

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Whittaker Moss Primary School**

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique Reference Number: 105781

Inspection Number: 188935

Head teacher: Mr S Lowes

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Reporting inspector: Mr C Smith

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706779

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with nursery

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Elmsfield Avenue  
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Rochdale  
Lancashire  
OL115UY

Telephone number: 01706 342342

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor R Stott

Date of previous inspection: April 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
C Smith	Science Religious education Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management The efficiency of the school Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
T Smith		Partnership with parents and the community The curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
D Maddocks	Mathematics History  Art Geography Areas of learning for children under five	
D Pattinson	English  Information technology Physical education Special educational needs	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Standards are high in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics, science, physical education and singing.
- Provision for the children under the age of five in the Nursery and Reception class is very good and they make good progress. Planning is exemplary.
- Pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning in most classes and their behaviour, relationships and personal development are all very good.
- The school is successful in developing pupils' moral, social and cultural awareness
- Teaching is very good in the Nursery and Reception class and good and sometimes very good in Key Stage 2.
- The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils and maintains good links with parents.
- The curriculum is well planned and carefully organised, particularly in Key Stage 2 and for the under fives.
- The school has a good ethos.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is not high enough and progress is slow.
- II. The results of weekly and termly assessments are not used to determine future planning.
- III. Monitoring the work of the school is not sufficiently rigorous and weaknesses are sometimes missed.
- IV. Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring standards.
- V. Statutory requirements are not fully met in the Governors Annual Report.

**The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made sound progress since the last inspection by maintaining most of the good features and improving most of the weaknesses pointed out. The previous report identified the need to provide schemes of work. This has been achieved and pupils are now able to build on learning from year to year. This has enabled higher attaining pupils to reach higher standards. A programme of professional development for teachers is now in place. This ensures that training is provided when national initiatives, such as literacy and numeracy, are introduced.

After the last inspection the school was set targets to closely monitor and evaluate the planning of the curriculum and standards achieved. Teachers' planning is regularly checked and test results at the end of Key Stage 2 are analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses, including any pupils who need additional support. However, systematic audits of the work of the school are not undertaken in all areas and weaknesses are sometimes missed. Subject co-ordinators support their colleagues well by providing schemes of work and resources, but their role in monitoring standards has not significantly improved.

### Standards in subjects

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>Very High</i> A*
			<i>Well above average</i> A
			<i>Above average</i> B
			<i>Average</i> C
			<i>Below average</i> D
			<i>Well below average</i> E

English	A*	A
Mathematics	A*	A
Science	A*	A

Standards in Key Stage 2 have remained high over recent years, although standards in Key Stage 1 are closer to the national average. The very high standards attained in the 1999 results in Key Stage 2 reflect the large proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels. Standards achieved by the current Year 6 pupils in reading are generally good, but in writing they are average. Pupils have too few opportunities to improve the quality of their writing by redrafting it and this is holding back progress. However, the school has successfully introduced the literacy hour and this is raising standards.

Standards in mathematics are high in Key Stage 2 and have been so for some years. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been close to the national average over recent years, but were slightly higher in the 1999 national tests. Most elements of the national numeracy strategy are already in place. As a result, pupils' mental arithmetic skills and their ability to apply these skills to solve problems are progressing well, in Key Stage 2.

Standards in science have also remained high over recent years. Pupils reach very high standards in their knowledge and understanding of plants, animals, materials and forces. However, progress in experimental skills, particularly pupils' understanding of how to apply the scientific method, is not as rapid. This reflects the inconsistency of emphasis on these aspects.

Standards in information technology, religious education and all other subjects are as expected and progress is satisfactory overall, but pupils make slower progress in Key Stage 1. Children make good progress when they start school. By the time they are five, they are well ahead of the standards expected in almost all areas of learning.

· **Quality of teaching**

· <b>Teaching in</b>	<b>Under 5</b>	<b>5 – 7 years</b>	<b>7 – 11 years</b>
English	very good	satisfactory	good
Mathematics	very good	satisfactory	good
Science		unsatisfactory	good
Information technology		insufficient evidence	satisfactory
Religious education		satisfactory	satisfactory
Other subjects	very good	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching is satisfactory in 26 per cent of lessons, good in 42 per cent, very good in 22 per cent and excellent in five per cent. Five percent of the teaching is unsatisfactory and this is all in Key Stage 1. Good teaching occurs in the core subjects, physical education and history. The music co-ordinator teaches singing very well. Teaching is best in the Nursery, Reception and Year 5.

· **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Very good; inside and outside the classroom.
Attendance	Very good; well above the national average.
Ethos*	Good; relationships in the school are very good and pupils work hard.
Leadership and management	Sound; the head teacher and governors have ensured high standards are achieved by the time pupils reach the age of eleven. However, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are not sufficiently rigorous.
Curriculum	Good; schemes of work are in place to guide teachers. However,

Pupils with special educational needs	assessment is not consistently used sufficiently to inform planning. Good and these pupils make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good; provision for moral and cultural development is good, satisfactory for spiritual development and very good for social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory; arrangements for professional development of staff are good and resources are adequate.
Value for money	Good.

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

· **The parents' views of the school**

**What most parents like about the school**

- VI. The school is approachable and parents are involved and kept well informed.
- VII. The high standards achieved.
- VIII. Extra curricular activities, particularly music.
- IX. The homework provided.
- X. The school's values and high standard of behaviour.
- XI. Children enjoy school.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- XII. One or two parents feel that there is not

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school does participate in the usual range of competitive sports and often wins trophies.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To move the school forward, the head teacher, governors and staff should:

- a) Raise standards and improve progress in Key Stage 1 by;
  - Improve classroom management by adopting more effective strategies to control pupils, reducing the number of different activities to a manageable number and ensuring that pupils understand what is expected of them; (paragraphs 26, 29, 36, 97, 105, 112, 116 and 153)
  - Analysing test results at the end of Key Stage 1 to identify and strengthen weaknesses, as happens in Key Stage 2; (paragraphs 47 and 64)
  - Ensuring that pupils' attainment and progress are carefully monitored and that the work done in Key Stage 1 is adequately co-ordinated. (paragraphs 47, 65 and 77)
- a) Further develop the use of assessment to inform curriculum planning by:
  - Ensuring that medium term and lesson plans consistently specify what is to be assessed and how; (paragraphs 37, 46, 117, 128, 134 and 160)
  - Modifying the curriculum in the light of assessment information collected. (paragraphs 47, 99 and 107)
- a) Improve the management of the school to enable any weaknesses to be remedied by:
  - Carrying out careful audits of the work of the school in all areas and using this information to set targets for action; (paragraphs 64, 65 and 73)
  - Involving subject co-ordinators centrally in monitoring and evaluating standards and progress. (paragraphs 64, 99, 113, 145 and 160)



In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- ) Ensure that the Governors Annual Report contains the information required and the prospectus describes the character of the school; (paragraphs 56, 59 and 66)
- ) Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their information technology skills across the curriculum. (paragraphs 23, 39 and 139)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **· Characteristics of the school**

1 The school is situated on the fringe of the town of Rochdale. The school receives pupils from the privately owned housing estates nearby and from the older village of Norden. The school shares a site with a special school, but has its own section of the building. There have been no significant alterations to the structure since the last inspection in 1996, but pupil numbers are increasing and extensions to the present building are being considered. The building has seven classrooms, a library resource area, an administration area, staff room and a hall. The Nursery is located in the main building. There is a hard play area, a car park and an extensive games field.

2 The school is average in size with 223 pupils on roll. The number on roll has grown since the last inspection by more than an extra class of pupils. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds (5.3 per cent) is slightly higher than most schools. Twelve pupils speak English as an additional language, but all speak it well. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals (3.6 per cent) is well below average for primary schools. The percentage of pupils on Stages 1-5 of the register of special educational needs (18 per cent) is increasing and has now reached the national average. The percentage of pupils who have statements of educational needs (1.8 per cent) is close to the national average. The school has a 60 part time place nursery, and all places are currently taken up. Children are admitted into the Nursery each September and they enter main school in the year when they will become five. The attainment on entry of pupils into school is above what might be expected nationally.

3 The school aims to promote pupils' self esteem, celebrate their achievements and foster a strong partnership between home and school. Providing a curriculum closely matched to pupils' different learning needs and ensuring that all pupils have equal access to it are regarded as paramount. Current priorities are to raise standards in English and mathematics by implementing the literacy hour and National numeracy strategy, develop information technology, introduce national guidelines for the teaching of other subjects and review the provision of extra curricular activities.

4 After the last inspection the school was set targets to raise the attainment of more able pupils by providing schemes of work for all subjects and ensuring the work of the school was carefully monitored. Additional issues outlined the need to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators and link the professional development of staff to school priorities. These issues have featured in all subsequent development planning.

5 The school has agreed targets with the local education authority relating to pupils' attainments in the year 2000 National Curriculum assessments and tests. The school has also begun to set personal targets with individual pupils, particularly those who without support may not reach the national standards expected.



**Key indicators**

**6 Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
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for latest reporting year:	1999	15	16	31
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National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	12	15
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	26	28	31
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84% (77%)	90% (85%)	100% (94%)
	National	82% (80%)	83% (81%)	87% (84%)

  

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	26	30	30
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84% (83%)	97% (86%)	97% (94%)
	National	82% (81%)	86% (85%)	87% (86%)

## 7 Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	14	31

National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	29	31	31
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	94% (70%)	100% (91%)	100% (91%)
	National	70% (65%)	69% (59%)	78% (69%)

  

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	15	17
	Girls	14	12	14
	Total	28	27	31
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	90% (91%)	87% (91%)	100% (91%)
	National	68% (65%)	69% (65%)	75% (72%)

- .....
- 1 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year
  - 2 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

2      **8      Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
Through absence for the latest complete	Authorised	School	4.4
Reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

2

2      **9      Exclusions**

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

2      **10      Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	27
	Satisfactory or better	95
	Less than satisfactory	5

## 2 PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 2 EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 2 Attainment and progress

11 The standards reached by pupils aged eleven are higher now than they were found to be at the time of the last inspection. In Key Stage 2, attainment improved considerably in 1996 and has remained generally high since then. The high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are reflected in the large proportion of pupils who reach higher than average levels in national tests. In the 1999 national end of key stage tests, the school results were very high in all three subjects. When these results are compared to those obtained by pupils in similar schools, they are much higher in English, mathematics and science. The current Year 6 pupils are reaching well above average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English.

12 Results in Key Stage 1 have fluctuated over recent years. They were found to be higher at the time of the last inspection than they are now. This is mainly because the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is now taken into account. Fewer pupils in this school, by the age of seven, reach the higher levels in either writing or mathematics than is the national picture. The school's performance in the 1999 national tests for pupils aged seven was average in reading and writing, but above average in mathematics. Although the results in mathematics are similar to those in schools with an equivalent intake of pupils, they are below in writing and well below in reading. Previous results from 1996, and 1997, indicate that attainment over time remains close to the national average in reading and writing, but is usually higher in mathematics. Teacher assessments of science indicate that most pupils reach the standards expected, but fewer pupils than usual reach the higher levels. Inspection findings indicate that the current Year 2 pupils are attaining the standards expected in writing, mathematics and science, but standards in reading are above average.

13 Most children enter school with above average standards of attainment. The schools' baseline assessments, when compared to Rochdale as a whole, indicate comparative strengths in areas of language and mathematics. Most children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception and by the age of five, they exceed the standards expected in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children's personal and social development is well above average and their physical development is average. Children benefit from the very good start made in the Nursery and Reception class. Learning through play is very purposeful and the atmosphere is happy, busy and exciting.

14 The current Year 6 pupils' attainment in English is above average. Most pupils read accurately, with good understanding, and gather information from books competently. Standards of writing are satisfactory, in terms of spelling and punctuation, and many pupils write imaginative poems. However, few opportunities are provided for pupils to revise and redraft their work and their capacity to write extensively suffers. Most pupils listen attentively and speak confidently. They show sensitivity when listening to the views of others.

15 By the age of seven, pupils' reading skills are good, particularly their proficiency in sounding out unfamiliar words and many are beginning to read with good expression. Skills in writing and listening and speaking are satisfactory.

16 Pupils make sound progress in reading through Key Stage 1. However pupils make slow progress in speaking and listening, mainly because too few opportunities are provided for carefully structured and well controlled discussions. Although pupils' handwriting and spelling improve, they make slow progress in expressive and narrative writing. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in reading, particularly in comprehension and in extracting information from books. Pupils also make good progress in speaking and listening and learn how to speak persuasively to influence a listener. Most pupils make sound progress in writing, but the skills learnt through exercises are not always transferred into their everyday written work.

17 Standards in all aspects of mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average and most pupils are adept in applying the skills learnt to solve mathematical problems. Most pupils, by the age of 11, use mathematical language fluently, understand mathematical relationships and handle even large numbers confidently.

18 By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils have acquired the skills to handle numbers to twenty and they have developed a secure understanding of mathematical language. However, pupils' understanding of shape is weaker and they are less confident in deciding which number operation to use when tackling problems.

19 Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics through Key Stage 1, although progress in number work is better than other areas. Most pupils make very good progress through Key Stage 2. From Year 3 they consistently build up their understanding of mathematical rules and develop quick recall of number facts, such as multiplication tables. In each class, pupils learn how and when to apply their skills and their mathematical reasoning skills grow stronger year by year.

20 Most of the current Year 6 pupils are attaining well above average standards in the knowledge and understanding aspects of science. They have a very good understanding of plants, animals and materials and a very good knowledge of forces, such as friction. Pupils' experimental skills are average. They are aware of scientific methods and the need for fair tests and they make thoughtful predictions of what is likely to happen. However, some pupils struggle to keep the tests fair by separating out the variables.

21 Attainment in science by the age of seven is average in the areas of knowledge and understanding. Pupils can explain changes, including life cycles and make simple electric circuits. However, the practical areas of predicting and testing are weaker.

22 Pupils make good progress in science through Key Stage 2, although pupils' acquisition of the skills of investigation is not as rapid as their progress in knowledge and understanding. Pupils make slower progress through Key Stage 1, particularly in the area of practical science.

23 Attainment in information technology, by the ages of seven and eleven, is in line with the national standards expected. Pupils make steady progress in communicating and handling information and in the areas of control and modeling. However, some pupils who do not have home computers fall behind because they do not have sufficient and consistent opportunities to work on computers in school.

24 Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make sound progress through both key stages. They develop a clear understanding of the importance of stories and events in Christianity and other religions and develop respect for beliefs held by others.

25 Pupils make satisfactory progress and produce work typical of their age in art, design and technology, history, geography and music. In physical education, pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 and acquire a good range of gymnastics and games skills. Good progress is also made in singing and pupils create beautiful sounds using two and three part harmonies. Within geography pupils become proficient in making and reading maps and their knowledge of the locality is good. There are one or two weaknesses in the non core subjects. For example in art, pupils have little understanding of the work of artists and in design and technology pupils do not always appreciate the need to evaluate and improve their work.

26 Taking all subjects together, pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 and reach high standards. Progress through Key Stage 1 is much slower because teachers have difficulty in establishing a quiet productive working atmosphere. Within both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are identified early and provided with well designed learning programmes. A good level of additional support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, which significantly improves their reading and understanding of work in other subjects. The progress of pupils with above



average attainment is better than at the time of the previous inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers are now more successful in matching work to their learning needs. Test results since 1996 indicate that the performance of girls and boys varies from year to year, but these variations reflect the different cohorts of pupils moving through school and there is no significant difference in gender performance over time. The school has agreed targets for improving standards with the local education authority. These are suitably high taking account of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

27 Literacy is promoted well in other subjects. Pupils are frequently required to listen and answer questions, speak to various audiences and write accounts of their work in other subjects. Numeracy is adequately promoted in other subjects, but pupils do not make sufficient use of information technology across the curriculum.

## 2 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

28 The quality of pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour, relationships and personal development has been sustained since the last inspection and remains a strong feature of the school.

29 Attitudes to learning are good. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved and the progress made. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes to work are consistently good, and often very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. They are well motivated, sustain high levels of concentration in lessons and keen to respond to the challenges offered. At Key Stage 1 response is less consistent. These pupils also enjoy learning, but quickly become restless and lose interest in their work especially when lessons lack challenge, or when they are not given a clear understanding of what to do. Children under five in the Nursery and Reception class show very strong interest in their work and co-operate well with their teacher and classmates.

30 Behaviour throughout the school is very good. This confirms parents' views. Pupils clearly know what is expected of them and react accordingly. Outside the classroom pupils act sensibly and move around the building in a calm and orderly manner. Incidents of bullying are rare and there have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils are very proud of their school and show due respect for all of its fabric and fittings.

31 The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff is a strength of the school, and makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. Pupils are polite, very open in their dealings with others and always ready to be helpful. They show genuine care and concern for each other, and relate strongly to those who need extra help. In lessons they work well together in pairs or groups and share ideas and equipment well. At playtime, and whilst eating lunch, they are friendly and sociable.

32 Pupils' personal development is good, and enhanced through extra-curricular activities, links with the community and an annual residential visit to the Lakeside Centre. In the Nursery, children's personal and social development is excellent. From their first days in school they are accepted as valued members of the community and made to feel important. They understand the importance of taking turns and of sharing, and have a well-developed sense of fair play. Pupils are clearly aware of, and respect, each others' rights, feelings and beliefs. They not only accept other points of view, but also learn from them. Pupils work well independently and show significant levels of initiative through their studies. For instance, they get out their own materials for lessons and tidy up when they have finished, and make excellent use of dictionaries and thesauri. Pupils are keen to accept, and carry out the duties well. Their sense of citizenship is enhanced through support for charity.

2

## 2 **Attendance**

33 Attendance is well above the average for primary schools nationally, and has remained consistently at this level since the last inspection. There is no unauthorised absence. Lateness is not a problem. Pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of lessons. Many pupils arrive early and start work before lessons commence.

## 2 QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### 2 Teaching

2 34 The quality of teaching is good, but much stronger in the Nursery, Reception and at Key Stage 2 than it is in Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection teaching has improved in three important respects. One is the reduction of unsatisfactory teaching from 16 per cent on the last inspection to five per cent this time. Another is the substantial improvement in Key Stage 2, brought about by more direct teaching and much less dependence on worksheets. This change has significantly benefited the more able pupils who now receive much more challenging work and make better progress. Thirdly, teachers' subject expertise has improved in music and design and technology and physical education lessons are better because teachers now concentrate more on the development of skills. However, not all areas have improved. For example the teaching of art is satisfactory but not as good as last time. This reflects the greater concentration of time being spent on literacy and numeracy. Also the teaching in Key Stage 1 is not as strong as previously reported. During this inspection, of every ten lessons seen, approximately three were very good or excellent, four were good and three were satisfactory. Teaching was unsatisfactory in five per cent of lessons, all of which occurred in Key Stage 1.

35 Teaching of the children under the age of five is very good. In Reception and the Nursery, the teachers' knowledge of the needs of under fives is matched by a very good understanding of the children in their care. Planning is exemplary, the activities provided are exciting and purposeful and teachers use questioning very effectively to develop the children's spoken language. Children's achievements are highly valued and these high expectations are reflected in the children's work. Organisation and the management of children are very good and self discipline and a sense of responsibility are strongly promoted. Carefully matched, and often challenging, activities ensure the children make accelerated progress. The imaginative, 'what you can do with your child' homework tasks and the comprehensive procedures for assessing children's progress make a significant contribution to the children's development.

2 36 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is broadly satisfactory, but a quarter of the lessons are unsatisfactory and there are some recurring weaker elements in lessons even where the teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall. The weaknesses almost always arise when teachers try to manage too many activities at once without having good control of the pupils. On these occasions teachers have to patrol the classroom in an effort to keep the pupils focussed. More time is spent organising than teaching and teachers have little time to assess pupils' learning. In a science lesson, for example, pupils arrived at the wrong conclusion because the teacher was unable to intervene before it was too late. There are several satisfactory aspects of the teaching. Planning is usually clear and the preparation of resources is often good. The teaching methods used are often appropriate and effective in literacy and numeracy, although teachers do not always have sufficient classroom support to guide every group. The teachers work hard and generally maintain good relationships with their pupils. However, the careful planning is often undone when whole class discussions are spoilt by interruptions and pupils begin tasks before they have a clear understanding of what they are expected to do.

37 In Key Stage 2, 80 per cent of the teaching is good or better and some of the teaching in Year 5 is excellent. Activities are carefully matched to pupils' interests and understanding. Teachers expect pupils to show interest, to try hard and reach high levels of understanding. For example, in science, Year 3 pupils not only group tinned food products according to their content, but with encouragement and guidance, group them according to their nutritional value. Planning is good and lessons are well structured, although targets for assessment are not consistently identified. Teachers use resources imaginatively to gain pupils' interest and promote clear understanding. For example, in Year 5 number grids and number lines are used very effectively to help pupils to understand the relationship between fractions and two place decimals. These are difficult ideas for the pupils to grasp, but the way in which displays are built up and used as teaching aids is extremely effective in enabling pupils to reach high standards. Tasks are very carefully explained or demonstrated and teachers ask searching questions to probe pupils' levels of understanding. These strategies lead to high quality discussions with pupils constantly offering imaginative and enterprising comments. In Year 6, for example, the teacher carefully guided pupils to search for clues and read between the lines to enable them to

reach high levels of reading comprehension. Activities are well organised to enable pupils to work independently. Pupils complete their tasks with little need to disturb the teacher. The system allows teachers to spend valuable time with groups, moving pupils on to more challenging learning. Junior pupils are very well managed and relationships are very good.

38 The introduction of the national literacy hour is having a marked effect on planning. Lessons are planned in detail and the literacy teaching techniques, gained from courses, are raising teachers' subject knowledge. English lessons are characterised by clear introductions, followed by carefully matched activities and useful end of lesson discussion sessions when learning is effectively reviewed. These strategies are having a significant impact on the teaching of English. The teaching of numeracy, particularly mental mathematics, is also developing well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Tasks are often simplified and pupils are given good support in lessons. This particularly helps to improve their reading and writing skills.

39 Teachers' understanding of the subjects they teach is at least satisfactory in all subjects and good in the core subjects in Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under the age of five is very good in all areas of learning. Good teaching of English, mathematics, science and history is common in Key Stage 2. Teaching of singing and skills in physical education is generally good and benefits from good levels of expertise. The teaching of religious education, art, geography, design and technology and music is satisfactory. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory, but pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to refine their skills.

40 The use of homework is good and promoted by the well organised home reading programme, particularly in Key Stage 1. Junior age pupils complete an increasing number of homework tasks as they reach the higher classes, all of which provide valuable reinforcement of learning.

## **2 The curriculum and assessment**

41 The curriculum for children under the age of five is broad, balanced and provides a rich educational experience that covers all areas of learning. There is a clear and appropriate focus on developing children's language and personal skills. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes prepares children well for the national Curriculum.

42 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and prioritises the teaching of English and mathematics. However, the emphasis on English and mathematics reduces the time available for other subjects, particularly art. This has had an impact on the art curriculum, which is rather narrow. The decision to timetable the "literacy hour" and the "numeracy hour" at the same time throughout the school means that additional classroom support is not available for all classes, for example teachers in Years 1 and 2. A suitable programme of personal and social education, sex education and drugs awareness is provided within the school's curriculum. As a result, the curriculum effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, personal and physical development and pupils are prepared well for moving on to the next stage of education. From the Reception class onwards, pupils are given increasing amounts of homework as they become older. Pupils are given good opportunities to take on responsibility for their work and to help each other and the school. The teaching of Spanish in Year 6 plays a positive role in preparing pupils for secondary school.

43 The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are given full access to the curriculum and are well supported in their classrooms and when withdrawn in small groups for extra help, particularly in English. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is implemented well and pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. The individual education plans written for these pupils have improved since the last inspection. They are precise, class teachers are aware of the targets and take them into account when planning their lessons. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are met effectively and they are valued as individuals by their teachers and their classmates.

44 The planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection. There are policies for all subjects. With the exception of art and religious education, there are useful schemes of work that provide guidance for teachers. This ensures that activities are provided in an appropriate sequence that builds upon pupils' previous learning. Pupils' progress is improving as a result, particularly in Key Stage 2. A few examples were noted where teachers did not adhere to the scheme of work and work was unnecessarily duplicated in different year groups. However, this has occurred because the school is phasing in nationally recommended programmes of study. The school uses a range of planning forms and these help teachers plan the curriculum, although a few forms duplicate each other, for example teachers complete two medium term planning forms for the "numeracy hour".

45 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils, particularly in sport and music. A good range of residential visits and visits to places of local interest extend and enrich the curriculum.

46 The school has introduced new assessment procedures since the last inspection. The impact of these procedures has yet to be felt as teachers are coming to terms with the new systems. Procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of the under fives are very good. When children enter the Nursery and Reception classes a useful assessment of their knowledge, skills and understanding is carried out. This forms a baseline against which their future progress can be measured. In Key Stages 1 and 2, assessment procedures are satisfactory. A variety of assessments are carried out throughout the school, in addition to the national tests for seven and 11 year olds. In Key Stage 2, when pupils are working in focussed groups for reading, writing and numeracy, their teacher assesses their progress, noting particularly those areas that some pupils find difficult. However, in Key Stage 1, teachers tend to rely on less structured tick lists. In other subjects throughout the school, teachers are given more flexibility to assess pupils' progress. Some teachers do this very well while others do it less well and this is an area of inconsistency within the school. For example, the assessment of pupils' skills in practical science is effective in Year 3 and pupils' make better progress as a result.

47 Pupils maintain their own useful Records of Achievement, which are updated regularly, and teachers and pupils select work to store in them. In addition, teachers select samples of pupils' work and keep them in assessment files. However, the purpose of these files is not clear. Overall, insufficient use is made of weekly and termly assessment to make changes to the curriculum in the light of pupils' responses to it. However, the results of national tests for 11 year olds are analysed effectively to identify those areas of the curriculum that are in need of further improvement. This is yet to happen at Key Stage 1. The assessment of pupils' skills is made more difficult on occasions because lesson planning does not always identify sufficiently clearly what is to be assessed and how the assessment is to be carried out. Despite the lack of focus for assessment, teachers know their pupils well and usually ensure that the work provided matches their abilities. The quality of marking of pupils' work is accurate and positive and best when teachers suggest what pupils should do to improve their work.

## **2 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

48 The school's arrangements for promoting pupils' moral and cultural development are good and pupils' social development is very well catered for. In these areas the curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, but opportunities are sometimes missed to help pupils' to reflect on spiritual themes.

49 Spiritual development is soundly promoted. Some planned curriculum opportunities enable pupils to experience the joy and excitement of learning, for example, Year 5 pupils consider the association between the colour black and feelings of darkness and evil, exploring how colour influences moods and perceptions. More often, such opportunities arise spontaneously and are not planned for. Aesthetic displays around school help to stimulate pupils' imagination. Assemblies are interesting, well prepared, establish a calm atmosphere for thought and prayer, and their content and leadership are sufficiently varied. The spiritual content, though still not sufficiently represented, has improved since the last inspection and complies with legal requirements. Assemblies reinforce collective responsibility and shared values and allow pupils to consider relevant themes,

such as, what makes a special friend, through stories, discussion and prayer. Pupils gain knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of others through a study of different faiths in religious education. There are times when pupils reflect on important issues, for example when Year 6 pupils consider examples of courage, but these are opportunities are insufficient.

50 The moral dimension of pupils' learning is well promoted. All adults in school provide sound moral leadership, and give pupils a clear sense of direction about moral issues. All work successfully to positively reinforce very good standards of behaviour. The school successfully helps pupils to acquire a sense of right and wrong and to consider others. For example, Year 5 pupils are horrified when they hear that very young children worked with dangerous machinery to increase the wealth of mill owners last century. Clear principles and values are consistently reinforced, such as classroom rules, which are often devised by pupils themselves. Carefully considered routines, made clear to all pupils, and an expectation of high standards of work and behaviour in most classes, successfully strengthen the agreed procedures. The school reward system strongly influences pupils to behave well and work hard. Praise and encouragement are used effectively. The school fosters values, such as, honesty, fairness and respect for truth, justice and other people's property. The consistent and positive approaches to pupils' moral development results in high standards of behaviour and good attitudes to learning.

51 The school provides a very good range of opportunities to promote pupils' social development. Teachers are very good role models and set a good example of how relationships should be conducted. There are many valuable opportunities for pupils to work together, for example, in gymnastics and guided reading sessions during the Literacy hour. They learn respect for others by listening to their views. Weekly opportunities to have their good work commended help them to appreciate the achievements of others. Co-operative attitudes are fostered effectively through such social activities as school performances and annual residential visits. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to carry out duties, such as classroom monitors, but too few opportunities for pupils to become centrally involved in helping to make decisions about the school. Pupils learn to relate well to others through the sensitive integration of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils develop a strong sense of identity, through the house system. They develop an understanding of citizenship through raising monies for specific causes, such as, for Springhill Hospice and the N.S.P.C.C. The good range of extra-curricular activities, for example, various sporting clubs and the school choir, enable older pupils to expand their personal interests and experiences.

52 Pupils' cultural development is good. The school actively promotes pupils' understanding of their own cultural traditions by ensuring that it is fully involved in local festivals and celebrations. For example, groups take part in Norden and Rochdale Festivals, and an annual "Schools' Night" which help to forge strong links with the local community. Pupils' cultural experiences are extended through music, particularly the interesting presentations of brass, string and recorder music. There are a few opportunities for pupils to experience different cultures, through such activities as the African music theme in Year 3. The school also celebrates religious days from a variety of faiths. However, there are too few artefacts from other cultures available for pupils to study and no links with schools in a very different multicultural setting. Pupils are given insight in to other cultures, but not sufficiently to help them to fully understand the nature of a multicultural society.

## **2 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

53 Provision for pupils' support, guidance and general welfare remains good, and continues to make a positive contribution to the quality of their education. The school is a caring community, and one in which teachers know their pupils well, have very good relationships with them and respond positively to their needs. Parents indicate that their children like coming to school and that they are well supported by staff. Inspection evidence confirms this.

54 Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are effective. In the Nursery and Reception class, arrangements for monitoring and supporting the development of children under the age of five are exemplary, and ensure that their needs are fully met. Praise and rewards are used appropriately to encourage effort and significant achievements are celebrated and recorded. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic

progress are satisfactory, but are not always used consistently. A strong feature of the school continues to be its response to children with special educational needs. They are sensitively supported through individual education programmes, and this level of care extends to support the families of these pupils.

55 The school has good procedures for promoting behaviour and discipline that are implemented consistently by all members of staff. Simple, but effective, rules exist to ensure pupils' thoughtful and orderly conduct around school. Rewards and sanctions are appropriate and applied fairly. Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying are not formalised, but measures to prevent bullying are effective.

56 Registers are properly maintained and monitored regularly. Pupils are encouraged to come to school, and appropriate arrangements are in place for investigating any unexplained or irregular attendance. Levels of attendance are not published in the governors' annual report to parents.

57 Pupils' general welfare is promoted successfully. Local authority guidelines have been adopted for child protection and a named teacher has designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies. A suitable health and safety policy is in place and risk assessments are carried out. Standards of cleaning are very high and the building is in good repair. However, during the inspection one or two health and safety matters were raised with the school. One of these, relating to uneven flagstones outside the Nursery, was also identified during the last inspection. Pupils are supervised carefully throughout the day, and lunchtime arrangements are well managed. As a result the school functions as a calm and orderly community. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and illness are good, and emergency equipment is serviced regularly.

## 2 **Partnership with parents and the community**

58 Strong links have been maintained with parents since the last inspection. They feel very welcome in school and several regularly give up their time to help with classroom activities, where they are well organised and used effectively. Many others accompany educational visits and, occasionally, some of them run after-school sports clubs. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning at home, particularly through reading and maths. Homework is well structured and parents indicate that they appreciate the amount and balance of work set. Reading diaries maintain useful contact between teachers and pupils' homes. Arrangements for receiving new pupils into the Nursery are exemplary, and ensure that children's needs are fully met. A clear home-school agreement has been produced and sent to parents. The Friends Association remains very active and gives generous support to the school. Its social and fund-raising events are well supported and all money raised is spent wisely for the benefit of pupils.

59 Communications with parents are satisfactory. Parents are well satisfied with the information they receive about their children's progress and are kept fully informed about all aspects of school life through various forms of correspondence. They also receive a clear homework timetable and other useful literature about the work to be done in class, for example, in numeracy. Written annual reports are informative and set appropriate targets for improvement. At other times, teachers are readily available to talk to parents if there are any worries or concerns, and parents indicate that any matters raised are handled well. The prospectus does not indicate the particular characteristics of the school, and the governors' annual report does not meet statutory requirements in a number of ways. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about developments and usually attend review meetings.

60 Links with the local community are good and have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Educational visits to places of interest and visitors to the school, such as theatre groups and sports professionals, extend the work pupils do in class and provide first-hand opportunities for them. Residential visits and involvement with community events, such as music concerts or the Norden Festival, make significant contributions to pupils' personal and social development. Support for charity and very close links with adjoining special school raise pupils' awareness of the needs of others and promote citizenship. Links with business are weak and do not have a high priority in the school. Transfer arrangements for pupils in Year 6 are greatly enhanced through Spanish lessons, taken each week by a teacher from the language department at the local High School.

## 2 THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### 2 Leadership and management

61 The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and governors is sound. Over recent years, the head teacher, staff and governors have been successful in ensuring that pupils reach the highest possible standards before they move on to secondary school. Throughout their passage through school the pupils have been provided with a caring and supportive learning atmosphere. Parental involvement is welcomed and the good partnerships established have considerably enhanced the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school is popular within the community and the head teacher and governors have set a course for the future aimed to ensure that the school continues to present a positive image.

62 The aims of the school are clearly and consistently promoted across the curriculum. For example, policies for all subjects contain reminders to ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to all activities and the needs of pupils who find learning more difficult are taken into account. As a result of the clear intention, the Code of Practice has been implemented effectively and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school aims encompass a strong desire to promote pupils' self esteem and celebrate their achievements. The effects of these aims are evident in the very good management and provision for children under the age of five in the Nursery and Reception class. The school aims also recognise the need to cater for pupil's different abilities and learning rates. The outcomes are strongly reflected in the attainment of the more able pupils, which has improved since the last inspection. Although the written aims do not contain a reference to standards, high standards are promoted and the school provides a good ethos for learning.

63 The school's has responded positively to most of the issues identified in the previous inspection. For example, the work of teachers was originally not sufficiently supported by policies and schemes of work to ensure that pupils made smooth progress from year to year. This has now been rectified for all subjects, with the exception of art and religious education. This issue was acted on quickly and the school is now updating the guidance in the light of more recent national changes to the curriculum. The role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened, in this respect, and they now provide good levels of support. Co-ordinators have also worked hard to help teachers by organising and preparing resources. The school has provided a regular and effective programme of professional development for all teachers, seen as necessary during the last inspection. In the introduction of the literacy hour, for example, further training for teachers has been effective in raising standards in reading comprehension.

64 The previous inspection identified weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Some improvements have been made, but the school has not gone far enough and some weaknesses remain. The head teacher makes planned visits to all classes to observe teaching and learning. Notes are taken and teachers are given feedback on their performance. This has helped in the introduction of the literacy hour and a similarly effective pattern is emerging in the introduction of the numeracy strategy. Pupils' annual test results are collected and analysed, but only in Key Stage 2. The information collected provides a good basis for raising attainment. For example, targets are set for pupils who the school feels may not reach the standards expected in English and mathematics by the age of eleven. These pupils are invited to attend after school booster classes and given additional support in class. Improvements such as these are instrumental in maintaining the high standards. However, not all areas are adequately monitored and some weaknesses are not being identified and remedied. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 1 where pupils' attainment is low and progress is slow. Standards in Key Stage 1 are not sufficiently monitored, partly because the senior management team does not contain a representative from Key Stage 1 or the Nursery. Secondly, although subject co-ordinators provide good levels of support, their role in monitoring the curriculum is not clear. They examine teachers' plans of the term's work and have recently begun to collect samples of pupils' work from different classes. However, the purpose behind these measures has not been fully understood and even when co-ordinators have identified problem areas, they are unsure about how to improve the situation. Consequently, some aspects of learning, such as the development of practical skills in science and the use of information technology are not receiving equal attention in every class.

65 The governors have a clear understanding of the main priorities and issues facing the school in the

coming years. They give full consideration to alternative ways forward, for example in dealing with increasing pupils numbers. Their established systems of working help new governors to become quickly integrated. They learn about standards through reports from the head teacher and staff, and they analyse and debate performance data associated with Key Stage 2. School development planning is sound and addresses the national changes to the curriculum effectively. However, the school does not carry out a systematic audit of school needs so that all areas worthy of development receive appropriate consideration. Internal needs, such as standards in Key Stage 1, are sometimes overlooked.

66 Although communications with parents are generally good, the Governors Annual Report falls short of meeting statutory requirements. For example, the school's national test results and attendance figures are not given and there are no progress reports on the previous inspection issues. Term dates, sporting aims and arrangements for the disabled are also omitted. However the school is aware of the deficiencies and has taken action to update the publications.

67 Taking into account all aspects of management and developments since the last inspection, the school is in a sound position to move forward. Its capacity to improve is exemplified by the willingness it shows in embracing national priorities, such as the recent developments in literacy and numeracy.

## 2 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

68 The school has sufficient teaching staff to meet its needs. There is a good mix of established, experienced staff and younger recently trained teachers. Teachers are appropriately qualified and have received a broad range of additional training to support their work. There is a good number of additional support staff who are used effectively.

69 The professional development of teachers has improved significantly since the last inspection. Professional development is now planned effectively to match national priorities and those identified in the school development plan. Appraisal is well organised and is effective in identifying personal training needs. Systems for the induction and mentoring of new staff have also improved since the last inspection and now operate effectively.

70 The school's accommodation is adequate to meet the needs of pupils of primary age. Some classrooms are small and the open-plan nature of the school allows noise to travel. However, teachers and pupils do not appear to notice and it does not usually affect the quality of lessons. Most classrooms are bright and well organised, creating environments that stimulate good learning. This is particularly the case in the large Nursery and Reception classrooms. The Year 2 classroom is situated between two corridors and people passing sometimes distracts pupils. Storage space is used well and the hall and dining areas are suitable for their varied purposes. The building is maintained in clean condition and the environment is made more attractive by the effective use of displays of pupil's work.

71 There are adequate hard and grassed play areas, which are maintained in good order. The hard play areas are not marked out to encourage the development of games or physical activities. There are no quiet areas for pupils who do not wish to play games at break-time. There is a secure play area for Nursery children, but no such area for the youngest Reception pupils. This, together with the lack of opportunities to use large play equipment has an impact on these children's physical development and confidence. In addition, the concrete slabs in the Nursery play area are very uneven, an issue unresolved since the last inspection.

72 The school is adequately resourced and these resources are well organised and accessible to teachers and pupils. English and mathematics are resourced well, although the range of non-fiction books in the library is barely adequate, as noted in the previous inspection. Resources to support the teaching of science, history, geography, music and physical education are adequate. There is a good range of computer systems but the range of software is rather limited, particularly to support the use of information technology to support other subjects. Resources to support art are barely adequate and there is a narrow range of examples of famous artists' work. Religious education resources are inadequate, there are few books and artefacts. Children under five have sufficient equipment to support most areas of their learning, but in Reception class there is a



shortage of large outdoor play equipment, a narrow range of mobile toys and a lack of large soft play equipment to encourage their physical development.

## 2 **The efficiency of the school**

73 The quality of financial management is sound and the school continues to operate efficiently as described on the previous inspection. The head teacher carries the principal responsibility for planning. He is well supported by governors, the deputy head teacher and administrative officer, although not all members of staff are sufficiently involved in the process. Suitable plans are established for the forth-coming year and consideration is given to future developments. School needs are identified through and analysis of the previous year's spending and informal discussion. However, this approach is inadequate because a systematic audit of school assets and potential areas of expenditure are not recorded and areas are sometimes missed. For example, the co-ordination of Key Stage 1. However, the budget is well matched to the school's declared priorities and accounted for in the school development plan. In this respect the school has improved since the last inspection.

74 Funding for specified areas, such as special educational needs and the development of literacy, is used effectively and monitored appropriately. For example, the special needs co-ordinator benefits from days allocated over the year to review and plan for pupils' future needs with local education authority staff. Income earmarked for staff training is wisely invested in the local authority in return for the good quality courses. The successfully completed literacy training is a good example of effective expenditure.

75 Currently, a small budget surplus is kept in reserve. This contingency ensures that, should emergencies arise or unforeseen developments begin, the school is in a position to respond. For example, the school has not yet received its allocation for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, effective use of the contingency has enabled the school to launch the Numeracy Strategy early in the autumn term by providing the necessary equipment. However, there are other pressing needs, yet to be met, such as resources for religious education and management time for co-ordinators to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of standards.

76 The efficiency of financial control and daily school administration are good. The administrative officer and head teacher keep careful track of day to day school expenditure. Governors monitor school spending well and receive regular printouts to help them. Governors make frequent visits to observe the work of the school and see for themselves how staff operate and how equipment is used. This helps governors to evaluate the impact of their financial decisions, however, their observations are not recorded and formally shared with the Governing Body as a whole. Spending records are well documented by the administrative officer who does much to ensure that the school is efficiently run. The financial audit, conducted in 1997, concluded that financial administration was effective. The few recommendations have been fully implemented.

77 The deployment of teachers and support staff is satisfactory. The deputy head teacher is strategically placed in Year 6 to evaluate the effectiveness of the pupils' learning as they reach the end of their primary school years. Adjustments are made to the curriculum in an effort to raise standards, particularly in the core subjects, in response to information fed back by the deputy head teacher. However, there is no such provision at the end of Key Stage 1. Nursery and Reception assistants are very well utilised and they provide very good levels of support for children aged five and under. The work of classroom assistants is targeted effectively towards the needs of pupils who find learning difficult, particularly in English and mathematics. Co-ordinators provide useful guidance in the form of policies and schemes for most subjects and act as consultants in their subjects, but they are not sufficiently involved in the important areas of monitoring and evaluating standards.

78 The use of the accommodation and learning resources is good. The school hall and grounds are very well used for the many extra curricular activities, including sport and music. Classroom areas are managed effectively and displays of pupils' work are used to create an attractive, stimulating and exciting learning environment. Very little time is wasted. Priority is given to the core subjects, but enough time is

given to other subjects to ensure that pupils receive a worthwhile experience in all areas.

79 Taking into consideration the attainment of pupils on entry, the standards they attain and the progress they make, together with their behaviour and the quality of education provided, the school is currently giving good value for money.

## 2 PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

### 2 AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

80 The provision in the Nursery and Reception class is a strength of the school and gives children an excellent start to their education. The school has maintained the very high standards identified in the previous inspection. At the time of the inspection only four children in the Reception class were aged five.

81 When children enter the Nursery, their overall attainment is above what is expected for children of this age with regard to their language, mathematical and social skills. Children make very good progress in the Nursery, particularly in developing their language and literacy skills. By the age of five, most children have acquired good personal and social skills and are working above what is expected in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Their physical development is average.

82 Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. In the Nursery they work and play together well, for example when working in their home area or playing together with small construction kits. Children become confident and develop good relationships with their classmates and adults. They take turns and share, for example when working with sand or water. In the Reception class, children continue to work well together, for example when they role-play in their “hospital”. Children are encouraged to take responsibility and they respond well to this, for example when they started in the morning they immediately completed a sorting task with their parents before entering the main classroom. By the age of five, most children’s personal and social skills are above what is expected for children of this age.

83 Children make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. In the Nursery, children count up to five, learn about shapes, and use these shapes to explore patterns. Many can name two-dimensional shapes such as squares, circles and triangles and identify them, for example when cutting making simple patterns. Children know a range of number rhymes and counting games. In the Reception, class, children count to 10, and recognise and use the numbers from 1 to 10. They use mathematical terms such as “big”, “bigger”, “biggest” accurately. When writing, the shape of their numbers is improving steadily although some regularly reverse their numbers. Higher attaining children can calculate simple subtraction sums such “5 monkeys, take away one, leaves 4 monkeys” without recourse to counting or using their fingers. By the age of five, most children’s mathematics skills are above what is expected for children of this age.

84 Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the Nursery, they talk about their family and their brothers and sisters. They can explain the different areas of the Nursery and a few describe where they live and how they came to school. Children explore the use of their senses and know the names of many of the parts of their body. They sort, select and assemble shapes to form tasteful collages. By the age of five, most children’s knowledge and understanding of the world is above what is expected for children of this age.

85 Children make good progress in developing their creative skills through a range of activities. They use their imagination to draw, paint and make collages. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, children work with a range of solid and malleable materials such as wood and dough. They mix primary colours well when painting pictures. In both the nursery and reception classes, children engage in high quality role-play, expressing their ideas and feelings well, for example when working in their “hospital” they acted out the roles of doctors, nurses and patients well. Children sing an appropriate range of songs and rhymes and use musical instruments to provide sound effects. In the Reception class, children can maintain a beat and clap to a rhythm and many already know the names of simple percussion instruments and can use them to maintain a simple tune such as “London Bridge”. By the age of five, most children’s creative skills are above what is expected for children of this age.

86 In the Nursery and Reception class children cut and stick paper and card. They play with wet and dry sand, water, dough and other malleable materials. This develops their manipulative skills. In the Nursery, a secure outside area is used to encourage role-play and playing together and this helps promote their personal

and social development as well as their physical development. However, the flagged outside area is very uneven and this is a health and safety issue that was identified in the previous inspection report. There is a suitable range of wheeled toys that develop co-ordination and awareness of space, but there is a limited range of climbing equipment and there is no large soft play equipment. In the reception class, the youngest children do not have access to a separate play area or the outside equipment used by the Nursery. This has an impact on their physical development and, by the age of five their physical development only matches what is expected of children this age.

87 The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception is very good. Teachers and Nursery nurses have very good knowledge of the under fives curriculum and plan the activities they are offering children in great detail. They work together very well and know exactly what the others are doing. Very clear planning identifies what children should have learnt at the end of each week. At this early stage in the year, the Nursery curriculum is focussed on integrating children into the school and developing their personal and social skills. The teacher places emphasis on establishing routines within the class, for example discussing how the children can select their own milk and how they should tidy up after each activity. Children's language and literacy skills have a very high priority in the nursery and form part of every activity that is planned by teachers. Teachers and Nursery nurses have high expectations, for example they use very good open questions to involve pupils in the lesson. Teachers prepare a wide range of activities for the children, including activities that are selected by the teacher and those that are selected by the children themselves. As a result, children are presented with a very rich educational experience in both the Nursery and Reception classes and this gives them an excellent start to their education in the school.

88 The curriculum for children under five is broad, balanced and planned very well against the areas of learning, with particular emphasis placed on the development of pupils' language skills in the Nursery. The curriculum promotes children's personal and social skills very effectively and provides a wide range of activities, for all areas of learning, to promote high standards. Work is very well planned to provide many opportunities for children to talk, listen, write, draw and explore how numbers are matched and sequenced. Children are provided with activities that develop their independence and responsibility. In the Reception class, children are given separate literacy and numeracy lessons. The curriculum enables children to make very good progress, particularly in the development of personal, social and language skills, and prepares them very well for the National Curriculum. The Nursery and Reception curriculum is monitored effectively. A number of target activities are identified each week. Teachers and nursery nurses ensure that all children complete these activities during the week and these are carefully assessed. The results of these assessments are used to plan future lesson and to monitor individual children's progress.

89 In both the Nursery and Reception class, resources are used to good effect. For example, when telling the story of "The Big Hungry Bear", nursery children were given models of the main characters, including a very large strawberry! Similarly, when the Reception teacher read the story of "Where's my Mummy?" the teacher and Nursery nurse used a very wide range of resources to emphasise the letter "m". However, many of the smaller resources in the Nursery and Reception have been personally provided by the staff and there is a shortage of large climbing equipment and large soft play equipment in both the Nursery and Reception class.

## 2 ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

### 2 English

90 National test results over recent years show that pupils, by the age of eleven, almost always reach high standards in English. The 1999 national test results confirm this and show that attainment in English is higher than that obtained by pupils in similar schools. The current Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in writing, but above average standards in speaking, listening and reading.

91 The 1999 national tests for seven year olds show that attainment in reading and writing is average. Although results have fluctuated over recent years, attainment in reading and writing has remained close to the national average. These results are below in writing and well below in reading when compared to schools

with a similar intake of pupils. The current Year 2 pupils are reaching the levels expected in writing. However, standards in reading are improving as a result of the priority given to the teaching of word building skills and effects of the literacy hour and attainment is now above average.

92 In speaking and listening, pupils make slow progress throughout Key Stage 1, but good progress throughout Key Stage 2. The unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 is largely due the lack of skilled questioning to develop the spoken word, too few opportunities for structured discussion and to the poor listening skills of a minority of pupils which impacts on the rate of progress for all pupils. Throughout the school, and especially in Key Stage 2, pupils increase their ability to speak clearly, confidently and articulately. For example, Year 2 pupils begin to use their voices expressively when reading, and show from their responses to questions that they have listened to the teacher. By Year 6, pupils understand how suitable words and phrases are used to add impact to the listener. They engage in discussions involving different viewpoints, listen carefully to and take account of alternative views and ask questions to develop ideas. They increase their awareness and use of a more complex, expressive vocabulary. Pupils often participate in assemblies when their spoken language is strengthened through drama.

93 The good standards in reading, evident during the last inspection, have been maintained and further developed by ensuring that it continues to be given a high profile. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress, while in Key Stage 2, progress is good. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop a range of approaches to tackle words that they do not know, and gradually gain greater fluency and expression in their reading. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are beginning to read accurately and with understanding, can explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction and know where to locate a book's contents and index. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils learn to read with improving accuracy, fluency and understanding, increasingly express clear opinions about their reading and begin to compare books and characters. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils confidently extract relevant information from reference books using the contents and index, use a wide range of context and other clues to read more complex words and phrases and read a wide variety of literature. Many older pupils are able to infer and deduce in order to understand the deeper meanings of more challenging text. Reading is generally carefully monitored to enable all staff to chart progress. Almost all pupils enjoy reading and have good support from home which helps to motivate them.

94 In writing, pupils progress at too slow a rate throughout Key Stage 1. This is because insufficient time is spent on developing writing skills and pupils write in too narrow a range of contexts. However, by the end of Key Stage 1, the handwriting of many pupils shows accurate form and consistent size, and spelling is beginning to improve with most pupils spelling common words correctly. Some write in complete sentences, with good use of punctuation. Pupils make sound progress in writing throughout Key Stage 2. Writing skills are taught in a systematic way, often through formal exercises as pupils move through the school. However, pupils do not readily transfer their developing knowledge of the structure of our language and increasing vocabulary to their extended writing. Although pupils write for an increasing range of purposes, there are too few opportunities for them to plan, draft, revise, read and present their work, and for extended writing, including through the use of information technology. Different kinds of writing, such as, argument, commentary and dialogue, are insufficiently represented. However, poetry is quite well represented, and by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are writing interesting limericks.

95 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all aspects of English at both key stages. Their learning needs are identified quickly in the Nursery and Reception and individual education programmes tailored closely to their specific needs are provided. Good levels of support are offered and parents are involved and kept closely informed. These factors enable good progress to be made. Pupils with higher attainment make good progress in Key Stage 2 because teachers expect them to reach high standards and provide work of considerable challenge, particularly in spoken English and reading. However, potential higher attaining pupils do not always receive work of sufficient challenge in Key Stage 1, particularly in writing and progress is slower.

96 Pupils' have satisfactory attitudes to learning English at Key Stage 1, and good attitudes at Key Stage 2. Many pupils show enthusiasm for each aspect of the subject. They have adapted well to the demands of the literacy hour, moving smoothly from shared text activity to group work. Pupils work independently and

conscientiously when required, co-operate effectively, and behave well, especially in Key Stage 2.

97 Overall, the quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 1, but with weaknesses. Throughout Key Stage 2, it is consistently good. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of the literacy hour in both key stages. Weaknesses, in Key Stage 1 arise from teachers not establishing quick and effective control. The pace of lessons slows when pupils all try to answer at once and the teacher has to spend more time managing this than teaching. Sometimes the teacher is busy attending to arising needs which spring from having too many different activities to control. Under these circumstances pupils cannot always receive the help they need to make progress. Despite these weaknesses, teachers usually prepare their work carefully and ensure that a good level of resources is available. They staff have a secure understanding of the subject's requirements, mark pupils' work carefully and provide useful comments to guide pupils in their work.

98 Teaching at Key Stage 2 is consistently good. All Key Stage 2 teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. Lively presentations and appropriately challenging tasks are common features and these approaches successfully capture the pupils' interests. Teachers use skilful questioning to check pupils' understanding. In Key Stage 2, pupils are consistently well managed, control is particularly effective and lessons proceed at a brisk pace.

99 The co-ordinator's role is insufficiently developed to enable her to have the best possible overview of the subject. The school's assessment arrangements are sound, but there are inconsistencies in the use of assessment to inform future planning, except in reading. The library is not sufficiently attractive or well organised to enable pupils to gain a love of books. The present organisation, where books are grouped according to topics or colour rather than numbers, inhibits pupils' ability to locate information quickly. There are too few non-fiction books, and some reading material, both fiction and non-fiction, is old and worn and requires disposal. Literacy is well promoted in other subjects, for example, in science, where pupils write sequential instructions for investigations.

## 2 **Mathematics**

100 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress overall in mathematics and, by the end of Year 2, their attainment matches what is expected of seven year olds. In the national tests for seven year olds in 1999, pupils' results in mathematics were above the national average, although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was average. In comparison with schools of the same type, pupils' results are broadly similar. In Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress in all aspects of mathematics. As a result, by the end of Year 6, their attainment is well above what is expected for 11 year olds. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 1999, pupils' results in mathematics were very high and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also very high. In comparison with similar schools pupils' results were well above average.

101 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in developing their knowledge of mathematical vocabulary. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand that different mathematical words can mean the same thing. For example, they recognise that "subtract", "make smaller by", "decrease", "take away", all mean "subtract". Pupils also make steady progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of number, but slow progress in developing their understanding of shape and space and in using and applying their mathematical knowledge to solving problems. In Year 1, pupils add and subtract single numbers to 10, recognise the hours on analogue and digital clock faces. In Year 2, pupils, add numbers greater than 10 and use information to construct block graphs, for example showing the classes favourite foods. They recognise half-past, quarter-past and quarter-to on a clock face. Pupils realise that the position of the digit signifies its value, for example that the 2 in 23 means two tens.

102 In Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6 in developing their knowledge of mathematics and in using this knowledge to solve problems. In Year 3, pupils know their two, five and 10 times tables and use them effectively during mental arithmetic sessions. They measure accurately in metres, centimetres and millimetres and are beginning to work with simple division sums. In Year 4, pupils use tally charts to collect data and draw graphs questions. Most pupils confidently add and subtract numbers greater than 1000. In Year 5, pupils use most of the multiplication tables confidently and use them to check

the correctness of their answers to multiplication and division sums. They understand how fractions convert to decimals, understand the correspondence of 45/100, 4.5 and 45 per cent and calculate simple probabilities accurately. In Year 6, pupils divide three digit numbers by two digit numbers, handle negative numbers confidently, and recognise lines of symmetry in regular shapes. They have good skills in applying mathematics to a variety of problems, for example when investigating relationships between square and triangular numbers.

103 Pupils' numeracy skills are developed very well in other subjects throughout the school. In science, pupils handle data well, tabulate their graphs and produce graphs. Computers are used well to present information in line graphs, bar charts and pie charts, whilst in geography pupils use co-ordinates, grid references, scales and compass bearings confidently. Pupils used their good measuring skills in design and technology lessons making nets of shapes to fold into boxes.

104 Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well and make good progress when they are given extra support in class or are withdrawn from the class to receive tuition extra help. Their individual education plans are appropriate and are used by their teachers to provide work that is well matched to their needs. As a consequence, they make good progress.

105 In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 it is good, and it is excellent in Year 5. Teachers use a variety of strategies to teach number and all use mathematical language well. Teachers have a secure understanding of mathematics and use resources well to support their teaching. The best teaching was seen where the teacher set very challenging targets and used a very effective wall display to visually demonstrate decimal place value and their link with fractions. This was accompanied by very searching questions that explored the limits of pupils' understanding. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen where the teacher did not use effective strategies to maintain pupils' interest and, as a result, they became distracted and bored, particularly during an over-long introduction.

106 Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. They enjoy their lessons, work hard, particularly when they are given challenging group work. They are interested in mathematics and eager to answer questions, particularly during mental arithmetic sessions and they work enthusiastically on mathematical activities.

107 The mathematics curriculum is well managed and meets National Curriculum requirements, although pupils' independent investigative skills are not sufficiently promoted in Key Stage 1. Pupils are well prepared for the national tests for eleven year olds and, consequently, significantly more pupils reach the higher levels than is the case nationally. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and identifies what pupils are expected to have learnt at the end of a lesson or sequence of lessons. Informal assessment is used well by most teachers and, as a result, teachers know their pupils well, especially the standards pupils they have reached. However, the results of formal assessments are not yet used effectively to inform their future planning. The mathematics policy and scheme of work are being updated in line with national changes, but have provided good guidance in the past. Resources to support the teaching of mathematics are good, are well organised and are accessible to teachers and pupils.

## 2 Science

108 The school's science results in the 1999 national tests for pupils aged eleven are very high and much higher than they are similar schools. Almost all pupils reached the standards expected, instead of the usual two thirds and more than twice as many as usual reached higher levels. Trends over recent years indicate that standards have remained high and the current Year 6 pupils are also attaining high standards. Standards in Key Stage 2 are higher than at the time of the last inspection and the pace of lessons has improved considerably.

109 Teacher assessments of pupils aged seven in 1999 show that the proportion who reached the expected levels was above the national average. However, over recent years pupils' attainment has consistently remained close to the national average. Very few pupils generally reach higher levels and this is

why the standards are lower than they are in schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds. The current Year 2 pupils are on course to reach the standards expected by the age of seven, but few are likely to reach higher levels.

110 The current Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the scientific method. They make astute predictions of what is likely to happen, but are less sure of how to ensure the test will be fair. For example, they sometimes change two conditions and are then unsure which one led to the results. A new scheme of work has been introduced in which the skills of experimentation are made explicit. Younger pupils are already benefiting. In Year 5 for example, with careful guidance, pupils design fair tests to find out if stretching an elastic band raises the pitch when it vibrates. Most pupils by the age of eleven, observe carefully and measure changes accurately, for example to find how much of a substance has dissolved in cold and hot water. They draw sensible conclusions and use this learning to help them solve problems in other areas, for example to explain the water cycle. Pupils have very good knowledge of the human body and plants and correctly explain the basic functions of the essential organs, such as the heart or the roots of a plant. Most pupils have advanced knowledge of materials. For example, they understand the properties of matter and make a good attempt to explain the relationship between molecules and atoms. Pupils show similar levels of understanding of physical processes and have no difficulty in explaining balanced forces.

111 Pupils' knowledge and understanding of science at the end of Key Stage 1 are average. An examination of previously completed work shows that coverage of the different aspects of science is irregular. Most pupils know about plants and life cycles, understand simple changes in materials and make simple electric circuits correctly. However, there is little evidence to suggest that pupils make systematic observations and compare what actually happens with their predictions. This reflects the insufficiently structured teaching.

112 Pupils make good progress in Reception, but then progress slows through Key Stage 1. Science is not always taught systematically so that skills can be built from week to week and from class to class. Learning is sometimes disrupted when practical work is not carefully controlled and supervised. On these occasions, pupils sometimes draw the wrong conclusions and misunderstand the scientific principles being taught. Pupils do learn to predict the likely outcomes of their work and are capable of making accurate guesses about which surface cars will travel over best. Pupils also learn to record their findings on charts. However, the teacher often imposes these methods and pupils sometimes fail to understand the need for accurate and carefully tabulated results.

113 In Key Stage 2 most pupils make good progress and particularly good progress in the knowledge and understanding aspects of science. However, progress in investigative and experimental science is similar to that made by pupils of this age. This is because the knowledge and understanding aspects are studiously taught, whereas the practical and reasoning skills are not taught equally and regularly in all classes. The co-ordinator is aware of the differences between classes through discussion and receiving copies of teachers' plans. She sets a good example by teaching all aspects of science and organises resources effectively for all teachers to use. However, deficiencies in the development of investigation skills are not remedied because the action does not always follow identification of weaknesses. Progress in Years 3 and 5 is generally stronger because an investigation approach is used in almost all lessons. For example, in Year 3, pupils are challenged to classify foods according to their own criteria before re-classifying according to newly acquired understanding of nutritional value. This approach requires pupils to think hard and learn to justify their ideas.

114 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. In Key Stage 2 they make very good progress because they have good opportunities to discuss their ideas with classroom helpers. In Key Stage 1 pupils who find learning difficult make at least satisfactory progress, again because they are supported in their work. Progress made by more able pupils could be better in Key Stage 1, but is good in Key Stage 2 and this is evident in the high levels of knowledge and understanding they reach. Boys and girls are given equal encouragement and opportunities to learn and they make similar progress.

115 Pupils have good attitudes to learning. In most lessons they are attentive and interested, although



this sometimes breaks down in Key Stage 1 when clear instructions are not given. Many pupils become absorbed in their work and ask enterprising questions.

116 Teaching in science is good overall, but generally unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. However, teaching in Reception very successfully enables pupils to cope with tricky areas of understanding, such as life cycles. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is sometimes undermined even when the lesson objectives are clear and the resources are thoroughly prepared. Pupils are sometimes not given sufficient guidance at the beginning of the lesson so they are unsure of exactly what is expected. Sometimes too many different activities are organised leaving teachers too many to manage, particularly when control is not firmly established. On other occasions lessons benefit from very high levels of adult help. In Year 1, for example a very ambitious lesson was organised where pupils were given rich opportunities to use their senses to describe several different experiences. The potential for difficulties of supervision was very real, particularly when one of the activities was to stand in jelly! However, the four adults managed the activities well and pupils enjoyed an experience to remember and gained rich scientific language.

117 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is generally good and well structured enabling lessons to move along at good pace. In Year 4, for example, the teacher sets time targets and then stops the class to check on understanding and progress. This works well and keeps pupils on their toes. Pupils are well disciplined, yet they are often given scope to organise their own group approach. This is particularly the case in Year 6. The good pupil management sets the right climate for learning and even when the lesson is packed with activity, pupils work purposefully and do not take advantage of the freedom offered. Furthermore, teachers have time to observe pupils, ask questions and keep track of their learning. Assessments are used effectively at the end of units of work to probe their knowledge and understanding of work covered. However, the assessment of the skills of experimentation is much weaker and is not yet leading to the necessary changes in planning to promote these skills further. The most effective teaching is closely associated with the design of activities. In Key Stage 2 teachers often make their own worksheets. These take account of the particular learning needs of the group and can be extended to provide extra work for quick finishers or to give greater challenges.

118 Written work, group discussion and reading instructions in science make a valuable contribution to pupils' standards of literacy. Pupils are sometimes required to measure and calculate numerical amounts, but information technology skills are not sufficiently exploited in science.

## 2 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### 2 Art

119 Very few art lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

120 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in drawing and painting. They use a variety of materials and techniques, although most of the work seen was based on poster paint or pencil. Pupils in Year 2 used white and black paint carefully to modify shades of green and blue, and mixed primary colours well when drawing different types of transport. However, they have little understanding of famous artists from the past or present.

121 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress and, by the end of Year 6 their attainment is similar to that of pupils in other schools. They have some knowledge of famous artists and realise that artists develop a particular style for effect. For example, older pupils could compare the landscapes of Constable with Kandinsky's more simple geometric style. Pupils understand the terms perspective and vanishing point and make good observational line drawings, but make little use of shading.

122 Teachers have a sound knowledge of art and teach a narrow range of skills and technique

effectively. For example, in Year 4, pupils were shown how to use pencils, pastels and charcoal to convey texture when drawing coasters. Materials are well prepared and good subjects are chosen which make lessons interesting and well managed. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to art. They enjoy art lessons and work with enthusiasm and care.

123 The quality of artwork was of a higher standard on the last inspection. The art curriculum and the allocation of teaching time have been slimmed down because of the school's concentration on literacy and numeracy. There is no effective scheme of work to give guidance to teachers and the school relies on teachers' expertise and experience to ensure that pupils experience the full range of activities. As a result activities are not always placed in an appropriate sequence that builds upon pupils' previous learning. Throughout the school, pupils' artistic skills are used effectively to produce work to enhance and illustrate other subjects.

## 2 Design and technology

124 Standards are typical when compared with the last inspection, but more emphasis is now placed on designing and planning. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

125 Reception pupils benefit from a good start. They become proficient in cutting and joining materials and already know of different ways to finish their models using colour, decoration and fabric. A very good start is also made in designing. The Reception class display of wheeled vehicles bears a sign, 'match the design to the finished model' and this is easy to do. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. In Year 1 for example, pupils refine their designing skills by listing the materials needed alongside a labeled drawing of what the finished model should look like. This effective planning ahead helped pupils to make good quality puppets using sticks, wooden spoons, card and fabric. In Year 2 pupils learn techniques, for example, how to fasten wheels on an axle so that they rotate. However, pupils have little idea of how to evaluate their work apart from commenting 'I like it'.

126 Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2. From an early stage in the junior classes, pupils learn to apply the skills gained in design and technology in other subjects. For example in Year 3, pupils design and make good quality weather instruments, such as wind speed and rain gauges to help their studies in geography. In Year 4, they develop an understanding of how to make solid constructions from two-dimensional drawings. Progress is good in Year 5. The teacher is ambitious and knowledgeable and introduces pupils to computer generated design to enable them to resize, rotate and move gymnastics apparatus to add more challenge to lessons. By Year 6 pupils are competent in preparing designs. They have developed a sound knowledge of materials and the skills to cut, fasten and shape them. Pupils are beginning to add the element of control to their work, for example using a cam to achieve circular motion of a model roundabout, but this level of attainment is restricted to the few.

127 Pupils' attitudes are good. They plan their work together profitably, share equipment and are very aware of the advantages in helping each other.

128 Teaching is sound overall and particularly good in Reception and Year 5 where teachers enable pupils to design and try out different techniques to help them select the best materials or the most appropriate design. Teachers have sound knowledge of the subject and provide challenging activities, which are usually matched closely to pupils' interests. Resources are used well and pupils are given sufficient time to complete tasks to their own satisfaction. In good lessons teachers ask questions to help pupils reconsider what they are doing and make suggestions when they have difficulty. In these lessons there is a strong focus on helping pupils to evaluate and improve the quality of their work. Most teachers manage their classes well and ensure that pupils apply themselves and work safely. In Key Stage 1 group activities are sometimes not sufficiently overseen and opportunities are missed to guide pupils' thinking. Teachers do not use any consistent methods to assess pupils' progress, although lesson planning does indicate the skills pupils are expected to learn.

## 2 Geography

129 Only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was

available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

130 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in geography and, by the end of Year 6 the attainment of most pupils is typical for their age. Most pupils have appropriate geographical skills and their knowledge of places and the local area are good. They carry out investigative work effectively and record their findings, presenting their written work to a high standard. Pupils have a good knowledge of the impact of environmental change and have well developed mapping skills.

131 In Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of their local environment and can describe their journey to school, using appropriate vocabulary to describe the area. They identify the different types and purpose of buildings in the locality and the materials that they are made of.

132 In Key Stage 2, pupils' mapping skills are developed well, for example pupils in Year 3 use the points of the compass, pupils in Year 4 use four figure references and pupils in Year 6 use six figure references when using maps. Pupils in Year 4 contrast the daily life of St. Lucia with that of Rochdale while pupils in Year 5 make a detailed study of the differences between Jamaica and the United Kingdom. Pupils use geographical vocabulary accurately; for example pupils in Year 6 used the terms "erosion" and "deposition" when explaining how the contours of a map described the land around a river.

133 Teachers have a sound knowledge of geography and use specific geographical language well. They make good links with other subjects and support the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Older pupils in particular take pride in the presentation of work.

134 The geography curriculum is broad and balanced. There is a policy and a detailed scheme of work that ensures that activities are planned in an appropriate sequence that builds upon pupils' previous experiences and skills. However, there is no consistent approach to the assessment or recording of pupils' progress in geography. Geography resources are adequate and good use is made of the local environment and field trips.

## 2 **History**

135 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress in history. Most pupils attain standards appropriate for their age and similar to those at the time of the last inspection. In Key Stage 1 pupils understand the difference between the past and present and old and new. For example, pupils in Year 1 looked at toys from their grandparents and parents times and compared them to their own. Pupils have knowledge of the lives of some famous people, for example pupils in Year 2 could describe the major events in Florence Nightingale's life. In Years 5 and 6, pupils understand how sources of evidence inform them of the past and contrast aspects of current society with those in Victorian times and during World War 2. For example, pupils in Year 5 wrote vivid descriptions of the trials and tribulations of children working in Victorian factories, while pupils in Year 6 used copies of original literature and books to explain the reasons behind rationing in the World War 2.

136 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they respond well. They work hard and concentrate well on their tasks. Older pupils are articulate, confident and keen to take part in discussions; for example when discussing why food and clothes needed to be rationed during the war. Pupils behave well, co-operate when working in small groups and have good relationships with each other.

137 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, good in Key Stage 2, and sometimes very good, in Years 5 and 6. Teachers prepare their lessons well, have good organisational and management skills and clearly communicate their confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. The best teaching is seen when teachers plan their lessons in detail, ensuring the work set matches the differing abilities of pupils in their class. In these lessons, teachers provide challenging tasks and set the scene using evocative language. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were genuinely horrified by the teacher's description of the working life of five year old children in Victorian mines.

138 The history curriculum is broad and balanced. The school has adopted a national scheme of work and the units of study have been allocated to different year groups to ensure that new learning builds effectively on pupils' previous experiences and skills. Resources are adequate and educational visits to places of interest successfully develop pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge and cultural development.

## 2 Information technology

139 Attainment in information technology, as in the last inspection report, is broadly in line with the national standards expected at the end of both key stages. There is coverage of all areas of the subject but in too narrow a range of activities. A significant minority of pupils are attaining below national levels at the end of both key stages. This is because pupils have too few opportunities for regular access to computers. The range of software is not yet wide or extensive enough to enable pupils to use information technology sufficiently in most other subjects, despite recent improvements.

140 There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about progress across Key Stage 1, since little work was observed during the period of the inspection. However, Year 1 pupils, building on the firm foundations established in the Nursery and Reception classes, use information technology effectively to help communicate ideas. For example, they type their names, change background colour, and print completed labels. However, they are not yet aware that computers have a memory and that work can be saved. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils programme a floor robot with purpose and outline their actions. They begin to generate and communicate ideas in forms other than text, such as, through pictures. They develop an ability to use a mouse appropriately to move icons around the screen.

141 Progress throughout Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory for most pupils, especially for those who have computers at home and can practice developing information technology skills. However, pupils who depend entirely on access to computers within school make slower progress because they have too few opportunities to use them. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and receive at least their share of time on computers. Pupils very familiar with information technology routines sometimes help them. This one to one support secures their progress. Year 3 pupils demonstrate developing confidence handling a mouse to change the tense of verbs in language work and are beginning to change text by deleting letters. Year 4 pupils use information technology well to manipulate text, for instance when re-ordering lists of class rules. They highlight text, cut and paste appropriately, and change font size and colour with the minimum of supervision. They complete graphs using information technology to show the results of their investigations in science. Year 5 pupils are competent in modelling and make effective use of a design package to plan the location of gymnastics equipment in the school hall. They move, rotate, copy and enlarge screen images to suit their preferences. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils retrieve stored information proficiently by searching, selecting and printing. For example, Year 6 pupils use a CD-ROM to support work on "Britain since the 1930's" in history. They use computers to write poems, but opportunities for word processing, and for control technology, are under-represented. Pupils learn to set up, store, seek and amend information on spreadsheets, although this aspect is a recent introduction.

142 Attitudes are satisfactory, but pupils are not all confident in the use of information technology. The lack of confidence is related to lack of experience and opportunities to develop essential skills. The more confident pupils, who frequently use computers at home, sometimes teach new skills to others.

143 There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2 it is sound overall. Little direct teaching was seen during the inspection. Where it did take place, led by the head teacher, it was very good, with secure subject knowledge demonstrated and thoughtful questions asked to reinforce and develop understanding. However, in some classes, interventions to help pupils working at computers are too infrequent to support them effectively.

144 The management of the subject is sound, and there are clear plans for its further development. At present pupil performance in information technology is not keeping pace with provision. Although all pupils have their own e-mail address and most know how to send e-mail, the use of the internet is at an early stage of

development. Pupils have not yet fully benefited from the National Grid for Learning hardware. Identified additional training needs are required to help raise the profile of the subject. There is a good range of hardware which is sufficient to meet curriculum requirements. However, more software is required to enable information technology to be further developed across the curriculum.

## 2 Music

145 Standards in music are typical, but attainment is higher in singing, particularly at the junior key stage. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The picture is better than given in the previous inspection report when music was often taught to the whole school at the same time. There is now more emphasis on music lessons where work can be closely matched to the needs of each age group. The co-ordinator has provided a detailed scheme of work and secured the co-operation of some members of staff in following it, but has yet to implement a means of monitoring its success and introduce a form of assessment.

146 At Key Stage 1, standards are similar to those in most schools in singing, responding to music and composing, but higher in performing accompaniments to stories and songs. Reception pupils make good progress and are very imaginative in selecting sounds to illustrate the parts of a story, such as 'tramping through the woods in search of a bear'. They are already beginning to write down simple compositions using flower pots and numbers. Pupils make sound progress in Years 1 and 2 where they learn techniques such as tapping and shaking instruments and develop the ability to clap increasingly complex rhythms. Almost all pupils can clap the pattern of a steady beat and are beginning to understand and use terms correctly, such as *ostinato*.

147 Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through the junior classes. However, most pupils make good progress in singing. This partly arises from the influence of a good choir. A large number of pupils attend choir practices regularly. They learn to sing three part songs and perform them for the whole school. Other pupils learn from this and hold their own part well when singing two part rounds. The quality of sound produced and pupils' capacity to sing in time and in tune with good diction is of a high standard. Similarly, pupils who play string and brass instruments sometimes perform for the whole school and this gives other pupils a wider appreciation of different types of music. Pupils in some classes have good opportunities to compose and perform their own arrangements. In Year 3, for example, pupils study African rhythms and select instruments and actions to represent different actions, such as lifting water from the well. They create sensitive and interesting compositions, particularly when they blend two or three different melodies using the pentatonic scale on chime bars. Pupils understand the value of practising to improve and when encouraged make accurate and perceptive comments about how their own work and that of others can be improved.

148 Pupils' attitudes are usually good. Pupils' are eager to take part and many are willing to sing or play on their own from an early age. This shows that pupils are successfully developing interest in music and the confidence to share it with others.

149 Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. New skills are systematically taught and pupils are given sufficient time to practice them. In most lessons pupils are grouped in a circle with instruments in the middle. This is effective in ensuring that they can see and hear each other and co-ordinate their playing. In the best lessons the activities are carefully structured to develop all aspects of music. In Reception, for example, pupils are given opportunities to listen, sing, play instruments and compose so that all pupils are actively involved and developing a wide range of skills.

## 2 Physical education

150 Pupils make sound progress in physical education throughout Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection because previous learning is now carefully built on to enable important skills to be taught in logical sequence. All aspects of the subject are appropriately represented to enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to receive a balanced

curriculum and take part in a suitably broad range of experiences.

151 Throughout both key stages, pupils develop a growing awareness of safety and the beneficial effects of exercise. In dance, Year 1 pupils demonstrate competency in the skills of control, co-ordination and balance in response to dance music. During games, Year 3 pupils improve their techniques of throwing and passing when acquiring the skills of netball. Year 3 pupils extend their gymnastics skills effectively by investigating different ways of travelling both on the floor and using apparatus, and using their imagination to overcome set challenges. Year 4 pupils work on developing their balancing routines, and start to link two actions together to improve overall performance. By year 6, pupils work in groups to practice and refine a longer series of actions. Pupils practise and refine their gymnastics skills at floor level and then transfer these on to apparatus to good effect. They execute increasingly complex sequences of movement with good control and co-ordination. They use simplified versions of recognised games to learn the principles and develop essential skills of attack and defence games.

152 Attitudes to learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and good at Key Stage 2. Most pupils enjoy physical education, behave sensibly, co-operate well, and handle resources carefully. They persevere to improve their techniques and performance.

153 Teaching is sound at Key Stage 1, and consistently good throughout Key Stage 2. Features of good teaching include clear aims for the lesson with a strong focus on improving skills. Teachers give precise instructions and set high levels of challenge. Most teachers have a secure understanding of how to teach physical education. Their lesson organisation is good and resources are used well. Pupils are often asked to demonstrate and this helps other pupils to observe and improve their own work. Occasionally, teachers in Key Stage 1 struggle to maintain control, particularly when pupils are excited. This slows the pace of the lesson and limits the progress pupils make.

154 The subject is well managed by a new, enthusiastic and dynamic teacher. She leads the subject purposefully and is well qualified to ensure that it continues to improve. A policy and carefully structured scheme of work ensure that skills are systematically taught and developed across both key stages. Pupils compete with other schools in a suitable range of sporting activities. Resources are good, easily accessed and suitably stored. The well equipped hall, with a good range of fixed and portable equipment, enables pupils to develop physical skills appropriately.

## 2 **Religious education**

155 Standards of attainment in religious education by the end of both key stages are satisfactory and meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has introduced a wider range of teaching approaches seen as necessary at the last inspection, but resources for the subject continue to be insufficient. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school.

156 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory awareness of the importance of belonging to a group, such as a family or a school. They know what it means to be a friend and understand the importance of respect and value for others. They know some Bible stories, for example, the story of Joseph and his brothers and appreciate that the Bible is a special book for Christians. They are aware of the Christian calendar and name Easter and Christmas as special times. They know that other religions have different special days and celebrations, for example, Rosh Hashana, the start of the Jewish New Year. They understand that people have different beliefs and worship in different ways.

157 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils know that Christianity is the main religion in Britain, although they recognise the many diversities within the Christian religion, for example the Catholic, Church of England and Methodist forms of worship. They have good knowledge of the different places of worship, for example they know about the synagogue and why the Mosque is aligned towards the east. They know that religious stories have deeper meanings and that religious leaders often told these stories as a means of influencing the way people thought and behaved. For example, most pupils know the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. They know that this was a parable told by Jesus to illustrate that 'God loves all of his children'.

Pupils are well acquainted with religious terms and explain correctly, such expressions as sin, faith and worship. Whilst most pupils have a good knowledge of how different religions are characterised by special books, symbols and festivals, they are less sure about how religion affects the daily lives of believers. This is partly because they do not yet understand the impact that faith has on some communities and the extent to which some peoples' lives are determined by religious principles. When pupils talk about experiences they are familiar with, the quality of discussion is often of a high standard. For example, Year 6 pupils talk openly and confidently about a range of themes, such as war and protecting the environment. They are able to see problems from different perspectives, for example that war may be justified when people need to be protected.

158 Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in developing an understanding of some of the religious traditions of the world. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they often receive additional help from classroom assistants or parent helpers in lessons and have many opportunities to express their ideas. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in planned elements of Judaism, Islam and Buddhism, in addition to their main focus of Christianity. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 often make good progress in the development of spiritual awareness as a result of their confidence in talking in front of others about their feelings and beliefs.

159 Pupils usually have good attitudes in both assembly and religious education lessons. They enjoy participating, whether acting out parts of stories or offering their opinions and ideas. They listen carefully to what others say and show respect for people of different beliefs and traditions. Pupils are more accepting than interested when lessons conform to a narrow formula of stories followed by a written account, as sometimes happens in Key Stage 1.

160 Teaching is broadly satisfactory, but often good in Key Stage 2 where a wider variety of approaches are used. In Year 5 the teaching is of a very high standard because of the skilful way discussions are guided. In this class, pupils are encouraged to think deeply and offer their views and opinions. Their ideas are listened to carefully and then built on. This successful approach enables pupils to make significant leaps in understanding, for example in recognising that the terms 'light and dark' are associated with 'good and evil'. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of religious education is broadly satisfactory. Teachers have a good grasp of how to teach religious facts and ideas, but not all teachers are as successful in helping pupils to shape their own values in the light of understanding the beliefs of others. Consequently pupils learn about religions better than they learn from them in some classes. This inconsistency of depth of coverage of the Agreed Syllabus is recognised by the co-ordinator. She teaches well and sets a good example in her own class, for example, by asking pupils to write their own prayers, visiting places of worship and comparing one religious perception with another. There are examples of these wider approaches being used in other classes, but the practice is inconsistent. Teachers' plans are checked regularly, but as yet the system of monitoring is inadequate to ensure consistently good practice throughout the school. Resources are also inadequate. There are few resources for teachers to base their lessons on, other than the Agreed Syllabus itself and virtually no religious artefacts for pupils to examine. Most teachers use questioning well and value what pupils say. This leads to many pupils making useful contributions to lessons. This is also an effective tool for assessment, but other forms of assessment are insufficiently addressed.

2 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

2 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

161 The inspection of Whittaker Moss Primary School was undertaken by four inspectors over four days, giving a total of 14 days in school. Fifty-four lessons were inspected, along with assemblies and registration periods, amounting to approximately seventy-five hours of inspection. In addition, observations were made of pupils arriving and leaving school, and of lunch and break times. All teachers who regularly teach English and mathematics were observed teaching those subjects. Meetings were held prior to the inspection with staff and the Governing Body. During the inspection there were discussions with governors and staff and daily meetings between the reporting inspector and head teacher. A sample of average, above and below average work from each year group was examined, along with assessments, records, reports and teachers' plans. A representative sample of pupils from each year group was heard to read and frequent discussions with pupils took place. Documentation, provided by the school, was analysed before and during the inspection. Registers were checked and the budget figures were analysed. The reporting inspector held a meeting for parents before the inspection; 17 parents attended. Their views were considered along with the analysis of 45 responses to the questionnaire seeking parents' views about the quality and standards of the school.

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2 **DATA AND INDICATORS**

2 **162 Pupil data**

	<b>Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)</b>	<b>Number of pupils with statements of SEN</b>	<b>Number of pupils on school's register of SEN</b>	<b>Number of full- time pupils eligible for free school meals</b>
2 <b>YR – Y6</b>	223	4	41	8
<b>Nursery Class</b>	30	0	0	0

2 **163 Teachers and classes**

2 **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	28

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

Total number of education support staff:	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	130

2 **Qualified teachers (Nursery classes)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	30

2 **Education support staff (Nursery class)**

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.5



2      **164      Financial data**

Financial year:	1998-1999
	£
Total Income	422,911
Total Expenditure	420,041
Expenditure per pupil	1,884
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,528
Balance carried forward to next year	12,398

2      **165****PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	130
Number of questionnaires returned:	45

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	73	27	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	84	16	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	54	29	17	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	60	36	4	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	69	29	2	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	71	27	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	53	40	7	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	55	39	2	4	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	71	24	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	78	22	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	84	16	0	0	0

