

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BERNARD'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ladybridge

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105230

Headteacher: Mrs J A Brook

Reporting inspector: Mr B Tyrer
23101

Dates of inspection: 26th February – 1st March 2001

Inspection number: 187103

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wendover Drive Ladybridge BOLTON
Postcode:	BL3 4RX
Telephone number:	01204 652147
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M J Procter
Date of previous inspection:	December 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr B Tyrer 23101	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Physical Education Music Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunity	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs M Roscoe 9884	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr M Wehrmeyer 15015	Team inspector	English Information and Communication Technology Design and Technology Geography History Foundation Stage	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Hulton Park ward of Bolton. It is a Roman Catholic Primary School with 115 pupils of whom 55 are boys and 60 are girls. The school is smaller than other primary schools. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils have English as an additional language. Fewer than two per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is well below the national average. Thirteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. In both cases these figures are below the national average. The children enter the school in the Foundation Stage with broadly average levels of attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides a good quality education for its pupils. The pupils in Year 6 are reaching average standards and this represents satisfactory achievement for this group. Standards in the other junior years are above average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. The teaching is good and the pupils have very positive attitudes to the school. The curriculum is now satisfactory and has improved. The leadership and management of the school are good and support the school's drive to raise standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money when its costs and the quality of education provided are taken into consideration

What the school does well

- Standards are rising throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and their attendance is excellent.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- The school's aims are reflected in its every day life; the staff work very well as a team and are committed to improvement.

What could be improved

- Attainment in aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) at Key Stage 2.
- Attainment in art and design at Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1998 at which time it had improved sufficiently to warrant it being taken out of special measures. The drive to raise standards has been successful in the infant classes and is now evident in most junior classes. There is a continuing picture of improvement as pupils who have attained high standards in Key Stage 1 move up through Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is now good and work is better planned to meet the needs of the more able pupils. Attention has been paid to writing and the teaching of science is now good. The school's planning for the curriculum and schemes of work have improved although more work on this is needed in ICT and art and design. A wide range of teaching strategies has been developed and this means that pupils of all abilities are now able to make better progress. The school has not yet addressed the issue of providing a comprehensive child protection policy.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	B	B	C
Mathematics	A	B	C	D
Science	C	B	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the national test results for eleven year old pupils have been above the national average and in some cases well above the national average in English and mathematics since 1996. Standards in mathematics have dropped since 1998. Standards in science show a fluctuating but upward trend over time with an improving trend that is better than that seen nationally. However the overall improving trend over time for the three subjects has been below that seen nationally. Several factors explain this position. A small number of pupils are tested each year and so the value of comparisons between years is reduced. The unusual or unexpected under-performance of a small number of pupils within the test group can make a big difference to the anticipated outcome, as was the case in mathematics in 2000. The school met its targets for English and science in 2000 but did not do so for mathematics. There have been very good results over the past three years for pupils taking national tests at age seven and inspection confirms that the attainment of pupils in this age range is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The higher levels of attainment are also reflected in English, mathematics, and science work in Years 3 to 5.

The school was placed in special measures in 1996, at which point improvement began and it was removed from special measures in 1998. The pupils in the present Year 6 have felt the impact of the staff changes since 1998 and have not benefited from the consistency of teaching in other year groups. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of the 13 pupils in the present Year 6 is typical of that seen nationally in English, mathematics and science and that their achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. The standards in other years are better than expected for the pupils' ages and for the current Year 6 they are high enough. The school has proposed reasonable and attainable targets for this group. By the age of eleven years, standards in all other subjects are in line with those expected except for art and design and in aspects of ICT where they are below. Attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage is what is expected for children at that age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are eager to come to school and are interested in their lessons. They take full advantage of what the school offers them and are keen to involve themselves in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in class, around the school and out in the playground. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are tolerant and have a strong sense of fair play.
Personal development and relationships	Good - pupils co-operate well with one another and take good care of their school and one another. They accept responsibility and show good initiative when necessary.
Attendance	Excellent - attendance is much higher than average and the rate of unauthorised absence is very low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching and learning are good. All of the lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Forty-one per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 55 per cent were good and four per cent were very good. The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is good across the school. Literacy and numeracy are well taught with good attention being paid to the teaching of basic skills. The teachers plan work to meet the needs of all pupils well and so pupils of all abilities learn at a good rate. The pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for and, like their classmates, make good progress. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and the good relationships that exist in the school enable pupils to work in a relaxed yet purposeful manner. There are occasions when the teachers' marking does not help the pupils to understand how to improve. Teachers do not make enough use of computers to support the pupils' learning. Some teachers lack expertise in art and design and this, combined with the lack of guidance for the teachers' planning, affects the standards that pupils achieve by the age of eleven.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory - there are good strategies for teaching English and mathematics and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, aspects of ICT and art and design are not covered in sufficient depth to ensure standards are high enough by the time pupils leave school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good - teachers' planning shows how these pupils will be supported and the good evaluation of their progress enables new targets to be set effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good - the school's relationship with the church provides a good contribution to spirituality. Cultural development is satisfactory and guidance exists in history and geography policies for developing pupils' understanding of other cultures but this has not been extended to other areas of the curriculum. The pupils are effectively taught what is right and wrong. The school creates a climate in which each child is valued as an individual.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school checks the pupils' progress in their work and their personal development carefully and gives them good support.

The parents have very good views of the school. The links with parents contribute significantly to pupils' learning and personal development. The school needs to extend its child protection policy into a more detailed document that gives better guidance to staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and all staff work well together to bring about continuing improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is well informed and takes an active part in deciding the priorities of the school. The governing body is successful in meeting its responsibilities.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good systems for evaluating and recording the progress that pupils make.
The strategic use of resources	This is satisfactory but good use is made of support staff. The school has a larger than average underspend but this is earmarked for the provision of extra staffing next year.

There are sufficient staff, and good plans to increase staffing next year to take account of the large number of pupils who will be in Year 6. The accommodation is of good quality and is well maintained. The governing body has the benefit of members with financial expertise and the principles of best value are understood and effectively applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like school. • That behaviour is good. • That they can comfortably approach the school. • That the school expects the children to work hard. • That the school helps the children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work expected of the child at home. • How well they are informed about their child's progress.

The inspection team supports the views about the school that please parents most. Inspectors are satisfied that an appropriate amount of homework is provided. While the information that parents receive about children's progress is satisfactory, there is scope to improve the clarity of some reports. The team notes that the parents have welcomed the improved arrangements for consultation sessions and the response in the questionnaire that showed parents overwhelmingly believed that their children were making good progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the reception class at the start of the year in which they are five with levels of attainment that are broadly what might be expected for children of their age. By the time they have completed the Foundation Stage they have made good progress and the majority are on course to reach the nationally set targets for their age in all areas of learning. Some children will exceed this expectation just as some will not reach it.
2. The results of national tests for seven year olds in 2000 showed that:
 - standards in reading and writing were in the top five per cent of school's nationally and in mathematics were well above the national average;
 - standards were well above those in schools where a similar number of pupils were eligible for free school meals.
3. Attainment in all three subjects has been consistently very high over recent years. This, combined with the improvements in teaching and learning that have been seen over the last four years, goes some way to explaining the higher standards seen in Years 3 to 5 in the juniors. The teachers' assessments of the seven year old pupils' attainment in science in 2000 indicated that standards were very high.
4. The results of the national tests for eleven year olds in 2000 showed that:
 - standards in English were above average compared to the national picture;
 - standards in mathematics were average and in science they were below average;
 - in comparison with similar schools, attainment in English was average, it was below average in mathematics and well below average in science.
5. The pupils' performance has been, overall, above the national average over time but shows a trend that is not as good as that seen nationally. The trend for science is difficult to determine because of the annual variations in the results but it does appear to be at least as good as the national trend.
6. Several factors need to be taken into consideration when looking at these results. A small number of pupils take the tests each year and any fluctuations or unusual performance on the part of a few pupils can cause wide disparities when results from different years are compared. Also the school was placed in special measures in 1996 and was taken out of special measures in 1998. There have been changes in staff and management as well as physical restructuring of the school. The benefits of the improvements that the school has made have impacted greatly on the standards achieved by the pupils at age seven but this has not been as easy or noticeable with the oldest pupils in the juniors, whose earlier attainment was not so good. It is evident from inspection that standards in Years 3 to 5 are above average and standards in Year 6 are high enough.
7. Inspection indicates that the attainment of pupils aged seven is above expectations for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The standards reached by the eleven year old pupils, a year group with a wide range of attainment, is average overall in English, mathematics and science. The current Year 6 group has 13 pupils (each pupil is therefore about eight per cent of the class). The higher attainers are set to reach the higher levels in all three subjects whilst at the same time there are some lower attainers who might not reach the expected level. This confirms that the quality of teaching has improved and that the key issue to provide better opportunities for the more able pupils has been successfully achieved.
8. Pupils of differing abilities are equally well provided for and make appropriate gains in their learning. There is no evidence to show differences between the ways in which boys and girls

learn or the rate at which they make progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them.

9. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use their knowledge of books and the alphabet to find information in non-fiction books. The higher attainers read with good expression and understanding. Some belong to local libraries and reading is generally a source of enjoyment. Younger pupils in Year 1 are able, in some cases, to talk about the characters and the plot of a story they are reading. Lower attaining pupils are able to use the sounds of letters and the pictures to help them read words that are unfamiliar. Pupils form their letters correctly and higher attaining pupils are beginning to join their writing. Younger pupils enjoy making lists of words with given beginnings and eagerly write sentences to show what their words mean. Speaking and listening is above average and is well promoted because teachers often ask pupils to explain their thinking in further detail. Pupils are given good opportunities to contribute their ideas, with the result that a Year 1 pupil in a mathematics lesson was heard to declare that "numbers go on for ever". By the time they are in Year 2 the higher and average attainers are good at putting several sentences together by way of explanation. They are confident in front of their teacher and their fellow pupils and, because of the good relationships in classrooms, are eager to express their opinions and feelings. In mathematics they have a good knowledge of different types of graphs and can describe the qualities of different flat and solid shapes. They work comfortably with addition and subtraction to 100 and can estimate and measure using kilograms. In science they know that plants need certain conditions for growth. They know that materials can be grouped, for example into natural and man-made categories, and they are able to experiment with melting ice and record and display their findings as a graph.
10. Pupils who are aged eleven show a good understanding of what they read, and refer to the text to justify their opinions. They know how to find information in a library. They read with fluency and use their reading skills in research. Writing is clearly formed but handwriting is an area that the school seeks to develop. Higher attainers are able to use a range of punctuation effectively and adapt the style of writing for different purposes, such as using bullet points in note taking. Their speaking and listening skills are again well developed because they are encouraged to report back in different subjects. They are encouraged to be expressive and the higher attainers are able to talk about the characteristics of different styles of writing. In mathematics the most able have a good range of strategies for dealing with problems presented to them orally. They work accurately with fractions, decimals and percentages and have experience of using different number bases, negative numbers, squares and primes. They have good graphical and data-handling skills. In science they demonstrate a clear understanding of a fair test and can carry out experiments with some accuracy and precision. They record and display their findings. They know about some different properties of materials and can classify them, after experiment, into groups that are either soluble or insoluble. They effectively investigate the effect that varying the resistance in a circuit has on a lit bulb.
11. The attainment of pupils in ICT meets the expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but is below what is expected by the age of eleven because the pupils have too little experience in some areas and so the picture of standards is patchy. Standards for pupils at the end of Year 6 are sometimes above those expected for their age, but only in the areas they have covered. The juniors have gaps in skills and knowledge about programming, in giving a series of instructions to control a machine, in the area of simulation software and in the use of the computer to gather data for science or geography studies. The time remaining for the Year 6 pupils is unlikely to be sufficient to cover these gaps. This prevents their attainment from meeting expectations overall.
12. The attainment of pupils at age seven and eleven in all other subjects is typical for pupils of their age with the exception of art and design at Key Stage 2, which is below average. This is due to the lack of planning to develop the pupils' skills and the lack of guidance on how to improve their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The school is a happy place and pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good. They are eager to come to school, more so than at the time of the previous inspection. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents commented that their children were happy to come to school and 98 per cent of parents agreed with the statement that their child likes school when responding to the parents' questionnaire.
14. Pupils' relationships with each other, teachers and adults in the school are very good. Pupils are polite and respect adults. They respect one another and are genuinely delighted with each other's achievements in the classroom. In a Year 5 English lesson, for example, the rest of the class congratulated pupils who read out their work with lively expression. Pupils willingly and enthusiastically applaud on special occasions such as during whole-school assemblies, where individuals are congratulated and praised for their work and contributions to school life. They show respect for lunchtime supervisors, who play an effective role in the pupils' pastoral care, and pupils are well mannered, very friendly and polite to visitors. Older pupils use their initiative to help younger ones and are quick to see a need. For example, a Year 6 boy helped a Year 2 child to use a knife and fork at lunch without being prompted. They talk to them in the playground and are there to lend a caring hand if anyone gets upset.
15. Behaviour in class, around the school and in the playground is very good. Pupils move around the school in a calm, quiet and orderly manner. They care for their school and its equipment and materials. They are trustworthy and respect each other's property. Occasional incidents of boisterous behaviour are dealt with promptly and supportively. Should the need ever arise there are well-understood systems in place to deal with bad behaviour and bullying. There have been no exclusions since the previous inspection. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are tolerant and have a strong sense of fair play.
16. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. They work well together and Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, confidently prepare and organise themselves for their next lessons and tasks. Those who have particular roles carry them out reliably. The lunchtime first aid monitor stays at his post throughout the hour, ready to render assistance when needed. Pupils are attentive and enjoy their lessons. Older pupils are confident and enthusiastic in explaining what is happening in the school, for example explaining the dinner arrangements or discussing what they have learned on the computer. They take a strong interest in their lessons and in the wider range of school activities. For instance some pupils are now sending e-mails in to school. They value the opportunity for independence in their work, and by pursuing their own ideas improve their learning. For instance, the reception children have very clear ideas about how to build a house for the three pigs that would keep any wolf out, and translate these ideas into the real thing. The pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions and words on others is mature for their age.
17. Attendance, which is considerably higher than national averages, is excellent. Unauthorised absences are minimal. This positive picture has been maintained since the previous inspection because children are keen and eager to come to school and parents support their regular attendance. Registers are completed at the appropriate times in a straightforward, effective way and absences are followed up as they occur. Requirements for reporting levels of attendance are met.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good. It is good in all phases. All of the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better. Teaching was satisfactory in 41 per cent of lessons and it was good in a further 55 per cent. One very good lesson was observed. This represents a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection in 1998. Several factors have contributed to this. The teaching in English and mathematics is good and the staff have implemented the national strategies confidently. The effects of the introduction of the teaching

strategies for literacy and numeracy have had an impact not just on the teaching of those subjects but on the quality of teaching in other lessons. Teachers find that they are able to transfer elements of the structure and methods and these are contributing to better teaching and learning overall. The adoption of nationally agreed schemes of work for the National Curriculum has also been important in raising the quality and consistency of teachers' planning for lessons. More important has been the contribution of the headteacher who was appointed a term before the school was taken out of special measures. She has set a good example as a class teacher, but more importantly, as an organiser and a team builder so that the present teaching staff display good levels of professionalism and a very good will to improve.

19. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the year in which they are five and share their teacher with a small number of pupils in Year 1. As is the case in other classes careful provision is made for each group. Planning is particularly good here and this means that support can be effectively targeted at different groups as the lesson proceeds. In the same way, a good balance is struck between the more formal teaching for pupils in Year 1 and those children in the Foundation Stage.
20. The teaching of literacy is good. The national strategy has been effectively introduced and lessons follow the format of the literacy hour. Work in other subjects such as the writing of notes and reports in science and mathematics and the recording of research in history and geography all make use of, and enhance, pupils' literacy skills. The teaching of reading is well promoted and as a result many pupils say that it brings them enjoyment. The library has been considerably enhanced and teachers make good provision for its use by pupils in their research work. Planning is good and caters for the differing levels of attainment of pupils and for mixed aged classes. Particular emphasis is placed on speaking and listening and pupils are given opportunities to report on the progress they have made which not only raises their self-esteem but also helps to clarify in their minds what they have achieved. The sensitive management of pupils is also a major strength of the teaching and because pupils feel that their contributions are valued, and that staff have high expectations in terms of concentration and behaviour, they respond in a positive way and work hard.
21. The teaching of numeracy is good. The introduction of the national strategy for teaching mathematics has had a good effect on the quality of teaching and the raising of standards. Teachers have a good framework within which to work and use all aspects of the lesson well. Pupils enjoy the brisk pace and challenge of the mental, oral sessions at the start of the lesson and value the plenary sessions that give them the opportunity to show what they have learned and what they understand. A pleasing aspect of the teaching of mathematics is the commitment to providing mathematical challenges that require pupils to think about how they can best apply their knowledge. Standards are generally high and these pupils are able to enjoy a challenge. Pupils respond well to the fact that they are expected to act responsibly and this shows in the way in which they carry out the tasks that they are set. The subject makes a good contribution to other areas of curriculum work as seen in the early pattern work of pupils in art, or in the way in which scientific findings are logged and presented graphically. Younger pupils make good use of computers and robots as they learn about shape and space.
22. Teachers plan for support staff to work with pupils with special needs and the classroom assistants do this very effectively. Where pupils have individual education plans the targets are carefully set. Lesson evaluation allows teachers to be aware of the progress that these pupils are making so that when the time comes for the individual education plans to be reviewed this can be done effectively and accurately. Equal opportunities are provided and teachers are aware of the gender bias in terms of preferred activities that the youngest children display when they enter the reception class. They are careful to avoid gender bias and effectively provide good role models for their pupils.

23. There is scope to improve teaching. The teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for the pupils to use computers. Too often the computers lie idle and this means that opportunities to extend pupils' skills and knowledge are lost. The teaching in art and design is not supported by a scheme of work which sets out the skills and knowledge that the pupils will learn over a period of time. Teachers lack expertise in art and design and have insufficient knowledge of how to develop the pupils' skills. As a consequence, pupils' work and methods of producing it are not sufficiently evaluated and improved.
24. The teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always help pupils to understand how to improve. The guidelines used in marking focus on the main purpose of an activity and the misspelling of common words is often overlooked. Consequently, pupils continue to misspell some common words. There are occasions when the teacher does not make plain to the pupils what they will learn during a lesson and so the pupils do not always understand what they have got to do.
25. However, there is a great deal that is good about the teaching and the effect that this has on pupils' ability and willingness to learn. All staff make it plain to the pupils that they care for and respect them. This is done in many ways and the pupils understand this well. Because the pupils are treated with respect and are expected to participate actively in their learning and because they can see that they are being given quality and relevant work to do, the pupils respond in kind. An example of this can be seen in the way in which teachers ask pupils to follow up pieces of work at home and the way in which it is completed.

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

26. Although the 1998 inspection noted that satisfactory progress had been made in developing the school's curriculum, it indicated that there was still work to be done. The school has, over the last two years, set about systematically eradicating the weaknesses, and has taken effective steps to strengthen the curriculum and its long-term planning. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, together with the adoption of the national guidance to underpin the scheme of work for science, ensures full coverage for these subjects. The teachers' expertise in planning from the schemes to set suitable targets for pupils, and to match work to prepare pupils to meet the targets, has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
27. The literacy and numeracy strategies are beginning to feed through and becoming effective in raising standards. Schemes of work based on national guidance are in place for most of the remaining subjects. These provide a sound framework for planning. They are promoting a secure progression of skills and knowledge, and establish a continuity of learning across the key stages and from year to year. The teachers make sure in their daily planning that they provide separate and suitable learning experiences for the two years in the mixed-age classes. The staff have created an overall plan which shows the pattern of links between subjects. The impact of this is to ensure that knowledge or skills in one subject are taught ready for when they are needed in another. A strength of the curriculum is the emphasis on the investigation and experiment elements in those subjects where these are a requirement. Further development is taking place in the schemes for ICT and art and design but it is too early for these initiatives to have any real impact on standards.
28. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good and follows the specified early learning goals. It provides all children with a broad base for their future learning. The curriculum in the infants and juniors now provides a sound quality and range of learning opportunities, with a generally balanced coverage of the programmes of study. In ICT there are some gaps in coverage linked to the time made available in the daily planning. There is a need to ensure that greater use is made of computers in the classroom and that the programme of learning in ICT is as broad as it should be. This is especially the case in the area of programming machines, such as robots for example, to work in a particular way. The narrow range of experience offered in art and design is due to limitations within the former

scheme. There is a need to ensure that provision is put in place for the systematic development of skills and for this wider range of provision to be made. The school otherwise seeks to provide a good breadth of experience, including enrichment of the curriculum by its programme of extra-curricular activities, visits to centres of educational interest and the contribution of visitors to school to share their expertise with pupils, including many from the local community. Parents value the good range of extra-curricular activities offered.

29. The headteacher ensures that the elements of personal, social and health education are in place. Teachers deliver these elements appropriately through a wide range of subjects. All pupils receive appropriate instruction in health and safety matters, and teachers raise awareness of the dangers of misuse of drugs and medicines. The governors are reviewing the policy for sex education in the light of pupils' growing maturity. Overall the curriculum is a sound basis for the pupils' next phase of education, and meets most of requirements of the National Curriculum.
30. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. They are well supported by individual education plans where this is appropriate and their progress towards their targets is well recorded as part of the lesson evaluations that teachers carry out. Planning by individual teachers also details how and when support is to be made available to pupils in lesson time.
31. The headteacher has embarked on a valuable programme of communication with partner schools. These are constructive and work to the benefit of pupils, by creating curriculum links and providing an effective induction of Year 6 into the senior schools. Similarly good communication with local nursery schools leads to a friendly start for the children into the reception class. Members of the local community play a distinctive part in the overall curricular provision. A local football team supports different areas of the curriculum such as ICT through the provision made available for study at the club's modern stadium.
32. The school is careful to extend equality of opportunity to all pupils and ensures that its practices do not promote undesirable stereotyping. In the same way materials and books are carefully screened. The school is aware of issues of inclusivity and all pupils within the school benefit as a result. The school has no pupils who have English as an additional language. There is no policy to show what arrangements the school would make to support such pupils.
33. The previous inspection found that the school had made good progress in its arrangements for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall they are now good. The headteacher ensures that this important area is to the forefront. The staff have worked together to build an ethos in the school which values everything about children, and is focused on building independence, high self-esteem and mutual respect. In practice this is seen in the way that teachers value all pupils' answers in lessons and build on them. It is seen in the dedicated care taken with display which values pupils' work. It is seen in the way that teachers model calm and considerate behaviour and foster very good relationships. This ethos underpins the good provision for moral development.
34. The provision for spiritual development is good. The policies for religious education, assemblies and acts of collective worship ensure strong support for the pupils' spiritual awareness. The youngest children have good opportunities to explore and marvel at the natural and man-made world. The class acts of worship by the older pupils are a moving focus of the school day, giving pupils the opportunity to reflect thoughtfully about their lives.
35. Provision for social development is good. The pupils understand and value the school routines and systems. Year 6 pupils recognise these as good training for social and moral development. They are able to explain how they have been helped to grow as mature and responsible young adults, for instance, by the rewards system. They have enjoyed the responsibility of jobs to assist in the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Some can see that the school's systems are leading them towards self-discipline. Many opportunities are

given for pupils to learn to work together effectively in pairs, small groups and teams. Most lessons promote the development of the pupils' independence of thought and they are encouraged to organise their own learning.

36. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Teachers raise pupils' awareness of art, music, dance and literature through the curriculum. The pupils are encouraged to develop a willingness to listen to each other's ideas and an openness to cultures and faiths different to their own, in religious education lessons. The school has good links with charities whose members come into the school with news of projects in third world areas, such as Peru or the 2000 Wells project in Africa. Work in the reception class on African music and dance, which was supported by the visit of a West African drummer, was shared by the whole school. Years 5 and 6 have an interesting outing planned to participate in a Gamelan orchestra workshop. The policies for history and geography are sound models to show how spiritual, moral and social education can be taught through subjects. They guide staff on how the diversity of cultures in modern Britain can be introduced in history and geography. This approach is not adopted consistently in other subjects such as art and design or music whose schemes of work are under review. Local culture and traditions are not neglected, with magic shows, puppet theatres and drama groups putting on plays

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall the quality of care and steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare are satisfactory and supported by some detailed policies and procedures. Since the previous inspection much has been done to extend this area of the school's work. Parents are now pleased with the improvements in the way pupils are looked after, particularly the way in which the school has reorganised the handover of children to them at the end of the day.
38. Staff pay good attention to the welfare and safety of pupils and manageable and reasonable steps are taken to ensure that assessments of possible hazards minimise any risk to pupils or staff. Improvements are necessary, however, in the manner that first aid treatments are recorded and monitored. The child protection policy is inadequate and does not comply with all legislation and is not supported by a staff-training programme. This shortcoming was identified previously and not enough has been done to rectify this outstanding issue.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. For example, pupils are warmly welcomed into school and registration periods are used well to facilitate a relaxed yet purposeful start to each school session. Staff have high expectations of regular, punctual attendance and parents, working within the spirit of the home-school agreement, share these aspirations.
40. Parents feel that pupils behave well in school and inspectors agree that the procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour work well. The school's policy makes clear the school's intolerance to bullying or harassment and the necessity for swift action to support and protect those involved.
41. Pupils are involved in drawing up their own class rules. These work well in maintaining co-operation and very good relations within classrooms. The expectations, however, covering social areas are not well understood. For example, some pupils are often slow to respond to the signal to enter school at the end of a playtime because they are not aware of the rules governing 'lining up' after the whistle.
42. Procedures for promoting good behaviour include a much valued reward system that is augmented by a good system of praise assemblies held each half term. On a daily basis, pupils dash gleefully to record their 'points' on class wall charts.
43. Appropriate supervision is maintained by teaching and welfare assistants during play and dinnertime, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Monitoring of the provision is

now necessary to check that the levels of staffing are adequate on the Key Stage 1 playground given the numbers of pupils accommodated there over the dinnertime period.

44. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory and supported by agreed systems used by staff to see how pupils are doing academically. The school has a number of strategies for checking pupils' attainment. Often these include the results from both statutory and optional tests plus teachers' assessments. Present practice is strongly focused on English, mathematics and science and results are used to set individual targets for improvement. There are good procedures in place for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are increasingly using assessment information to inform and improve lesson planning and so work is better matched to the individual or group. Pupils are aware of the progress they make, with their reading for example, and appreciate changing groups within class to tackle the more challenging work planned for them.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good and well supported by computer software to enable these to be less time consuming. Pupils needing additional help with literacy and those with a special educational need are particularly well supported because the results of the initial assessment for pupils starting in the reception class are used sensitively, when concern about progress is triggered.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The majority of parents hold very positive views about the school. These were expressed at the meeting held for parents and through the questionnaire returns. This represents a marked improvement since the inspection in 1996. Parents now feel very comfortable about calling in to see class teachers on formal and informal occasions. Parents comment that all staff are approachable and that their concerns are taken seriously and dealt with effectively. Some concerns were expressed, however, about the irregularity of homework and the written reports on children's progress that are presented annually to parents.
47. The quality of information published and that provided for parents throughout the year is satisfactory with both strong and weaker elements across the range provided; a good range of commercially printed materials is provided for each parent, which explains about the National Curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2. A good quality school handbook is published but does not fully lend itself to the notion of partnership expressed within it. It lacks, for example, appropriate and relevant information about the curriculum for those children who are in the Foundation Stage. Inspectors find also that insufficient information is provided for parents to enable them to understand what is planned for their children in a term, for each class or year group.
48. Regular newsletters serve to strengthen the links between home and school. These contain general items often concerned with fund-raising events and some parents are critical of both the lack of pertinent, relevant information in these, and also the late notification of some events. Inspectors find these views to be justified because opportunities are not taken to ensure that parents are informed about homework and other provision for each year group or class.
49. Information about pupils' progress is good in content and meets requirements. Written reports on progress were criticised at the time of the previous report. They are improved, but there is still some way to go before parents have a clear indication of the progress their children have made.
50. Parents are encouraged to contact school to pass on information to teachers. In this regard the Parental Consultation meetings serve this purpose well and have been a success because they offer confidential interviews in a flexible time slot. The teachers' expectations are shared with parents, who appreciate this useful dialogue.

51. Many opportunities are used well to increase the effectiveness of the school's links with parents. These are good and very productive. The overall improvements serve to underline the importance the school gives to good induction procedures and, most notably, the strenuous effort paid to consulting parents on the home-school agreement.
52. The school is proud of the good relationships it is developing with its parents and other volunteers that support its work and contribute to pupils' learning. These positive and friendly intentions have resulted in high levels of co-operation and parents willingly lend resources for use in the classroom. They give generously of their time to help with musical productions or individual support in class. Many support their children in various sacramental activities and other festivities. Parents actively support reading at home and a committed, well-established group, through the Parents and Friends' Association, raises substantial funds and decides how these monies should be spent.
53. Parents of those children with a special educational need are kept well informed and are invited to attend meetings where a review of their child's progress is made.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership and management of the school are good. A combination of good leadership from the headteacher and good support and commitment from governors and all staff continue to make this an improving school. The school has made good progress since the last inspection when it was taken out of special measures. The headteacher has been in post for just over two years. During this time she has overseen changes to the staffing structure and to management and organisation which in turn have promoted an improvement in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. The outcome has been that, in almost all cases, standards of attainment are consistently higher than might be expected. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher work well together and effectively share the burden of the senior management team. Delegation is effective in this small school and all staff, with their larger than average number of individual responsibilities, are aware of how they are expected to contribute.
55. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection report and this has been due in part to the attention paid to improving teaching by the local education authority, Her Majesty's Inspectors and the headteacher. When the headteacher was appointed just over two years ago she was originally inhibited in the monitoring aspect of her role by virtue of a half-time teaching commitment. She is now more able to look at teaching, which she does through visiting each of the four classrooms. The school has devised a good policy for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and it is now to be put fully into operation. The school is in a good position to benefit from this initiative which is designed to raise the quality of teaching and learning still higher. Because there are sound systems of assessment the school is able to set realistic and attainable targets for pupils.
56. The governing body contributes to the school's planning for improvement and has made a good contribution to bringing the school up to its present position. The governors are careful to fulfil their statutory obligations. As part of their role in managing the budget, they seek to provide the best value for the money they spend. Sound financial systems are in place and data is available which shows how the school's spending plan is proceeding. Funds that are allocated for specific purposes are properly spent and the school's somewhat larger than usual budget underspend is earmarked for the provision of extra staff in the next academic year.
57. There is a very strong and shared commitment on the part of all associated with the school to secure continuing improvements. There is a strong sense of community within which communication is effective. All staff are able to make contributions to school development planning, and the procedures for performance management which are in place ensure that issues of staff development can also be incorporated into such planning. The school's aims

are to be seen as a thread that runs through its day-to-day life. Relationships are very good and the school is careful and successful in meeting the needs of individuals and in providing equality of opportunity. A strength of the school is the way in which the staff with support roles are integrated into the teaching and welfare provision that is made and the effectiveness that results.

58. At present, because the policy for monitoring and evaluating teaching and the quality of the curriculum through classroom observation is not in operation, the co-ordinators do not benefit from the insight that this would provide. Nevertheless, they have a good understanding of what they want and need to do and are enthusiastic about their roles. They have made good progress to date in the revision of policies and the adaptation of nationally suggested schemes of work in order to make them meet the particular needs of the school. Particular attention is now needed to complete and implement the schemes of work for ICT and art and design.
59. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well organised and the provision that is made for pupils with special educational needs meets the requirements and recommendations of the nationally agreed code of practice. The co-ordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher and a full-time class teacher, has had little opportunity to monitor the quality of the provision that is made for pupils with special needs in other classes.
60. There have been staffing changes in the last four years and since the last inspection just over two years ago. There are secure and effective procedures in place to induct new arrivals to the school and the effectiveness of these can be seen in the efficient way in which a job share is now working in Class 2. The school has not been a provider for initial teacher training but would certainly be suitable. The school makes some use of new technology and uses the Internet and electronic mail in some of its responses to outside bodies such as the local authority.
61. There is an adequate level of staffing and all staff are able to contribute effectively. This is seen in the way in which support staff are targeted at areas of need as, for example, in the way they support pupils with special educational needs. The school accommodation is now much improved as a result of some internal restructuring. The building and grounds are kept in very good condition and are treated with the greatest respect by all pupils. Whilst the building is attractive it has barely enough space and this has influenced decisions about, for example, the way in which ICT is taught. Resources are generally of an acceptable standard.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The governing body and senior management team of the school should raise standards further by:

- (1) completing and implementing the scheme of work for information and communication technology as planned and ensuring, through greater use of the school's computers, that the fullest range of experiences is provided, particularly for pupils in Key Stage 2;
(see paragraphs: 11, 23, 28, 107, 109 and 110)
- (2) completing and implementing the school's scheme of work for art and design as planned so as to provide opportunities for a wide range of experiences and the systematic development of skills and knowledge.
(see paragraphs: 12, 23, 28, 92, 93 and 94)

In addition to the issues above, the governing body should consider the following when drawing up its action plan:

- the need to develop the school's child protection policy;
- the way in which the school's marking policy is interpreted with particular reference to spelling;
- the need to inform parents about the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and to give parents greater notice of events taking place in school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

29

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	55	41	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	115
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2
Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100(100)	100(100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	17	12	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (82)	67 (91)	89 (91)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	17	17	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (82)	94 (91)	100 (91)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

* Data in the columns for boys and girls is omitted because of the small numbers in both key stages.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	115
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87

Financial information

Financial year	99/2000
	£
Total income	221915
Total expenditure	213573
Expenditure per pupil	1960
Balance brought forward from previous year	18696
Balance carried forward to next year	27038

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

115

Number of questionnaires returned

68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	40	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	43	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	44	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	49	16	3	1
The teaching is good.	53	40	1	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	41	13	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	53	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	48	6	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	36	0	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	50	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	37	4	3	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. Children under the age of five are admitted to the reception class in September. The school provides a sensitive induction into classroom routines during the first three weeks when the children attend in the mornings only. Some of the children visit the reception class from their playgroups and nurseries in July, which helps them to become familiar with the surroundings. The 19 reception children share the classroom with seven Year 1 pupils. The reception teacher has planned a complex timetable sharing the supervision with the nursery nurse. A usual pattern is for lesson introductions to include both year groups, then one group splits off to start its practical activities while the other gets further tuition from the teacher. Sometimes this is the reception year, sometimes Year 1. The system works well because of the close teamwork of the two adults and the quality support given to the pupils. The timing is a fine art, as the nursery nurse has to be ready to switch groups as soon as the teacher finishes the lesson introduction.
64. The positive bonus of this arrangement is that reception children have a very good model for behaviour and intense concentration in the Year 1 pupils. They also spark off a stream of ideas for the younger ones to think about in discussion sessions. The negative side is that the reception children do not get the continuous run of directed play activities which is now a feature of the Foundation Stage. This deficit is adjusted in two ways. These activities, such as the role-play area or sand tray, are available for reception children when they have completed the lesson-based tasks. Special activity sessions are provided for the whole class at times when the teacher has the valuable support of several adult volunteers. This is when pupils enjoy creative activities, music and design and technology with food textiles and structural models. ICT is included together with more role-play opportunities. The training of the volunteers is thorough, resulting in good quality teaching and support. This planning widens the curriculum so that a good overall curriculum experience is presented.
65. The children are given a simple test at the beginning of the year to measure a baseline of their attainment strengths. The test is repeated at the end of the year to see how much progress the children have made. The information from the test is useful to the teachers, who are able to spot children who may encounter difficulties and then keep a close eye on them. It also enables the teacher to begin to put the children into effective working groups and give them tasks that are suited to their attainment. The day-to-day planning of work is soundly linked to the new national guidelines for under fives, as a sequence of goals for early learning.
66. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They respond well to opportunities to work in groups and most interact confidently with their friends. They mix well with older pupils and have a distinct sense of belonging to a class and a school community. Reception children are able to sit still and listen, often with rapt attention to stories or the teachers' tuition. Well-planned routines train the children in polite behaviour, and require them to tidy up after activities. Since they are fairly insecure when they start school they clearly make good progress. When lining up to go to the hall, and in assemblies, they are indistinguishable from the older classes in their sensible behaviour, and the junior teachers sometimes point them out as a model for the older classes. The teaching is good, because it not only gives frequent opportunities for the children to practise politeness and sharing, but also because it is a gentle training in self-discipline. The only limitation lies in the opportunities for children to develop their capacity to select more of their own activities, based on personal interests.
67. Literacy is an exciting time for the children because staff tell stories in a lively manner. Within the fun of the big books, like 'Once upon a Time', the teacher ensures that the children learn basic skills about letters and sounds, and how to get information from the pictures. The

teaching is good because it uses knowledge of what the children can do to put them in groups where they can tackle activities at their own level and they make good progress. There is good support for them to increase their pace of reading and develop the early stages of writing. Some good recording by the nursery nurse, of how well the children achieved in the lesson, is used effectively in the planning to ensure that they move further in the next. This valuable assessment procedure is also used in mathematics, but does not extend to other areas of learning, where it is equally important. During the language activities children chatter away happily, in the role-play areas or at their tables. They are beginning to use the more adventurous words that the teacher introduces. Their reading is becoming more confident. Since, for some children, their starting point was slightly below average in language and communication, the group overall has made good progress, as most of the children are likely to exceed the expectations for their age by the time they start Year 1. The teachers keep a close eye on the children's development in learning and plan to meet their needs.

68. The children make particularly good progress in mathematical development, because their starting point was below average, and now many are likely to exceed the expected goals. Well-planned, purposeful teaching accounts for this. A particular strength is the way that the teacher is able to match the tasks set for the different ability levels of the children. Lively lesson introductions develop mental agility and simple problem solving with numbers up to 20. Children use a variety of counting strategies, including the fingers, where they have to match one to one, and are encouraged to "check every finger has a partner!" In groups, the children work with intense concentration to strengthen their understanding. The middle group are becoming confident with 6-1 and the language of subtraction; the next group are not far behind as they master 5+1. The top group can add or subtract any number between 1 and 6 to or from ten, using a dice game to set the pace. In the sand and water trays the children find good opportunities to experience shape and measure quantities.
69. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted by teaching sessions about particular topics such as fruit and seeds. The learning environment is filled with objects to stimulate the children's curiosity and interest and this extends their knowledge and understanding of the world still further. Their level of knowledge is generally that expected for their age, although some areas of experience seem weaker, such as the naming of the less common animals. Children make sound progress when working through the practical experiences planned for them, such as the observation of objects floating and sinking. They are taught how to use mathematical skills in recording their observations as simple charts. They learn about the world in and around the school. They receive good direct teaching on the programming of floor robots. They are above average in their ability to design products, such as houses for the three pigs, which they build and then evaluate. The children develop an awareness of past times from events they recall in their family lives. The teachers foster and satisfy a sense of curiosity in the children. Many aspects of teaching in this area are very good, particularly the deployment of volunteers, but the emphasis on direct teaching inevitably places a limit on the children's personal exploration and so they do not progress as quickly as they might.
70. The children's physical development takes place in the school hall with their own time- tabled gymnastic and music and movement lessons. The teaching is good, keeping all the children concentrating on the task and thinking quite creatively. They display above average balance and control. With clear instructions, and the opportunity to practise, the children make good progress in increasing the range and quality of movements to interpret the watery music, for example. It is part of the school's action plan to develop a secure outdoor play area, stocked with the necessary large play equipment. The children are agile, alert and enthusiastic. Many of the classroom activities involve good training in precise handling skills with glue spreaders, scissors and other small tools. Some of the children find this task difficult, but they receive patient encouragement and eventually begin to master the skills. Most children are likely to meet the expectations for their age by the end of the reception year.

71. The children's creative development is likely to be near to the average for their age by the time that they are six. They make good progress in a range of activities, and very good progress in music, linked to good teaching. Children develop enthusiasm and confidence to explore their own ideas. They show the capacity to learn the words of new songs easily, and are confident in handling a range of simple instruments. They have good ideas about using these in compositions to be recorded on tape and played to their classmates. Their achievement has remained above average consistently since the 1996 inspection. No art and design activities were observed, but the children's paintings and collage, and the technology models they have made, show that they are working to a good standard.

ENGLISH

72. Standards in English have improved since the inspection in 1998. The variations in attainment between different year groups have virtually disappeared. The Year 2 pupils have for several years regularly achieved high standards in reading and writing. Their books and their class work during the week of the current inspection were of an above average standard. The pupils achieved well above the levels of pupils of a similar background in the 2000 tests. Over recent years pupils nearing the end of Year 6 have also regularly achieved above average standards. However in the year 2000 national tests they did not do as well as expected when compared to their attainment at the end of Year 2. This is mainly because as children join and leave the school the composition of the Year 6 class is not the same as it was during Year 2.
73. The work of the present Year 6 pupils is of a sound standard and they are likely to achieve at least average levels by the end of the year. This represents appropriate achievement for this group of pupils. As stated in 1998, standards in reading are still higher than they are in writing, but both have improved since then. Although pupils' handwriting is more clearly formed than it was, the school recognises that this is an area for further development, and the teachers and pupils are working hard on this. The teachers use the school's strategy for reading and writing effectively and teachers have managed to raise the standards reached by all Year 2 pupils to a secure Level 2, and nearly all of the Year 6 pupils to Level 4. Standards in speaking and listening are better than average. Parents are particularly pleased with the rise in standards in English.
74. Teaching of English is good and this leads directly to pupils' good progress in lessons. The school has taken careful note of the previous inspection report. Under the enthusiastic leadership of the co-ordinator the teachers have used the literacy strategy very effectively to tackle all the detailed points in that report. The staff's determination to 'get it right' is evident in their careful planning. They now plan challenging work for pupils of all abilities. Teachers now ask probing questions that open up pupils' ideas, instead of narrowing them; "Why do you think that?" is frequently heard. They build on the pupils' answers and on previous learning in calculated steps. Teachers introduce basic skills at an early stage. Year 1 pupils enjoy making lists of 'spr, scr, spl' words in one lesson and wrote sentences at a furious rate to show what their chosen words meant. By the end of the lesson not only were they able to use the sounds, but were also thinking that their sentences could be longer.
75. Reading standards for most of the Year 2 and some of the Year 6 pupils are above average. Pupils have personal targets to help them make progress in reading. By Year 6 nearly all pupils have a secure knowledge of letter patterns and the teacher is able to move on to technical details such as stressed and unstressed vowels. The pupils relish this challenge and the discussion that surrounds it. As a result they are able to tackle difficult new words independently. This in turn enables the teacher to pursue good quality literature, and to express satisfaction with the way in which his pupils tell him about 'poetic licence' in Kipling's lines. The pupils have a strong enthusiasm for reading, are developing a dramatic feel for expression and at the higher level can capably compare the styles of the different authors they enjoy. In doing this they lack a little of the abstract vocabulary needed to describe style in concise terms. Teachers are good at introducing technical vocabulary in all subjects, but do

not get the pupils to say them aloud often enough. Consequently they cannot be certain that the pupils have acquired full understanding and mastery of those words.

76. The enhanced resources are particularly well used in English teaching. Big book stories or non-fiction topics are popular because they give pupils such a clear stimulus that everyone can see and join in with. Pupils are eager to use the interesting features of language in their own writing. The small white boards enable them to make quick notes and change them easily. Teachers have extended the range of effective teaching methods since 1998. For instance a good brainstorm technique for Year 3 pupils enabled them to produce a quick list of ideas for the suitable description of a creepy woodland setting. When they wanted to add eerie new words to craft their work further, they searched for a thesaurus, but found none. In all classes this book is insufficiently used. All teachers give pupils good opportunities to work in small groups or teams to pursue their own ideas. These groups work best when there is an understanding that a good work rate is expected. In some classes the teacher's expectation is not made clear to pupils and so rates of progress are not so good. The range of writing topics is far extended from the limited diet found in 1998. The pupils are eager to tackle any subject they are given, and they try hard to include what they have learned in the lessons. In response to the previous inspection, teachers now encourage pupils to re-draft their writing, but some of the Year 5 and 6 second versions do not improve significantly on the first attempt. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously. They are right to use a strategy that does not centre on mistakes pupils make, but instead encourages them. However, this means common spelling errors are included in the ticks and this sends mixed messages to the older pupils who need a strategy for spotting the errors and correcting them. The teachers' marking does not give pupils information about their own learning in a way that tells them what they can do to improve.
77. Teachers give much thought to developing pupils' speaking skills. In consequence standards and progress are good in speaking and listening skills. When teachers encourage pupils to report back what they have learned to the whole class, at the end of a lesson, the pupils extend not only their own confidence in speaking to an audience, but also clarify the main points of the lesson. Teachers make sure that everyone gets a turn to do this. They support pupils who have special educational needs well when they encourage them to use complete sentences. Older pupils have a clear idea about the difference between formal and informal speech.
78. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the way the teachers plan separate work for both years in the mixed age classes. This is an example of the care the school takes to ensure that pupils' learning moves at a suitable pace. The teachers get to know their pupils' potential by regular testing using a sound range of procedures. The information enables the school to organise groupings, and to target support staff and booster work to move each level of ability forward as effectively as possible. Staff analyse the results of major tests carefully to show any weak areas and make sure the teaching for these areas is strengthened. Some of the testing, such as reading and writing profiles, is carried out termly which does not allow the results to feed quickly enough into planning. Teachers are alert to the potential in other subjects for using or developing literacy skills. They employ the computer in some effective language projects that link pictures to writing. The school library is now a much more pleasant place. The bright new books are well used as pupils of all ages are taught library skills effectively, and the co-ordinator wants to extend the stock of books as quickly as possible.

MATHEMATICS

79. There has been good progress since the last inspection report. Better provision is now offered to the more able pupils and all pupils are offered more adventurous and imaginative opportunities in the use of mathematics. The standards achieved by the end of the infants has improved since the last inspection and while standards in the current Year 6 are still average, the more able pupils are appropriately challenged by the work. The results of tests for pupils at the age of eleven in 2000 showed that attainment was average when compared with

schools nationally and was below average when compared with similar schools. When compared to their attainment in national tests at the age of seven the pupils' performance was well below average. Several factors account for this. The composition of the class changed between 1996 and 2000, as did the school's staffing. This is a small group and variations in numbers are apt to cause large differences in results. The results were further depressed by the absence of a pupil and the fact that some pupils who met teacher assessments in tests for science and English failed to do so in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher level (Level 5) exceeded the national average. Although performance over time has been above the national average the trend has been lower than that seen nationally.

80. The results for pupils in national tests at the age of seven present a much brighter picture over time and, with the exception of 1997 (the current Year 6) when they were average, results have been very high. Results in tests in 2000 were well above the national average and were well above the average when compared with similar schools.
81. Inspection shows that standards for pupils aged seven are above expectations and that pupils at age eleven are meeting expectations. There are some within this last group of 13 pupils who are performing to a high standard and equally there are some who are working at a lower level. Inspection evidence shows that teachers' expectations are high enough because, as with last year and this year, higher attaining pupils are doing well and lower attainers and those with special needs are receiving good levels of support and also making good progress. This is particularly pleasing, as a key issue of the previous inspection report was to ensure that higher attaining pupils made better progress.
82. By the age of seven pupils have a good knowledge of how to present data in graphs and diagrams and, on occasion, use computers to display and print the information. They add and subtract numbers to 100, tell the time to the half-hour and estimate and measure weight in kilograms. They are able to describe the features of flat and solid shapes and show good levels of recall when dealing with number facts. They have a good range of strategies for helping them to work out simple number problems. Pupils in Year 6 are good at using their knowledge of numbers and quickly recall and use different approaches to solving problems. They use fractions, decimals and percentages and can switch effectively between them. Their graphical skills are by now much enhanced and they understand and use aspects of data handling including range, mean, median and mode. They find the area of flat shapes including triangles and are familiar with multiples, squares, primes, bases and negative numbers.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Some strengths of the teaching are illustrated in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who were given data about the visit of a magic show to the school. With minimal introduction to the task, they were left to get on with costing it. This complex task showed good planning and resourcing. The teacher's good understanding of pupils' abilities and skills and very high expectations were evident in the way that the task was presented. Pupils showed that they are used to working in such a practical way. They responded well to the challenge, and used their mathematical and interpersonal skills effectively to solve the problem. At an appropriate point a halt was called and pupils were asked to explain their progress. This gave them and others the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the particular approaches different groups had adopted. Generally teachers are well prepared. Their planning shows clear objectives and makes provision for pupils of differing level of attainment. The planning of resources is particularly good so that, for example, pupils working on position and direction are each provided with a card displaying arrows to show forwards, left and right. They enjoy using this to direct a pupil around their room in the same way that they will later program a robot or use the logo program to similar effect on the computer. Relationships are good because of the trust and expectations of the teachers. Pupils feel secure and know that their efforts are valued and so are eager to contribute. They are actively engaged in their own learning and work hard when given tasks. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is usually well planned and is carried out

effectively by a good set of support assistants. This too helps to make classrooms areas in which all are purposefully engaged.

84. Teachers are secure and familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and this has had a good impact with respect to raising the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Oral and mental sessions are carried out at a brisk pace and pupils enjoy the challenge that is presented. Pupils are generally asked to explain their thinking and teachers also determine the extent to which the rest of the class supports a particular answer thus gaining a good insight into the performance of the class as a whole. Numeracy makes a good contribution to other areas of the curriculum such as science, history and geography and good use, particularly in Key Stage 1, is made of computers and other technology such as robots.
85. There are sound procedures for the assessment of progress and this enables teachers to plan and set accurate targets for individual pupils. Evaluation of lessons points to the progress of pupils and what went well and what did not. The co-ordinator has not yet visited classrooms to evaluate the teaching and learning that takes place and this means that the identification and sharing of the best elements of practice and its attendant effect on raising standards is inhibited.

SCIENCE

86. The performance of pupils in national tests at age eleven in 2000 showed that attainment was below the national average and that in comparison with similar schools, the attainment was well below the average. The performance of pupils aged eleven, over time, reflects the effects of small cohort numbers that are apt to produce wide year on year variations. However the trend is upward and is at a sharper rate than that seen nationally.
87. The disappointing comparison with results for 2000 and pupils' previous levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is largely due to the 22 per cent change in the composition of the class; most of which occurred quite close to the end of Key Stage 2. The results of teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were very high in terms of what was seen nationally and were also high when compared with similar schools.
88. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. Inspection evidence shows that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is now at the national average although for some higher attainers it is above the expected level. The attainment of pupils in the rest of Key Stage 2 is higher than that seen at the end of the key stage. The difference is again due to the particular ability levels of pupils in Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of life processes concerning the development of plants. They understand the principles of fair testing and are able to carry out experiments in which certain elements can be varied and the results compared.
89. The attainment of pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. In their work on life processes and living things pupils recall with good detail their observations of growing things that they encountered on a walk around school. They are challenged by their teacher to explain why it was that they thought things grew in the places that they did. Through the provision of good resources, including the use of the computer, pupils are able to examine and group different types of seed, draw and label the basic parts of a plant, and explore and hypothesise about different growing mediums.
90. The teaching of science is good and one of its particular strengths lies in the way in which teachers focus on allowing pupils to experience the process of scientific discovery. This work is carefully planned and resourced. Although the investigative work tends to be over-directed by the teacher at times, it nonetheless gives pupils an opportunity to work as scientists. Pupils appreciate being given hands on experiences and respond well to the challenges they are set. Because teachers have given thought to the preparation of the lesson they are clear about what will be learned and share this with the pupils, and so pupils have a clear

understanding of what they have to do. Pupils work hard and act responsibly because it is expected of them. They are keen to be involved in the lesson. They ask and answer questions and work well together when required. They treat equipment and materials safely and sensibly. Because of the good teaching and their good attitudes to learning, pupils in a Year 6 group were able to make good progress in carrying out and recording their investigation into the effect that the varying length of a highly resistant wire has on the ability of a battery to light a bulb in a circuit. The staff are careful to use technical vocabulary and to give pupils the opportunity to explain their results which they do with enthusiasm. Good use is also made of mathematical skills where the recording and presentation of results is concerned. Good attention is paid to those pupils who have special educational needs and because they receive good support from classroom assistants, as well as from the teacher, they are able to make the good progress that is generally seen from the rest of the class.

91. The co-ordinator is effectively established in the role and has been responsible for improvements to the scheme of work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development in that it provides them with many opportunities to explore and marvel at natural and man-made aspects of the world in which they live.

ART AND DESIGN

92. The standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is as might be expected but standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below expectations. Standards in art and design were not reported in the last inspection and so it is not possible to comment on any improvement that may have occurred. The pupils work hard and use materials in a sensible way. They are keen to display their work and are generally pleased with their results. However, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 do not have the breadth of experiences that is necessary for them to reach the expectations for eleven year olds. The work that they do does not help them to develop skills, such as those required for observational drawing, to a high enough standard. They have had little experience of working in a wide range of media and so have not developed sufficient expertise in using fabrics and threads, or in making three-dimensional structures, printing and pottery. Some basic skills such as the effective holding and using of tools and materials are not always evident in even the oldest pupils.
93. The infant pupils work with a reasonable range of media that enables them to express their ideas in different ways. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Pupils create images from their imagination and from observation. Year 1 pupils explore pattern, shape and texture through making rubbings. The pupils in Year 2 have completed chalk drawings after looking closely at shells, and pastel studies of red peppers, which show a developing awareness of shape and form. Years 1 and 2 pupils made good progress in one lesson observed, when they tried out the effect of thick and thin lines when they created portraits. Pupils of all abilities in the junior classes make unsatisfactory progress. The work done by both the Years 3 and 4 pupils is very similar and is generally at a low level. The pupils have too little opportunity to develop their ideas or refine techniques. The work in Years 5 and 6 pupils' sketchbooks show that they have not been taught the necessary skills for pencil sketches of still life and some pupils use a ruler as they lack the confidence and guidance to draw freely. New sketchbooks are issued each year and this does not allow the pupils to refer to previous skills and techniques that they have learned or provide the teacher with evidence of progress.
94. The teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory and had some good features. The Years 1 and 2 pupils were effectively taught the skills that enabled them to use different qualities of line in portraits and they tried smudging to create a different effect. In a lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher presented the pupils with a good range of resources from which they developed their understanding of how artists present still-life. The pupils lacked the skills to execute their own ideas, however, and most did not even attempt to mix colours. The level of teachers' subject knowledge and expertise varies and is often not high enough. The pupils' work is not always evaluated by the teacher, or by the pupils themselves, with a view to improving it.

95. The co-ordinator, who has recently taken the responsibility for the subject, is producing a portfolio of work so that the staff know what to aim for. She has made a good start and has appropriate plans for developing the subject and raising levels of attainment. There is presently no scheme of work upon which the teachers can base their planning and this restricts the effectiveness of teaching. Work is in hand to modify the national guidance work so that it meets the needs of the school. The subject is adequately resourced. The pupils' work is suitably displayed and makes a good contribution to the appearance of the school. While the subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual and social development of the pupils, there is a need to strengthen the extent to which pupils develop an understanding of art from other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards in design and technology are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6. Progress is better than was found at the time of the 1998 inspection. This is attributable to the enthusiastic leadership offered by the co-ordinator. She has developed a strong scheme of work and provides valuable guidance for teachers to help them to know what to teach and how to approach their lessons. The subject plays an important part in the life of the school and, right from the earliest years, pupils develop a practical approach to solving design problems. Although only one lesson was observed, the evidence from pupils' work, and their articulate explanations of what technology is about, show that they have a good understanding of this subject.
97. Infants achieve well. It is clear that teachers cover the full process from designing and drawing labelled plans to making an interesting range of items, which are then evaluated. Pupils undertake projects that are relevant to other subjects they are studying. Their work strengthens the learning in these subjects. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make hinged puppets, where the learning about pivot points strengthens their understanding of levers in science. Juniors also achieve well. Their work on three-dimensional models of a river system increases their understanding of the process of deposition in geography. The lesson observed in Key Stage 2 was good, and demonstrated the important features of good use and preparation of materials, clear explanations and good opportunities for all pupils to try out their own ideas and to judge how successful they were. Years 3 and 4 compared their own pop-up books with the commercial versions, and thus learned more about the role of illustration in books. Children love this kind of challenge and respond by particularly good behaviour and effort. Teachers give particularly close attention to pupils with special educational needs, bringing their progress up to the level of their peers.
98. The co-ordinator particularly values the contribution of the local education authority in providing training and support to raise the expertise of the staff and to provide a broad curriculum embracing all four strands of technology. The key point for development is the lack of a simple system of tracking pupils' attainment and progress, to give both the teachers and pupils a clear picture of the levels at which they are working in order to identify areas for development and thereby raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

99. To provide a wide curriculum the school kept geography on the timetable during the period when requirements for this subject were relaxed. Only two lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. Discussions with pupils and evidence from the work in their books enables the judgement to be made that standards are generally in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the findings of the 1998 inspection. Teaching has improved since then, enabling pupils in Key Stage 1 to make good progress and those in Key Stage 2 to make satisfactory progress. Their knowledge of places and how people use those places develops steadily through the years. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, learn to make comparisons with, and simple maps of, the Isle of Struay. By Year 4

these simple accounts have extended to surveys of how people allocate their time to different activities during the day. By Year 6 these studies are more detailed still, looking at the relationship between the climate and the formation of rivers.

100. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, and is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, is more helpful to teachers than the one in use during the previous inspection. Teachers use it effectively to guide the planning of topics. A strong feature of lesson planning is the way teachers take account of the needs of the mixed-age classes by providing separate activities for each age group. The planning of work to match the different abilities of all pupils means that all groups are suitably challenged. However, pupils in Key Stage 1, for their age, go deeper into topics than those in Key Stage 2. For instance while Year 2 pupils create maps to compare features of the Isle of Struay with some in Bolton, Year 6 can only explain co-ordinates in terms of two figures. The underlying skills are not developed as far in the pupils' books as they might be, but there is evidence to show that more is covered in lessons than is shown in their books.
101. Teachers plan for a greater variety of approaches in their lessons than was found in 1998. Pupils in Year 1 might tackle the writing, while Year 2 work in teams to build a collage map of Struay. These good learning opportunities are reflected in the good attitudes pupils have to their work and the concentration they show. Key Stage 2 teachers use the pupils' own experiences well as a basis for lessons. For instance the technique of brainstorming motivates the pupils well because they can use information they understand. In this way Years 3 and 4 pupils constructed lists of work, leisure and recreational activities, based on the homework survey they had done, to link to places on a map of Bolton. This not only gave them an insight into land use, but also involved them in using geographical terms precisely. Teachers are quick to seize opportunities to put in teaching points for literacy. Numeracy skills are encouraged and used effectively in lessons where pupils convert their findings into tables or graphs. A good number of the infants' topics have the information put on computer, which extends the pupils' ICT skills. Years 5 and 6 also use the computer effectively to find out information about different parts of a river. The pupils use the printouts effectively to feed back to their classmates at the end of the lesson, thereby sharing the data more widely.
102. The teachers extend pupils' thinking by probing questions. The pupils' answers are always valued. In the case of the older ones the teacher's comment, "These are all valid points which we could investigate further", prepares the pupils to identify their own geographical questions, and moves them nearer to Level 5. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit particularly from the valuing of their ideas, since it boosts their confidence and independence. With the sound support they get they are able to make progress similar to their peers. The use of assessment to record pupils' attainment and to monitor pupils' progress through the attainment levels has not developed further since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has made this a first priority in the subject's action plan.

HISTORY

103. In keeping with its aim to provide a broad curriculum the school has kept history on the timetable during a period when requirements for this subject were relaxed. During the week of the inspection only two lessons were observed. Talking to pupils and seeing the evidence from the work in their books enables the judgement to be made that standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. However, the quality of pupils' learning experiences has improved with better teaching, and is leading to good progress. Pupils' knowledge of events, and how to find out information in history, develops steadily through the years. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, learn to use a time line to put events of the recent past into order. By Year 6 this simple procedure has extended to quite complex family trees of the Victorians. In the juniors' books there is not much evidence of interpreting why people acted as they did.

104. Teaching is good. The new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, is stronger than the one in use during the previous inspection. Teachers use it effectively to guide their planning. Teachers plan their lessons with different activities for each of the years in the mixed-age classes, and this ensures that pupils are working at a suitable pace. The improved teaching leads to good progress. More learning happens than is recorded in the books. This is because the teachers are determined to move away from the statement in the previous report that teaching was prescriptive. Now their first objective is to get pupils thinking. They match the work and their questions to pupils' ability. This stretches all the ability levels, and they give good support to pupils who have special educational needs.
105. Teachers have extended the variety of approach in their lessons. For instance Year 1 pupils have a practical activity which reminds them of the moon landing in 1969, while Year 2 are writing their reasons why the Americans were in a rush to make this happen. Years 5 and 6 pupils are encouraged to work well in small teams when they go round the classroom using their past learning to help them put a series of eight events into the correct order. They have to rely on their memory and extend their reasoning powers while exploring their own ideas. This is interesting and exciting learning. When they reach their conclusions, and report them back to their classmates at the end of the lesson, they clearly understand what they have learned. As a result pupils have a very positive attitude to history. Many say it is their favourite subject. Most of Year 4 want to be archaeologists and appear on 'Time Team'. They have a strong enthusiasm for the Roman times and are fascinated by the idea of purple cloth being so rare that only a few could afford it.
106. Teachers use and develop the pupils' literacy skills effectively by encouraging different forms of writing such as the journalistic style or as a diary. Numeracy is not as much to the fore, and pupils are not working as well with figures, for instance lengths of time such as reigns. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sense of the passage of time and how long ago events occurred, is not secure, shown by a Year 2 girl who wanted her teacher to describe what it was like during the Fire of London. However, teachers do explain this clearly and patiently. By Year 6 they are handling census data confidently. Pupils gain first-hand experience by handling artefacts, supplied by a good library loan service. The use of trips, to Bolton Museum for instance, has increased since the previous inspection. These have a positive impact on pupils' learning by making history come alive. The co-ordinator values the support of the local education authority in training and guidance which has helped raise the staff expertise overall. She plans to extend the brief recording of pupils' attainment into a system, which will allow pupils themselves to see the picture of their learning progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

107. The 1998 inspection did not refer to ICT. The school has made good progress since the 1996 inspection when it described provision in this subject as ineffective. The resourcing and teaching of the subject are now much more effective, although there is still more to do. The standard of work by pupils at the end of Year 2 is in line with that expected for their age. Although standards in the areas pupils have covered by the end of Year 6 are similar to those expected for their age, there are gaps. The time remaining for Year 6 pupils is unlikely to be sufficient to cover these gaps, for example programming and using simulation software, and this prevents their attainment from meeting expectations overall.
108. No direct teaching to whole classes was observed. It is the school's policy to teach skills to small groups of pupils when they are relevant to the purpose of the lesson. Several examples of this tuition were seen during the inspection. They involve the headteacher, the class teachers, several volunteer adults, and some very effective members of the classroom support staff. The teaching in these situations is at least satisfactory and helps pupils to make sound progress. The relationships are good so that the pupils listen well and do their best. More importantly it is directly responsive to pupils' needs, in that the adults can give the exact tuition that the pupils need at that moment. The teachers take care that the turns work out fairly by recording on a rota sheet when each group goes to the computer. Pupils who have

special educational needs are given extra time to keep them up to the level of their peers. The tutors' explanations are patient and clear; children are able to ask questions and get enough time to practice. They also have time to explore their own ideas.

109. The Year 2 pupils' work shows that they go into a suitable depth and tasks link closely to work in other subjects. The pupils can explain how their text with borders makes their English work look better, or how their data displays of graphs make their science experiment results clearer. They can show how to make the floor robot go backwards and forwards and turn by controlled amounts. Years 5 and 6 pupils explain articulately how word-processing skills have developed into desktop publishing, and how spreadsheet cells can be used for manipulating numbers mathematically as well as for building up data for graphs. They confidently use CD-ROMs for finding information and have begun to send e-mail messages to school. The juniors have gaps in skills and knowledge about programming and using 'remote devices', in the area of simulation software and in the use of the computer to gather data for science or geography studies.
110. The classroom computers lie idle for significant periods and the teachers plan too few opportunities for the pupils to use them routinely to support their learning. The scheme of work has recently been revised and is ready to use as soon as the staff have completed the current round of training. It shows the complete coverage of the programmes of study. It incorporates a simple, effective system of recording pupils' developing skills, which could effectively involve the pupils in building up a picture of their own learning. The co-ordinator has helped other teachers to develop confidence in their teaching, by working alongside them. She encourages teachers to set challenging tasks in the aspects of the subject that are covered and to expect good results.

MUSIC

111. The attainment of pupils at ages seven and eleven is as might be expected for pupils of their age. The inspection of 1998 did not judge to standards of attainment but an earlier report said that attainment was broadly satisfactory. This position has been maintained.
112. Pupils have a good repertoire of songs and hymns and they can sing tunefully either unaccompanied or with a range of accompaniment. A small number of pupils also take advantage of the opportunity to receive tuition from the peripatetic music service and this makes a valuable contribution to the level of understanding that pupils bring to their general class music lessons. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to devise their own forms of musical notation and are thereby able to compose, record and play short percussion pieces. In doing this they show that they are able to work co-operatively and meet the teacher's expectations by the end of the session. Older pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are able to use different strategies to repeat and pass on a clapping sequence. They are then able to practise and perform a short percussion piece that demonstrates their understanding of pulse and rhythm. When asked to evaluate the work of others they do so in a sensitive and constructive manner.
113. Two lessons were observed and the musical element of assemblies was noted. The strengths of the teaching lay in the ability of teachers to explain and set challenging tasks which are appropriate to the ability level and age of the pupils. Good use is made of demonstration and lessons are aided by careful attention to resourcing. Because teachers are clear about what is expected the pupils are able to respond positively and they do so with enthusiasm. They are actively engaged in their learning and they work well together when composing. They are happy to demonstrate and are pleased to the point of applause on completion of their demonstration.
114. The co-ordinator is confident and able and has established a good set of priorities for the future including the provision of support for a new scheme of work based on a nationally approved model. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development of the pupils but there is scope for greater attention to be paid to the multicultural contribution that this subject could make. The co-ordinator oversees teaching of the subject but there is no systematic evaluation at present with the result that opportunities to identify and share good practice are missed. The subject is well resourced and these resources are well stored and accessible.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are as might be expected for pupils of their age. Pupils are given a broad curriculum and do well in swimming and in some of the extra-curricular activities that the school offers. The last inspection report in 1998 made no mention of standards of attainment in this subject but an earlier report in 1996 said that standards were below expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 but were average at the end of Key Stage 2. On that basis it is possible to point to an improvement in the last four years for pupils in Key Stage 1.
116. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show a lively and thoughtful response to a piece of music and are able to show their expression both through large flowing movement and also through finer movements of the face and hands. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 make the best use of limited space to show that they are able to work in groups to produce a sequence of movements that they have developed during the lesson.
117. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, both of which were of a satisfactory standard. Strengths in the teaching lay in the way in which pupils were clearly directed yet allowed to produce their own responses. Good attention was paid to safety and good use was made, in a large class, of the limited space that was available. Pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for. There is a need to allow pupils greater opportunity to demonstrate and evaluate the work of others and this practice should be extended to those pupils who are present but not actively participating, perhaps because of injury, in the lesson. Pupils are enthusiastic about physical education and because teachers' expectations of behaviour, safety and effort are clearly understood and because teachers make clear the nature of the task, the pupils are able to respond in a positive and constructive way. When given the opportunity they are willing and eager to demonstrate for the rest of the class.
118. A satisfactory curriculum is offered and this is supplemented by a good range of extra-curricular opportunities for sports such as netball, rounders, cross-country and football. Classes attend regularly for swimming lessons and all pupils exceed the expectation for their age by the time they leave school. The subject is suitably resourced and these resources are well maintained and easily accessible. The teaching of the subject is not currently monitored and so this makes evaluation of teaching and learning difficult. The co-ordinator, who is recently appointed to the role, has suitable priorities that include the development of dance, a continuing commitment to competitive sport and the development of extra-curricular activities for younger pupils.