

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Lea St. Mary's Catholic Primary School**

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire LEA

Unique Reference Number: 119634

Headteacher: Mrs E. T. Schofield

Reporting inspector: Mr P. M. Allen  
OIN 17531

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2000

Inspection number: 186810

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior and Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Darkinson Lane Lea Town Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR4 0RJ
Telephone number:	01772 729881
Fax number:	01772 729801
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K. Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	21 <sup>st</sup> November 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr P. M. Allen	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Music	How high are standards?
		Under-fives	How well are pupils taught?
		Equal opportunities	
		Special educational needs	
Mrs B. McIntosh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr I. R. Worsnop	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Information technology	
		Design and technology	
		History	
Mrs A. Brangan	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well is the school led and managed?
		Art	
		Geography	
		Physical education	
		English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

Pennine Inspection Services

6 Bridle Dene  
Shelf  
Halifax  
HX3 7NR  
01274 602139

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Inspection Quality Division  
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Alexandra House

33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's R. C. School is a voluntary aided Catholic school situated in the small rural village of Lea Town. It is a below average sized primary school which serves the parishes of St Mary's, Lea Town and St Robert's, Catforth. A small number of pupils are drawn from the local area but the majority are from the western suburbs of Preston. The isolated nature of the school means that pupils have to be transported, many by school bus. The intake is varied in both background and attainment. Attainment on entry to school is currently judged to be broadly in line with what might be expected. Children enter school at the beginning of the year in which they become five. The vast majority have had experience of pre-school education. There are 97 pupils on roll with significantly more boys than girls. There are 18 on the register for special educational needs, three of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Since the previous inspection the school has been extensively extended and modernised. It now consists of a new two-storey teaching block containing four modern fully equipped classrooms, two for each key stage. The original building, now refurbished, provides extra rooms, including an office, staff room and library. The school aims to provide the highest quality of all round education for all children irrespective of their abilities. The school has set targets for future developments, including the raising of attainment at Key Stage 1, together with the development of the information technology curriculum.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school with a will to become more effective. Pupils make satisfactory and often good progress, most achieving well in relation to their abilities. In relation to national standards, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than they are at the end of Key Stage 1. Positive and purposeful leadership is provided by the headteacher. The quality of teaching is mainly good or very good. In light of the costs involved, the standards achieved and the quality of education provided, the school gives an overall good value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- ◆ The very good teaching at Key Stage 2 produces high standards.
- ◆ The pupils' very positive attitudes, their very good behaviour and the very good relationships all have a significant impact on the quality of learning.
- ◆ There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- ◆ The quality of the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports the caring, Christian ethos.
- ◆ The staff work hard and are committed to the school and its pupils.
- ◆ There is a very good partnership between the school and the parents who are very supportive.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- ◆ Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics.
- ◆ The information technology curriculum and provision.
- ◆ The amount of time for teaching at Key Stage 2.

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



## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a steady improvement since the last inspection in November 1995, building on the strengths which were identified in that report. The National Curriculum results at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved since that time. Links with the parents and the community have been significantly developed. The key issues have largely been addressed. Most significantly, the accommodation has been improved. Long term planning, assessment, resources, teacher appraisal and opportunities for pupils to have cultural experiences have all been significantly developed. There is still a need to teach an effective curriculum in information technology. There is a shared commitment to further improve the school through a programme of review and development.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	A*	B	D	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A*	B	C	
Science	B	A*	A	C	

Evidence indicates that the under-fives attain well, especially in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. National assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 are affected by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards of attainment for most pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages and for some they are above. Although the pupils observed generally attain well relative to their abilities, there is recognition of the need to raise standards at the end of Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are judged to be good and above national averages. This clearly reflects the pattern of attainment over previous years. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than they are at the end of Key Stage 1, relative to national averages. Standards of presentation and handwriting are variable across the school. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory as pupils do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes of the pupils	Reception children develop very positive attitudes to school and this start is continued throughout the school. Pupils are enthusiastic towards school and want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Levels of behaviour are very good both in lessons and around the school and the older pupils set a good example, providing good role models for the younger ones.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. The school promotes self-esteem. Relationships are very good with children respecting, valuing and supporting each other.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Pupils are generally punctual and there is a prompt and positive start to the school day.

Pupils are well motivated by lessons and co-operate well in group tasks displaying good relationships and positive behaviour.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5 - 7 years	aged 7 - 11 years
Lesson seen overall	Mainly good	Mainly good	Mainly good

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

During the inspection 50 lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was always at least satisfactory. In 24 per cent of the lessons it was very good, in 54 per cent of the lessons it was good and in the remainder it was satisfactory. Teaching was particularly good for the youngest pupils and especially good for the oldest pupils. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good. The school plans carefully to meet the needs of all its pupils, including those with special educational needs. The very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 has consistently produced high standards over recent years.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall the curriculum is broad and balanced, except in information technology and physical education. In information technology pupils do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlement. In physical education, pupils are denied important experiences because of the lack of a hall.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for these pupils is very good. Their needs are well catered for and they are well integrated into

	the life of the school.
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The very good provision for spiritual and moral development and the good provision for social and cultural development are integral to the life of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for all its pupils within its caring, Christian ethos.

The school has very effective relationships with parents and this has a significant impact on the quality of learning. A high priority is placed on the care and nurture of the children.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is providing conscientious and purposeful leadership which benefits from the commitment of the staff who work very hard for the good of the children. The school development plan provides a useful tool for managing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable chairperson, is very supportive of the school. There is recognition that governors need to become more involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A purposeful start has been made in school self-evaluation through analysing data to inform targets for improvement. There is recognition of the need to further develop the monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Resources for most areas are comprehensive and well used. There is an appropriate number of staff, although there is a need to maximise the efficient use of the time of the classroom support staff. The headteacher and the governors plan ahead carefully to develop resources in line with the school's priorities, with appropriate consideration given to the principles of best value.

Staffing levels are satisfactory overall. The extension and refurbishment programme has been a success but the lack of a hall affects many aspects of school life, such as physical education, collective acts of worship and dining arrangements. Good use is made of time except that teaching time at Key Stage 2 is below national recommendations.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ The good progress being made.</li><li>◆ The standards of behaviour.</li><li>◆ The quality of teaching.</li><li>◆ The expectation that children will work hard and do their best.</li><li>◆ The quality of leadership and management.</li><li>◆ The support given to help the children to become more responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ A significant number of parents would value more extra-curricular activities,</li><li>◆ A significant number of parents are concerned about the lack of a hall.</li></ul>

Due to prevailing circumstances there have been few extra-curricular activities this year. The school has firm plans to review the provision of extra-curricular activities. The inspectors endorse parents' concerns about the lack of a hall which has an adverse effect on the quality of education provided. Pupils do not receive an appropriate physical education curriculum and the number of pupils in classrooms for assemblies is unsatisfactory. Virtually all the views expressed were very supportive of the school and inspectors' judgements support these positive views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. National performance data over a four year period, from 1996 to 1999 gives useful evidence of standards of attainment at the end of both key stages. Given the relatively small numbers, overall evaluations can be significantly affected by the number of pupils with special educational needs. This is the case for the Year 2 group in the summer 2000 tests where a quarter of the pupils were identified as having special educational needs and did not reach the appropriate levels. Standards of attainment for most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national averages and for some they are good and above national averages. Standards are higher overall in reading and writing than they are in mathematics.
2. The 1999 results for Key Stage 1, together with those over recent years, have been lower than those observed during the inspection. In 1999, the reading and mathematics results were well below national averages and those of similar schools. In writing they were broadly in line with the national average but well below that of similar schools. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, national performance data indicates a similar pattern where the performance in writing is better than in the other subjects. The performance in mathematics over that period was well below the national average.
3. All the evidence indicates that standards at Key Stage 2 have risen since the last inspection. The judgement of the inspection team is that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are good and above national averages. This pattern of attainment will be confirmed in the very creditable summer 2000 results, when a significant number of pupils will achieve the higher level 5, notably in mathematics and science. These standards are broadly reflected in the 1999 tests. In English they were above the national average but below the average for similar schools. In mathematics they were above the national average and in line with similar schools, whilst in science they were well above the national average and in line with similar schools.
4. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, national performance data indicates that the performance of pupils was well above the national averages, especially in English and mathematics. During the inspection, evidence collected indicated that teacher expectations were very high and progress was very carefully targeted, with the very good quality of teaching having a very positive impact on the standards achieved and the progress being made. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are significantly higher than at Key Stage 1. Progress is more marked towards the end of Key Stage 2 than it is towards the end of Key Stage 1.
5. Staffing difficulties at Key Stage 1 have caused some instability over recent years and this has had an adverse effect on standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, there is a clear issue for the school to address. That issue, recognised by the school, is to raise standards at the end of Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics. The school needs to raise standards to those creditably achieved at Key Stage 2. A start has been made, so that most of the current Year 2 pupils have achieved well, although more needs to be done, especially in mathematics.
6. As the inspection took place at the end of the school year, there was just one child who was under five. Judgements are therefore based on observations of the younger children,

including those who have recently become five, together with a review of previous work. Levels of attainment on entry to the school vary from year to year. Nevertheless, on admission at the age of four, currently most children have levels of knowledge and understanding which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make a good start and progress in the Reception year is good. Consequently, by the time of entry into statutory schooling, the children reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes for their age and some exceed them. The under-fives attain well especially in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. The careful match of work to their needs and the good contribution made by the nursery nurse ensure their good progress. The good quality of teaching has a significant impact on the progress made by the children, as do the positive influences of working alongside older children.

7. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and inspection evidence indicates that they make good progress overall in English, where good use is being made of the literacy hour. Progress is generally more marked in the early years and the latter part of Key Stage 2. Throughout the school pupils attain good standards in speaking and listening. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils listen attentively and speak confidently. In writing, skills are good at Key Stage 2 and average, but improving at Key Stage 1. Standards of handwriting and presentation although generally good for older Key Stage 2 pupils, are variable across the key stages, and the school needs to target the raising of standards in this area. In reading, pupils make good progress. Most pupils are fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 2 and the good support given by parents in hearing children read at home has a significant impact on the good standards achieved.

8. The numeracy hour is having a positive impact on standards, especially in mental arithmetic. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have covered all areas of the mathematics curriculum, they have some understanding of factors and prime numbers and can use simple algebra. In shape, space and measures, they have knowledge of the features of two and three-dimensional shapes. Most have developed problem solving skills and can use a variety of ways to organise their work. Pupils display an interest in mathematics and make satisfactory and often good progress throughout the school with progress more marked in Years 5 and 6. The school is beginning to make progress in its drive to raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1.

9. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding and develop good investigative skills in science. They experiment with heating and cooking and with the forces of pull and push. They learn to predict and evaluate. They study the parts of the body and work with electricity building circuits. They learn the difference between things that are living and things that have never been alive. They explore the properties of gas and conduct experiments on the weight of air. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the need for fair testing. They show both interest and enthusiasm for science work. They use focused exploration and investigation to acquire scientific knowledge, understanding and skills.

10. An issue in the previous report was to teach an effective curriculum in information technology as standards, learning and teaching were judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards in information technology are still unsatisfactory across the school because pupils do not have full access to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Although the school has moved forward significantly in recent times and some skills have been developed, there is recognition that much remains to be done. Overall, pupils make insufficient progress in information technology.

11. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good and inspection evidence indicates that they make

appropriate progress in art and physical education and good progress in design and technology, geography and history. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress; the work is supported by clear individual education plans which identify targets for learning. The school has made a good start in target setting recently and its analysis of assessment data and target setting is an area which is progressing well. The critical issue for the school is to continue to raise standards at Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics, so that results at the end of that key stage are as creditable as they are at the end of Key Stage 2.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school continues to be as high as that described in the previous report and contributes significantly to the standards they achieve. Relationships and pupils' attitudes to the school continue to be of a high quality.

13. All staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and this contributes to the very pleasant and well-ordered community in which learning is supported. This reflects parents' positive views of attitudes and behaviour in the school. Pupils settle quickly in class, are attentive to their teachers and listen carefully to what others have to say. They clearly enjoy their work and approach their tasks with enthusiasm.

14. Reception children, including children under five, develop positive attitudes to school and this is continued throughout the school. They settle quickly into school routines and build up very good relationships with adults and each other. They are keen to learn and undertake tasks well. They are co-operative with each other, amicably sharing resources and taking turns with large outdoor play equipment. Children are attentive and follow instructions well. They have good social skills and are starting to develop aspects of their independent learning. Children move quickly from whole class teaching sessions into small group activities consolidating and practising skills learnt with the whole class.

15. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes and are well motivated. They show a good level of interest in their work and apply themselves well. During lessons, pupils respond well to instructions from teachers and very quickly settle to work. They enjoy the interesting activities provided and can sustain good levels of concentration. In all classes, pupils are eager to contribute to discussions and employ previous learning in their answers and suggestions; for example, Year 2 pupils were keen to discuss differences between toys and games used in Victorian times and those they play with today. Year 3 pupils enjoyed a stimulating quick-fire questioning session about Tudor sailors and explorers. Older pupils become more confident and articulate in expressing their views and participate in question and answer sessions in a very mature way. This was seen during several literacy lessons when they were describing and evaluating a range of texts and authors.

16. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and when at play is very good. When handling tools and materials in design and technology lessons pupils do so carefully and sensibly. They are sensible as they line up for lunch, which takes place in the limited space of two classrooms. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion and older pupils enjoy the opportunity to eat their packed lunches at the picnic tables in the playground. At playtimes, pupils mix well and play together in a friendly way. Older pupils set a good example, providing good role models for the younger ones.

17. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils show initiative in their learning and assist in the daily routines of the school when they enjoy taking responsibility for tasks in class and



around school. As the children become older, they successfully improve their personal development and social skills, becoming confident learners. Pupils are adept at carrying out independent research work either using reference books or the CD-ROM. They are keen to listen to each other and hear about each other's interests. Pupils lead their class assemblies with confidence and pride, whilst their peers listen attentively to their presentations.

18. Relationships throughout the school are of a very high standard. Pupils are friendly, polite and helpful to adults. There is emphasis on self-discipline and promoting self-esteem which helps to create a friendly and orderly community. This benefits pupils' learning and the standards attained. They give good support and encouragement to each other. During lessons and assemblies they are keen to share each other's successes and achievements; for example, in a physical education lesson, pupils were genuinely pleased with each other's improved performances in the timed shuttle runs. Very pleasant and calm relationships were established during this lesson especially given the element of competition. The school is a happy, harmonious community. Attendance at the school is good and parents agree overwhelmingly that their children enjoy coming to school.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

19. In the previous report the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better, with consistently good teaching in Reception and Key Stage 1. During this inspection, 50 lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In 24 per cent of the lessons observed it was very good and in 54 per cent it was good. Teaching was particularly good for the younger pupils and especially good for the oldest pupils. The very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 has consistently produced high standards over recent years.

20. Teachers work very hard with a strong commitment to the school and its pupils with whom they enjoy good relationships. Teachers work with enthusiasm; for example, when one teacher and the pupils discuss the e-mails they have sent to and received from one another. Teachers show a good knowledge of individual pupils and their needs. They provide feedback on performance, partly through effective marking; they set homework which is both appropriate and manageable. Teachers have good subject knowledge, especially in English and mathematics, but confidence in information technology is less secure. They show good technical competence in the teaching of phonics and in the teaching of mental skills.

21. Most of the teaching observed was effective and purposeful. In the most effective lessons, the quality of teaching has a clear and positive impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour, on their productivity and on the standards of work produced. Targets are clear, expectations are high and pupils are kept on task. Pupils are well trained and know exactly what is expected of them; they realise that poor work will not be accepted. Where teaching is not as effective, the management of pupils is less secure, expectations are not as high, pupils do not produce as much work and progress is not as significant.

22. The teachers have successfully implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, carefully adapting them to the needs of the school. Both strategies are having a positive impact on the standards being achieved. Independent group time is carefully considered and, during the inspection, this part of the sessions worked better when there were other adults in the room to supervise the group work. The teaching is usually well planned, generally well organised and engages the interest of the pupils. Although the classroom helpers give good levels of support, consideration needs to be given to maximising the use of their time and skills. For some of the time, classroom support staff are observers taking a

passive role, with too little direct involvement in the teaching.

23. The youngest children receive good support. The teaching for Reception children, including those under five, is consistently good, providing a solid foundation for level 1 of the National Curriculum. The teaching benefits from the effective partnership of the teacher and the nursery nurse. The teaching is carefully structured and this is shared with the children; for example, the teacher says "Now we are going to do our word work". Personal and social learning is emphasised. Children are encouraged to develop self-control and independence coupled with learning to work co-operatively. The staff encourage the Reception children to aspire to the achievements of the Year 1 pupils who provide effective role models for their young friends. The work reflects the ethos of the school and gives the children a positive start to their school lives.

24. As the inspection took place at the very end of the school year and part of the time was given to Year 6 leavers making a visit to their secondary schools, it was particularly clear that the work for the oldest pupils prepares them well for the next phase of education. The very good quality of teaching impacts on the standards and the progress being made. In a literacy hour observed, the teacher introduced the author and a well chosen text with pace and clarity. The focused questioning provoked thought, took learning forward and ensured that everyone stayed on task, concentrating well. There is very effective management of the whole class, leading to group work which is appropriate to the needs of the various ability groups and where only the pupils' best work is acceptable. The pupils respond well and at the end of a productive plenary, when the teacher says, "I've enjoyed that, have you?" the pupils answer in the affirmative.

25. Most pupils have very positive attitudes and become engaged in their lessons. The teaching generally meets the needs of all the pupils. The quality of teaching has a positive impact on the learning and progress of those pupils with special educational needs for whom work is usually provided which is well matched to pupils' ability and builds on pupils' current skills and understanding. Teaching is focused on the targets identified in helpful individual education plans. These pupils receive good support from both the teachers and the classroom assistants.

26. The school has made a good start in the monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, co-ordinators and local education authority advisory staff. The further development of this programme can impact on the quality of teaching so that feedback from structured lesson observations provides clear targets for improvement. The further raising of the quality of teaching can make an effective school more effective as well as improving the quality of education provided.

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

27. The curriculum offered to the pupils is generally broad and balanced except in information technology and physical education. There are elements of the physical education curriculum which the school cannot provide due to the lack of hall space. The school meets statutory requirements in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Statutory requirements are not met in the teaching and provision of information technology and currently pupils do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlement in this subject.

28. The school has effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy,

which are based on the national strategies. The literacy and the numeracy hours have been successfully implemented. Appropriately the school has adapted the strategies to cater for the needs of the pupils, given the wide range of age and ability in the classes. The strategies are having a positive impact on the standards achieved.

29. Although the classrooms are housed in a new building, the lack of a hall severely restricts activities in physical education. Currently lessons in this subject have to be taken in classrooms or outside in the playground or school field. This is not a satisfactory situation. In addition to severely affecting activities in physical education, the lack of suitable accommodation restricts collective acts of worship. Key stage assemblies are held three times each week in the restricted accommodation offered by the classrooms. Full assemblies are also conducted in a classroom in extremely cramped and unsatisfactory conditions. Currently, the school has two such assemblies each week. Parents are invited to one of these assemblies in which achievement rewards are given to pupils.

30. The size of the school's new classrooms is only adequate in classes which contain small numbers of the youngest pupils. Where pupils are older and class numbers larger, classroom space is cramped and barely adequate. Because of the lack of a hall, pupils have to eat their midday meal in two classrooms. This entails pupils having to walk along corridors carrying trays to and from the serving hatch.

31. The last inspection report cited the provision of information technology as a weakness and an area for development. Since that time the school has made some good progress but recognises the need for further developments in its teaching and provision in the subject to enable pupils to receive their full curriculum entitlement. The school is currently closely following a subject development plan and has established a small computer suite, which is now connected to the Internet. Through its links with the local small schools' cluster, the subject co-ordinator is exploring possibilities of establishing links with a school in the United States of America. Resources are adequate in the subject and staff have been involved in training days, with more planned for next term. Additionally, teachers now receive the valuable assistance of the school's secretary who works in information technology on a part time basis in a number of schools.

32. Overall teaching time at Key Stage 1 is in line with national recommendations but teaching time at Key Stage 2 is below recommendations. Morning lessons do not always extend to the allotted time, mainly due to the problems of organising assemblies. This affects the school's ability to teach the full literacy hour. Following the last inspection's observations, the school has appropriately reviewed the time devoted to the teaching of all curriculum subjects.

33. Pupils' achievements in national testing in the core subjects at the end of Key Stage 2 are good and above national averages. The school is now working to address the recognised pupil underachievement, especially in mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 1. A homework policy has been established with importance being given to improving pupils' reading skills. At the beginning of each school year, parents are provided with details of topics each class will cover. Additionally, other areas of the curriculum often involve pupils in work at home; for example, in design and technology, where pupils produced some very imaginative model totem pole models during their half term holiday.

34. Assessment strategies were an issue raised by the last inspection. Appropriate systems and approaches have now been developed, particularly in English and mathematics, and teachers' planning is good. The school recognises there is a need for further developments;

for example, in the recording and tracking of pupils' achievements in information technology and in the development of strategies for assessing the foundation subjects

35. All pupils have equal access to the school's curriculum. The governing body has decided not to provide formal teaching in sex education but to adopt the policy of answering questions and addressing concerns whenever they arise. The last inspection report praised the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. This good provision has been maintained and the school is rightly proud of its achievements. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school.

36. Good progress is being made in developing the roles and responsibilities of curriculum subject co-ordinators in the monitoring of teaching and learning and curriculum planning. Co-ordinators responsible for English, mathematics, science and religious education have had opportunities to observe lessons. Observations are discussed with teachers and recorded. The headteacher and the local education authority adviser have also observed lessons. There is some subject specialisation with teachers exchanging classes for the teaching of some English activities, science, design and technology and physical education. The school's history and geography curriculum is studied in alternate terms.

37. Curriculum resources are generally good with the exception of physical education. The school's library has been audited and a full reclassification has been undertaken with the help of the local education authority library services. Resources for Reception children have been improved.

38. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual and moral education and good provision for their social and cultural education. Pupils are responsive and attentive in assemblies even though these are conducted in unsatisfactory conditions. Pupils are reflective in story time and listen to and become involved in prayer and the singing of hymns. Pupils learn to consider others as their neighbours and a candle is lit whilst the youngest pupils think deeply and sincerely about one of their friends who has left the school. Grace is said before the midday break and a prayer and a 'thank you' offered to their teachers and their fellow pupils before leaving for home in the afternoon. There is a real sense of community and care in the school.

39. Pupils are aware of the differences between right and wrong. Each year they discuss class rules and have opportunities to alter them or introduce new ideas. Rules and the school's Mission Statement are well displayed in classrooms and common areas. In assemblies and lessons, pupils are taught the importance of rules and thought-provoking statements encouraging friendship and good behaviour are on display in some classrooms. Pupils are polite, welcoming and friendly. The school operates a points system for the rewarding of good behaviour, politeness and achievement. Certificates are awarded which pupils keep in their own files and a trophy is awarded to winning teams.

40. Pupils accept responsibility in classrooms for distributing and tidying away some resources. They take registers to the secretary and, very politely and routinely, hold open doors when classes are filing along corridors or down stairs. Pupils work well together. They share ideas and resources and show good levels of independence and self-discipline; for example, during lunchtimes, which are generally orderly and civilised despite being very poorly accommodated.

41. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced through their studies in art, history and geography; for example, pupils' studies and work in Kuna Indian art. The school offers pupils a

stimulating environment where their work is well displayed and celebrated. Since the last inspection, the school has made good advances in teaching pupils about other beliefs, faiths and cultures. Pupils have visited a local temple and the school curriculum now includes lessons on Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.

42. Pupils' social development is broadened through contact with members of the local community; for example, when local people visit the school and talk with pupils about life in the community in the past. The school holds a fête each year that also involves members of the local community. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have swimming lessons at the local pool and have been involved with pupils from other small schools in football matches, swimming galas, athletics events and cross country running competitions.

43. Pupils visit the local power station to learn about electricity. They visit museums, concerts, local zoos and theatres. Older pupils visit a local Field Centre when studying aspects of the science curriculum. Visits are also made to the local high school to watch plays and concerts and where some pupils are involved in additional music lessons. Recently great excitement and interest was generated when older pupils visited the Millennium Dome and the youngest pupils travelled to the Eureka Museum. Many parents are concerned about the lack of extra-curricular activities. The school has offered activities in computer studies, choir and football practice but acknowledges that, because of staffing problems, provision has suffered over the current school year. The school intends to fully review its provision of extra-curricular activities.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

44. The school is successful in providing a caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel safe, are able to develop their confidence and independence and concentrate on their learning. Personal support for the pupils is good. There is a positive atmosphere and teachers know their pupils well. They take every opportunity to react positively with them and raise their self-esteem. Pupils are happy to come to school. Pupils support each other well during lessons and in their play.

45. Pupils' behaviour is very good and is a strength of the school. The whole culture of the school is one of sensible behaviour, self-discipline and consideration for others. Attention to good behaviour receives a high priority and it is well managed. Teachers and other staff maintain good discipline in a calm effective manner and pupils respond well to their praise and encouragement. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare.

46. Attendance levels at the school are consistently good. Procedures for following up unexplained absences are rigorous and effective and as a result there are very few unauthorised absences. Certificates are awarded at the end of the year to pupils with full attendance.

47. Members of staff provide a good level of supervision and carry out their duties in a caring way. Comprehensive welfare procedures are in place. The health and safety of pupils receives a high priority and effective practice is in place to carry out regular risk assessments around the school premises. Arrangements for child protection are good and all staff are aware of the requirements. Pupils are taught about keeping safe through their programme of personal, social and health education.

48. Since the last inspection, the school has improved assessment procedures and made

good progress in developing a system of recording and assessing pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Staff use the assessment components within the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which help assess pupils performance in terms of specific learning outcomes. Baseline assessments are established on entry to the school and are providing useful information. Effective use is made of pupils' profiles to record significant information about progress.

49. The headteacher has developed very useful individual assessment profiles in English and mathematics. Information is appropriately collected on pupils' achievements in standardised and national tests to enable the school to track the progress of pupils over time and make predictions for individual levels of attainment in the end of key stage tests. The school tracks the progress of boys and girls in each year group to ensure that the pace of learning is similar for both genders. Additionally, each child has a record of achievement folder containing information on attainment and samples of work. In subjects other than English and mathematics, there are no whole school systems to record the acquisition of knowledge and skills and individual teachers have developed their own procedures.

50. Pupils' personal development is monitored and recorded well. Assessments are made of pupils' personal qualities such as attitudes and behaviour and details on attendance are recorded. The school is most successful in valuing pupils' achievements and recognising their successes. Educational guidance for pupils is good. Work is well matched to pupils' academic needs; for example, through booster classes for those who are on the threshold of reaching a higher level in the national tests. This has a significant impact on raising the achievements of groups and individual pupils.

51. There are clear and effective procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and the school's arrangements meet the requirements of the national Code of Practice. The provision is very good and pupils make good progress. Each of the pupils on the register has an appropriate individual education plan with suitable realistic targets. The school gives good, consistent support to these pupils in the development of their skills.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. Since the last inspection, the school has built upon the strengths identified in the report and developed an effective working partnership with parents. Parents' views indicate strong support for the school; this was demonstrated by the number who attended the meeting prior to the inspection and the very high number who returned questionnaires. Parents are interested in school and support their children well. They feel that this is a welcoming, approachable school where their children make good progress and achieve good results. Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views.

53. A significant number of parents responding to the questionnaire expressed concern about the range of provision for activities outside lessons. Due to particular circumstances there have been few extra-curricular activities this year but the school has firm plans to review the provision. Inspectors endorse parents' concerns about the lack of a hall which has an adverse effect on the quality of education provided. Pupils do not receive an appropriate physical education curriculum and the number of pupils gathering in classrooms for assemblies is unsatisfactory.

54. The school gives some good useful information to parents and encourages them to become involved in their children's work. Class teachers provide detailed information on topics

and work to be covered at the beginning of the school year. Good information about the school's daily life and events is available in the prospectus, governors' annual report and weekly newsletters. Successful meetings for parents on the curriculum have been held providing useful information about reading, literacy and numeracy. Parents are always welcome to talk informally to staff at any time if they have any concerns regarding their child. There are also formal opportunities for them to meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress. Parental attendance at meetings and school events is good.

55. Pupils' annual reports give good information about attainment and progress clearly highlighting strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects. The school provides a helpful booklet for volunteer helpers in school. The school works closely with parents of pupils with special educational needs, providing early identification of concerns. Parents attend reviews and are kept well informed of the child's progress.

56. The school has done much to establish effective relationships with parents and works hard to encourage and welcome them into school. Parental involvement has a good impact on both the pupils' learning and the work of the school. All parents are encouraged to take an active part in the life of the school and their child's education. A good number of parents help in class regularly and many more are willing to assist on educational visits.

57. There is positive involvement of parents and pupils in the social and fund-raising activities organised by the committed Friends' Association which provides good financial support to the school. Parents have made a good contribution towards the cost of the new school building. Children receive good support from parents when work is sent home. Many listen to their children read and make useful comments in the home-school book. The school's partnership with parents is very good and is one of its many strengths.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

58. The headteacher, staff and the governing body are working very effectively as a team in moving the work of the school forward. The headteacher is providing conscientious and purposeful leadership, has successfully raised expectations and is setting and achieving goals for improvement. There is clear recognition that raising standards at the end of Key Stage 1 is a priority. The school is meeting its aims and most parents are pleased with the way these aims are reflected in the pupils' achievements and personal development.

59. The previous report identified the need to both produce a development plan which linked strategic planning more closely to the educational needs of the school and to find ways of evaluating how effective efforts were in raising the standards and quality of education. The format of the school development plan was revised and this is now a detailed document which places developments in a framework of values and structures, with costings, identification of responsibilities and a sequence of actions to be followed. As the plan runs only for the current year, it is complemented by outline planning for a further three years.

60. The governors, led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable chairperson, are very supportive of the school. Many of them work with the school on a regular basis thus gaining good insights into curriculum developments; for example, the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours. Governors have established committees and begun to accept responsibility for oversight of particular aspects of school life, such as special educational needs, finance, health and safety, child protection, numeracy and literacy. Although some informal monitoring of literacy and numeracy by the governors is being developed, there is recognition that governors need to become more involved in monitoring the work of the school. Statutory

requirements are met except for some elements of the information technology curriculum which are not implemented.

61. The commitment to provide equal opportunities for all pupils is reflected in the aims, objectives and Mission Statement of the school and is successfully achieved. The ethos of the school is based on the Christian teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. The school is very successful in providing a shared, safe and secure environment which has a significant beneficial impact on the teaching and learning.

62. There is an appropriate number of staff, although there is a need to maximise the efficient use of time of the classroom support staff. Co-ordinators are well qualified and well matched to their roles, either by basic qualification or by training and experience. The headteacher effectively monitors teaching and learning, especially in literacy and numeracy, and gives verbal feedback to the teachers. There is an experienced special educational needs co-ordinator and the work with those children is supported by the classroom support assistants. Good induction procedures are in place for any newly qualified teachers who have the support of a mentor as well as much informal help from the whole staff. The appraisal cycle is now in place which is an improvement since the last report. The staff generally work well together, informally sharing their expertise to improve the quality of teaching and learning. All science and design and technology at Key Stage 2 is taught by the respective co-ordinators.

63. The arrangements for professional development are satisfactory and well focused on curricular developments. Whole school training is provided in key areas and members of staff have opportunities to attend courses of specific relevance to their work. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have had a major impact on teaching techniques and standards but there is a need, recognised by the school, to focus on the improvement of standards in literacy and numeracy at the end of Key Stage 1.

64. The quality of the accommodation has been improved very significantly since the last report with the recent refurbishment of the original building and the addition of a two storey teaching block with four modern fully equipped, but small, classrooms. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of education provided. The lack of a hall curtails activities in physical education, drama and collective acts of worship. There are hopes that a school hall is to be built in the future but no definite plans are in place. Two hard surfaced playgrounds are well marked for imaginative play and a large playing field is situated to the rear of the school. Concerns about the safety of a leaning wall are to be addressed as the local education authority has given permission for work to be undertaken in the summer holidays to bring this wall up to acceptable standards.

65. The level of learning resources is good. Considerable work has been carried out to develop a well resourced library. The school is well supplied with both fiction and non-fiction books. A very good range of picture books and sets of books support the work in the literacy hour.

66. The headteacher and the finance committee take responsibility for monitoring the school's budget. The budget is approved by the finance committee and then presented to the full governing body. Funds allocated for the support of pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. The headteacher and the governors plan ahead carefully to develop resources in line with the school's priorities, with appropriate consideration being given to the principles of best value.



67. The day-to-day administration of the school is good. The school secretary has a good understanding of both the school and the local education authority systems. She makes a positive contribution to the efficient running of the school ensuring that the best value is achieved when ordering stock and buying in services. The school is now due for an audit and has addressed all the points raised in the last audit report. The school fund account is audited annually. The school is bright, orderly and tidy and benefits from the conscientious care and commitment of the caretaker who is also the cook. Pupils receive good support from the rest of the efficient kitchen and supervisory staff.

68. Most pupils arrive promptly and there is a positive start to the school day. Good use is generally made of time, except that teaching time at Key Stage 2 is below national recommendations. The school needs to review this situation.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed. In order to further raise the standards and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ improve the information technology curriculum and provision by:
  - *continuing to review the level of resources, both hardware and software;*
  - *continuing to develop staff confidence through support and training;*
  - *developing more opportunities to use computer programs to reinforce learning and to practise skills in other curriculum areas;*
  - *developing more routine use of computers with opportunities to practise the skills which have been taught;*

(paragraphs 10, 20, 27, 31, 60, 114, 115 and 116)

- ◆ target raising standards at Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics by:
  - *increasing pupils' productivity in their work;*
  - *raising expectations of what higher attainers can achieve;*
  - *involving parents and pupils in setting clear targets for improvement;*
  - *continuing to improve the very good quality special educational needs support;*

(paragraphs 4, 5, 8, 11, 33, 58, 80, 83, 88, 92, 95 and 103)

- ◆ review teaching time at Key Stage 2.

(paragraphs 32 and 68)

In addition to the above areas, the following less critical areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 7, 22, 27, 29, 30, 38, 62, 64, 86, 89, 139 and 146:

- ◆ target all interested parties to expedite the provision of a hall;
- ◆ review the role of the classroom support staff in order to maximise the efficient use of their time to support the teaching and learning;
- ◆ improve presentation and handwriting to make them more consistent across the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	49

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	24	54	22	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll	97
Number of pupils eligible for free school meals	6

#### Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupils mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	9	9	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	7	7	8
	Girls	8	9	8
	Total	15	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (92)	89 (93)	89 (85)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	16	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (100)	89 (100)	94 (100)
	National	80 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	5	8	13

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 or above	Boys	3	4	4
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (100)	85 (92)	92 (92)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 or above	Boys	2	4	5
	Girls	6	8	8
	Total	8	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (100)	92 (92)	100 (92)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	83
Any other minority ethnic group	1

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3 : 1
Average class size	24.5

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	193,501
Total expenditure	191,58
Expenditure per pupil	2,017
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,750
Balance carried forward to next year	26,670

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out:	98
Number of questionnaires returned:	83

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	49	45	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school	52	42	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good	61	34	4	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	39	46	12	1	2
The teaching is good	61	37	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	52	35	11	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	65	24	6	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	64	34	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents	49	36	8	0	7
The school is well led and managed	52	40	1	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	60	34	4	0	2
The school provides as interesting range of activities outside lessons	10	40	38	6	6

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

69. As the inspection took place at the very end of the school year, of the 12 children in Reception, only one child was under five. Judgements on under-fives are based on observations of the younger children, including those who have recently become five, together with a review of previous work. Although attainment varies from year to year, the competencies of most children are broadly in line with what could be expected at the time of entry into school at the beginning of the year in which they become five.

70. Evidence collected during the inspection indicates that the children will reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time of entry to statutory schooling and that some will exceed expectations for children of this age. Attainment in all the areas of learning is generally good, although attainment in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development is particularly good. Children make good progress by practising, consolidating and extending their skills. They have a good foundation upon which to build by the time they enter Key Stage 1 and most are working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum. Their time in the Reception year gives them a positive start to their school lives.

71. Good support is provided by the nursery nurse, part of whose role is to work with the under-fives. The quality of teaching is good and benefits from the very good relationships. Pupils in Reception are taught alongside Year 1 pupils and the presence of older children as role models has a positive impact on the rate of learning and on the expectations of the staff. The planning for the class appropriately takes into account the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five and level 1 of the National Curriculum. The teacher and the nursery nurse show a good knowledge of individual children and their needs and there are very good relationships with parents who are appreciative of the good start the children are given. The good quality of the teaching has a very positive impact on the levels of attainment, the progress the children make, their attitudes and behaviour and their self-esteem.

72. Appropriately personal and social development is seen as a very clear priority and the children attain well. At the time of the inspection the children were very well established in school and were confident and secure in their school environment; good levels of confidence impact well on the quality of learning. Children show increasing levels of concentration and perseverance and are eager to explore new learning situations with obvious enthusiasm. They consider the consequences of words and actions for themselves and others. They enjoy taking part in 'circle time' when they listen well to one another. They respond well to lunchtime as a social occasion. They learn about personal safety through a well supervised 'Walk Right Project' when they go outside the school to learn about road safety.

73. A high priority is given to language and literacy and evidence indicates that most children attain well in this area, making good progress. The children's needs are catered for during a version of the literacy hour which, when the weather allows, leads to opportunities for outside play, this enables the children to spend an appropriate length of time on the literacy input. Children develop good speaking skills, learning to listen well to each other. They enjoy familiar stories at the listening station. Reading is highly valued and children quickly learn that text conveys a message and that it is read from left to right and from top to bottom. They associate sounds with letters and read simple text using these skills. They are developing early writing skills and they can write and recognise their names. There is a very good range of available books, including big picture books. Although space is tight, a role-play area provides a range of learning environments to stimulate speaking and listening skills; for

example, a shop, a café and a surgery.

74. Most children attain well in numeracy and are beginning to work towards the appropriate National Curriculum targets in mathematics. Most can carry out addition to five using objects to help them and higher attainers carry out addition to 10 and can order numbers to 20 competently. Children complete sequential patterns, make simple bar graphs and weigh a variety of objects. They gain a good understanding of mathematical terms such as shorter, longer, heavier and lighter. They benefit from a good range of counting games and through singing number rhymes.

75. Children are given good opportunities to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn about their own village considering old buildings, including the church. They could benefit from access to maps showing Lea Town. They make a plan of the classroom and create a map of their journeys to school. They learn about the seasons of the year and the characteristics of each one; they keep simple weather records. They learn about the past; they review their own lives and compare themselves now to when they were babies and in so doing they acquire appropriate vocabulary to express the passing of time. They learn about toys from the past. They celebrate the millennium by burying a time capsule. They learn about living things by using the school's grounds; they grow cress and beans; they recently planted a beech tree. They learn about parts of the body and the parts of a plant. They experiment with bulbs and batteries and with magnets and magnifying glasses. They enjoy making models with construction kits, although this area could be developed. Technological understanding benefits from access to computers with a range of software which could benefit from further development.

76. Children make good progress in their creative development. They use paintbrushes confidently, mixing colours to produce the desired effects and colours. Most are competent at using Plasticine and play dough to make models and there are good opportunities for children to cut and stick. They sing a range of songs and begin to develop a sense of rhythm, enjoying nursery rhymes and action songs. They learn to accompany themselves on percussion instruments.

77. Children show increasing co-ordination when using a range of tools in their work, such as scissors and pencils. They handle construction apparatus competently. A good range of activities promotes the development of fine motor skills. The provision in physical development is significantly disadvantaged by the lack of a hall, where children could be given valuable opportunities to develop co-ordination in the development of skills. There are good opportunities for outside play when children enjoy playing with the new large toys and equipment which includes some new bicycles.

78. The resource provision for the under-fives has a positive impact on the standards achieved and the school is reviewing its curriculum in light of the new national Early Learning Goals about which there is great deal of confidence and optimism in the staff.

## **ENGLISH**

79. The previous report judged that standards of achievement in speaking and listening, reading and writing were satisfactory or better throughout the school both for the pupils' ages and abilities. Although the standards have broadly been maintained at Key Stage 1, all the evidence indicates that standards at Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection.

80. In the 1999 Key Stage 1 results, standards in reading were well below the national



average and well below the average for similar schools. Standards in writing were in line with the national average and well below those for similar schools. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, the performance of pupils in reading was slightly below the national average and in writing it was slightly above the national average.

81. Given the relatively small numbers, overall evaluations can be significantly affected by the number of pupils with special educational needs. This is the case for the Year 2 group in the summer 2000 tests where a quarter of the pupils were identified as having special educational needs and did not reach the appropriate levels. The judgement of the inspectors is that standards for most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages and, for some they are above. This judgement is reflected in the results for 2000 where in reading half of the cohort gained a level 2a or 3 and in writing where a quarter of the cohort gained a level 3. Overall, these results show an improvement on recent years.

82. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are significantly higher than at the end of Key Stage 1. All the evidence indicates that they have risen since the last inspection. The judgement of the inspection team is that standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are good and above national averages. This pattern of attainment will be confirmed in the creditable summer 2000 results. National performance data shows that this pattern of attainment is reflected in the 1999 results and also in the pattern of results taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together. Overall, this represents a picture of consistently high attainment.

83. During the inspection, evidence collected indicated that, in the class of oldest pupils, teacher expectations were very high and progress was very carefully targeted. The very good quality of the teaching was having a very positive impact on both the standards achieved and the progress being made. Progress is more marked towards the end of Key Stage 2 than it is towards the end of Key Stage 1. The main issue as it relates to English, recognised by the school, is the need to raise standards in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1. The school needs to raise standards to those creditably achieved at Key Stage 2. A good start has been made, so that most of the current Year 2 have achieved well in the tests of summer 2000, although more still needs to be done.

84. A number of pupils were heard to read during the inspection and these observations indicate that reading standards are generally good throughout the school. This is partly because of the high priority given to it and partly because of the high level of parental support. Pupils make a positive start in reading, developing good levels of fluency, accuracy and understanding. They learn to meet the reading demands of the National Curriculum. Pupils, from the youngest onwards, develop a good range of phonic skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have developed a range of strategies for dealing with unknown words. They read with understanding and expression. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are developing into enthusiastic and reflective readers who can gather information from a variety of sources. Many show a love of reading and a good knowledge of the work of a variety of writers.

85. Overall, standards in written work are good but could sometimes be higher, with more demands made on the pupils and higher teacher expectations. In Reception, pupils develop early writing skills, sometimes writing about their own lives and experiences. From writing about their own lives, pupils learn the foundations of story writing. At Key Stage 1, they write about their own home and about getting up in the morning. They retell well-loved stories such as 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'Cinderella'. They write about the characters from 'Fantastic Mr Fox'. They create illustrated book sleeves with details about their favourite Dick King Smith books. They have sound opportunities to apply their writing skills across the curriculum; for

example, in science when describing experiments and in religious education when writing about the lives of Biblical characters.

86. At Key Stage 2, pupils are given good opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and audiences; for example, extended stories, prayers, book reviews, reports, poems and letters. In the early part of the key stage, pupils write stories about 'a favourite toy' and about 'a special person'. They reflectively write about friendship and making choices. They write poems about 'happiness', about 'special wishes' and about 'the seaside'. They describe 'a day in the life of a Roman soldier'. Older pupils are given a wealth of opportunities for purposeful writing. They write letters to local villagers about life 50 years ago. They compare Lea Town with Preston Dock. They enjoy good opportunities for story writing and, following an extract from a book called 'The Lottie Project', they write extended stories. Evidence was seen during the inspection of very sensitive poetry writing, some of it about pets. One pupil writing about her dog wrote of 'his wagging tail a whipping sword, his bark a lion's roar'; one pupil wrote of his cat as a 'noble soldier marching around the house running away from the other cats . . . but as she sleeps beside the fire, she turns into a household cat waiting for the adventures of the day to come'. Work of this quality is the outcome of teaching which inspires pupils to write. Pupils learn to write fluently and at length, with generally good standards of spelling and punctuation. Standards of presentation and handwriting, although usually good for the oldest pupils, are not always consistent across the school. This is an area for the school to review.

87. Standards of speaking and listening are good for most pupils. Pupils of all ages generally listen attentively; for example, in assemblies and stories. They are generally confident when answering questions and giving explanations and engage well in conversation with adults. Pupils are able to reflect on their experiences; for example, younger ones when discussing their visit to the Eureka museum and older ones when describing their recent day in London to visit the Millennium Dome. Older pupils are able to speak clearly and express their opinions giving reasons; for example, when discussing their favourite writers, reflecting on their seven years at the school and when sharing their anxieties about moving to the next school.

88. The good quality of teaching means that the pupils respond well. Attitudes and behaviour are usually very good, partly because the lessons proceed at a good pace and engage the pupils' interest. Pupils work well together when undertaking paired tasks, showing perseverance and seeing the task through to the end. The quality of teaching impacts on the progress being made. The quality at Key Stage 1 is beginning to impact on the raising of standards which is necessary for those pupils. The very good relationships add to the quality of learning. The school has nurtured a very real interest in reading for many of the pupils. Most pupils work productively, giving of their best.

89. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages with very good teaching for the oldest pupils. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Teachers manage pupils well and make good use of praise and encouragement. Focused questions and discussions are a feature in all lessons. The literacy hour is providing a consistency in approach for each class and good use is made of the strategy planning resources. Teachers capture the interest of the pupils through the imaginative use of materials. Pupils are given sound opportunities to develop word processing skills, although this could be further developed. The teaching valuably emphasises the importance of speaking and listening. Although classroom support staff make a good contribution, consideration needs to be given to making the most efficient use of their time and skills. For some of the time in literacy hours, they are observers taking a passive role, with too little direct involvement in the teaching. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. Positive support is provided by the voluntary helpers in school and the many parents who give valuable help with home reading practice.

90. Standardised tests for reading are administered, optional national tests are used and strategies for day-to-day assessment and regular monitoring and recording of pupils' progress are developing well. There are useful practices in place to track the progress of individual pupils using individual portfolios. Pupils' work is marked carefully and there are many examples of good, constructive comments which are helpful to pupils for the improvement of their work. A lot of hard work has been invested in adapting the literacy hour to meet the particular needs of the school; procedures for its implementation ensure consistency of structure to lessons and are impacting on standards achieved.

91. The provision of resources meets the needs of both the National Curriculum programmes of study and the National Literacy Strategy and includes a well stocked library. Good use is made of books and topic packs provided by the local education authority's library loan service. There is a useful policy which is reviewed annually and the national strategy is forming the basis of a scheme of work. The curriculum is enriched through visits to the local secondary school for plays and musical events. Pupils benefit from the annual celebration of World Book Day. The work benefits from the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator who, together with the headteacher, has undertaken some classroom observations of the literacy hour. The further development of the monitoring of teaching and learning can impact on the quality of teaching so that feedback from lesson observations provides clear targets for improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

92. National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 indicate that the number of pupils achieving level 2, which is in line with expectations for pupils of this age, was close to the national average. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels 2b and 3 was well below the national average. When compared with all schools or similar schools the standards of attainment are well below national averages. Taking the past four years together, national performance data indicates that standards have been well below the national averages. In 1999 the results in mathematics were lower than those in reading and writing and this pattern of attainment is confirmed over the four year period.

93. National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 indicate that standards of attainment in mathematics were above the national average when compared with all schools and broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. Overall, performance for the past four years has been above the national average. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is significantly lower than it is at Key Stage 2 and raising standards at Key Stage 1 is an important issue for the school to address.

94. Inspection findings show that overall standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are affected by the fact that one quarter of the Year 2 pupils have special educational needs; this will affect this year's national test results, when only one pupil will achieve the higher level 3. Standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are judged to be good and above the national average. At the time of the last report standards of attainment were satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and high at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are now broadly similar, whilst attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is still high.

95. Progress is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good across both key stages; they are set clear targets and progress is monitored appropriately. Inspection findings indicate that some steps are being taken by the school to raise attainment at Key Stage 1 and improve progress; for example, by using the self-evaluation data analysis tasks to identify areas for development. Progress is

least marked where the work set lacks challenge and pupils quickly and correctly complete the set tasks and more demanding work is not provided.

96. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are acquiring an understanding of basic number and number patterns. They recognise some mathematical shapes and can measure appropriate units. Many show skill when estimating, solving numerical problems, recording and interpreting data and using graphs. Reception and Year 1 are very familiar with numerals from one to twenty; they use doubling and halving techniques confidently; they put the correct time of o'clock, quarter past, half-past and quarter to on plastic clocks. Year 2 pupils count in tens to 100. They are becoming familiar with fractions of quarters and halves through practical work of folding small paper 'pizzas'. They know the term semicircle and they know that rectangles, squares and triangles can be divided into halves and quarters.

97. Year 3 pupils build on previous knowledge learnt at Key Stage 1. They count in larger numbers up to a 1,000. They know about more complicated fractions and use correct mathematical terms; for example, numerator and denominator. Year 4 pupils use fractions and decimals leading on to proportion. Most pupils use decimal and fraction notation well and recognise 'sequence' pattern as a proportion. Year 5 pupils record data by tallying information and transferring it to a frequency table; they understand mode and medium. By Year 6, pupils confidently understand and work out percentages, know about proper and improper fractions and inverse operations. They understand nets of a cube and a cuboid, can calculate and measure angles, can relate scale distance to actual distance and they can understand reflecting co-ordinates. Open-ended investigative type activities are incorporated into many lessons at this key stage. Many pupils in Year 6 are reaching standards above the national average for this age group.

98. Pupils enjoy their mathematics, are well behaved and work well throughout the school. They show high levels of interest, respond well, listen to others and are generally appreciative of others' achievements. Pupils show genuine pleasure at others success; for example, Year 6 applauded the pupil who knew about the 'commutative law'. Very good relationships are established in all classes between teachers and pupils. Most pupils confidently share their ideas with their peers and respect between them is most evident.

99. All the teaching is good with some very good in Reception and Year 6. All teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and activities. Good teaching strategies are used; for example, in Reception, pupils are encouraged to write the numeral 5 in the air with their fingers whilst chanting a verse 'nice long neck, fat tummy, put hat on'.

100. Where the quality of teaching is very good there is evidence of previous good teaching; for example, the older pupils use mathematical terms like 'vertical axis' and 'inverse operations' quite naturally when answering questions or explaining their strategies. Regular work in mental mathematics is a feature of the teaching at all stages and contributes to the good standards of numeracy attained by most pupils. Teachers use homework well to supplement the class work and this makes a good contribution to the standards attained. When teaching had shortcomings, these related to limited chances to use the computer to investigate mathematical patterns and consolidate their learning. There are a smaller number of lessons with little differentiation so that the higher attainers find the work unchallenging and, at times, these pupils' capabilities are underestimated.

101. The policy is to be reviewed and updated to contain elements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The scheme of work is taken from the National Numeracy Strategy and the school has made a good start in implementing this strategy. The school uses a range of methods to

assess pupils' progress, including the optional national tests for Years 3, 4 and 5. Useful records of pupils' progress are maintained by the teachers in the individual pupil portfolios.

102. The curriculum co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has monitored the teaching in each class, giving oral feedback to the teachers. The subject is being co-ordinated in a conscientious and effective way. Good links have been established between the governing body and the staff and the nominated governor for numeracy has observed some lessons.

103. Staff have been well prepared through in-service and in-school activities for recent developments, most notably the National Numeracy Strategy. The subject is well resourced. Evidence indicates that standards are beginning to rise at the end of Key Stage 1 and this needs to continue.

## **SCIENCE**

104. Teachers' assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that standards are good and above national averages. Achievement in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are very good and well above national averages. Test results over the last four years show similar results. The school has maintained its standards and results of tests completed in 2000 show a continuation of pupils' high achievement in science. Inspectors' findings support these results. Standards are broadly in line with those of similar schools.

105. In Reception and at Year 1, pupils take turns to complete weather records each day. Pupils explore the properties of various kinds of materials, such as paper, card, wood and plastic, observing and recording the results when these are submerged in water. They work with magnets, sorting and predicting which objects will be attracted or repelled. Older Key Stage 1 pupils combine their work in science with that in the literacy hour when reading together from a Big Book. They learn about weather recording symbols and how rainfall and temperature are measured. Pupils experiment with heating and cooling and with the forces of pull and push. They learn to predict and evaluate. They study the parts of the body, work with electricity and, using card and glue, build a model lighthouse illuminated through the use of a circuit, bulb and battery. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the difference between things that are living and things that have never been alive and know that plants need light and water to grow.

106. At Key Stage 2, pupils use their knowledge of mathematics when studying and measuring the growth of a sunflower. They explore the properties of gas and know that gas, like a liquid, will take the shape of its container. They know that gas is invisible and that it is dangerous because it is flammable. They make predictions and conduct experiments on the weight of air, their observations and conclusions being evaluated through a good level of discussion. Pupils value their visit to the local power station and are often able to talk and discuss with conviction using appropriate words, for example, atom, neutron, proton and reactor. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use focused exploration and investigation to acquire scientific knowledge, understanding and skills.

107. Pupils respond well to their work and make good and often, very good, progress. They join eagerly in discussion using appropriate scientific vocabulary. Pupils behave well and often show pride in their work. Older pupils enjoy their work and become very involved, so much so that many of them will stay behind at the beginning of playtime to continue their discussions with their teacher. Pupils draw on past experience when making their predictions and use previously gained knowledge and understanding when exploring new situations; for example, when discussing his visit to the Millennium Dome, one pupil explains why its model eye reflects

an upside down image. Pupils learn that initial hypotheses may well be wrong even though based on previous ideas and knowledge; for example, when one pupil declares that air makes certain things light and therefore, cannot have weight. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

108. The quality of teaching in both key stages is often very good. Teachers plan their lessons well. Good, and often very good, use is made of demonstration and questioning to further pupils' understanding and learning when introducing lessons and when discussing results of experiments and comparing predictions. Teachers exhibit good subject knowledge and make good use of scientific terms and vocabulary. There are high expectations of pupils and lessons and discussions are generally conducted at a brisk, challenging and motivating pace. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and occasionally lessons are usefully punctuated with humour and anecdote. Where opportunities arise, teachers refer to other areas of pupils' knowledge; for example, the use of ambiguous sentences when pupils are writing their experiment conclusions on the weight of air. Good use is made of visits to local businesses and interactive museums to extend pupils learning and knowledge.

109. There is a policy and scheme of work based on the nationally prescribed guidelines. The subject co-ordinator teaches all the lessons at Key Stage 2. Planning is good, records of achievement are kept for the older pupils and assessment procedures, including practice test sheets, are being developed. Recently a school portfolio of work has been developed. The school recognises that further work is needed in this area to establish an agreed, whole school approach to assessment. Resources are good and are regularly audited. Future plans involve considering the implications of Curriculum 2000.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

110. Standards of attainment in information technology are unsatisfactory, as pupils do not currently receive their full National Curriculum entitlement in the subject. This was an issue in the previous report and although the issue has been partially addressed, there is still much to do.

111. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, pupils learn about control technology when they work with a small control box and learn to enter a short program for sequencing the flashing of a bulb on a model lighthouse. Pupils use the computer during their work in the literacy hour. Using a CD-ROM, they find information about different animals and begin to word process their discoveries. Younger pupils handle the mouse confidently to click on icons, follow instructions and learn to print and save their work.

112. At Key Stage 2, pupils work well together in small groups when programming robotic toys. They successfully use their knowledge of angle turns to correctly instruct the toys to describe given routes of travel across the classroom floor. Then, responding to the teacher's challenge, they give the toy new directions to draw given letter patterns on large sheets of paper. Pupils use computers to word process their creative writing and poems and, using the recently installed Internet facility in the small computer suite, they send short e-mailed messages.

113. Pupils enjoy their work in information technology. They are well behaved and work co-operatively in small groups. Older pupils show good levels of perseverance when confronted by a problem or challenge. Although pupils made progress in the activities observed, overall they make insufficient progress across the various aspects of the subject.

114. The quality of teaching observed was good at both key stages. Through challenge and encouragement, teachers are often very successful in motivating their pupils to achieve good levels of learning. Work is clearly explained and even the youngest pupils are able to work independently on the computer in small groups. However, there were only two occasions where pupils were observed using information technology in a cross-curricular way. This is an approach which the school needs to develop to ensure the subject is used relevantly and routinely by all its pupils.

115. Teachers have been involved in computer training sessions, some of which have also included parents. More training sessions have been arranged for the next school year. There is a positive attitude to the school's need to further develop its information technology curriculum through the school. A recent initiative, involving the small schools' cluster and a school in the United States of America, is being considered by the school which would involve good use of the recently installed Internet facilities. The small schools' cluster organisation has also been responsible for establishing the school's secretary as an additional teacher of information technology working in several schools in a part-time capacity. The school's resources are good with some of its computers housed in a small suite in the library. The school is developing strategies for whole school assessment and currently individual teachers are responsible for recording pupils' achievements.

116. Currently the school is following the nationally prescribed guidelines for its information technology scheme. This is being complemented by the inclusion of teachers' ideas. There are plans to bring all these approaches together in order to establish a whole school scheme of work. The school needs to establish strategies to ensure pupils have routine, relevant and cross-curricular access to information technology. The school has moved forward in its information technology provision but there is much to do to ensure that pupils receive full access to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

## **ART**

117. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. No lessons in art were observed during the inspection. Sufficient evidence was available from the pupils' previous work and discussions with pupils and teachers to allow judgements to be made.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can express their ideas and record their observations in a variety of media. They know how to mix colours to produce tones and shades and can use tools and techniques safely. The youngest pupils make puppet fish on sticks; this has links with their mathematical work to reinforce numbers one to twenty. Pupils illustrate the work of authors Roald Dahl and Dick King Smith with pencil drawings and crayon work. Year 2 pupils experiment with finger and stick puppets using a variety of materials. Using doilies, lace paper and card they make Victorian picture frames. For their Easter baskets, they dyed eggs using crêpe paper and water and finished with wax crayons to make a batik effect.

119. The work in Years 3 and 4 often supports other subjects such as history and mathematics. Pupils research and make a collage of Queen Elizabeth I; they use their mathematical skills to make repeated, rotating and connecting patterns. Year 5 and 6 pupils learn about William Morris and, after looking carefully at his work, they draw and make collages inspired by his style. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experienced a good range of observational and imaginative work. They practise and refine their techniques through the use of sketchbooks. The work of famous artists such as Matisse and Hockney is studied. Pupils study these artists' techniques in detail, comment on their effectiveness and then produce their

own pictures in the same style.

120. The art curriculum is generally sufficiently broad and balanced and pupils work with a range of media, techniques and styles. There is evidence of more experience provided for three-dimensional work since the last report. Clay modelling is experienced across both key stages.

121. The co-ordinator is an art specialist and has very good subject knowledge. The medium term plans are sent to the co-ordinator in advance of the teaching and she checks that all areas of the curriculum are being covered. The policy is in the process of being updated and the scheme of work is to be reviewed in the light of the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Work in the school is displayed appropriately and when the pupils talk about their work, it is clear that they are proud of it and enjoy seeing it displayed. Assessment procedures with aspects of progression are built into the new scheme of work to be used in September. The subject is well resourced.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. Pupils make good progress at both key stages. In Reception and Year 1, pupils work on designing and making puppets. They begin by drawing faces on their thumbs, move on to making small stick puppets and then progress to producing hand puppet characters. On completion these are evaluated and pupils remark on the difficulties they have experienced and identify what they have learnt in stitching their materials together. They demonstrate their puppets, to very good effect, in short plays and productions; for example, the singing of Old Macdonald's Farm, illustrated with nodding and waving dogs, horses and sheep, was enjoyed by the pupils during the inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to understand health and safety issues when working with materials and components.

123. At Key Stage 2, pupils use card, boxes and other junk resources to make models of musical instruments, such as scrapers and shakers. Older pupils use modelling clay and tools to make imaginative and expressive figures assembled into totem poles. They continue their work during their half term holiday and produce large models made from a variety of materials. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to consider the effectiveness of a piece of work, such as the musical instruments.

124. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Lessons are well planned, organised and resourced. Teachers give pupils clear instructions and good levels of help and advice during practical activities. Lessons are conducted at a good, challenging pace. Pupils are well behaved and use tools and equipment sensibly. They enter into discussion and enjoy their work. They show good levels of concentration and are justifiably proud of their achievements.

125. There is a subject policy and a scheme of work based on nationally prescribed guidelines, involving three topics each year, which the school intends modifying to comply with Curriculum 2000 requirements. A two year rolling programme of work has been prepared for pupils in Key Stage 1 and this will be introduced at the beginning of next term. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are taught by the subject co-ordinator. Some teacher assessment is made of pupils' work and achievements. Resources are good and provision has recently been audited. As well as a review of the curriculum, the subject co-ordinator's future plans include developing assessment procedures through the school with emphasis being placed on identifying pupils' problems for future class reference.



## **GEOGRAPHY**

126. Due to the way the timetable is organised, no teaching was seen in geography. Therefore there is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements on the quality of the teaching and the pupils' response to it. Judgements are made from discussions with the teachers, talking to pupils, the scrutiny of pupils' work and displays across the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

127. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have some knowledge and understanding of their immediate surroundings. They write about buildings in the area; for example, houses, the local church and other public buildings. A plan of the classroom is coloured and named, although a template is used which detracts from the pupils' own creativity. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have some knowledge of direction and symbols in maps and know how to use scale. They follow the route of Sir Francis Drake to develop their mapping skills. Pupils' understanding of various and contrasting communities in England and the impact of development on the environment is broadly in line with that which is expected of pupils of this age. They compare the seaside town of Blackpool with the rural aspect of Lea.

128. A local study of Preston Docks is being covered by the older pupils. Pupils understand about dock regeneration from their visit to Liverpool; they know why Preston used to have docks and how erosion of riverbanks silts up the estuaries and prevents passage of ships. They know the location of countries on a world map and use atlases. Greece is studied both geographically and historically; they make good use of travel brochures to extend their knowledge of Greece. A study of the weather, including temperature, weather symbols, forecasting and climate, contributes to their learning. They know about the water cycle and that water vapour in the air condenses into water droplets forming clouds. Exploratory walks to the village to look at the brickwork on the church and to look at the different kind of houses and land usage are valuably undertaken. Pupils study India, comparing and contrasting lifestyles between this Third World country and their own.

129. The policy is in the process of being reviewed and updated for Curriculum 2000 together with the scheme of work. The subject is adequately resourced but there is a need to adjust some resources to the implementation of the new scheme. In the school review plan this subject is a priority for the next school year. Assessment records are retained in folders. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning and monitors teaching informally.

## **HISTORY**

130. Standards of attainment are good at the end of both key stages and pupils make good progress. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, pupils develop their sense of time and chronology when they explore and discuss old and new toys and the inventions which are used in homes. They look at toys shown on a large picture and identify those which are Victorian and those which are modern. They know that plastic and remote control technology, are both modern inventions and that the first buses were pulled by horses.

131. Older pupils study Tudor times. They learn about the Spanish Armada and using small world maps, follow the route taken by Francis Drake when circumnavigating the globe. Using card and paper and paint they assemble on the wall a large picture of a Tudor street, showing typical architecture and people of different social standing; for example, Henry VIII and a beggar. They discuss the results of change over a period of time when studying the local docklands and begin to understand how events and demands can lead to specific

developments and results. Across the periods of study, Key Stage 2 pupils are able to evaluate information and say whether it is fact or opinion.

132. Pupils remember previously learned facts and use their knowledge in discussion. They are generally well motivated by their tasks and show interest and concentration. Pupils generally behave well although there are isolated occasions when some pupils are restless and do not give their full attention to the set activity. Older pupils become very involved in discussion. They share ideas and give examples and suggestions with several staying behind at playtime to continue their conversations with the teacher.

133. The quality of teaching at both key stages is generally good. Work is well planned and organised and teachers have good relationships with their pupils. Questioning is used to good effect and teachers are successful in engaging pupils in discussion and in the exchange of ideas to further pupils' learning.

134. There is a policy which is soon to be reviewed. The school is currently adapting its own scheme of work in the light of the nationally prescribed guidelines. The teaching of history alternates each term with geography. Teachers keep records of pupils' learning and achievement but the school recognises the need to devise a whole school approach to assessment in the subject. Resources are good. Commercially produced worksheets are available for extension activities and the school makes use of the local education authority's loan service, which provides interesting artefacts. Visitors are invited into school; for example, a local historian, grandparents and members of the village community when pupils study local history. Future plans involve a review of the curriculum to comply with the requirements of Curriculum 2000.

## **MUSIC**

135. During the inspection no music teaching was seen and, as such, there is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about the progress made, the quality of teaching and the pupils' response to it. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils have access to the appropriate range of experiences. A good standard of singing was observed during assembly with well chosen songs to support the assembly themes.

136. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, pupils learn a wide range of songs, including ones for collective worship, which they sing from memory, both tunefully and enthusiastically. They develop control of breathing, dynamics, rhythm and pitch. They can recognise and can sing loud and soft sounds, using their voices in various ways, such as chanting and whispering. They have the opportunity to appraise pieces of music, such as Ravel's 'Sunrise' and Bartok's 'Adagio'. They develop an understanding that music comes from different times and places. They enjoy practising songs for performance such as those for the Christmas Nativity. They sang 'Old MacDonald's Farm' when they depicted the story using puppets they had made just prior to the inspection.

137. At Key Stage 2, pupils further explore pitch through voices and tuned percussion. Many pupils are able to compose and annotate a tune which they play for others. Pupils learn songs from around the world, including rounds and songs with two parts. They develop their listening and appraising skills. They are given opportunities to learn about dynamics, tempo, timbre and structure. They listen for similarities and differences in contrasting pieces of music. Most pupils are able to read music. Many pupils enjoy performing as a member of one of two choirs which performed prior to the inspection at the local schools' music festival. A large number of older pupils enjoyed attending a Millennium Jazz concert.

138. There is a recently reviewed policy and good use is made of a commercial scheme of work. The subject is well resourced with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Simple assessment checks are made using the scheme. Staff are enthusiastic about the scheme and the work benefits from the fact that five members of the staff can play musical instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. Pupils are denied full access to all the programmes of study of the National Curriculum because of the lack of a hall. During the inspection, a dance lesson in a classroom was observed and lessons were seen in athletics and dance outside.

140. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, pupils move appropriately to music improving body control and co-ordination. They focus on contrasting body tension to show a sense of rhythm by both moving on the spot and travelling around. Pupils know how to contrast stiff and floppy movements, imitating toys.

141. At Key Stage 2, pupils practise improving their performance in athletics. They practise long jumps, timed shuttle runs and throws in preparation for the English Schools Athletics Awards. All pupils are developing and refining basic techniques in running and jumping. They enjoy measuring their own performance, comparing and improving it.

142. Very little gymnastics is in place as pupils have no access to large apparatus. The curriculum is supported by weekly visits to the local leisure centre for swimming lessons for the Key Stage 2 classes. All pupils in Years 5 and 6 can swim at least 25 metres and only a small number of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are non-swimmers.

143. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the activities. They are keen to explore the tasks set and work successfully in paired or grouped activities. The older pupils collaborate very well; they stay on task supporting each other whilst the teacher is occupied; for example, in timing the shuttle runs. Pupils show genuine pleasure at others' achievements; for example, when congratulating the fastest runners during the practices.

144. Overall the teaching is satisfactory through the school and very good at the end of Key Stage 2. The most successful teaching sets high expectations and makes regular use of demonstrations by pupils to illustrate good practice. All teachers maintain good pace in lessons, are alert to individual needs and ensure that pupils are dressed appropriately. Changing and moving from the classroom to the playground or field is handled efficiently. Good routines are established and pupils change quickly, with even the youngest pupils needing very little adult assistance.

145. A football club meets weekly after school although this was not organised during the inspection. More extra-curricular provision for the autumn term is planned by the co-ordinator to include coaching in netball and hockey. An inter-school field sports day, a swimming gala and a hockey day are held annually.

146. The co-ordinator is new to the post. He is enthusiastic about the subject and has plans for its development. The policy is fairly new and the scheme of work is being developed to fit in with the new requirements of the curriculum. The subject is disadvantaged by the lack of a hall although good use is made of the playgrounds and playing field. No gymnastic equipment apart from benches are provided. The school needs a hall so that the pupils can have an appropriate physical education curriculum.

