

INSPECTION REPORT

St Peter's Catholic Primary School
Cobridge

LEA area: Stoke on Trent

Unique Reference Number: 124315

Headteacher: Mr Neil Orme

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lysbeth Bradley, RgI

Dates of inspection: November 22nd – 25th 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707796

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary with Nursery
Type of control:	Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Waterloo Road Cobridge Stoke-on-Trent ST6 3HL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Father M Meagher
Date of previous inspection:	January 29 th – February 1 st 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Lysbeth Bradley, Registered Inspector	English English as an additional language Information technology Geography History	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Brian Rance, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency
Rod Braithwaite	Under-fives Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs	
John Wright	Science Art Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	Curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils make good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and achieve average standards by the time they leave the school.
- Standards in swimming are above average by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching has improved significantly. During the inspection almost all lessons were satisfactory and over half were good or better.
- Children under five make good progress.
- The school makes effective arrangements for the professional development of staff.
- Support teachers and classroom assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning and ensure that all pupils participate fully.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- Staff look after the children in their care well.
- The school has good links with the local community which greatly benefit the pupils' education.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in information and communication technology, art, design and technology, geography and history.
- II. Above average and the most able pupils are rarely given sufficiently challenging work.
- III. There is no clear educational direction for the coherent development of the whole curriculum across the school.
- IV. The way in which the timetable is constructed restricts the school's ability to provide a flexible approach to teaching and learning.
- V. Assessment is not used effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- VI. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to take on suitable responsibilities or to show initiative as they become older.
- VII. Planning for pupils' cultural development is inadequate.
- VIII. There are not enough resources to support teaching and learning in a majority of subjects.
- IX. There is a high level of absence and lateness which limits the progress made by a significant minority of pupils.

The school has made satisfactory improvement and has a number of strengths to set against its significant weaknesses. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress overall in addressing the key issues. A significant amount of time and effort has been put into improving the quality and consistency of teaching and in developing long and medium-term planning. Teaching standards have improved considerably since the previous inspection when over 40 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory. Almost all lessons seen were satisfactory and over half were judged good or better. This has been brought about through regular monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and deputy in mathematics and English and a substantial involvement by staff in developing their professional knowledge and skills in these subjects. Teachers' lesson planning has improved and the needs of the majority of pupils are now met. The school has only very recently developed better systems for identifying those pupils with special educational needs. As a result, these pupils now make satisfactory progress in most lessons because work is matched to their ability and they are supported effectively by classroom assistants and support teachers from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. Teachers still do not meet the needs of above average and the most able pupils in their planning or teaching.

The school has gone some way to develop schemes of work. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented with a reasonable degree of consistency and effectiveness and the nationally

recommended scheme of work for science has been adapted to meet the school's needs and to provide continuity and progression. Although the school has chosen to adopt the recommended schemes for information technology, geography and history, insufficient work has been done to make them accessible and useful to teachers in their planning. Governors are now more involved in monitoring curriculum developments and all co-ordinators have agreed targets and receive a generous amount of time for the development of their subjects. Assessment procedures have improved, although they still have some way to go. Teachers have recently begun to make use of information to set targets for individuals in English and mathematics.

The school has been successful in improving the teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2 as indicated both by test results and inspection evidence. The teaching in information technology skills has improved at Key Stage 2 and the school plans to have all teachers working at a satisfactory level of competence by the end of 2000. The school has not made sufficient improvement in enabling pupils to use their developing skills in other subjects. Standards in swimming at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved, and are now good. There is no evidence to suggest that the teaching of art and geography has improved since the previous inspection. The teaching of both subjects, along with design and technology and history remain issues of serious concern. Most teachers still do not use a wide repertoire of teaching skills and subsequently do not do enough to develop pupils' creative or investigative skills and do not enable them to learn how to discuss and debate with each other. Because the headteacher and the senior management team have not closely monitored a wide sample of pupils' work, the school has failed to enhance the quality and range of the curriculum.

The school is judged to have a satisfactory capacity for improvement. Good systems have been introduced to improve teaching, learning and standards. The newly appointed deputy has already begun to influence the quality of teachers' and pupils' work. The governing body has high aspirations for the pupils and expects the headteacher and staff to meet their needs effectively now that the school is housed in good accommodation.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
English	E*	D	<i>well above average</i> A <i>average</i> C
Mathematics	E	C	<i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E <i>very low</i>
Science	E	D	

In the 1999 tests eleven-year-olds achieved very low standards in English and standards that are well below average in mathematics and science when compared with national results. When compared with schools where a similar proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals, standards are judged to be below average in English and science, but just above average in mathematics. The 1999 results show a significant decline in standards in all three subjects compared with the 1998 results where results in English and mathematics compared very favourably with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 remains very low when taking all three subjects together. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is working hard to raise standards and that whilst standards remain below average in English and science, they are in line with national expectations in mathematics. Standards in information technology are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Although a majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are making good progress as a result of the effective use made of recently acquired hardware and software, they started from a low base.

In the 1999 tests and assessments seven-year-olds achieved standards in reading, writing and mathematics

that are very low when compared with the national average and with similar schools. Teacher assessment judged standards in science to be very low. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving because of changes in staffing but remain below average. Standards in information technology are below national expectations because teachers have not got to grips with the new hardware and software. Children under five make good progress overall and most achieve the expected standards in their personal and social development. The vast majority does not achieve them in language and literacy, in the mathematical area, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, in their creative development and in some aspects of their physical development.

· QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information Technology		Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Inspected separately	under Section 23
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall although many of these lessons were in literacy, numeracy and science. Ninety-eight per cent of all lessons were judged to be at least satisfactory with over half of all lessons judged to be good or better. Thirteen per cent of lessons observed were judged to be very good, mostly in Year 6 where the most effective teaching was seen. Only two per cent of the 47 lessons or parts of lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory. No teaching was seen in art, design and technology or music and very little in geography. Examination of teachers' planning and pupils' past work, as well as discussions with pupils, indicates that teaching is unsatisfactory across the school in art, design and technology, geography and history, and in information technology at Key Stage 1.

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

· OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Satisfactory overall. The majority of pupils are well behaved in class and around the school. Playtimes can be boisterous and some older pupils play without due regard for the younger ones.
Attendance	Although levels of attendance have improved since last year, when they were a cause for serious concern, they are still well below the national average. There has been a reduction in the amount of unauthorised absence, but is still twice the national average. Significant numbers of pupils do not get to school on time.
Ethos*	Satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to have positive attitudes to work and to get on together. Relationships are good between pupils from different ethnic groups. Teachers do not generally have high enough aspirations for what pupils can achieve, although the school's priority is to raise standards.
Leadership and management	Unsatisfactory overall. The headteacher does not provide a strong enough steer to the development of the whole curriculum. The school has worthy aims but does not translate these into coherent and consistent practice. The governing body knows the school well and keeps a close check on the effectiveness of strategies set out in the development plan and the return on their investments. The deputy head has injected more rigour into planning and the use of teaching time, which is already beginning to pay dividends.
Curriculum	The curriculum has breadth but lacks balance at both key stages. Most pupils

	have insufficient time to develop skills progressively in a majority of subjects. Although assessment procedures have improved, they do not enable teachers to plan the next steps in pupils' learning sufficiently well.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is now satisfactory and enables pupils to meet their individual targets.
Pupils who speak English as an additional language	Pupils receive effective support from the specialist teachers and the bilingual assistant and this enables them to participate fully in literacy and numeracy lessons.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school promotes moral and social development well. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, but insufficient thought is given to planning for their cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing levels are good, although some teachers lack adequate subject knowledge in art, geography, design and technology and information technology. Support staff are suitably qualified and enhance the quality of pupils' learning. The accommodation is of a good standard, but resources are poor overall and not always easily accessible. The library is seriously inadequate. These deficiencies constrain both teaching and learning.
Value for money	Satisfactory. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is higher than the national average. When they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress, and although overall attainment is still below the national average, inspection indicates a slow but steady improvement in English, mathematics and science.

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

THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school

- X. They are encouraged to play an active part in school life.
- XI. They find all staff very approachable and helpful in resolving problems that arise from time to time.
- XII. They are kept well informed about their children's progress.
- XIII. Standards of behaviour have improved. The school encourages children to be polite and helps them build good relationships.
- XIV. They support the school's homework policy and believe that it benefits their children.

What some parents are not happy about

- XV. The school does not enable their
- XVI. The school could do more to

The inspection team supports parents' positive comments and also agrees with their concerns. Pupils are capable of achieving higher standards in many subjects, particularly above average and the most able pupils. The team also believes that the school could do more to communicate in languages other than English, for example, by translating important documents, such as the home-school agreement and the homework policy. The ethnic minority support staff have already held a very successful meeting to explain the numeracy strategy to Asian parents which was much appreciated by the very large numbers who attended.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

- In order to raise standards, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

Improve rates of progress in information and communication technology, art, design and technology, geography and history by:

- Providing appropriate in-service training so that all teachers have adequate subject knowledge in order to teach the National Curriculum effectively
 - Further developing schemes of work so that they provide sufficient guidance to teachers
 - Ensuring that the curriculum for information technology meets statutory requirements.
- (Paras 19, 20, 24, 33, 41, 43, 44, 49, 70, 79, 132, 133, 136-138, 140, 142, 143)

Provide more challenging work for above average and the most able pupils by:

- Enabling them to have more opportunities to carry out independent investigations, to develop their research skills, to present their findings in a variety of ways and to debate important issues
 - Involving them in target setting and in planning their own work.
- (Paras 22, 50, 90, 109, 115, 126)

Provide clear educational direction for the coherent and consistent development of the whole curriculum by:

- Ensuring that the headteacher has a secure overview of the curriculum and learning across all subjects in all parts of the school in order to guide key stage and subject co-ordinators in their work and to monitor their effectiveness
- Giving sufficient emphasis to all foundation subjects so that the full range of curricular opportunities is provided for pupils
- Making use of the generous time allocated to subject co-ordinators to monitor teaching, learning and

standards of work on a frequent basis

- Building into medium-term plans opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology
- Identifying ways in which pupils' cultural development can be enhanced and planning for it in a systematic way
- Ensuring there is an adequate range of good quality resources that are easily accessible to pupils and teachers so that the National Curriculum can be delivered fully
- Identifying criteria in the development plan against which to measure pupils' achievements and to evaluate the effectiveness of all spending decisions.
- Paras 21, 33, 45, 46, 60, 71, 73, 74, 83-85, 108, 114, 130, 139, 141, 142, 144, 146)

Ensure that assessment is used effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning by:

- Developing moderated portfolios of work in all subjects to enable teachers to be consistently accurate in assessing work
- Monitoring pupils' written work on a regular basis to ensure that marking is constructive and specific, and identifies what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve.

(Paras 53, 54, 72, 73, 129)

Give all pupils greater opportunities to take on suitable responsibilities and to show initiative in their lessons and around the school

(Paras 29, 41, 59, 84)

Further reduce the high level of absence and lateness by:

- Using the data collected to work with families whose children are frequently absent or late
- Implementing the proposed scheme to reward good attendance as soon as possible.

(Paras 31, 31)

§ **INTRODUCTION**

§ **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Peter's is a Catholic primary school with a nursery unit, which provides education for children between the ages of three and eleven. There are presently 182 girls and boys in the main school and 28 children who attend the nursery on a full-time basis. The school is about the same size as similar schools, although numbers are fluctuating. The school has little spare capacity in the nursery, which has places for 38 children. The ratio of boys and girls has shifted significantly over the previous seven years with many more girls among the oldest pupils and many more boys in the nursery.
2. The school is in Cobridge, an area of Stoke on Trent. Over the past five years there has been substantial investment through the single regeneration budget to improve social conditions and the area has seen all round improvement. Social problems and unemployment are being tackled and the community has been given renewed hope. In spite of these material improvements, children entering the nursery have lower levels of attainment than at the time of the previous inspection. Many children have had limited experiences, are immature and have poorly developed personal, social and literacy skills. The local authority baseline assessment confirms the low level of attainment of a significant number.
3. Children under five are taught in the nursery and the reception class. They start in the nursery as

soon as they reach the age of three and all move to the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. This means that all children spend three terms in the nursery and some spend five terms. At the time of the inspection, five children in the nursery had reached their fourth birthday and five children in the reception class were already five. The local authority's policy is for the nursery to be staffed entirely by qualified nursery nurses.

4. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals has increased by ten per cent since 1994 to its present level of 57 per cent. This is well above the national average and places the school in the lowest of the five groups for comparing standards with similar schools.
5. A very high proportion of pupils speaks English as an additional language. Between 1997 and 1999 the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language has increased by about ten per cent each year to the present level of 51 per cent. A majority of pupils comes from families who follow the Muslim faith but who choose for their children to be educated in a Catholic school because of the attitudes and values it promotes.
6. The school has 15 per cent of pupils on its register of special educational needs which is broadly in line with the national average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need who receives additional support. The school has very recently improved its procedures to identify those pupils who will benefit from clearly identified targets and the number on the register is increasing as a result. There were seven fixed-term exclusions in the last year, most relating to one pupil who has now been excluded permanently from the school to where he moved.
7. In September 1998 the school moved into a brand new classroom block, along with re-modelled administrative quarters and hall. This has completed the extensive building programme begun in 1991 with a purpose built nursery. The school has further building plans that will enable children under five to be located together and suitable library provision to be provided.
8. The school's aims are embodied in its mission statement 'Our school aims to develop a caring environment fostering co-operation and communication between home, school, parish and the local community in order to prepare pupils for their future role in society.' The purpose of the school is the Christian development of its pupils, their growth in their own faith and their awareness of the wider community in the world.
9. The school's four main targets are to raise attainment, particularly at Key Stage1, the further development of literacy, the successful introduction, development and resourcing of the numeracy strategy and the further development and integration of information and communication technology into the school curriculum.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999(98)	13	15	28

9. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	7	6
	Girls	6	6	3
	Total	16	13	9
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	57(75)	46(61)	32(47)
	National	77(80)	81(81)	84(84)

9. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	7	12
	Girls	5	3	6
	Total	13	10	18
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	47(57)	36(47)	65(79)
	National	(81)	(85)	(86)

Attainment at Key Stage 22

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999(98)	13	12	25

9. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	9	9
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	11	14	15
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	44(76)	56(57)	60(71)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

9. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	9	8
	Girls	6	5	5
	Total	12	14	13
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	48(76)	52(62)	56(71)
	National	(65)	(65)	(72)

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Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

9. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	7.1
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.9

Absence National comparative data 0.5

9.

9. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	7
	Permanent	0

9. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	13
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

9.

9. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

9. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

9. **Attainment and progress**

10. The previous inspection found that overall standards were below average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at both key stages and that there were serious weaknesses in mathematics at Key Stage 2 where pupils made unsatisfactory progress and achieved below their abilities. Standards in writing were also poor. In those foundation subjects where there was sufficient evidence available to reach judgements, standards were below average in information technology, art, geography and gymnastics at both key stages. No judgements were recorded on design and technology, history or music. Pupils with special educational needs made limited progress because their needs had not been identified or targeted quickly enough and many did not receive adequate support in class.
11. The school has worked effectively to address low standards in mathematics. As a result of systematic monitoring, constructive feedback on strengths and weaknesses in teaching and the introduction of the numeracy strategy, standards have risen at Key Stage 2. When pupils in the present Year 6 leave school at the age of eleven they are likely to attain standards in line with the national average in mathematics. Standards are still below average in English, science and information technology, although Standards in writing are beginning to improve as a result of the clear guidance provided to teachers on the teaching of spelling and pupils have been given well-planned opportunities for writing at length. Pupils continue to make unsatisfactory progress in most foundation subjects because not all teachers have adequate subject knowledge, time allocation and resources are inadequate, and teachers' planning does not enable pupils to develop and apply their skills in a progressive and systematic way. Standards have also improved in physical education with pupils making satisfactory progress in games and gymnastics, and good progress in swimming. Most pupils with special needs now make satisfactory progress, although the school has been slow to address the issues raised in the previous report.
12. When children start in the nursery at the age of three, most attainment is well below average in relation to their literacy, numeracy, and personal and social skills, although a few pupils have the potential to achieve above average standards. The local authority baseline indicates that although they make satisfactory progress overall in the nursery, and good progress in their personal and social skills, when they go into the reception class the attainment of the vast majority is still well below average, and very low in the mathematical area. Children make good progress in reception although by the time they reach statutory school age many children have still not achieved the desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy, in the mathematical area, in their knowledge and understanding of the world or their creative and physical development. The majority, however, achieve the expected standards in their personal and social development.
13. At the end of Key Stage 1, National Curriculum tests and assessments for 1999 show that pupils' attainment, when compared with the average points score nationally, was very low in reading, writing and mathematics. Results were also very low when compared with the results attained by pupils in schools with a similar free school meals entitlement. Between 1996 and 1998 standards declined steadily in reading, whilst standards in writing, having declined between 1996 and 1997 improved in 1998. Results in both reading and writing dropped substantially this year. Standards in mathematics have been declining steadily since 1996. Teacher assessments in science indicate equally low standards with pupils attaining well below the national average in 1998 and very low results in 1999. Very few pupils attained the higher level in reading or mathematics and no pupils attained it in writing and science. Pupils' very poor performance last year is largely attributed to poor teaching in Year 2, when pupils failed to build on the progress they had made the previous year. Inspection findings indicate that the situation has improved considerably in English and mathematics as a result of staffing changes and now that the literacy and numeracy strategies are beginning to take effect. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of the key stage, they are likely to attain below average standards in all three subjects.

14. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attained very low results in English when compared with the national average points score and well below average results in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools they achieved below average results in English and science and just above average results in mathematics. Trends over the three years between 1996 and 1998 show a steady rise in English, only for standards to plummet in 1999 to below the 1996 level. Although standards declined in mathematics between 1996 and 1997, they improved in 1998 and maintained the same level for 1999. In addition, 12 per cent of pupils attained the higher level 5 in 1999, an improvement over the previous year when no pupil attained the higher level. Results have been erratic in science over the past four years. Results declined significantly in 1997, only to improve along with mathematics in 1998. However, they dropped again in 1999 by 11 per cent at the same time as the national average improved by 11 per cent, thus widening the gap. No pupil attained the higher level. The school anticipated the poor results. The class had many low attaining pupils and spent two years using the hall as a classroom before moving into new accommodation and in their final year were taught by a supply teacher in the Autumn term. Inspection finds that the school is effectively addressing low standards at Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science and that pupils in the current Year 6 are attaining standards in line with national expectations in mathematics and below in English and science.
15. Test results present a mixed picture of the comparative attainment of boys and girls. In Key Stage 1, between 1996 and 1998, boys did not achieve as well as girls in reading, writing and mathematics. The local authority's analysis of the 1999 tests indicates that boys outperformed girls. In Key Stage 2, during the same period, results show that not only did boys achieve comparatively well when compared with other boys, but they achieved better results than girls in all three subjects. Inspection evidence finds no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls at either key stage, nor any significant differences between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
16. In English, pupils make satisfactory progress overall at both key stages, although there are significant differences between different aspects of the subject. The school places good emphasis on developing both reading skills and pleasure in books. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing basic reading skills and in using a variety of strategies when meeting unfamiliar words. They do not make the same progress in developing skills of comprehension, and often do not move beyond a literal understanding of the text, failing to appreciate the humour or subtlety of idiomatic expressions and figurative language. Although they make satisfactory progress in developing their listening skills, many pupils make unsatisfactory progress in developing their speaking skills as they move through the school. A minority of pupils demonstrates the ability to alter their register when talking to different audiences, or to modify their vocabulary sufficiently when moving between formal and informal speech. Older pupils do not often engage in debate or justify their opinions at length. Progress in writing is satisfactory overall. Good progress is being made recently in extended writing as a result of specific planning with clear objectives. Good progress is also being made in spelling where teachers have adopted a consistent approach across the school. Poor progress has been made in handwriting to date which the school has plans to address as a matter of urgency.
17. Pupils make steady progress through Key Stage 1 in developing their knowledge and skills in number and shape. Their use of language in mathematics is becoming more accurate. Through the national numeracy strategy, pupils are often making good progress in their numeracy skills, but not in the practical applications of mathematics, problem solving and data handling. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in their mathematics, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in manipulating numbers mentally. There is less evidence in lessons observed, and in workbooks, of pupils using and applying mathematics and handling data.

The school's commitment to the Numeracy Project has had a successful impact on their progress and standards.

18. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in science, although they do not have a secure understanding of scientific concepts and they make insufficient progress in developing and using their investigative skills. Pupils' limited ability to express themselves verbally hinders the progress they make.
19. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in information technology is below expectations because teachers do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the programmes of study and have not come to terms with the new hardware and software that the school has installed. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is also below expectations. Until very recently, the lack of appropriate resources at Key Stage 2 prevented pupils from developing their skills and understanding at a high enough level. Progress at Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and at Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory overall with rapid progress in the development of skills being made by pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.
20. At Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils make unsatisfactory progress in art, design and technology, geography and history. This is because teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of the National Curriculum, insufficient time is spent on each subject, planning is poor because lessons do not take sufficient account of pupils' levels of understanding, and knowledge and skills are taught in isolation. Pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education, with good progress being made in swimming at key Stage 2. No judgement could be reached on progress in music at either key stage because no music lessons took place during the inspection.
21. The development of literacy, numeracy and information technology skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory at both key stages because the teachers do not build relevant opportunities into their daily plans or ensure that pupils are using their skills at an appropriate level. Speaking skills are not well developed at either key stage because pupils rarely have opportunities to work collaboratively, exchanging ideas, justifying a point of view or generating their own questions. Pupils do not use their knowledge of number and measure often enough in geography or science. When opportunities arise they cannot apply them at the level planned by teachers. The use of information and communication technology has also been hampered by significant teething problems with the new system and inadequate technical support.
22. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall and good progress when working with support staff on specific targets. Average attaining pupils make generally satisfactory progress over both key stages. Above average pupils and the most able do not generally make the progress they could because teachers do not have high enough expectations and rarely set them work of sufficient depth or challenge. Neither pupils nor teachers set their sights high enough.
23. The school has a significant population of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Some of these pupils are well able to complete the set tasks but are limited in reaching a high standard of attainment due to their limited level of operational English. These pupils experience difficulty when trying to explain what they have learned or developed using the technical language of the subjects concerned. This is a limiting factor on the progress they might make.
24. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in mathematics at both key stages, but particularly at Key Stage 2. Standards in writing are started to improve since the new co-ordinator

for English introduced a clear strategy that is implemented with a satisfactory degree of consistency across the school. Standards have not improved in information technology, but the school has a coherent long-term plan to address staff training and to secure the necessary hardware and software to teach all strands effectively. The school has failed to address the low standards in art and geography identified by the previous inspection. Along with design and technology, and history, standards and progress in these subjects are in urgent need of improvement.

24. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

25. Overall, pupils' attitude to their schoolwork is satisfactory. Most pupils are interested in their work, concentrate well and become enthusiastic when lessons are stimulating. They do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their capacity for personal study through research, investigation and problem solving. Where teaching is well structured, pupils are motivated and work hard. The most positive attitudes were found in the reception class and Year 6.

26. Children under five enjoy coming to school and settle quickly into daily routines. They behave well in both nursery and reception and are beginning to understand right and wrong. They form good relationships with other children and adults, and are beginning to work co-operatively. They know how to share and enjoy helping to tidy away.

27. Satisfactory standards of behaviour have been maintained since the previous inspection. The majority of pupils are well behaved in class and around the school. Playtimes can be boisterous and some older pupils play without due regard for the younger ones. Pupils enjoy the rewards that they can earn and understand the warnings system that is used as a sanction for poor behaviour. Parents similarly understand and support the behaviour policy, which forms part of the home-school agreement that has recently been introduced. Parents report that behaviour has improved since the pupils moved into the new building and that their children take more care of property. There were seven temporary exclusions in the previous year, most relating to one pupil who has since been permanently excluded from his new school.

28. Relationships between pupils and adults, and among pupils, are satisfactory. When working together on tasks they help and support each other. They are learning to listen to what others have to say, and respect their views, for example in circle time. Most pupils are polite and pleasant with each other and they behave equally well towards adults and visitors, as well as staff and classroom helpers. Pupils, who come from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, work and play harmoniously together. No racist behaviour was observed during the inspection.

29. Pupils' personal development is unsatisfactory. There are generally too few opportunities for pupils to take on suitable responsibilities and only rarely are they enabled to show initiative or to think for themselves. Pupils in Year 6 undertake monitor duties and there are opportunities to participate in school productions and choir performances outside school. Little has changed since the previous inspection. Teachers have not yet developed sufficiently qualities of independence in their pupils either inside the classroom or within the school community.

29. **Attendance**

30. Pupils' attendance at school is poor. Taking account of both the high levels of lateness as well as

absence. Although the attendance level for the previous year, at 92 per cent, was a significant improvement on the previous year at 86.3 per cent, it has been consistently well below the national average for the past four years. Authorised absences are high at 7.1 per cent, although almost one-third of these is due to extended family holidays, often because parents return to their home country. Unauthorised absences are very high at 0.9 per cent, with over 40 per cent of pupils recording an unauthorised absence. Both the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus correctly report on absence statistics.

31. The incidence of pupils arriving late for school is very high. In this present autumn term two-thirds of pupils have recorded at least one late arrival at school. On average 10 pupils have arrived late every day this term. On the first day of the inspection some 32 pupils were late for school. This consistently high level of lateness disrupts the start of the day for all the pupils in school and these pupils are not learning the important self-discipline of punctuality.

31. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

31. **Teaching**

32. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection when over forty per cent of lessons seen were judged to be unsatisfactory and pupils in Key Stage 2, in particular, were making limited progress as a result. Of the lessons observed, ninety-eight per cent were judged to be at least satisfactory with over half of all lessons judged to be good or better. Thirteen per cent of lessons observed were judged to be very good, mostly in Year 6 where the most effective teaching was seen. Only two per cent of the 47 lessons or parts of lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory overall, but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, with 70 per cent of lessons seen were judged to be good or better in upper Key Stage 2.
33. No teaching was seen in art, design and technology or music and very little in geography. Examination of teachers' planning and pupils' past work, as well as discussions with pupils, indicates that teaching is unsatisfactory across the school in art, design and technology, geography and history, and in information technology at Key Stage 1. A majority of teachers have inadequate subject knowledge in more than one of these subjects. They are consequently unclear in their planning and often set their sights too low. They are not helped by the lack of specific guidance in schemes of work for several subjects and the absence of a co-ordinator in art, history and geography. Too much emphasis is placed on teaching facts, and insufficient thought is given to how pupils can learn new skills and develop their understanding. One lesson does not build on another in such a way as to enable pupils to make connections or to apply their knowledge and skills in a different context. All too frequently the lack of resources leads to teachers employing a narrow range of strategies or relying too heavily on worksheets, for example in geography. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. Music was not taught during the period of the inspection so it is not possible to reach a judgement.
34. The quality of teaching for children under five is good overall. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn. All staff, including support language teachers, work closely together to create a secure and welcoming atmosphere where the children feel valued and quickly adapt to day-to-day routines. Emphasis is properly placed on the development of spoken language and their personal and social skills. Teaching is satisfactory in the nursery. The experienced nursery nurses work, but do not have the benefit of the presence of a qualified teacher to support them on a daily basis. Activities in the nursery are always carefully

- prepared and planning identifies the expected learning in practical activities, for example those involving water, sand and role-play, as well as in language and mathematics. However, these plans are not always specific enough to assess children's development and ensure maximum progress is made, particularly by the few above average pupils. In the reception class, teaching is good overall and better account is taken of different levels of attainment to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in literacy and numeracy. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on developing their imagination and in developing their skills of using a range of materials and tools creatively.
35. Teachers have worked hard at both key stages to implement the literacy and numeracy strategies. Most have secure subject knowledge in both English and mathematics. In the better lessons, an enthusiasm for books or number was combined with detailed planning that built on previous learning and provided activities that were well-matched to pupils' needs and interests. Weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory teaching were largely related to inadequate use of assessment to ensure that questions and tasks were pitched at the right level. On these occasions, teachers were over anxious to tell pupils what they should know, rather than picking up their misconceptions and helping them to reach an understanding by sensitive questioning and clear explanations.
 36. Teachers from the local authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service work effectively with teaching staff to support pupils who have particular difficulties in accessing the curriculum because they speak English as an additional language. These teachers play a full part in lessons and provide much specific help and advice to class teachers. They also keep careful records of the performance of targeted pupils that informs future planning for these pupils. Their considerable expertise on language development and questioning skills is not fully exploited by the school.
 37. Pupils with special educational needs generally receive satisfactory support from their teachers, and frequently good support from classroom assistants and language teachers in literacy and numeracy lessons and through the programme for additional literacy support during reading sessions. Targets are set for pupils and are reviewed on a regular basis, but teachers do not use the individual plans consistently on a day-to-day basis in their planning.
 38. Teachers generally ensure that pupils learn in a calm and well-ordered environment. Recent initiatives to improve classroom behaviour have meant that little time is lost in dealing with unsatisfactory behaviour. Teachers are generally consistent in making their expectations clear and give positive feedback to pupils, most of whom demonstrate a good understanding of the class rules. Occasionally, some teachers proceed before they have everyone's attention and do not check pupils who talk over one another.
 39. Whilst teachers' planning is satisfactory for individual lessons, the inconsistency of practice in their day-to-day assessment of individual pupils and groups means that pupils do not always make as much progress as they could. Teachers frequently fail to capitalise on the good progress made in individual lessons because gains in learning are not taken into sufficient account when they plan subsequent lessons. This is particularly relevant when more than one teacher is involved in teaching the class. Temporary and part-time teachers do not have sufficient information on which to base their planning and consequently their expectations of what pupils can do can be wide of the mark.
 40. The school has worked hard to develop a homework policy that meets the needs of pupils and parents. The provision for homework is good. Everyone understands what is expected of them and pupils are conscientious in carrying out the activities set which enable them to develop good study habits and prepares the oldest pupils for their transition to secondary school.

41. Although the quality of teaching has improved significantly overall, insufficient progress has been made in addressing several of the specific weaknesses identified in the previous report. Teachers continue to deploy a limited variety of teaching styles and are not successful in developing qualities of independence in pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge remains unsatisfactory in information technology at Key Stage 1 and in art, design and technology and geography across the school.

41. **The curriculum and assessment**

42. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory and planned across all areas of learning. Nursery planning ensures a good range of activities which effectively support children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. Planning in reception makes clear links with the National Curriculum and prepares pupils well for transition into Year 1. There are clear procedures for the identification of pupils with special educational needs and, along with those children who speak English additional language, they are well supported by the school and by staff from the local authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service.

43. Since the previous inspection the curriculum has benefited from much development in response to the key issues for action. Many of the weaknesses have been addressed and the curriculum is now broadly satisfactory at both key stages. The school has gone some way to develop schemes of work. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented with a reasonable degree of consistency and effectiveness and the nationally recommended scheme of work for science has been adapted to meet the school's needs and to provide continuity and progression. Although the school has chosen to adopt the recommended schemes for information technology, geography and history, insufficient work has been done to make them accessible and useful to teachers in their planning. Governors are now more involved in monitoring curriculum developments and all co-ordinators have agreed targets and receive a generous amount of time for the development of their subjects.

44. The curriculum is broad and provides for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It also includes health education, which in turn includes sex education and drugs awareness. It meets all statutory requirements with the exception of some elements of the information technology curriculum which are not being addressed because the school does not have the necessary resources.

45. The balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. A heavy emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy lessons but the amount of time allocated to some other subjects is inadequate. For example, insufficient time is allocated to science at Key Stage 1 to cover the required subject content to an appropriate depth. At Key Stage 2, two half-hour periods each morning for subjects other than English and mathematics also limits study of real depth, especially as these lessons may be as short as 20 minutes when change over time and preparation for break or lunch are also included. Insufficient attention is also paid to speaking skills in English and to skills of problem-solving and investigation in mathematics and science.

46. The school chooses to teach all lessons in music, art, and design and technology on Fridays. This means that on the other four days pupils in many classes experience a narrow range of activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 have a whole day each week when they only have lessons in mathematics and English in a variety of forms. This inflexible approach limits teachers' ability to

provide a range of curriculum experiences that engage and maintain the pupils' interest and enable them to develop a broad range of learning skills. This restricts the progress that pupils make in developing creative, practical and research skills, and to develop literacy, numeracy and information technology skills across the curriculum.

47. The school strives to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs but insufficient attention is paid to the needs of the most able. Good use is made of teachers from the local authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service to support pupils who have English as an additional language. Booster classes are also used well to target particular pupils and this increases their ability to work to their full potential. However, the pupils' cultural background is not sufficiently well reflected in the curriculum and potential opportunities for enrichment and relevance are missed.
48. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is planned effectively and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Tasks and activities are differentiated appropriately and enable these pupils to achieve the curricular targets in their individual education plans. They are well supported in lessons in the core subjects by the teacher and classroom support staff.
49. The previous inspection report was critical of the way in which the school planned and delivered the curriculum. The school has worked hard to establish a curriculum that ensures progression and continuity of the pupils' learning. They have received much help in this by adopting the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. These have provided secure structures for curriculum development. Although the school has also chosen to adopt the recommended schemes for information technology, geography and history, insufficient work has been done to make them accessible and useful to teachers in their planning.
50. The curriculum for most subjects is supported by policies, some in draft form, and schemes of work which are translated by teachers into half-termly and weekly plans. These are generally well written and have sufficient detail to support the teaching. Although the half-termly and weekly planning ensure that teachers prepare their lessons with care and good attention to detail, it also creates some unnecessary duplication of information. A strength of the current planning is the identification of clear learning objectives for many lessons. In the best lessons these identify what the pupils will learn and not just what they will do. These objectives are then shared with the pupils and used well at the end of the session to provide feedback on their progress. The curriculum is supported by well-structured forms for the teachers to complete for each level of planning. These are not completed consistently by all teachers. How the work is to be differentiated to meet the needs of the above average pupils, and also the most able pupils, is often not included. Another omission in much of the planning is the lack of the subject specific skills the pupils will need to acquire and practise in order to tackle the work with confidence.
51. The school provides a satisfactory level of extra curricular opportunities that include a choir, a recorder group and chances to play sports including football and netball. The school organises homework for all pupils in support of their learning. At Key Stage 2 the well-structured homework programme effectively prepares pupils for secondary education.
52. Assessment procedures for children under five are satisfactory. They are used to plan suitable learning activities that match the children's needs. Assessment at Key Stages 1 and 2 is under-developed and is unsatisfactory. It is not consistently built into the teachers' planning and is not used effectively to inform future planning effectively. The assessment policy provides an overview of school procedures but does not give clear guidance for teachers to follow or establish expectations. This results in little or no teacher assessment being undertaken in lessons other than

English, mathematics and information technology. When assessment is undertaken, it is usually to checking what facts pupils have learned. In lessons where learning objectives are well developed and used effectively to focus the teaching and learning, the teachers gather clear evidence of what pupils have understood and the skills they have developed. This evidence is also used to shape future lessons in the light of experience. Regrettably, this good practice is not consistent among all teachers.

53. Strategies for recording the attainment and the progress of the pupils are not consistently developed across the school. Teachers have devised their own systems and often these records acknowledging which tasks have been completed rather than what the pupils have learned or how well they have progressed. For example, reading records indicate how often pupils read and what they have read. At the time of the previous inspection the school had begun to compile collections of pupils' work that identified expected standards at different ages. Insufficient progress has been made in this area, which has been a contributory factor to the inaccurate teacher assessments in recent years.
54. The marking of the pupils' work is variable, but is unsatisfactory overall. At its best it is very informative and interactive, identifying what pupils do well, where they have made progress and setting targets for improvement. However, there are instances when marking is limited to a tick and a general comment, which while providing positive encouragement does not help the individual move forward.. There are also times when the marking concentrates on the presentation of the work, including spelling and punctuation, to the exclusion of pupils' understanding of what they have learned.
55. The school is in the early stages of collecting and analysing assessment data to identify challenging targets for individual pupils in order for the school to raise standards. The school has yet to place the same emphasis on interpreting the evidence or devising strategies to address the weaknesses.
55. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
56. The school promotes pupils' moral and social development well. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, but insufficient thought is given to planning for their cultural development.
57. Spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted through collective worship and some aspects of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 were asked to think about caring and the idea that 'you can be a King without a crown'. They were also given a good opportunity to reflect on the words of their hymn. A Key Stage 1 assembly used the arrival of a new pupil in school to think and talk about needing 'special friends'. Several very young children could identify reasons why they had their friends. Displayed poems reflected on Autumn, and pupils also wrote sensitively about people who they have known who had died. Prayers are displayed in several areas of the school, and are said regularly by the pupils at different times in the school day. Planned opportunities for reflection are very limited, although pupils have adequate opportunities every day to reflect on the values and beliefs of the Catholic faith in religious education lessons, at weekly mass and in class and key stage assemblies.
58. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The aims of the school are broadly met. Members of staff take a positive approach to discipline along Christian lines and aim to develop the character of pupils to respect themselves, their belongings and other people. This, and the mission statement's emphasis on co-operation, is the basis for the establishment of a moral code

recognised by everyone working in the school. Rules, which guide the day-to-day working of the school, are prominently displayed in classrooms and referred to frequently to assist pupils to behave in a considerate, caring way and to help them understand their place in class and school society. Teachers use the points reward system to reinforce good behaviour, as well as the happy and sad faces on the board, to indicate good or unacceptable behaviour. The moral code is applied reasonably consistently throughout the school. The headteacher monitors the effectiveness of the code when pupils visit him to share good work or to explain why they have misbehaved.

59. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development and encourages positive relationships between pupils and staff. The school is involved in local community events, such as attending church for festivals, visits to the local museum, the Heritage Centre and Macclesfield Silk Museum. Through special projects, the school encourages contributions to charities such as Oxfam - providing a well for a village, and raising money to send a Rwandan child to school. These activities help develop pupils awareness of belonging to the wider community. Although older pupils are given responsibilities, they are not always entirely appropriate. Helping tidy library books and reading stories to reception children are useful activities, but policing the toilets to eliminate bad behaviour should not be the responsibility of pupils.
60. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. Subjects such as geography, art and music make little contribution to pupils' appreciation of the Arts or to their understanding of other world cultures. The potential of literature to expand pupils' horizons has not been realised. The library, which should be a significant source of information on other cultures, has many outdated books, often in poor condition, which are not helpful in improving pupils knowledge. The richness of the pupils' own cultural background is not sufficiently well reflected in the curriculum and opportunities for enrichment and relevance are missed. Pupils are unaware that their house system is founded on four renowned potteries. The school does not plan for pupils to develop their understanding of the multi-racial society in which they live.
60. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
61. Teachers and support staff, including classroom helpers, midday supervisors and the secretary, know the pupils very well and are keenly aware of their particular circumstances. Nursery staff provide good support for very young children and have developed a number of routines, such as setting the tables for lunch, that promote their social skills well. The support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Support teachers who work with individual pupils for whom English is an additional language keep careful records to monitor their progress. However, the procedures for monitoring the development of individual pupil's academic and personal development are unsatisfactory overall because whole school assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed. There is not a secure basis for recording pupils' progress and much of it depends on what individual teachers choose to do. This leads to inconsistencies in practice.
62. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are satisfactory. Considerable effort has been made recently to introduce and implement a new behaviour policy throughout the school. Although the deputy head has monitored its implementation informally, it has not yet been reviewed formally to gauge its effectiveness or the consistency with which it is being applied. The head teacher maintains a detailed record of individual pupils discipline problems, but summative analysis has not yet been possible.
63. Overall, the routines for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. The computerised records of pupils' attendance at school are maintained meticulously. The register is called promptly at the beginning of each school session and marked

correctly. Teachers try hard to find out why pupils are absent or late. However, the wealth of information available is not used effectively to follow up and redress persistent lateness or absence, and the school receives inadequate support from the education welfare service of the local education authority in this regard.

64. Effective procedures for child protection are in place. All staff are familiar with the policy which follows the local authority's guidelines, and the head teacher undertakes the role of designated person. The premises are very secure, with extensive use of closed circuit television facilities. The school pays good attention to safety matters. The governing body has adopted the local authority health and safety policy, and the health and safety sub-committee has been established to carry out regular risk assessments. Electrical equipment, physical education equipment, the security system and fire extinguishers are checked regularly. A fire drill is held at least once per term and its success monitored. Procedures for dealing with accidents and other medical incidents are well understood by all staff, with two staff trained in first-aid. There is a separate medical room with appropriate equipment and a hand basin, with toilet facilities not far away, although there is no bed.
65. Procedures for promoting pupils' wellbeing, health and safety are good. Most of the criticisms raised in the previous report are no longer relevant as the school has since moved into new premises. Teachers no longer shout and the school has introduced satisfactory policies for health and sex education.
65. **Partnership with parents and the community**
66. The information provided by the school to parents is satisfactory. There are three consultation evenings for parents each year and they appreciate the annual reports on their children which provide useful information that summarises the year's achievements. The reports include a useful section for comments on areas for improvement. Some parents would appreciate translation into their own language. The high level of security in the new building initially gave some parents cause for concern with regard to the difficulty of getting to see teachers; these problems now seem largely to have been overcome. There are regular newsletters to tell parents about the activities in school and numerous other letters about specific items for an individual class such as school trips, football or netball practice. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus conform to statutory requirements.
67. Parents' involvement in pupils' learning is satisfactory. Home-school agreements issued only in English have been issued to all parents but not all have yet been signed and returned. The agreement includes reference to homework and parents cooperate with the teachers in supervising their children's work at home. The governors recognise that more thought needs to be given to the translation of documents, particularly those that have a direct impact on pupils' learning. Only a very small number of parents assist regularly in classes, mostly listening to pupils reading. There is always good support from parents in accompanying school trips. The Association of Parents, Teachers and Friends (PTFA) has recently been reorganised and has a small but enthusiastic committee that organises a number of fund-raising events. The money raised is spent in consultation with the teachers on providing additional classroom resources, most recently good quality picture books to encourage parents involvement in promoting their children's enjoyment in reading. enjoyment in reading.
68. Links with the wider community are good. The school has close links with St Peter's church although very few parents are members of the congregation. The priest celebrates mass every week with all pupils, either in school or in the church. There are regular visitors to the school who include the local police, musicians and puppeteers and, as part of a drugs awareness programme,

the caravan from the Life Education Centre visits the school. The pupils make a number of trips to places of interest such as museums and activity centres that support learning in subjects such as history and physical education. The pupils' choir regularly entertains the residents in three local homes for the elderly as well putting on a major production each year to which parents and friends are invited. The school's computer suite is used every week by adult learners involved in College in the Community activities which includes a family learning initiative attended by both pupils and their parents. The school plans to involve parents in using their newly acquired information technology skills to support pupils in the classroom. The PTFA has been very successful in gaining sponsorship from a number of local companies for the benefit of pupils, such as a strip for the netball team.

68.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

68. Leadership and management

69. The previous inspection identified serious weaknesses in curriculum development and in the planning and teaching of the National Curriculum. The report identified the need for the headteacher to monitor teaching and learning and for senior teachers to monitor pupils' work closely in order to enhance the quality and range of the curriculum. It stressed the need for improved involvement by co-ordinators in curriculum development across the whole school and closer involvement by governors in monitoring curriculum developments and standards of achievement. Since the inspection, the school has spent a great deal of time, effort and resources in implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies and in equipping itself to address identified weaknesses in information technology. At the same time, it has seen the completion of plans to improve seriously inadequate accommodation that was seen as a severe hindrance to efficient education.

70. The school has made satisfactory progress overall in addressing the key issues. A significant amount of time and effort has been put into improving the quality and consistency of teaching and in developing long and medium-term planning. Teaching standards have improved considerably since the previous inspection and are now broadly satisfactory across the school. The school has developed satisfactory strategies for literacy and numeracy in its implementation of both national strategies. This has been brought about through regular monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and deputy in mathematics and English and a substantial involvement by staff in developing their professional knowledge and skills. The deputy has been very influential in improving teachers' lesson planning and the needs of the majority of pupils are now met. However, weaknesses remain in several subjects, including art and geography which were identified four years ago as needing improvement.

71. The governing body has now become more closely involved in monitoring curriculum developments. The curriculum committee is well informed and active in both setting targets and seeking to raise standards. Governors are committed to the school and its pupils and provide both support and challenge to the headteacher and his staff. Co-ordinators have clear job descriptions against which they have agreed annual targets. Subject co-ordinators and teachers with other curricular responsibilities are allocated generous amounts of time to undertake their responsibilities. This time has largely been devoted to identifying strengths and weaknesses, and implementing policies and schemes of work and has yet to translate into improving standards, except in English and mathematics.

72. Assessment procedures have improved, although there is still some way to go before they are

consistently and effectively used to influence planning. Teachers have recently begun to make use of information to set broad targets for individuals in English and mathematics, although these are based largely on prediction and are often wide of the mark.

73. The headteacher does not have a sufficiently broad overview or a good enough understanding of the curriculum to provide effective support to staff in undertaking management responsibilities or to evaluate the effectiveness of their agreed targets. He is not in a secure position to check whether the subject co-ordinators have correctly identified priorities for development or to question their decisions. He does not provide a strong steer in charting the overall educational direction for the school and this is a significant weakness in his leadership. This is particularly evident in the lack of leadership in the early years and Key Stage 1 where the school has identified the need to raise standards rapidly. Because senior teachers, led by the headteacher, have not closely monitored a wide sample of pupils' work, they have failed to enhance the quality and range of the curriculum.
74. The school development plan covers a three-year period and incorporates key issues from the action plan. There are too many priorities to tackle systematically and their implementation is not staged on a yearly basis with a date for completion. The monitoring of targets relates to the completion of tasks and there are no criteria against which to measure success in relation to improved standards of work, attendance or behaviour. Consequently, although considerable effort is spent on checking what has been done, the governing body has no way of evaluating the effectiveness of their spending decisions and the impact on pupils' learning.
75. The management of special educational needs has recently improved and is now broadly satisfactory. Clear procedures have recently been instigated by the new co-ordinator, and they follow closely the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. In the nursery although pupils' special education needs are recognised, especially those of speech and language, there are no formal individual educational plans. Training for all staff on identification, which was indicated as a weakness in the previous report, has yet to take place.
76. The school makes good use of teachers from the local authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) to support teachers working with pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school has a significant number of pupils who benefit from such expertise but there is little evidence in the school's development planning that their needs are being acknowledged outside of the EMAS support.
77. The school's ethos is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to work are generally positive and relationships are satisfactory overall and sometimes good. The school does not have a clear commitment to high standards embodied in its mission statement or its main aims. Although governors and senior staff see their central purpose as improving standards by raising parents' and pupils' aspirations, these intentions have yet to be clearly communicated to all staff or to act as guiding principles in every aspect of the school's work.
78. The school is judged to have a satisfactory capacity for improvement. Good systems have been introduced to improve teaching, learning and standards. The newly appointed deputy has already begun to influence the quality of both teachers' and pupils' work. The governing body has ambitious aims and high expectations of what teachers and pupils can achieve now that the school is housed in good accommodation.

78. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

79. Staffing levels are good. The teachers have suitable experience and expertise to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum to the age range of pupils, although some teachers lack adequate subject knowledge in art, geography, design and technology and information technology. Teachers from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service are well qualified and experienced, and make a significant impact on the progress of those pupils they work with regularly.
80. Support staff are suitably qualified and enhance the quality of pupils' learning. The nursery is staffed by three hardworking and experienced nursery nurses who, whilst meeting the children's learning needs satisfactorily, would benefit from more regular contact with an experienced Early Years teacher in order to promote more rapid progress. There is a satisfactory number of support staff who provide valuable classroom support in all areas of the school. They are well prepared for their roles in lessons and often provide much needed support for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The school is supported well by a conscientious team of non-teaching staff including a clerical assistant, lunchtime supervisors, a caretaker, a janitor and an appropriate number of cleaners.
81. The school provides good professional development opportunities for the staff. There are regular staff meetings and training days that are used well to support the development priorities of the school, for example the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. There is a well-developed and effective induction programme for newly qualified teachers. All teaching and classroom support staff on permanent contracts have specific job descriptions, which are negotiated and well documented. Teachers' job descriptions are well integrated into the appraisal process and the resulting targets reflect the development needs of the school as well as those of teachers themselves.
82. Now that the school has moved into new premises the quality of the accommodation is good, but there are shortcomings in the design which impact on the effective development of the curriculum. Classrooms are carpeted and well-furnished, but have limited storage facilities. Whilst communal areas, such as entrance halls and cloakroom area, are spacious the library is located in a narrow corridor. In spite of a clear display policy the standards of display around the school are not stimulating and do not celebrate pupils' work sufficiently. Work is often at too high a level for the pupils to see. Where teachers have created displays to stimulate pupils' interest and imagination pupils clearly benefited in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 4 were encouraged to develop poems line by line in the reading corner and pupils in Year 6 used an interactive display of artefacts relating to Victorian schools to carry out research. The two hard play areas are large and attractively and interestingly marked out, and there is a large grassed playing field.
83. Resource provision across the school is generally poor. It is good in information technology in terms of the equipment available. However, there is currently insufficient software available to support teaching and learning across a wide range of subjects for pupils of all ages. Resource provision is satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. It is barely satisfactory in science and physical education as each subject has aspects of the resources that need to be extended or replaced. In all other subjects the resource provision is poor and does not meet the needs of the curriculum. There is very little good quality children's literature for older pupils in classroom libraries.
84. The central reference library is also a poor resource for the school. Many of the books are out-of-date, in poor condition and many appear uninviting. The lack of a classification system does not enable pupils to find books easily to support their learning. This situation does not prepare them for using local libraries or school libraries when they enter secondary education. The library is

sited in a busy corridor and this denies opportunities for independent research as there is nowhere to sit and study quietly. The school is not currently able to supplement its own resources from the local authority's schools' library service. This poor provision has a negative effect on the pupils' progress as it does not encourage reading and denies pupils opportunities for simple research in support of their learning. The library of fiction books, which is well organised and run by two very committed parents is a valuable asset to the school. It is popular with pupils and parents and contains many attractive books, which encourage pupils to borrow on a regular basis. However, its situation does not enable pupils to browse as it also sited in the same corridor as the reference library and this is very busy in the period before school when it is open.

84. **The efficiency of the school**

84.

85. Financial planning in the school is satisfactory. The governing body is determined that the good provision of teaching and support staff should be continued; however, provision of good quality learning resources is unsatisfactory in a number of curriculum areas. Additionally, although there is a very detailed school development plan, it has too many priorities and does not relate spending decisions closely enough to educational outcomes. For example, there has been considerable expense, albeit with the help of grants, on computer equipment which has had little effect on improving the unsatisfactory standards which have prevailed since the previous inspection, especially at Key Stage 1. Fluctuating numbers on roll have added impetus to the need for clear-sighted medium and long-term financial planning. The governing body, through its finance committee and its capable chairman, is very well aware of the need for effective strategic planning for the use of scarce resources. Although staff with management responsibilities, other than the headteacher, are not involved sufficiently in financial planning, the clear vision and experience of the finance committee leaves the school well placed to improve its financial planning. The school makes effective use of its staff, and is particularly successful in the contributions it receives from dedicated and experienced classroom support staff and teachers of pupils with English as a second language. Support in numeracy and literacy lessons is good in group work, but could be more effective in whole class sessions. Learning resources, which vary widely in quality and provision across the curriculum, are generally used satisfactorily. The new school classroom areas are used well, although the school does not exploit the accommodation well to encourage independent learning and research.

86. Financial control and school administration are good and the minor issues raised in the last auditors report two years ago have been dealt with adequately. The headteacher and very efficient school secretary work hard to establish clear school routines and procedures through computer management systems and ensure that teachers can concentrate on their professional duties. Both are dedicated to day-to-day organisation, although the head is sometimes too heavily involved in administration at the expense of curriculum development.

87. In making a judgement about the overall efficiency of the school, several factors are relevant. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is higher than the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average. When they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress, and although overall attainment is still below the national average, indicates a slow but steady improvement in English, mathematics and science. The quality of education is sound, and teaching is almost always satisfactory and sometimes better. As a result the school is judged to give satisfactory value for money which is a similar outcome to the last inspection.

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

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

88. Children are admitted to the nursery when they are three years old and usually attend, mostly on a full-time basis until they join the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. When the children enter the nursery, they are attaining standards that are well below what might be expected for their age. Most children have very limited language skills, a significant number speak English as an additional language, and most have little understanding of number. They possess few social skills, have had a very limited range of social experiences and many lack confidence to act independently. However, a small number do have higher attainment and social awareness. Standards on entry to the nursery are below those indicated in the previous inspection and this is confirmed by the results of the local authority's baseline assessment.

89. Children under five are making good progress, with the considerable support of the nursery nurses, the reception teacher and language teachers assigned to them. Nevertheless, when they start Key Stage 1 many pupils are still not attaining the standards that are expected of children aged five and in most areas of learning, their knowledge and understanding remain low.

90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the nursery, which is managed by three experienced and dedicated nursery nurses, teaching is satisfactory and in the reception class it is good. All staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn. The children are managed effectively and helped to develop through systematic routines each day, such as finding their name on the display board. All staff, including support language teachers, work closely together to create a secure and welcoming atmosphere where the children will feel valued. The staff plan their work carefully with a similar structure to the rest of the school. However, there is often insufficient breakdown of activities and aims for individual children in the nursery. Although staff know their children well, assessment of their attainment and progress is not taken into account enough to ensure that tasks are always appropriate, especially for the two or three more able children.

91. In the reception class, much more account is taken of different levels of ability to ensure effective learning by all children. The school follows the local authority's policy in choosing not to deploy a qualified teacher in the nursery. Activities in the nursery are always carefully prepared and planning identifies the expected learning in activities involving water and role playing as well as in language and mathematics activities. However these are not always specific enough to assess children's development and ensure maximum progress all the time because staff are not given sufficient guidance in planning, teaching and assessment.

92. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory and is based on the desirable learning outcomes although it is integrated well with the National Curriculum in the reception class to meet the needs of children of different attainment. Good emphasis is placed on personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics which are the children's areas of greatest need.

92. **Personal and social development**

93. Children make good progress in developing personal and social skills because of the caring and knowledgeable input of staff. By the time they are five, the majority have achieved the desirable learning outcomes. Many are showing confidence and self respect and are establishing good

relationships with other children and adults, as for example in an assembly when several nominated 'their special friend'. They are beginning to work well in groups, and know how to share, for example, dressing up clothes and take turns in using different play equipment. They behave well in both nursery and reception and are beginning to understand right and wrong. They are encouraged to show independence when choosing activities although some still find difficulty with aspects of dressing and personal hygiene.

93. **Language and literacy**

94. Children make good progress in developing their language and literacy skills. Teaching is good. By the age of five their listening skills are satisfactory but their skills in speaking, reading and writing remain below those expected for children of their age. They listen to instructions but sometimes do not understand them. The nursery, with the effective support of language assistants, places great emphasis on developing speaking skills. Staff are successful in enabling the majority of children to speak confidently and expressively, particularly those entering with little or no English,. Some children are reluctant to talk, and few ask questions of adults although two or three were eager to communicate, for instance a girl who described her picture of a rainbow, and a boy who explained how a stethoscope is used and where the human heart is. Many children in reception can chatter away happily to each other and to adults about their homes and their lives, although their vocabulary is often limited. All children enjoy listening to stories and respond eagerly to questions. Most reception children knew 'We're all going on a Bear Hunt' off by heart, and several recalled details of the plot at length. Children are encouraged to recognise and write their names and most are able to do this by the time they leave reception.

94. **Mathematics**

95. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and the quality of teaching is good. Baseline assessment on entry to the nursery indicates well over half the children are unable to count at all and only three children recognise numbers. In the nursery children begin to learn mathematical language through practical activities, such as when working with water and sand, filling and emptying containers. They recall number rhymes and counting games, and learn to use mathematical language in their role-play. Learning to count occurs in many of their activities, as for instance when they make jelly and porridge in creative activities. Reception children are able to make simple repeat colouring patterns using colour pegs and unifix. By the time they are five, attainment is below average. Many children can count to 10 and in one lesson a small group could recognise and name triangles, circles and rectangles and indicate some of their properties like '3 corners in a triangle'.

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

96. Children make satisfactory progress in the development of knowledge and understanding of the world. When they start in the nursery most children have a very limited awareness of the world around them but they are rapidly given opportunities to develop their learning in this area. Nursery children learn about the weather and the months, several naming 'November' every day. They also understand what a letter and a stamp is and are able to link this to their visit from Postman Pat. They can talk about fire-fighters and police officers through their dressing up activities and role play. They learn about animals and plants and in reception when making porridge, about the differences made by using hot and cold water with different foods.

96. **Creative development**

97. Children make satisfactory progress overall in their creative development. Many opportunities are provided for imaginative play in the nursery and children have daily opportunities to express themselves through painting although there is a wide difference in how they choose from a range of colours. They join in with adults in singing familiar songs and nursery rhymes and in a happy and reflective assembly joined with teachers and pupils in Key Stage 1 with songs and actions associated with the words. Children in reception have less frequent opportunities to respond imaginatively in role-play, music, drawing and painting because of the heavy emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy lessons.

97. **Physical development**

98. Children make satisfactory progress overall in physical development, although they make good progress in body control and co-ordination. In the nursery they have extensive daily opportunities to use small equipment outside including bicycles, tricycles and balls. There are often enough adults to give a ratio of three or four children to each adult which is very helpful in developing their physical skills. There is a good, safe, spacious outdoor area and an appropriate number of resources. There are also good resources, which are used often inside enabling children to develop their body control and co-ordination. In the reception class, children show good spatial awareness running and changing direction safely and accurately. They can stretch and curl well, and most can balance a bean bag on their head for at least ten seconds, showing good control and skill in balancing and moving with small objects. However, many children find difficulty in handling tools such as pencils, scissors and paintbrushes and their skills are developing more slowly. Activities requiring the selection of materials and cutting and folding also help to develop the often very low level of the children's practical skills.

98.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

99. The previous inspection found that overall standards were below average in English at both key stages, particularly in writing where there was considerable underachievement and in speaking where pupils did not have enough opportunities to explore and develop ideas through discussion with their peers. Key points for action were the development of monitoring and evaluation procedures and higher expectations of pupils' written work. Pupils' overall attainment remains below average in English, although standards in writing are beginning to improve as a result of pupils being given well-planned opportunities to write at length, clear guidance provided to teachers on the teaching of spelling and the effective implementation of the literacy hour.

100. When pupils reach statutory school age most of them have not achieved the desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy. At the end of Key Stage 1, National Curriculum tests and assessments for 1999 show that pupils' attainment, when compared with the average point score nationally, was very low in both reading and writing. Teacher assessment judged standards in speaking and listening to be equally low. Results were also very low when compared with the results attained by pupils in schools with a similar free school meals entitlement. Between 1996 and 1998 standards declined steadily in reading, whilst standards in writing, having declined between 1996 and 1997, improved in 1998. Results in both reading and writing dropped substantially this year. Very few pupils attained the higher level in reading and no pupils attained

it in writing. Pupils' very poor performance last year is largely attributed to poor teaching in Year 2, when pupils failed to build on the progress they had made the previous year. Inspection findings indicate that the situation has improved considerably as a result of staffing changes and now that the literacy strategy is beginning to take effect. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening and attain standards that remain below average because of the significant number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

101. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attained very low results in English when compared with the national average point score. When compared with similar schools they achieved below average results. Trends over the three years between 1996 and 1998 show a steady rise in attainment, only for standards to plummet in 1999 to below the 1996 level. The school anticipated the poor results. The class had many low attaining pupils and spent two years using the hall as a classroom before moving in to new accommodation and in their final year were taught by a supply teacher in the autumn term. Inspection finds that the school is effectively addressing low standards at Key Stage 2 in English, although pupils remain below average in reading, writing and speaking. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall although there are significant differences between different aspects of the subject, depending on the emphasis placed on them in planning and teaching. There is no significant difference between boys and girls at either key stage or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because their needs are now targeted.
102. The successful introduction of the literacy hour has meant that lessons are no longer dominated by teachers to the same extent that they were the previous inspection. However, whilst pupils make sound progress in their listening skills at both key stages, they make unsatisfactory progress in developing their speaking skills as they move through the school. Interactions are generally between the teacher and individuals or groups and rarely between pupils. Speaking and listening are not planned for specifically although the school recognises that there is an urgent need to develop a clear policy. Many pupils at Key Stage 1 answer in single words or short phrases at best. At Key Stage 2, a few pupils demonstrates the ability to alter their register when talking to different audiences, or to modify their vocabulary sufficiently when moving between formal and informal speech. Older pupils do not often take part in debate or justify their opinions at length. A minority of pupils read expressively.
103. The school places good emphasis on developing both reading skills and pleasure in books. Pupils make good progress in developing basic reading skills and in using a variety of strategies when meeting unfamiliar words. They do not make the same progress in developing skills of comprehension, and often do not move beyond a literal understanding of text, failing to appreciate the humour or subtlety of idiomatic expressions and figurative language. Teachers do not always check that pupils who speak English as an additional language understand key words or phrases within a passage. Those teachers who share a love of language with the pupils enable them to interact with the text to greater depth. This happened in a Year 2 class when pupils imagined what it was like to be one of the characters and in a Year 4 class when pupils were helped to understand the imagery used by two poets in describing trees in Autumn. The school is well resourced with a good range of big books and sets of interesting texts for group reading. At Key Stage 1, pupils have access to a satisfactory number of good quality picture books. However, classroom libraries at Key Stage 2 contain a very poor selection of children's literature to read which seriously inhibits the progress of above average and the most able readers. Pupils were not able to discuss books they had read at any depth and often lacked the vocabulary to distinguish between different genres.
104. Progress in writing is satisfactory overall. Good progress has been made recently in extended writing as a result of specific planning with clear objectives, although few teachers have

identified the potential for pupils to write for different audiences and purposes in subjects such as science, history and geography. There are emerging strengths in narrative, non-chronological and empathetic writing. For example, pupils in Year 6 not only had a clear understanding of the structure and purpose of non-chronological writing, but were able to produce well written accounts of schooldays, past and present, and to evaluate each other's work. However, there is little evidence of pupils' ability to put forward both sides of an argument or to justify an opinion. Good progress is also being made in spelling where teachers have adopted a consistent approach across the school. In the better lessons pupils were encouraged to identify patterns within words and to spur each other on. Teachers are not consistent in encouraging pupils to make use of word books and dictionaries as a matter of course. Many pupils do not demonstrate a good grasp of punctuation, although there is evidence that attention to detail in reading big books together is helping pupils to understand the purpose of commas, speech marks and question marks. Poor progress has been made in handwriting to date which the school plans to address as a matter of urgency. A majority of pupils in Year 6 have not developed a regular and fluent hand.

105. Pupils generally show positive attitudes to the subject, and when the work is explained well and teachers make their expectations clear, they concentrate well and do their best. In the better lessons, pupils set about their work with a sense of purpose because the tasks are well matched to their abilities and they are clear what is expected of them. Teachers do not always appreciate that the reason that pupils cannot work independently is often the result of unsatisfactory planning for different levels of attainment and not pupils' inability to get on with a task without support.

106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages, although it varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and weekly planning is clear and comprehensive with relevant texts that are well suited to the week's objectives. Planning for group activities is less detailed and it is not always evident how the task builds on the objectives of the whole class session. This sometimes leaves groups set to work independently, unable to proceed without adult intervention. Although teachers make weekly evaluations of pupils' progress, they do not assess individual's reading and writing to determine targets for improvement. Relationships with pupils are generally good and the pace of most lessons ensures pupils are motivated to learn. Occasionally pupils are kept sitting on the carpet for too long in cramped surroundings and not all of them have clear sight of the text. It was rare to observe teachers reinforcing correct pronunciation or grammar and sloppy use of language often went unchecked. Where this was done effectively, the teacher intervened with sensitivity and enabled the pupils to make good progress. In the best lessons, teachers make effective use of questioning to draw out pupils understanding and enable them to evaluate their own work.

106.

107. The quality of teaching is considerably enhanced by the very valuable contribution made by support staff. Teachers from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service have good subject knowledge and form very good relationships with those pupils who lack confidence. They use a wide range of techniques to promote pupils' involvement and make constant assessments of their understanding. Thorough planning and preparation enable pupils to make good progress with dedicated support. Class teachers do not always demonstrate the same level of awareness and occasionally believe that a pupil will understand if they are told frequently enough. Classroom assistants also make an effective contribution to the group work. Support staff are not often sufficiently involved in whole class sessions and no collaborative teaching was observed during the inspection.

107.

106. The new co-ordinator has achieved a great deal in a short time. She has made an accurate assessment of both strengths and weaknesses in standards, teaching and resources, produced an ambitious but realistic action plan. She has already made an impact on the quality of teaching and learning by providing sensitive support and guidance as well as demonstrating good practice herself. She has made good use of the time available to develop policies, planning and resources across the school in order to raise standards. There is a considerable way to go. Although improvements have been made in assessment procedures, through careful analysis of national test results and school administered tests, teachers are not yet confident in making diagnostic assessments of pupils' reading and writing. The library is inadequate both in terms of accommodation and levels of resourcing. Classroom libraries do not contain a sufficiently wide range of fiction and reference books to meet the needs of all pupils. The school does not supplement its range of books from the school's library service, which could go some way to addressing the shortfall and provide pupils with a wider range of books to choose from. Currently, many recent purchases are kept in the resources room and are not easily accessible to teachers or pupils.

108.

109. Although the school has begun to address many issues from the last inspection, there has been little improvement in standards in speaking or in challenging the most able pupils.

109. **Mathematics**

107. The previous inspection found that overall standards were below average in mathematics at both key stages and that there were serious weaknesses in mathematics at Key Stage 2 where pupils

made unsatisfactory progress and achieved below their abilities. The school has worked effectively to address low standards in mathematics. As a result of systematic monitoring, constructive feedback on strengths and weaknesses in teaching and the introduction of the numeracy strategy, standards have risen at Key Stage 2. When pupils in the present Year 6 leave school at the age of eleven they are likely to attain standards in line with the national average in mathematics.

108. At the end of Key Stage 1, National Curriculum tests for 1999 show that pupils' attainment, when compared with the average points score nationally, was very low in mathematics. Results were also very low when compared with the results attained by pupils in similar schools. Standards in mathematics have been declining steadily since 1996. Very few pupils attained the higher level 3. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attained well below average results in mathematics. When compared with similar schools they achieved just above average results in mathematics. Trends over the four years show that although standards declined in mathematics between 1996 and 1997, they improved in 1998 and maintained the same level for 1999. In addition, 12 per cent of pupils attained the higher level 5 in 1999, an improvement over the previous year when no pupil attained the higher level. The school anticipated the poor results because the class had many low attaining pupils.
109. By the age of five, many children have not achieved the desirable learning outcomes in the mathematical area. At Key Stage 1 most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress, although by the end of Year 2 they are still below the standards expected of seven-year-olds. The small number of higher attaining pupils make unsatisfactory progress and do not reach the standards of which they are capable. The inspection findings indicate an improvement on the 1999 test results when the number of pupils achieving the national standards or above was well below average. By the age of 11 years, pupils have made good progress, so that they attain standards in mathematics close to the national average. These findings reflect the results of the 1998 and 1999 national test results.
110. Pupils make steady progress through Key Stage 1 in developing their knowledge and skills in number and shape. In Year 1 the majority can count, subtract and double numbers up to 10, count on using a number line past 10 and a few pupils can add 3 digits correctly. Pupils skills in applying their mathematics to real problems are limited, although their use of mathematical language like 'less' and 'more' is developing. Pupils in Year 2 are able to recognise 3-D solid shapes like 'pyramid', 'sphere' and 'cuboid' correctly. Their use of mathematical language is becoming more accurate. Pupils are making often good progress in their numeracy skills as a result of the national numeracy project, but they do not make sufficient progress in the practical applications of mathematics, problem solving and data handling.
111. At Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in their mathematics, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in manipulating numbers mentally. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, order correctly two figure decimals up to 1.0, convert fractions to decimals, and decode equivalent and improper fractions. Pupils in Year 5 can work successfully against the clock, most getting the majority of mental calculations e.g. $37+26$ correct in a very short time. They also describe strategies for checking answers quickly to ensure they are correct. Pupils in Year 3 are also beginning to make good progress from a very low base, especially in numeracy where most know their 2 times table and can add together two simple two digit numbers, such as $(32+10)$. Pupils in Year 4 can count on in fives and most can name fractions up to fifths, the more able being able to name three-fifths and seven-tenths. Most pupils know the 2,3,4 and 5 times tables. There is less evidence in lessons observed and in pupils' books of using and applying mathematics and handling data. When pupils are challenged in these areas they demonstrate the ability to think logically, as for example, when pupils in Year 6 looked at probabilities and applied it to descriptions of events in the Victorian classroom they had recently visited. Pupils in Year 5

can also work out up to 16 double figure combinations using four co-ordinates, and show good knowledge of the definitions and properties of shapes like parallelograms, rhomboids and hexagons. The school's commitment to the numeracy project has had a successful impact on pupils' progress and standards. However, these improved numeracy skills are insufficiently developed in other subjects such as geography and science.

112. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They are keen to learn and sometimes become very excited when there is a competitive element in mental maths. They generally behave well, although occasionally they are allowed to call out and chatter to each other in whole class sessions. Above average pupils become a little restless and go off task when the work is too easy and there is nothing to do once they have finished. All pupils, when sufficiently challenged, or when supported by an adult in small groups, work very hard and conscientiously to achieve their targets.
113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. In lessons observed, it was occasionally good at Key Stage 1 and frequently good at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan well, and often use their resources well. They use the numeracy session effectively, making a good balance between whole class and group activity, and all teachers endeavour to close their lessons with a clear and effective plenary. At Key Stage 1, teachers are very careful to reinforce pupils' knowledge although for a few this can be repetitious if they already have a sound grasp of the concept. Questioning is generally good, but does not always elicit more than one-word answers. Teachers try hard to build on pupils' enthusiasm for learning. At Key Stage 2 teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and although the more able are not yet achieving their targeted attainment levels, there is evidence of more challenge in the teaching. As an example, a girl in Year 5 disappointed by a mediocre mental test performance was sparked into enthusiastic effort by a challenging mathematical problem she was presented with. All teachers are encouraging and supportive to their pupils and are beginning to harness the mathematical interest of most pupils.
114. The mathematics curriculum is effectively planned. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adapted to the school's scheme of work which provides appropriate guidance to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers include assessment opportunities in their planning and a number of tests are regularly used in addition to the national tests. Target setting in its early stages, is attempting to identify pupils' individual needs in an effort to improve standards, but has yet to make any impact on results. The thoughtful co-ordinator has realised that she needs to lead the staff in a more focused approach through assessment in order for the school to make consistent improvement year on year, so that the significant variations in attainment in recent years can be eliminated. The school encourages parents to support their children by setting homework. This is proving to be a successful initiative with most children receiving guidance and encouragement from home and completing their tasks.
115. Since the previous inspection the school has faltered in its improvement, but is now in a stronger position. Results indicate that standards at Key Stage 1 have fallen, whilst those at Key Stage 2 have risen. Present inspection evidence shows that by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they will have made good progress and achieved much improved results, helped by the introduction of the National Numeracy Project.

118.

Science

116. The previous inspection found that overall standards were below average in science at both key stages. When pupils in the present Year 6 leave school at the age of eleven they are likely to attain standards that are still below average in science. The schools' results do not show clear trends of

improvement at either key stage.

117. At Key Stage 1, teacher assessments in science indicate low standards with pupils attaining well below the national average in 1998 and very low results in 1999. Pupils also attain well below average standards when compared with pupils from similar schools. No pupils attained the higher level 3 in science. Results for pupils' experimental and investigative work are well below the results for other aspects of these national tests for science.
118. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attained well below average standards in science. No pupil attained the higher level 5 and this had an impact on the average point score in both 1998 and 1999. When compared with similar schools pupils achieved below average results in science. Results have been erratic in science over the past four years. Results declined significantly in 1997, only to improve along with mathematics in 1998. However, they dropped again in 1999 by 11 per cent at the same time as the national average improved by 11 per cent, thus widening the gap. Inspection finds that the school is effectively addressing low standards at Key Stage 2 in science and that pupils in the current Year 6 are attaining standards that are below, but not well below, average.
119. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils enter the statutory years of schooling with standards that are well below those expected nationally. They make unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 because insufficient emphasis is given to the subject, both with regards time and the opportunities for pupils to be involved in exploring and investigating. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although they do not generally have secure understanding of scientific concepts or skills by the time they leave the school.
120. At Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 1 are learning to identify correctly the flower, leaves, stem and roots of a range of plants. They understand that some vegetables are part of a root system. Pupils in Year 2 classify common materials appropriately and most understand that some materials can be twisted, stretched, bent or squashed and they will return to their original shape, and that others will not. They are beginning to understand why the properties of certain materials affects their use.
121. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 understand the need for fair testing when investigating whether plants need an optimum amount of water to secure the best growth. Pupils in Year 4 record accurately changes in temperature as a bar graph and use this effectively to predict how this pattern of change might continue. When studying pollination, pupils in Year 5 use scientific terms correctly to label parts of different flower heads. Pupils in Year 6 understand the delicate balance of food chains and how some man-made changes in the environment may result in some animals becoming extinct. In most classes at both key stages, there is a significant number of pupils who have difficulty in explaining what they have learned and this limits the progress that they make.
122. Most pupils enjoy their science lessons and are interested in the activities provided. Their general response is good and most listen carefully to teachers' explanations and instructions. They are often very keen to participate in question and answer sessions. There are times when the negative behaviour of a significant number of pupils distracts others and detracts from the key role of teaching.
123. Teaching of science at Key Stage 1 is never less than satisfactory and on occasions is good. At Key Stage 2 teaching is also never less than satisfactory, is often good and on occasion is very good. Lessons at both key stages are generally well prepared and resourced, but there are times

when teachers are over reliant on worksheets which do not fully support the learning objectives. Much of the planning does not identify clearly differentiated work for the more able and most able pupils. This results in lower and average ability pupils receiving well targeted work but the higher ability pupils receiving insufficient challenge.

124. In the very best lessons teachers use well developed learning objectives to drive the teaching, to give pupils targeted feedback and to assess their work. In these lessons teachers use a range of teaching and learning strategies to give the lesson pace, interest and a clear purpose. In other lessons strategies are limited and do not involve the pupils as effectively. There are times when the teacher's questioning skills are limited and are used to achieve a single word answer rather than developing a discussion. In many lessons there are pupils who would benefit from engaging in an extended discussion on the science they are currently learning.
125. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum for science has been much improved. The nationally recommended guidance has been analysed and blended with the school's own scheme of work. This should ensure continuity and progression of subject content and skills and remove the duplication of topics, which occurred in some classes previously.
126. Assessment of pupils' work is not well developed and is not an integral part of planning. The records that the teachers keep of the pupils' attainment and progress do not follow a consistent format. Although these records are generally thorough, they do not allow for easy comparisons across year groups. The co-ordinator does not have an annotated collection of pupils' work that has been matched to National Curriculum levels to guide teachers in assessing work accurately. This has resulted in inaccurate teacher assessments, particularly at Key Stage 1.
127. The level of resources for science is barely satisfactory and results in pupils having to share essential equipment. At times teachers are forced to plan their lessons around the scarcity of some equipment. Higher attaining pupils are disadvantaged by the lack of access to sensing or data logging equipment for measuring and tracking changes in the environment, for example, light, temperature and sound. The library is also an inadequate resource to support teaching and learning in science. Many of the books are out of date, in a poor condition and uninviting. They do not support independent learning and constrains progress.

130. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

130. **Information technology**

128. At the time of the previous inspection, no judgements were made on attainment or teaching and there was little evidence of progression or pupils being given full access to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Information technology was not sufficiently valued as a learning resource and was not used to offer challenge and enjoyment to pupils across the curriculum. The school has subsequently identified the development of information and communication technology as a priority. It opted to become involved in the first phase of the local authority's implementation of the National Grid for Learning. This has meant investing considerable time and money in installing a network of new computers in every classroom and in establishing a computer suite where skills are taught to half-classes on a weekly basis.
129. These ambitious plans have yet to make a significant impact on standards, which are below expectations at the end of both key stages. In spite of the substantial investment, the school still

does not have all the resources needed to ensure that the National Curriculum programmes of study are delivered in full. For example, older pupils are not taught control or modelling at present. The school has experienced prolonged difficulties in accessing suitable software and this has resulted in frustrations for both teachers and pupils. Teachers at Key Stage 1 have yet to develop confidence in the new systems and are not providing pupils with regular opportunities to use computers and other devices on a regular basis. There was no evidence of younger pupils using computers in lessons during the inspection or of teachers identifying the use of information technology in their weekly or medium-term planning. At this key stage pupils are making unsatisfactory progress in developing skills and in using information technology to enhance their learning in other subjects. Limited examples of work on display indicate that pupils have used a drawing programme to create their own images.

130. At Key Stage 2, although the majority of pupils make rapid progress in lessons, progress is no more than satisfactory overall and unsatisfactory in Year 3. Most pupils at Key Stage 2 are beginning to develop a range of skills because of effective teaching that is planned meticulously over a series of lessons. This enables them to consolidate skills and develop new ones whilst taking part in very motivating projects with specific objectives. Because pupils are starting from a low base, overall standards do not yet match expectations, but the school should be well placed to raise standards once all teachers have completed their training next year. At present, there are shortcomings in the way in which the subject is planned which leads to inequity. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have a weekly lesson in half-class groups in the computer suite specifically aimed at developing skills. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 do not use the computer suite and rarely make use of information technology in the classroom. The headteacher, who has recently assumed the role of co-ordinator - and is well qualified to do so - does not currently work with teachers or pupils in the lower part of the school which is where teachers lack confidence and subject knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.
- 133.
131. Pupils' response is good overall and frequently very good. They are eager to use the new equipment, behave responsibly and show good levels of awareness in relation to safety issues. They work co-operatively in pairs, explaining what to do and offering encouragement. They concentrate hard, follow complex instructions to the letter, and are prepared to persevere when faced with the unexpected. Higher attaining pupils are confident to take risks and to experiment with the most effective solution, although they are sometimes held back by the pace at which the majority learn new skills. Pupils in Year 6 became so absorbed in setting up their own web page using a wizard for the first time that they failed to hear the bell that signalled lunch time.
135. Teaching is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 but broadly satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The teaching of skills is good at Key Stage 2. At this key stage, teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Planning and preparation is good with specific learning objectives that are made explicit to the pupils. Pupils are involved in evaluating their progress and in setting new targets. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work but has not yet adapted it to meet fully the needs of pupils and to provide sufficient guidance to all teachers in their planning. Most teachers do not plan for the progressive development of pupils' information technology skills in other subjects. At present, the school is not making the most effective use of resources or staff expertise and it has yet to be demonstrated that the substantial investment in hardware and software is of benefit to all pupils.
- 135.
135. **Art**

132. No art lessons were taught during the inspection. The work on display and in the pupils' sketchbooks indicates that attainment is below what is expected for pupils of similar ages at both key stages. Pupils have not developed essential skills in key experiences such as painting and drawing and this makes them unable to tackle the tasks they have been set with confidence. Sketchbooks have recently been introduced but most pupils are unaware of how these books might be used to plan work or support their developing skill level.
133. Many of the issues raised in the last inspection concerning standards, teaching and learning in art have not been adequately resolved. Examination of teachers' planning and the small amount of work on display indicates that there is inadequate subject expertise among the staff. Although the school has developed a satisfactory scheme of work since the previous inspection, there is no co-ordinator at the present time to lead essential development work for both teachers and pupils. The scheme contains helpful information to support teachers in their planning but does not include details of essential skill development, how the work might be matched to the pupils' needs and abilities or how the pupils' work might be assessed. As a result opportunities are lost that could support teachers in raising standards. The development of the subject is also limited by the poor level of resources available to support the teaching and learning.
137. **Design and technology**
134. No design and technology lessons were taught during the inspection. The limited work on display across both key stages indicates that standards are generally below that which is expected for pupils of a similar age. In the recent past the school has not provided sufficient opportunity for pupils to acquire and develop even the most basic designing and making skills because many teachers lack subject knowledge and skills to guide pupils in their learning.
135. The school appointed a new co-ordinator at the beginning of the current academic year. She is an experienced teacher of design and technology and has the relevant knowledge and skills to develop the subject to an appropriate level. An effective scheme of work has been introduced which should provide a secure basis for teachers to undertake a progressive development of essential skills and experiences with their pupils. However, this potential development is severely restricted by the poor level of resources which are currently available to support the teaching and learning in this subject

139.

Geography

136. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in the subject and do not achieve standards that are expected for pupils of the same age nationally. These judgements were reached on the evidence of work in pupils' books, discussions with pupils and one lesson observation. On this one occasion when geography was taught during the inspection, the lesson was taken by a temporary part-time teacher, new to the school, who had secure subject knowledge and understanding. The lesson was thoroughly planned and prepared and pitched at an appropriate level for eight and nine-year-olds. There were clear aims and objectives and the teacher had given considerable thought to providing stimulating materials that would engage the pupils' interest and enable them to develop their geographical skills and apply their knowledge of hot and cold places. In spite of good teaching and the pupils' initial enthusiasm, they made satisfactory progress at best because they had had so little previous experience of working with globes and atlases or of finding out information or justifying their decisions. Pupils' books indicate a lack of pride in their work and little sense of urgency.

Much of the work was poorly presented and often unfinished.

137. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall. The school has chosen to adopt the nationally recommended scheme of work but has not begun to adapt it to the needs of the school. This has resulted in pupils in Year 6 repeating work that they covered in Year 5 and insufficient thought being given to the progressive development of skills and understanding as pupils move through the school. Pupils are frequently taught facts and skills in isolation and have had few opportunities to study geographical locations in depth. Insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' understanding of technical vocabulary. For example, Pupils in Year 3 were unable to explain the meaning of 'abroad' and were unsure of the difference between a continent, country and city. The poor level of resources, such as books, atlases, maps of different scales, aerial photographs, photo packs and measuring equipment means that teachers are severely constrained in their ability to meet the demands of the scheme. Two of the four key stage classes are taught by part-time teachers who follow the class teacher's plans but do not have sufficient involvement in medium-term planning to enable them to provide work matched to the pupils' needs.
138. Insufficient thought has been given to the potential of the subject to develop pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Where pupils are required to use these skills it is often at an inappropriate level because they have not been identified in the medium-term plan. Many weaknesses were identified at the time of the previous inspection. A key point for action was to develop the role of the co-ordinator in order to support teachers in meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum and to provide opportunities for in-service training with a focus on the development of geographical skills. The school has not addressed these issues, choosing instead to focus on the development of literacy and numeracy and consequently no improvement has been made. Most teachers have unsatisfactory subject knowledge which results in low expectations, poorly-planned work and a continued reliance on worksheets on which pupils record barely understood facts. The school is presently without anyone who can provide the necessary lead in developing the subject. Several teachers have undertaken the role since the previous inspection and the most recently appointed co-ordinator is presently absent. Monitoring of standards, teaching and learning has been ineffective. The school is not currently in a position to meet the demands of Curriculum 2000 in geography.

142.

History

139. Although many pupils make satisfactory progress in individual lessons, they make unsatisfactory progress over time and do not achieve standards that are expected for pupils of the same age nationally. This is because too heavy an emphasis is placed on acquiring subject knowledge, teachers' expectations are either too high or too low, and pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop their skills of historical enquiry.
140. Pupils at both key stages respond well when they have the opportunity to experience history at first hand or through studying artefacts and facsimile documents. For example, pupils in Year 6 had acquired a good understanding of what school was like for their Victorian counterparts and pupils in year 1 were fascinated by domestic objects commonly found in a Victorian home. However, they demonstrate that they are much more used to answering questions than asking them. The school has poor resources to support the development of historical skills and relies heavily on the good will and ingenuity of teachers to bring the subject to life.
141. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall in lessons observed although it is unsatisfactory over time. Most teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, but planning often fails to take

account of the needs of pupils of different abilities. Teachers spend too much time explaining and determining what pupils have remembered. They rarely plan activities that encourage pupils to consider 'How do we know?' or to determine how reliable the evidence is. The lack of emphasis given to the subject over the key stage does not enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. All classes spend the first hour of an afternoon, once a week, studying the subject. Lessons frequently start up to ten minutes late which means that pupils barely have time to pick up the threads from the previous week when they have to stop again. This lack of flexibility does not promote reflection or research skills. Good practice was observed where the Year 6 teacher made fruitful links to work in literacy which enabled pupils to enhance their understanding and knowledge in both subjects. The school has not yet identified how learning in English and history could be brought together to promote effective learning and the efficient use of time.

142. The school has a suitable policy and has chosen to adopt the nationally recommended scheme of work but has not begun to adapt it to the needs of the school. Planning and assessment are not yet linked and teachers have no information of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses on which to base their planning for the year. The school is presently without anyone who can provide the necessary lead in developing the subject. Several teachers have undertaken the role since the previous inspection and the most recently appointed co-ordinator is presently absent.

143. At the time of the previous inspection, no judgements were reached on attainment, progress, teaching or learning. The scrutiny of work indicated that the quality of pupils' work could be better. An overuse of work sheets was noted and limited opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of historical enquiry. Attention was drawn to the limited number of dated resources which restricted pupils' opportunities to develop the range and depth of their knowledge. Little has changed since then.

147.

147. **Music**

144. No music lessons were taught during the inspection. All music lessons are taught by a specialist teacher who works at the school for one day each week. The school fails to exploit the expertise of the co-ordinator for music who only teaches an extra-curricular lesson of recorders and rehearses the school choir for special performances.

145. The teaching of music is limited by the poor range of resources available. Instruments are generally old and the range of tuned instruments is especially limited. Opportunities for listening and appraising music are restricted by a library of recorded music that covers a wide range of composers from a variety of eras and cultures.

149. **Physical education**

146. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards in line with those expected for their age. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress in swimming and achieve higher standards than expected, and this is reported separately.

147. In the one lesson observed at Key Stage 1 nearly all pupils were able to bounce large balls and control them, one boy achieving this one handed for a considerable length of time. Most worked

well with a partner bouncing balls accurately in a hoop to each other. Not all pupils show satisfactory spatial awareness. At Key Stage 2 pupils show satisfactory skills in vigorous warm ups and use large apparatus for star jumps very confidently. Other pupils in Year 5 are developing sound hockey skills and are able to describe the skills verbally to the class. Pupils at Key Stage 2 do not always show sufficient awareness of the need for safety when moving apparatus.

148. All pupils are enthusiastic, sometimes over excitable and boisterous, but most try hard in their tasks to improve their performance. They do not always listen carefully enough to instructions in their eagerness to continue their activities, although their behaviour is generally good. They like to watch demonstrations by their peers. Although they frequently have constructive opinions to offer they are sometimes unable to wait to be asked.
149. The teaching is generally satisfactory. Whilst most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, and their lesson aims are clear, some allow pupils to talk out of turn and fidget when they are being instructed. In the better lessons, pupils are encouraged to listen quietly all the time, and talk only when necessary as, for instance, when planning a movement with a partner. There is also inconsistency in encouraging pupils to make judgements on their own and others performance.
150. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme, adapted from a local education authority scheme, which covers all areas of physical education. The subject supports the aims of the school well in developing and fostering co-operation and offers several opportunities for extra curricular activities. Football and netball clubs encourage matches against other local schools, although this has been somewhat curtailed whilst building of the new classrooms has taken place. The national 'Tops' sports scheme has provided both resources and training for teachers. Parents help regularly with funding having recently purchased athletic hurdles. Pupils are able to use the facilities of Stoke College of Further Education, where they work with students, and Burslem Sports Centre, which enhances their physical education. Last year 6 pupils were selected for the Burslem town athletic team. The school has also benefited from generous local sponsors purchasing games kit for the teams. Assessment of pupils' progress and its use in planning, is informal and although teachers appreciate their pupils' capabilities well, assessment procedures, and their use in planning future work, is underdeveloped. Overall, physical education contributes well to the development of pupils' self esteem.

Swimming

The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming reported as follows:-

151. Standards of swimming achieved by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 are good. A lesson observation showed only three non-swimmers at present in Year 6, with the large majority of other pupils already, in the early part of the school year, being able to swim 25 metres unaided. Pupils are very confident in the water and are developing good skills in both front and back crawl. Progress is very good as a substantial number of pupils have had little experience of swimming by the time they start school. When pupils first go swimming at the end of Year 2 most are non swimmers. However, in the Year 3 class observed about a third had already learned to swim, and many others were close to swimming unaided. All pupils show confidence in the water, are aware of safety procedures and are determined to progress.
152. Teaching is of a good and sometimes very good quality. The school employs an effective qualified

instructor who works with teachers and the head. The instructor and deputy head have appropriate qualifications to teach swimming and their knowledge effectively promotes the development of skills. Abilities and progress of pupils are well identified which greatly helps continuity as pupils have half-termly sessions throughout Key Stage 2. A good feature of the lessons is the continuous activity and good pace of the lessons. No time is wasted, and pupils have every opportunity to work on their skills throughout their lessons. A range of swimming aids and resources are also effectively used.

153. Provision of swimming is well organised and enables all pupils in Key Stage 2 to have equal opportunities to increase their proficiency. Lessons have clear learning objectives, and teachers know the abilities and attainment of their pupils well, although no written assessment of individuals is kept. However, awards and certificates are offered, encouraging pupils in their self-esteem and achievement.

154. The previous inspection judged standards in swimming to be in line with national expectations. Since then, standards have improved and the majority of pupils achieve a higher than expected level when compared with pupils of the same age nationally. The provision for swimming, and the attainment of pupils is a strength of the school.

158. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

158. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

Four inspectors, including a lay inspector, completed a total of 14.5 inspector days in school over a period of four days. The inspectors spent a 50 total hours observing classes at work, talking with pupils and examining the work of a sample range of pupils across the school.

Whilst in school the inspectors:

- formally inspected 47 lessons or parts of lessons
- examined a range of work from a representative sample of pupils from each year group, together with their records
- heard 21 pupils read formally and many others informally
- analysed a wide range of school documentation, including the school development plan, teachers' planning, analysis of test results and monitoring records
- examined attendance registers and the school's discipline records
- held discussions with the headteacher, a number of governors, subject co-ordinators, members of staff, and talked with a variety of people involved in the school informally, including parents.

A meeting was held which 4 parents attended and 24 parents completed questionnaires about the school. The issues raised at the meeting and in the questionnaires were addressed fully during the inspection.

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• **DATA AND INDICATORS**

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	182	1	29	99
Nursery Unit	28	0	0?	9

• **TEACHERS AND CLASSES**

• **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19:1

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

Total number of education support staff:	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	99

• **Qualified teachers (Nursery unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	n/a

• **Education support staff (Nursery unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	104
Average class size:	28

• **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/1999
	£
Total Income	357,101
Total Expenditure	368,053
Expenditure per pupil	1831
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,114
Balance carried forward to next year	17,530

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 202
 Number of questionnaires returned: 24

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	51	33	8	4	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	42	46	4	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	42	38	8	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	38	50	12	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	50	50	0	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	46	42	0	12	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	33	51	8	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	46	51	0	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	38	58	0	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	63	4	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	51	42	4	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

The school could do more to make information more accessible to parents whose first language is not English.