for their age and making satisfactory progress. A good balanced programme of work is taught and this enables pupils to develop the full range of skills satisfactorily. Swimming is a strength. All of the older pupils have swimming lessons for three terms over a two year period. All except one current Year 5 pupil can swim at least 25 metres. Two-thirds of the year group can swim between 100 and 400 metres.

132 Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1. Younger Year 1 pupils begin to develop appropriate ball control, rolling and receiving balls and directing them between increasingly narrow gaps. Good habits start early. All pupils are properly changed and safety rules are observed. Lessons begin with a warm up. The youngest Key Stage 1 pupils obey the teacher's command and begin to make good use of space in the hall. In dance, Years 1 and 2 pupils try to follow the teacher's movements and are beginning to work at different levels, for example when they moved from a crouched to a stretched position as they came out of the conjuror's hat. Pupil with special educational needs take part fully, helped at times by teaching assistants.

133 At Key Stage 2, the development of games' skills continues satisfactorily overall, but well in individual lessons when specific skills are taught and pupils are involved in demonstrating and evaluating practice. Progress is evident in the increasingly controlled way that pupils pass a football, for example. By the end of the key stage, pupils' gymnastic skills are at a satisfactory level. They practise a sequence of movements, involving rolling, balancing, turning and jumping, using a limited range of basic apparatus. A

few pupil work at a higher level, showing good control, balance and poise. Most perform satisfactorily, improving their dismounts, for example, as they practise.

134 Teaching is mainly satisfactory at both key stages, with some examples of good teaching. All of the teachers observed have good control and management skills, and these ensure that pupils work hard and safely. Lessons are well planned, though occasionally good ideas, for example in dance, could be developed further. A good level of activity is sustained in most lessons, and time is usually used well. Teachers' expertise varies, but there is sufficient within the school and some individuals have good subject knowledge. Recent training has helped teachers to make suitable use of the apparatus provided through the 'Top Sports' initiative.

135 Pupils respond well to the subject, enjoying the opportunity for physical activity. They listen well to their teachers and follow directions well. They try to copy demonstrations. Years 5 and 6 pupils put the apparatus away excellently, working as teams. All pupils, from the youngest, work well together when opportunities are provided, for example in games.

136 Co-ordination is good. The broad curriculum includes opportunities for athletics and outdoor adventurous activities. Resources are good and well stored. A good range of extracurricular activities, including football, netball, cricket and dance, makes a good contribution to the quality of provision and to pupils' attainments. Older pupils take part in friendly matches with other schools. Last year, a team reached the semi-finals of the Catholic Cup in football.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

137 The inspection was undertaken by a team of four inspectors who spent a combined total of 11 days over a four day period gathering first-hand evidence about the school. Observation of lessons or parts of lessons took place, amounting to just over 41 hours. Additional time was given to attending daily assemblies, registration periods, interviews, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work. Interviews were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, teaching and support staff. A sample of pupils' work, representing the full age and ability range within the school, was examined. A cross-section of pupils was heard to read. Pupils' records of attainment and samples of reports to parents were looked at. Questionnaires issued to parents were received and analysed. These, and the views of parents, who attended a meeting before the inspection, were taken into account. A wide range of documentation, curricular planning and other information provided by school was analysed by the team.

• **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	155	1	49	33

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

6.5

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

23.85

• **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:

4

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

100

Average class size:

27.7

• **Financial data**

Financial year:

1998

£

Total Income

264,952

Total Expenditure	258,130
Expenditure per pupil	1,709
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,717
Balance carried forward to next year	28,539

· **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	118
Number of questionnaires returned:	40

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	50	42	0	7	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	55	35	7	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	28	42	22	8	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	37	52	5	5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	50	10	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	52	40	5	0	2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	50	40	7	2	0

I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	50	45	2	2	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	62	35	0	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	46	46	3	5	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	70	22	5	0	2

· **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents appreciated the good support for special educational needs and the range of extracurricular activities.