

INSPECTION REPORT

HOPWOOD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Heywood

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105798

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Johnson.

Reporting inspector: G.J. Yates
[2465]

Dates of inspection: January 17th-21st, 2000.

Inspection number: 188962

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Magdala Street,
Hopwood,
Heywood,
Lancashire.

Postcode: OL10 2HN

Telephone number: 01706 360494

Fax number: 01706 620186

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Alan Parker

Date of previous inspection: 10th June, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
G.J. Yates	Registered inspector	Mathematics; Physical education.	How high are standards? - The school's results and achievements.
L. Brock	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities.	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
A.V. Calderbank	Team inspector	English; Geography; History; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
M.J. Bowers	Team inspector	Science; Design and technology; Information technology.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
J. Pollard	Team inspector	Art; Music; Religious education.	How high are standards? - Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

Esprit Primary Inspections,
'Woodview',
2C Green Lane,
Standish,
Wigan. WN6 0TS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar,
Inspection Quality Division,
The Office for Standards in Education,
Alexandra House,
33 Kingsway,
London WC2B 6SE.

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. The ability on entry is broadly average. The week before the inspection started four new teachers had taken up posts at the school. Since the last inspection numbers have risen and the building has been extended.

Number of full-time pupils:	308	[well above average]
Pupils with English as an additional language:	2.7%	[above average]
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	9.1%	[below average]
Pupils on register of special educational needs:	64	[broadly average]
Average class size:	31	

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good features. It is well led, the teaching is good overall and an above average number achieve the expected standard in English, mathematics and science. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in English, mathematics and science is higher than that found in most schools.
- Teaching is never less than satisfactory and good or better in seven out of every ten lessons.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is of high quality.
- Teachers' planning is thorough and provides a clear structure for pupils learning.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to work and behave very well.
- The provision made for pupils' cultural, social and moral development is very good.
- Links with parents are very good.
- The interior of the building provides a very good environment for learning.
- Standards in art are higher than those found in most schools.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in both key stages in information technology.
- Investigative work in science is not challenging enough at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in history, geography and science.
- The organisation of the library.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection in June 1996. An assessment policy has been introduced and very good procedures are in place in English, mathematics and science. The school has an effective marking policy and pupils' progress is monitored well. Despite the good efforts made, the school still does not have its own sports field. However, other resources have been improved. Standards in physical education are higher than those found at the time of the last inspection. The teaching of history in Key Stage 2 has improved and pupils are now provided with tasks that extend their knowledge and skills. Teachers' planning is now of a very good standard. The provision for pupils' cultural development, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection, is now a strength of the school. Weaknesses remain in information technology and in the organisation of the library. The quality of written information for parents on pupils' progress has improved. Standards in mathematics have improved markedly in the last four years.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	C	D
mathematics	C	A	B	B
science	B	B	C	D

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

The table shows that standards achieved in English and science in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds were average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. Standards in mathematics were above average both in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. Over the past three years the school's results in English have declined but improved in mathematics. However, inspection evidence shows that standards are now higher than they were last year. Science results in 1999 were not as good as in the previous two years. The school has set challenging targets for over 90% of pupils to achieve level 4 in English, mathematics and science in the year 2000. Inspection evidence shows that in all three subjects the school is on line to meet these targets. A significant number of pupils are on course to reach a higher level in mathematics. A strength in English is the good quality and range of pupils' writing. However, pupils do not use their writing skills effectively in other subjects of the curriculum. Mathematics is a strength of the school. Pupils have good number skills and apply their knowledge well. Inspection evidence shows that standards in science are in line with those found in most schools. However, investigative work is not challenging enough for higher attaining Year 6 pupils. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory. The school does not have sufficient equipment to enable pupils to develop and use their skills. Pupils' work in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Not enough lessons could be seen in music to allow a judgement to be made about attainment. Standards are higher in art than those normally found and standards are average in all other subjects.

Most of the children under five are expected to attain the expected goals by the time they start Year 1. By the end of Key Stage 1 the proportion of pupils on course to achieve the expected levels in English, mathematics and science is higher than in most schools.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic, confident and courteous.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave sensibly in and out of school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. All pupils enjoy taking an active part in the smooth running of the school. Staff and pupils show mutual respect, a factor that contributes very positively to the caring ethos of the school community.
Attendance	Very good.

Pupils listen attentively to teachers and are keen to take part in question and answer sessions. They are very polite and greet visitors cheerfully. Pupils of all ages play well together at lunchtime.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the week of the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In 70% of lessons teaching was good or better and in 20% of lessons teaching was very good or excellent.

The teaching of English and mathematics is good in both key stages. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Numeracy and literacy skills are taught well. Teachers' planning and the use made of assessment information are both particular strengths of teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage pupils very well.

Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language are provided with appropriate learning opportunities. The setting arrangements ensure that work is matched well to pupils' ability.

The quality of learning is good. Pupils show a good level of interest in their work. A particular strength is the way pupils are actively involved in setting their own targets for improvement.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Broad and relevant. A strong emphasis is placed on developing reading, writing and number skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school is successful in the early identification of pupils who have special educational needs. Individual education plans contain very specific targets. Work is well matched to pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are well integrated into all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to help with the smooth running of the school. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good and spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. All pupils are valued as individuals and pupils' academic and records of personal development are well maintained. Very effective procedures are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils.

The school has a very good partnership with its parents. The inspection shows that parents are kept well informed about school events and what their children are learning at school.

In most parts of the school pupils work in ability groups in English, mathematics and science and are given good opportunities to develop and use basic skills. However, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are not provided with sufficiently challenging work in science. There are weaknesses in the curriculum provision made for pupils to develop their information technology skills. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good and the information gathered is used appropriately to set targets for improvement.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. Over the last ten years she has managed change effectively and is well supported by her senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very involved in all aspects of school life and carries out all its responsibilities well. Legal requirements are fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Test results are analysed and targets set for improvement. The effectiveness of teaching and learning is monitored well.
The strategic use of resources	Most resources are used well. However, the library is unsatisfactory and much information technology equipment is out-dated.

The internal accommodation is very clean and provides a stimulating learning environment. The school does not have its own playing field. The library is not well stocked with books. Particular strengths in the leadership and management of the school include:

- the commitment shown to improving standards further;
- an excellent staff development programme, including the excellent support given to new staff;
- the way the curriculum is organised to ensure that all pupils participate fully;
- the way staff is encouraged to work together as a team.

The school regularly reflects upon how well it is performing. It compares its standards with similar schools and sets targets for improvement. Each year all spending decisions are closely analysed and careful consideration is given to obtaining best value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • The school provides a wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities. • Their children like school. • The school has high expectations of behaviour and achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' handwriting and how they present their work. • The homework arrangements. • The information about their children's progress. • The links with parents.

The inspection team found that the amount of homework set is appropriate, parents do receive suitable information about how their children are progressing and there are good parental links. However, whilst there is some evidence that pupils' handwriting and presentation of work is at times unsatisfactory this is only in a minority of classes and not in every subject. The school has a justifiable high reputation amongst parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The baseline assessment of pupils under five shows that they start school with broadly average skills. Most are expected to attain the goals for their age by the time they start Year 1.
2. The school's test results and teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 1999 in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average and also well above the average found in similar schools. The performances of both boys and girls were well above national averages. Teacher assessment in science showed that at level 3 or above pupils' results were below the national average but overall assessments in English and mathematics showed that the percentage of pupils attaining level 3 or above was well above national averages. The trend in English, mathematics and science has been upwards over the last three years and standards are high. The school is well on course to achieving its targets in all three subjects.
3. The trend over time in English, mathematics and science results at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with the national trend. However the 1999 results were detrimentally effected by a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 age group that year. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 and above in the English and science National Curriculum tests in 1999 were below the national average and below that found in similar schools. In mathematics results were above the national average. In both mathematics and science the percentage of pupils at level 5 and above was above the national average. An analysis of the school's results shows that only a small percentage of boys attained level 4 or above in writing. The percentage of pupils attaining level 5 in English was close to the national average. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection with the percentage of pupils attaining level 4 almost doubling. The targets set for over 90% of pupils to reach level 4 and above in English, mathematics and science are challenging but appropriate. The school is well on course to reaching the targets.
4. Inspection evidence shows that the proportion of pupils on course to achieve the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science is higher than that found in most schools. Standards in mathematics are particularly high with just over one-third of the age group on course to achieving level 5 or above in the subject. Pupils have a good knowledge of all aspects of the subject. They apply their knowledge well when solving mathematical problems. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects, especially in science. A key strength in English is the range and quality of pupils writing. Pupils organise their thoughts clearly and logically. The school has successfully tackled the weakness in boys' writing identified in the 1999 Key Stage 2 English tests. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils speak and read well and use these skills appropriately in some subjects. A good example of this was observed during the inspection when pupils spoke clearly during assemblies. In science pupils have a good knowledge of scientific concepts but their investigative skills are not developed to the same depth.
5. In all other subjects inspected, except information technology, pupils achieve at least the appropriate standard by age eleven. Information technology standards are unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have the opportunity, because of a lack of appropriate equipment to develop and use their skills. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. In art pupils achieve standards higher than those normally found. No judgement can be made in music because of lack of evidence. A weakness within some classes is work not being well set out and untidy writing but there are examples throughout the school of very good presentation skills and neat well-formed handwriting. Information technology is not used effectively to support other subjects although the Internet is used in some classes.

6. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 the proportion of pupils on course to achieve the expected level in the end of key stage national tests and assessments is higher than that found in most schools. Pupils benefit from being taught all three subjects in ability groups. Almost all pupils have good knowledge of number bonds and good reading and writing skills. In science pupils have good investigative skills and suitable knowledge. Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects, for example in recording information off the Internet. Standards in art and physical education are higher than those normally found. However, standards in information technology are below average. Pupils do not have regular access to up to date computers to develop their skills. In religious education the demands of the locally Agreed Syllabus are met. In all other subjects reported standards are in line with those found in most schools. Information technology is not effectively used to support other subjects because the pupils lack the basic skills.

7. Inspection evidence shows that in all subjects, except information technology, most pupils make at least satisfactory progress. In English, mathematics and science they achieve well by the time they leave. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language receive appropriate support and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils do well in English and mathematics but are not challenged enough in science. No significant differences in the standards achieved were found between boys or girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The under-fives have very good attitudes to school and behave well. Children settle quickly into school and are clear about the routines of the day-to-day activities. They listen attentively to adults and each other. Children have confidence to answer questions and persevere with their tasks. Most follow instructions well and carry out their tasks sensibly. Children are clear about acceptable behaviour and through positive and sensitive management by teachers they comply with the standards they see around them.

9. In both key stages pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and courteous. Most concentrate well, they demonstrate very good levels of interest because lessons are carefully planned and appeal to them. For example, older pupils at Key Stage 2 worked enthusiastically at their paper sculptures because the work was presented imaginatively to capture their interest. Pupils concentrate intently during whole-class lessons because they are well structured and provide opportunities for productive discussion and learning. They are eager to answer questions and explain strategies. These positive attitudes have a significant impact on promoting pupils' learning through actively engaging them in the lessons.

10. Pupils take a full part in the range of extra-curricular activities provided. For example, there are instrumental music lessons and an art club. One pupil plays the piano during assembly and there are also musical activities outside the school which involve the choir. The school is beginning to plan for the annual music festival.

11. Pupils with special educational needs work well within the classes. They have positive attitudes towards their work because they have very specific targets. Pupils are able to persist with tasks because work is well matched to their needs. The school has maintained its good standard since the last inspection. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well integrated into all aspects of school life.

12. In the classrooms, around the school and in the playground the behaviour of the pupils is very good. This has improved from good in the last inspection. It is well managed by the teachers who provide many interesting learning opportunities. Pupils are polite and helpful. The adults provide good role models for the pupils and there is a positive approach to discipline. Pupils are praised and encouraged. They are provided with a caring and supportive environment and clear expectations of good behaviour are set. Discussions with pupils show that they understand the purpose and fairness of the rules of the school.

13. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided to discuss and devise classroom rules. The school equipment is in good condition and pupils use it responsibly. For example, younger pupils use jigsaws and books and small equipment for counting. They put these away carefully when they have finished with them.

14. There have been no exclusions during the last year. The school has a policy of inclusion that encourages working with pupils to resolve any difficulties. This promotes and supports the positive, secure environment of the school in which the pupils can flourish.

15. Personal development and relationships are very good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils work well together in the classrooms in whole groups, small groups, in pairs and individually. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and the pupils themselves. Pupils begin at an early age to start to take responsibility for their learning and can work collaboratively, share materials and ideas with others. For example, pupils concentrated well during a religious education lesson when they discussed 'needs and wants'. They demonstrated their ability to identify and reflect on important issues, to think about their impact and respect the views of others.

16. Pupils show initiative and are willing to take responsibilities; they help with jobs in the classroom. One group of older pupils is writing a school magazine. Older pupils look after younger ones. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and are supportive towards each other and the community; for example, they took part in a concert for a local hospice. These activities contribute to creating high quality relationships and a well ordered community. Pupils are respected and encouraged to develop personally through engaging in positive relationships with others.

17. Current attendance rates are very good. The rate of unauthorised absence is well below the national average. The school works well with the parents and all absences are followed up. Very good procedures are in place. The school has a thorough and conscientious approach to monitoring attendance to maintain the high attendance rate. Pupils are punctual arriving at school and a prompt start is made to lessons. Parents are notified of their child's absences in the end of year report.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good overall and contributes significantly to the quality of pupils' learning, their attitudes and the progress they make. It is good or better in seven out of every ten lessons and one in five is very good or excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents an improvement on the findings of the previous 1996 inspection when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in a minority of lessons. During the inspection none of the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection were in evidence. In both key stages there are significant strengths in the teaching of English, and mathematics. In these subjects all teachers have high expectations of pupils and set tasks which are well matched to their prior attainment.

19. The teaching of children aged under five is satisfactory overall and there are some good features. The curriculum is well balanced and forms a good foundation for progress towards the National Curriculum. Careful planning results in an appropriate focus to all lessons. Explanations are clear and children are well aware of the classroom routines. The warmth and care of the teachers together with the close partnership between teacher and classroom assistants promotes learning well.

20. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is especially good in English, mathematics and science. There are some examples of very good teaching in English, mathematics, music and physical education. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and planning in both is very effective. A strength of the teaching in literacy and numeracy is the consistently good matching of activities to pupils' needs. In the vast majority of lessons in these subjects the quality of learning is good because of the direct teaching of key skills, such as phonics, grammar and number bonds. Effective use is made of texts of good quality in literacy lessons. A good feature of the numeracy lessons is the regular use of mental work and the use of precise mathematical language. Science is well taught and includes an appropriate balance of teaching of scientific knowledge and investigative work. Only one lesson was observed in geography and history and so it was not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in each of these subjects. No teaching was seen in design and technology.

21. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science and religious education. Some excellent teaching was observed in science and religious education. There were several examples of very effective teaching in English and mathematics. Good account is taken of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in all year groups. In most of the literacy lessons a brisk pace helps pupils to make good progress. High expectations and challenging questions to extend thinking are important features of the very good teaching observed. In a lower Key Stage 2 class there is a good example of pupils working together with their teacher to brainstorm ideas before writing some very good pieces of poetry. In the numeracy lessons the regular use of mental work is helping to improve pupils' knowledge of number facts. However, in science investigative work set for the oldest higher attaining pupils is not sufficiently challenging. Lessons were also observed in Key Stage 2 in art, history, music and physical education. Teaching in these subjects is never less than satisfactory. No teaching was observed in geography and design and technology.

22. Teachers' planning has improved considerably since the last inspection when it was found to be variable across the school and between subjects. It is now very good in both key stages and ensures that activities are appropriately matched to learning objectives. Daily lesson plans for literacy and numeracy are detailed and include more of the specific skills to be taught. In other lessons teachers often include opportunities for numeracy and literacy skills to be practised and this is effective in consolidating learning. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills in history, geography and science.

23. Throughout the school teachers use a good range of teaching methods and classroom organisation. They include opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class as well as to work individually or in small groups. When teaching is very good, lessons include lively introductions and practical activities that make learning interesting for the pupils. This was evident in a science lesson with a group of Year 4 pupils who explored for themselves how to separate different materials and substances. This is not always evident and sometimes opportunities for pupils to test out their own questions are missed.

24. The setting arrangements in English, mathematics and science are having a beneficial effect upon the quality of learning because the work set is pitched at pupils' prior attainment and is appropriately focused on developing key skills such as phonic awareness and the correct use of punctuation. Good use is made of plenary sessions in several subjects to teach new skills or to review pupils' understanding. A strong feature of the effective teaching in religious education is the way teachers relate the content to pupils' own experiences and ask them to make a personal response. This has a positive impact on the quality of learning because the lessons are more meaningful. Common strengths of the very good teaching include clear and appropriate objectives for learning shared with pupils, clear exposition and a brisk pace in pupils' learning.

25. In both key stages teachers have a good understanding of most subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. All are thoroughly competent to teach the basics of literacy and numeracy. This has a positive impact on attainment. However, some teachers lack the necessary skills and understanding to be able to instruct pupils in some aspects of information technology. The use of the computer as an integral part of learning is not fully established.

26. The management of pupils' behaviour is unobtrusive and very good. It was a key feature of all the lessons observed. All teachers base their discipline on the very good relationships that are firmly established throughout the school. This aspect of teaching makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning because the pupils can be trusted to take some responsibility for their own learning.

27. The use of time and resources is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are structured well and start on time. They move along at a brisk pace and this keeps pupils involved in their learning. The best lessons include an evaluation activity and this is used well as an opportunity to assess pupils' levels of understanding. Time was used successfully in a physical education lesson with Year 6 where pupils were given the opportunity to comment upon their performance and that of others. This helped to develop the pupils' skills of critical analysis. Other example of good practice were in English, mathematics and art when the focus of the lesson was thoroughly evaluated during a plenary session.

28. Learning resources are generally used well. However the lack of up-to-date information technology equipment has an adverse effect upon the quality of learning and the progress pupils are able to make. The teachers make appropriate use of the local environment. Visits are organised to make subjects such as history and geography more relevant learning experiences for pupils. Adults with particular expertise are well used to develop particular skills. For example, the week before the inspection a potter had been in school working alongside older pupils. The work produced was of the highest quality.

29. Teachers are good at advising pupils as they work and in offering help to ensure that they make progress. In mathematics there are some good examples of teachers exploring wrong answers in order to assess where pupils are going wrong. Pupils' work is marked regularly and is supportive of pupils' good efforts. The best practice includes informative comments to suggest ways of improving.

30. The setting of targets for individual pupils is very effective in helping them to focus on specific aspects of their work that could be better. Homework is a regular feature of the life of the school and makes a good contribution to learning. The expectations range from reading at home, learning multiplication tables and spellings, completing work, and carrying out independent research.

31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as a second language is good. The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs is better when teachers and support staff work with pupils in small groups. This additional help ensures pupils are fully involved in lessons and that they are given every opportunity and encouragement to extend their vocabulary and use of language. Targets on individual education plans are very specific and help teachers to focus the learning objectives on individual needs. They are reviewed on a regular basis and have a positive impact on the good progress pupils make. The learning needs of both boys and girls are met. For example, the weakness in boys' writing has been addressed successfully.

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

32. The curricular opportunities offered to the pupils are good overall. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum covering all National Curriculum subjects, religious education, health education and sex and drugs awareness education. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good and very effectively supports the school's programme for social, moral and cultural development. Careful time adjustments have been made to the provision in foundation subjects to ensure that the national numeracy and literacy strategies are fully in place and that the core subjects of English, mathematics and science receive sufficient curriculum time. The numeracy hour is a strength within the school; this, together with the provision of extra mathematics lessons, promotes good standards of attainment. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.

33. Regular homework supports the curriculum effectively. This reinforces pupils' learning and encourages communication and co-operation between parents and the school. Religious education and the daily acts of collective worship satisfy all statutory requirements and provide very good support to pupils' cultural and spiritual development. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided. These include music, dance, drama, sport, art, science and information technology clubs.

34. Vertical grouping strategies have been successfully introduced and have promoted effective team teaching and the organisation of pupils into groups according to their abilities in English, mathematics and science. This provides good assessment opportunities and is leading to a rise in standards.

35. Provision for special educational needs is good, with accurate individual education plans setting clear standards, directing the teaching and enabling pupils' progress in learning to be monitored effectively. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language, are given full access to every aspect of school life.

36. The provision of information technology is unsatisfactory. The unavailability of suitable up-to-date equipment prevents pupils from making the satisfactory progress. The oldest higher attaining pupils in science are not challenged sufficiently whilst undertaking practical investigations. Pupils are not encouraged to write their own ideas in history and geography at Key Stage 2. The school library is badly organised.

37. The school very strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education through the corporate life of the school, the act of worship, religious education and other subjects within the curriculum. The school provides good quality assemblies that benefit from a variety of formats and styles. Teachers are careful to promote times of quiet reflection and pupils respond well.

38. There has been effective planning to ensure that pupils' spiritual development has been extended into subjects as well as being supported by assemblies. Pupils consider the wonder of life during their scientific investigations into growth. They gain insights into their own personal worth when they study vases they have created using a potters' wheel. Opportunities are provided for pupils to meet representatives of world religions to gain insights into their spirituality. The playing of music creates an appropriate mood for assemblies and moments of collective worship.

39. The provision for promoting pupils' moral development is very good. There is a very good personal and social policy, and pupils regularly discuss what is appropriate behaviour and the need for rules with the headteacher. This encourages a positive emphasis to school life. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff. Carefully chosen reading books reinforce the promotion of what is right and what is caring. Charity initiatives are encouraged to make pupils aware of the wider issues in society.

40. The school also provides well for pupils' social development. Very good social relationships are encouraged throughout the school. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is planned. The annual adventure day encourages and extends the relationship between pupils and staff. There are opportunities to work together on whole-school events such as singing for senior citizens and in organising and taking part in the Christmas party and pantomime. Many older pupils carry out tasks, which assist in the smooth running of the school, these include looking after and caring for younger children during lunch times. They use their initiative and take their responsibilities seriously.

41. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. This represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. It includes contributions from subjects such as history, geography, art and music. Artefacts representing parts of Africa develop insights into different cultures. Artists, musicians and painters such as Monet and work with a local potter all contribute to the pupils' cultural development. The French club and the pen-pal link with the German twinned town also increase pupils' awareness of world cultures. Meetings with members of other cultures within the locality provide very good insights into the extended nature of English culture in the 21st Century. Visits to a local synagogue add to this development.

42. There are good links with the local community and with feeder schools. Support services contribute to personal, social and health education. There is good support from the local business community including the financing of the Life Caravan initiative.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. A strength of the school is its very caring and supportive ethos. The quality of support and guidance for pupils is very good and the level of concern for their welfare is high. This increases the quality of provision noted in the previous inspection.

44. Procedures to promote and monitor pupils' well-being, health and safety are very good. The health and safety policy states the duties of school staff and the nominated governor conducts health and safety audits of the whole school. The caretaker is responsible for the day-to-day identification of any concerns and carries out his duties well. Members of staff visit the venue before a trip is being planned and conduct a risk assessment. This is then documented and analysed before a decision is made to go ahead with the planned visit. These good procedures ensure that pupils' health and safety are given top priority. The Local Education Authority conduct a whole school risk assessment bi-annually. All staff are vigilant regarding pupils' personal safety and pupils confirmed that they felt safe, secure and confident whilst in the school. Careful attention is paid to parents' concerns. Three members of staff are fully qualified to administer first aid and all members of staff are aware of the particular medical needs of some pupils.

45. Child protection procedures are very good and established staff members have received training in the early identification of concerns. The designated teacher intends to hold training for new members of staff and as a refresher course for others.

46. The school's procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very effective and applied consistently by all staff. The behaviour policy promotes respect and tolerance for the beliefs, values and cultures of the whole school community. Parents agree that the school works hard to promote good behaviour and that most pupils are well mannered and polite. This was endorsed during lesson observations and by representatives from two receiving high schools. Both pupils and parents confirm that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively by the school.

47. Attendance is very good and above the national average mainly due to the encouragement the school gives to children by rewarding good attendance and by the very good monitoring procedures in place. The headteacher and secretary are pro-active in identifying any emerging patterns of poor attendance and swift action is taken. Most pupils are punctual to school and registration periods provide a calm, orderly start to the day.

48. There has been a great improvement in the effectiveness of the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection. Pupils' progress is well monitored. The school identifies what action can be taken to improve pupils' academic and personal achievement by setting individual targets negotiated between teachers, pupils and parents. These are recorded and agreed at meetings with parents and samples seen suggest that pupils are encouraged and challenged to improve. The results from a range of assessments taken throughout the school are used well to inform planning and to identify achievement by gender and ability.

49. A Health and Safety week organised by the school contributes well to pupils' development. Health advisors, the emergency services, the Life Caravan and other visitors to the school provide pupils with an intensive but enjoyable week learning about a range of issues connected with first aid, personal safety and healthy eating and living.

50. Sex education is delivered sensitively within the context of family relationships. The school nurse offers very good support to the school and is well known by pupils and parents. The support and guidance offered to pupils who have a special educational need is good and the equal opportunities policy is delivered well. Parents confirm that pupils enjoy school and attend willingly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The quality of the school's partnership with parents is very good. Most parents at the meeting prior to the inspection and through the responses to the questionnaire, agreed that they would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. As was noted at the time of the previous inspection, parents endorse the very good attitudes and values promoted by the school.

52. The quantity and quality of information for parents is very good. Newsletters are informative and give good information on forthcoming events, on children's achievements and on changes of staff and other items of interest to parents. The school prospectus is "user-friendly" and contains photographs of previous pupils who are now parents, some of whom have had a long association with the school. There is a very good induction pack for parents of children new to the school and a range of informative leaflets on the numeracy and literacy projects. Parents are very appreciative of the way the school involves them in setting targets for their children to achieve. Parents and pupils enjoy having these goals to aim for. There are three parents' evenings each year.

53. Reports to parents about pupils' progress have improved since the time of the previous inspection. They are informative, show that teachers know pupils well, and include targets for future development. The Home/School agreement sets out clear guidelines for staff, pupils and parents.

54. Efforts are made to encourage parents to participate in the life of the school and a significant number do so. Parents help in the classroom supporting teachers and the school has good guidelines to help them make effective use of their time. Some parents and grandparents help regularly and confirm their enjoyment of their time in school. Some parents have progressed to taking educational qualifications as a result of their involvement with the school.

55. Workshops for parents have been held about the curriculum in particular the national literacy and numeracy strategies. A recent computer workshop for parents proved popular. Parents are invited to the reviews of their children with special educational needs.

56. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association is very active and raises funds for a variety of projects in the school including contributing to the costs of resurfacing the playground and purchasing a computer system. Parents of children new to the school appreciate the induction meetings organised for them. Overall, the school works in close partnership with parents and most appreciate the efforts made by the school to involve them in their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The quality of leadership and management shown by the headteacher and key members of staff is very good.

58. The headteacher is deeply committed to the school, the pupils and the staff. She provides a clear educational direction. The governors, headteacher and all staff share a common commitment to raising standards and to improving the quality of provision. A whole-school approach to key developments has been introduced and is evident in the way changes have been managed over the past ten years. The headteacher has put in place a very effective management structure that works very well. Day-to-day management is of a high standard and the school secretary carries out her duties well. Responsibilities are clearly defined and carried out efficiently by members of the Senior Management Team.

59. Governors know the school well and have a clear view of where the school is heading. They are very much involved in all aspects of school life. Through the committee structure they meet their statutory responsibilities and keep an informed eye on school developments. The Governing Body has set up suitable procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. For example, instead of having a curriculum committee, twice a year all governors attend meetings devoted entirely to curriculum issues. This is a very effective arrangement and ensures that all governors are fully informed about the strengths and weaknesses in curriculum provision. These two meetings provide governors with appropriate opportunities to make their own contributions towards improving the quality of education provided by the school. The literacy governor, special needs governor and numeracy governor all have a good understanding of their roles. Individual governors visit the school on a regular basis and have a good knowledge of the standards being achieved.

60. The procedures for monitoring provision, identifying aspects which could be better, planning for future improvements and reviewing progress towards the targets the school has set itself are very good. Regular planned monitoring of the literacy and numeracy hours by the headteacher and co-ordinators has taken the form of classroom observations to monitor the effectiveness of teaching. Written feedback has been given to individual teachers and more general issues discussed at staff meetings. Co-ordinators check lesson planning to ensure that agreed teaching and learning policies are being implemented and are given time to monitor how well their subjects are being taught. This has brought about a consistency in approach and helps to ensure that expectations are sufficiently high. As a result of the school's rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of its performance, the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and none of the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection report are still in evidence.

61. The support given to newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school is exemplary in ensuring that they are fully informed on procedures, curriculum planning and resources. Working for Investors in People accreditation has successfully encouraged the development of training for all staff. As a result the arrangements for professional development have improved significantly since the last inspection. They are very effective and take due account of teachers' personal needs and the objectives identified in the School Improvement Plan. The appraisal system is currently being reviewed. However, annual staff development interviews are held by the headteacher and are successful in providing an opportunity for members of staff to review their past performance and express their future aspirations. Four new members of staff have recently been appointed. In keeping with the whole-school assessment and evaluation management procedures, one day is allocated in the summer term to a full audit of staff expertise before appointing new subject co-ordinators. The governing body has agreed manageable performance targets for the headteacher and deputy head.

62. The school is very good at analysing in detail the data from National Curriculum tests and its own internal tests such as baseline assessments. It notes what has been successful and where improvements need to be made. It has identified, for example, that at Key Stage 1 spelling strategies need to be improved, in Key Stage 2 boys do much less well in writing than the girls and that throughout the school pupils' levels of inferential comprehension are weak. The necessary action to rectify these areas has already been put in place. The school has also used the data to draw up short-term targets for all its pupils. Above average targets have been agreed with the Local Education Authority for the levels of pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school in the year 2000.

63. Financial planning and management are very good. The headteacher, secretary and governors conscientiously follow clear financial procedures. Expenditure reflects the priorities in the School Improvement Plan. This development plan is very detailed and focuses appropriately on the raising of standards. It is based upon a thorough review of the strengths and weaknesses in performance. All staff and governors have the opportunity to contribute ideas. The clear and appropriate priorities in the plan are linked to specific targets that have deadlines and criteria by which to measure success. The responsibilities for taking the necessary action are allocated and costs identified.

64. The money allocated to the school to support pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately. The effectiveness of the good quality provision for special needs pupils is reflected in the good progress made by the pupils not only in academic work but also in personal and social development.

65. The governors show a good understanding of the implications of the budget and the need to obtain value for money. They invite tenders for major items of expenditure and follow well established procedures for ensuring they obtain the best deal for the school. Co-ordinators in the annual review of their curriculum areas have to assess the impact of their spending decisions on improvements to the quality of learning in their subject. The finance committee meets regularly and monitors spending patterns carefully. The latest audit report found that procedures in place within the school's financial systems were of a good standard. The few minor points raised have been implemented.

66. The effectiveness of how well the school takes action to secure improvements can also be seen in the good progress it has made since the previous inspection in 1996. For example, standards in mathematics and physical education have improved in the last four years. An assessment policy has been introduced and very good procedures are in place in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' planning is much better than it was at the time of the previous inspection and is of a very good standard. The provision for pupils' cultural development which was found to be a weakness is now a strength of the school. Schemes of work have been produced for all subjects and are of good quality. Where appropriate they take account of Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines.

67. The school has a sufficient number of teaching and support staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. There is a wide range of experience amongst the staff including provision for children who are under five, pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. Teachers work well together as a team sharing experiences and expertise as appropriate. The provision of classroom support is broadly average for the size of school. These members of staff are appropriately deployed and well briefed. They make a valuable contribution to the progress pupils make.

68. The accommodation is satisfactory and has benefited from a number of initiatives since the last inspection to improve the internal quality of the learning environment. This has included the building of an extra classroom to help accommodate the increase in numbers. Most classrooms are of an adequate size and bright. The very effective use of displays of pupils work both in classrooms and public areas adds considerably to the attractiveness of the school premises and creates a stimulating and welcoming place in which to learn. The school is kept very clean and maintained to a high standard.

69. Resources are good in English, mathematics and science. Though resources have improved in physical education since the previous inspection the school still does not have its own playing field. There is a shortage of up-to-date equipment in information technology which is having an adverse effect upon the standards pupils achieve. Education of the under-fives is effectively supported by a satisfactory range of apparatus for each of the areas of learning but there is a shortage of large play equipment. Resources are satisfactory in all other subjects. However, the library is still used as a storage area. It is not suitable as a resource for personal study and does little to promote higher levels of literacy.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- a. **Bring standards in information technology in both key stages up to the required levels by:**
- ◆ ensuring that skills in all strands are developed progressively as pupils move from one class to another
 - ◆ ensuring that pupils of all ages have regular access to up to date information technology equipment
 - ◆ monitoring and evaluating the subject and providing additional support for those teachers who lack confidence in the subject.
 - ◆ providing opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects

See paragraphs 5 and 135 in the main report.

[The school has recognised that standards in information technology need to improve.]

- b. **Provide higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 with more opportunities to develop their science investigation skills to a higher level.**

See paragraphs 21 and 108 in the main report.

- c. **Increase the number of opportunities that pupils are given to use their independent writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum.**

See paragraphs 89, 111 and 131 in the main report.

- d. **Re-organise the library as a learning centre so that books are more accessible to pupils and there is a attractive environment for learning that is consistent with that found in all other parts of the school.**

See paragraph 69 in the main report.

Other weaknesses that should be considered by the school:

- ◆ Pupils' work is not always set out well and sometimes their handwriting is untidy.

[paragraphs 5 and 88]

- ◆ There is a lack of large play equipment for children under the age of five

[paragraph 77]

- ◆ The length of some physical education lessons for younger pupils does not always give them time to fully develop skills during lessons.

[paragraph 152].

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2.7%	17.6%	52.7%	27%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	308
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	64

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	29	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	29	28	28
	Total	46	45	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98% (96%)	96% (100%)	96% (98%)
	National	82% (80%)	83% (81%)	85% (84%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	16
	Girls	28	28	27
	Total	45	45	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96% (96%)	96% (98%)	91% (98%)
	National	82% (81%)	86% (85%)	87% (86%)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	15	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	11	12	11
	Total	22	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69% (75%)	81% (75%)	78% (75%)
	National	70% (65%)	69% (59%)	78% (69%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	10
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	23	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72% (66%)	69% (66%)	69% (66%)
	National	68% (65%)	69% (65%)	75% (71%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	257
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
	£
Total income	404,994
Total expenditure	399,181
Expenditure per pupil	1,331
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,252
Balance carried forward to next year	14,065

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	308
Number of questionnaires returned	221

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63%	35%	1%	0%	0%
My child is making good progress in school.	52%	45%	2%	0%	1%
Behaviour in the school is good.	62%	36%	2%	0%	0%
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38%	49%	10%	2%	2%
The teaching is good.	59%	37%	0%	0%	3%
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47%	39%	10%	2%	2%
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67%	29%	1%	0%	2%
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71%	28%	0%	0%	0%
The school works closely with parents.	45%	42%	8%	2%	3%
The school is well led and managed.	61%	35%	3%	0%	1%
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59%	37%	2%	0%	3%
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59%	26%	3%	2%	10%

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. Children come into the Reception classes as four-year-olds on a full-time basis. At the time of inspection just over a half of the intake was of statutory school age. The overall attainment level of the majority of the children on entry to school is within the broadly average range. This judgement is supported by the school's most recent 'baseline' assessment.

71. By the age of five children are learning satisfactorily with some learning well. They are achieving the Desirable Learning Outcomes recommended for the age group and are well prepared for the transition to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The children are in three Reception/Year 1 classes with flexible grouping for number and literacy. These setting arrangements provide appropriate learning experiences which match children's needs and abilities. This system works well and the children are used to these groupings and enjoy this routine.

72. Personal and social education is effectively promoted. Children are well used to a good, clear and stable routine that helps to develop confidence. They respond well to the expectations of the adults and enjoy their work and settle to their tasks. They listen to each other and volunteer answers. Most can follow instructions and carry them out without adult support. They concentrate hard and persist with their tasks until they are complete. Children use equipment carefully and are able to put it away. They learn self-help skills and can change their clothes independently but slowly. This has an impact on the time available for the activities in physical education lessons. Behaviour is very good. Children relate well to adults and co-operate with each other. They are able to work independently for an appropriate amount of time.

73. In the Reception classes the National Literacy Strategy provides good opportunities for children's learning. By the age of five most have acquired the skills expected for the age group. There is a good quality of learning. For example, pupils listen attentively for an appropriate length of time to the stories from the 'big books' and join in, as they become familiar with the words and illustrations. They learn rhymes and poems. They are eager to take part in discussions and answer questions.

74. Children enjoy looking at books. Most can talk about the illustrations and are beginning to read simple words and sentences. The more able pupils know about the title, author and illustrator. They learn words quickly and can recall the story in the correct sequence showing effective learning. Children have books to take home for reading and parents contribute to the home school reading record. There is a good range of writing activities. Some children can copy from the blackboard, others copy underneath the teacher's writing, others practise writing letters and improve their letter formation. Most children can write their names unaided. The writing area supports children's learning well.

75. The National Numeracy Strategy provides good opportunities for children to learn about number. By the age of five children are meeting the national expectations. Most are able to count, identify shapes such as triangle, circle, rectangle and square. They can count, sort, match and put objects in order. They can join in number rhymes. They recognise numbers and can count in sequence. Some children can undertake simple addition to five and are beginning to set out their work in a more formal way.

76. Children are meeting expectations in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have made a pictorial route to show the way from home to school and are learning about their locality. They learn to recognise the sounds of different animals through listening to a tape. This was related to their work on the senses and being more aware of the world around them. Displays shows that children have made patterns and used scissors and glue to place items with care. They use paintbrushes and pencils and crayons satisfactorily and with confidence. However, children have few opportunities to use the computer.

77. Physical development by the age of five meets expectations. Children use space appropriately, find different ways of travelling and show good control. They can make good use of the space in the hall and follow instructions. Children are aware of the safety procedures. They can use malleable materials and make satisfactory progress in manipulative skills. However, children in the Reception classes do not have large play equipment and this limits their development in free play.

78. Standards are satisfactory in creative development. Through their paintings and collage children have opportunities to use paint, crayons and different types of paper. Their free paintings are bold and show energy and enjoyment. Children are beginning to paint to a theme, for example, snowflakes, and most can do this using bright colours. They can talk about what they draw and paint. They have opportunities to play imaginatively, the castle being well used for this and children become immersed in their roles. Good use is made of the sand and water where suggestions are made to the children to help them direct their play. This promotes good learning. Children sing satisfactorily.

79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in all areas of learning. There was some good teaching in literacy, when there were good relationships between the teacher and the children and the work was well matched to their abilities. This impacts positively on the children's learning. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is sound. Teachers' expectations and methods are appropriate. Planning is good and the Early Years team whilst newly established are beginning to work well together. They incorporate the National Curriculum alongside the Desirable Learning Outcomes and they are also developing the early learning goals as part of their planning. The way pupils are managed is very good, and they respond well to the positive relationships. The nursery nurse provides very good support especially to help pupils' develop creatively. Support staff make a significant contribution to the education of the children. Resources are well used and are sufficient for most activities.

80. A baseline assessment is in place and results have been analysed and used effectively to place the children in appropriate groupings. Ongoing assessments are thorough and are used effectively to monitor the different groups. This supports the existing organisation of the school and allows flexibility between the groups. The Early Years co-ordinator had been in post only for one week at the time of the inspection.

ENGLISH

81. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 the performance of pupils was close to the national average but below the average for similar schools. The results showed a fall on the previous year when standards in English were above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 and above was below the national average. However, last year's Year 6 class contained a higher than usual percentage of pupils with special educational needs who had particular problems in written English. This factor had an adverse effect on the school's test results. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the performance of the pupils in English has been higher than the national average. During the same period the performances of boys and of girls were above the respective national averages.

82. The current pupils in Year 6 have made good progress over time and their overall attainment is above average. The improvement this year in pupils' performance is due not only to the ability of this particular class but also to improvements made by the school to the quality of education provided. For example, a careful analyses of last year's National Curriculum test results showed that boys' performance in writing was below that found previously. Action has since been taken to raise boys' achievements in this area. Additional writing lessons have been provided and extra funds have been allocated to buy more suitable fiction books for boys who are reluctant readers.

83. Teacher assessments in English at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show pupils' overall performance to be well above the national average. In the tests for seven-year-olds the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 and above was well above the national average in reading and writing. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the performance of boys and girls has been well above average in reading and writing. During the same period of time the performance of girls in writing has been well above the national average and boys very high. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection. The current pupils in Year 2 are achieving above average standards in English and have made good progress. The inspection found no major differences between girls' and boys' achievements in either key stage.

84. Inspection evidence shows that speaking and listening skills are well developed in both key stages and standards are above average. By the age of seven, pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations, to stories and to each other, especially in discussions involving the whole class. All lessons include good opportunities for pupils to answer questions, talk about their work and express a response to the good quality texts used by teachers, for example "Walking Through The Jungle " or " The Jolly Witch " .

85. During the inspection higher attaining pupils in Year 6 showed good proficiency in the use of technical and descriptive vocabulary. Average attainers readily contributed their ideas in class discussions. Opportunities for pupils to take an active part in some assemblies, for example introducing the composer of the music gives them the chance to practise their speaking skills in a more formal situation. Year 6 pupils have taken part in drama and miming activities at one of the feeder high schools. This aspect has improved since the last inspection and is having a beneficial effect upon the standards being achieved.

86. Most pupils by the age of seven have become enthusiastic readers and standards are above average. Pupils make good progress. Higher attainers read aloud with confidence and good expression for their age. They are able to use contents and index to find information in non-fiction books. Lower attaining pupils have developed an appropriate range of strategies to attack new or unfamiliar words including competent use of picture and phonic clues. Pupils continue to make good progress during Key Stage 2 and standards in Year 6 are above those found in most schools. Most pupils are confident if not always expressive readers. Higher achievers can discuss the differences between characters in the stories they have read and explain the key features of the plot. Their ability to find information quickly from non-fiction books using the higher order skills of skimming and scanning has improved considerably since the last inspection. However, the library is poorly organised and not well stocked. This aspect of provision has not improved much since the last inspection and is unsatisfactory as a resource to promote an interest in reading and in books. The pupils who have difficulty with reading are supported well and make good progress.

87. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress developing their writing skills and achieve standards which are above average. They write, usually with letters correctly formed and some awareness of spelling and punctuation. Most successfully apply these skills to a good range of writing such as book reviews, story settings, lists, summaries and stories.

88. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 2 and standards are above average. By the age of eleven, most pupils understand how to lay out and punctuate texts of different kinds. They organise their thoughts clearly and logically when writing a story or an account and extend their repertoire of different kinds of writing. Some good examples of writing include pen portraits, game reviews, leaflets, diary writing and play scripts. Pupils are encouraged to write for different audiences. For example, Year 6 pupils are composing their own versions of "Cinderella" for the infants. Poetry writing is a feature of the work in most classes. In Year 3 pupils worked well together with their teacher to brainstorm ideas and produced some very good work. One poem entitled "Time" began with the lines "Billions of hours, passing by. The world is ours, till we die." As a result of these good opportunities for writing higher attaining pupils have extended their vocabulary and use language more expressively than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' handwriting and spelling are satisfactory overall but in some classes work is not always well presented and sometimes it is unsatisfactory. Pupils' drafting skills are appropriately developed.

89. There are limited examples of pupils being provided with suitable opportunities to practise and develop their language and literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in history Year 1 pupils wrote about how irons have developed over time and Year 6 have drafted copies of their own stories in the style of Greek myths. However, in general the opportunities provided for pupils to use their writing skills in history, geography and science are unsatisfactory.

90. The school makes good provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language. Teachers are good at planning work which matches pupils' abilities. As a result pupils make good progress in literacy and in speaking and listening. Class teachers and learning support staff work well together to ensure that the precise targets identified on pupils individual educational plans are being met. Targets are reviewed at regular intervals and new ones set.

91. The quality of learning is good overall. In all lessons observed pupils acquired appropriate knowledge and skills. They are, for example developing appropriate strategies for reading especially the use of phonics and contextual clues. In writing they respond well to the opportunities provided to use a range of styles and to develop accuracy in sentence construction and punctuation. The quality of learning is occasionally unsatisfactory when pupils are set routine and unchallenging tasks such as copying from the board. When pupils are encouraged to support each other on a writing task, such as poetry the quality of learning is good. Pupils concentrate well and adapt their behaviour appropriately to the different stages of the literacy hour. They participate well in whole-class discussions, settle quickly to group tasks, and persevere to complete work. Pupils enjoy explaining what they are doing. They follow the agreed class rules and behaviour is very good.

92. At both key stages, the overall quality of teaching is good overall with some very good practice. Throughout the school lessons are very well planned according to the learning objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers' presentations are clear and pitched appropriately at the pupils' level of understanding so that they understand the main teaching points of the lesson. Teaching is particularly effective when there are tangible links between each section of the lesson. Sometimes the introductions to lessons are over-long, which results in loss of pace to the lesson. Good management of pupil behaviour is evident in all lessons in both key stages. High expectations and challenging questions to extend pupils' thinking are important features of the very good teaching observed. Teachers' subject knowledge is good throughout the school. Resources are used well and enable pupils to benefit from having access to a good range of appropriate texts for the literacy hour.

93. The setting arrangements for pupils to be taught in ability groups introduced throughout most of the school is having a beneficial effect upon the good standards pupils are making and the quality of learning. The range of writing tasks set by teachers is imaginative, and gives pupils reasons to write for an audience which is real to them. The very good practice in Key Stage 2 of providing opportunities for pupils to reflect upon how well they are doing is having a positive effect on their attitude to work and on the standards achieved.

94. Teachers mark work conscientiously and there are some good examples of comments which indicate to pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. The setting of individual targets enables pupils to focus on improving a particular aspect of their work. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.

95. The co-ordinator left the school at the end of last term and a new one has yet to be appointed. The development of the national literacy strategy has been effectively managed. Assessment procedures are very good and the information gathered is carefully recorded and used in further planning and to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Monitoring and evaluating of teaching and pupils' work is an established feature of school life. Resources are good.

MATHEMATICS

96. Mathematics is a strength of the school. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in the National Curriculum tests in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 was above average compared with that found nationally and that found in similar schools. In the current Year 6 the standard of work of almost all pupils is at the expected level 4 and about a third of the class are working at a higher level.

97. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are also working at the expected level and a high proportion at a higher level. In the 1999 National Curriculum end of Key Stage 1 tests in mathematics the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was very high when compared with all schools and similar ones.

98. In both key stages pupils have a good knowledge of basic number and can apply their knowledge well when solving mathematical problems. Mathematics is used well in other subjects, especially science. For example, pupils use their data handling skills to compile and record scientific findings. Helix designs in art allow pupils to draw geometric shapes. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language achieve good standards.

99. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average competencies in mathematics. By the end of the key stage they have developed very good oral and mental skills and have a rapid recall of number facts. In one lesson, for example, pupils quickly halved and doubled numbers up to twenty. They can solve money problems using addition and subtraction and know how to record their answers. Pupils can name the properties of shapes and can accurately use standard measure. They have a good mathematics vocabulary and know what terms such as, 'find the sum of' mean. Pupils are taught in ability groups and the high quality of teaching they receive ensures that in all lessons they are appropriately challenged. There is a strong emphasis on mental mathematics and on pupils' explaining how they have arrived at their answers.

100. In Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate speed and accuracy in the calculation of number problems. Most pupils by the age of eleven can carry out a variety of mental and written computations. They know their tables well. Pupils accurately collect and interpret data in a range of graphical representation. They understand mathematical terminology such as mean, median and mode. Pupils can describe relationships such as multiple, factor and square and can recognise proportions using fractions, decimals and percentages to describe them. Additional mathematics lessons allow them to use their knowledge and skills. For example, in one lesson seen during the week of the inspection younger pupils applied their knowledge of number bonds well to pick out patterns in numbers.

101. Since the time of the last inspection standards in mathematics have risen significantly. At that time test results in the subject at the end of Key Stage 2 showed less than 50% of pupils achieving level 4. A high proportion of the present Year 6 class is on course to at least reach the expected level. The trend in mathematics over the last four years has been upwards and the subject is now one of the school's strengths. The introduction of teaching pupils in ability groups, better planning and use of assessment information and the successful implementation of the numeracy hours have all been key factors in the improvement made. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language achieve good standards.

102. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan and deliver the subject well and have very good relationships with their pupils. This results in teaching being of a good standard in both key stages. Good features of teaching include ensuring that pupils finish the work within a set time and providing work that really challenges pupils to use their skills. For example, in one class pupils were expected, within a short period of time to use decomposition to work out answers to a question related to a shopping trip. Expected high standards of behaviour are fulfilled and the time in mathematics lessons is used productively. Work is assessed well. A particular strength of teaching is the way teachers analyse pupils' mistakes and then explain to children where they have gone wrong.

103. Homework is used well to reinforce the work that pupils undertake. Very good use is made by teachers of mathematical displays in all parts of the school. For example in a Year 1 class an 'Addition with legs' display allows pupils to work out what 6 plus 8 makes by getting them to add together the number of legs of a ladybird and a spider. In both key stages teachers do not incorporate well enough information technology into their lessons as an aid to learning. A very good feature of teaching is the involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work with targets set for future improvement.

104. The quality of learning is good in both key stages. This results from the good teaching that pupils receive. The regular use of mental mathematics and the additional lessons help to improve pupils' achievements. Pupils are involved in target setting and encouraged to explain how they have worked out a particular answer. This helps them to achieve good standards. Pupils co-operate with each other when required to work in pairs, answer teachers' questions readily, behave well and are keen to learn. Most enjoy mathematics. Pupils take an obvious pride in the appearance of their work.

105. The co-ordinator is very experienced and knowledgeable. She has monitored the subject and also given very good support to colleagues. An effective, well established scheme of work is in place. Provision is continually under review as part of the school's efforts in school improvement. All elements of the numeracy strategy are in place and used effectively. Resources are accessible and of good quality. National Curriculum requirements are met.

SCIENCE

106. Inspection evidence shows that the proportion of pupils on course to attain the expected levels 2 and 4 by the ages of seven and eleven respectively is higher than that normally found. However, not enough opportunities are being provided for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 to work at the higher level 5 at developing their investigative skills. At the end of Key Stage 1 a significant number of pupils are already working at level 3.

107. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 2 show that pupils' attainment was in line with the national average with almost eight out of ten reaching the expected standard and a higher than average three out of ten pupils reaching the higher level. Teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils' attainment was meeting national averages with about nine out of ten reaching the expected level. There has been an upward trend since 1996 where attainment at eleven was below the national average. It rose in 1997 and 1998 to be slightly above the average and, in the most recent tests was in line. There is no significant variation in attainment between girls and boys or of pupils who speak English as a second language. Pupils on the special needs register achieve standards that are appropriate. These standards reflect the findings of the previous inspection report.

108. The findings of the current inspection indicate improvements at Key Stage 1. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils work at a higher level because they are in classes with older children and are challenged by the more advanced teaching. Year 6 higher attaining pupils are not always fully challenged when they are involved in scientific investigations. For example, they do not regularly analyse their tables of results through the use of line graphs or develop their own independent styles of scientific report writing. The oldest pupils have good knowledge of scientific concepts. However, because pupils are not systematically involved in investigations to predict, experiment and then hypothesise, only a small proportion is on target to achieve the higher level.

109. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good overall. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils successfully listen to and recognise everyday sounds. They listen attentively to tape recordings and are keen to share this awareness with the teacher. However, lesson planning is limited and pupils are not challenged to record their observations. The quality of learning is sound with many pupils reinforcing their knowledge of, and their ability to identify everyday sounds. Year 2 pupils are fully challenged by well planned lessons. Very good organisation ensures that time is constructively used. Photographs, moulds of mouths of teeth and gums and information sheets are available to help the pupils to know about the three different sets of teeth and their cutting, tearing and grinding purposes. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and deliver it at levels that challenge the pupils to learn and make good progress to the higher levels. There is a good working atmosphere with pupils co-operating to share the resources. Many are involved in independent study, responding positively and with enjoyment to the teachers' enthusiastic manner. When they are available, support staff are effectively used and have created positive relationships with the pupils.

110. Many pupils at Key Stage 2 respond with enthusiasm and interest to the teaching of science and they confidently enter into class discussions. Very good and excellent teaching results in high levels of effective learning taking place with many pupils gaining new knowledge and developing greater understanding of the process of investigation and fair testing. Year 3 pupils successfully practise their observational skills, posing questions about the condition of the plants they are investigating. They make accurate records of these investigations using appropriate scientific phrases in their writing and completing detailed sketches.

111. Carefully planned teaching ensures that the lessons move forward with good pace. Some teachers demonstrate very good levels of knowledge and challenge pupils to think about possible outcomes to their investigations in order to form predictions before they begin their fair testing. Good use is made of mathematics as pupils accurately measure out amounts of water and soils. They share out the tasks and work harmoniously together to complete the activities. Older pupils develop a very good understanding of the process of filtration. Inspection evidence shows that sometimes pupils are not given enough opportunities to write up their findings themselves and spend time copying from the white board.

112. The leadership and management of the subject are both good. The co-ordinator monitors planning and national assessment scripts are successfully analysed to identify the areas of learning requiring development. The school has adopted the national science guidelines to extend the current documentation. Very good assessment procedures are in place to support the requirements of the pupils in mixed-age classes.

ART

113. During the inspection it was only possible to observe a small number of art lessons. However, taking into account other evidence including a scrutiny of pupils' previous work and discussions with pupils and staff standards in art at the end of both key stages are higher than those found in most schools. This is similar to the last inspection.

114. In Key Stage 1 pupils are developing good observational skills. Very good work was seen in the style of Monet. Pupils closely observed lilies and then made careful paintings and pastel drawings which showed well developed drawing skills and good use of colour and tone. The completed work displayed a good blending of appropriate colours. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 paint boldly using vibrant colours reflecting their interest of houses and people in their imaginative paintings. They use paintbrushes with confidence. Older pupils create collages using a range of materials and techniques including paper curling using hot and cold colours. They are able to confidently record ideas and feelings.

115. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop good observational skills and techniques. Older pupils have undertaken still-life drawings of musical instruments using graduated hard and soft pencils. These are of a high standard with good application of the techniques of shading, tone and accuracy of observation. Famous artists are used as references. Work in sketchbooks shows very well understood work on perspective and shading. The quality of the clay work undertaken is of an exceptionally high standard and follows the visit of a professional potter to the school. Work in paper sculpture shows imagination and flair.

116. Pupils' learning is very good overall because of the care teachers take in providing opportunities for pupils to experiment and practise their skills in an unhurried way. They are given time to think of ideas for themselves and solve problems increasing their understanding of the possibilities of materials and techniques. Pupils undertaking paper sculpture modified their work as the result of the appropriate advice they received from the teacher. They learn how to plan their work to achieve success.

117. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They take initiatives and can work individually and in groups. They are able to take some responsibility for their own learning through being given choices. Pupils take pride in their work and are supportive of each other.

118. In the small number of lessons seen teaching is good in both key stages. Where teaching is sometimes very good in Key Stage 2 teacher demonstration is used well to introduce pupils to new techniques. Teachers plan conscientiously and are very well prepared so that the lessons run smoothly with all the resources to hand. This has a positive impact on pupils learning.

119. Time is used well and there are sufficient resources within the classrooms. Specialist materials are bought as required. There is a comprehensive art scheme of work that covers every aspect of the curriculum. Teachers assess three items of work a year to see what progress pupils have made. Visits are made to Manchester Art Gallery where pupils take part in workshops. This makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning and the progress pupils make.

120. Art is well used as a support subject for the other areas of the curriculum. For example geometric patterns are created that allow pupils to demonstrate their mathematical skills. The art displays around the school are of a high standard and enrich the learning environment. The school has a strong commitment to art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. No actual lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection. However, the quality of work seen at both key stages indicates that pupils attain standards that are typical for their age. It is not possible to make any judgement about the quality of teaching or learning.

122. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils skilfully manipulate construction kits to assemble a range of fairground rides, buildings and moving vehicles. These are of good quality and include moving parts, some of which are powered by battery driven electric circuits. This work appropriately reinforces the learning in the science curriculum. Recently the school won a competition using construction kit resources to make a large moving Ferris wheel. Similar electrically powered working models are displayed in the classroom. Many of these projects have begun with sketched design plans and there is an accurate correlation between these and the finished product.

123. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate a basic understanding of pneumatics when they produce models of monsters, millennium bugs and mini-beasts from recyclable materials. These open their mouths or move their arms and legs when air is injected by a syringe through a tube into a balloon that expands causing the attached parts to move. It is evident that pupils have enjoyed this work showing imagination and ingenuity. The display of these models includes design and instruction sheets that identify the construction process.

124. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 design and construct playground furniture of good quality, concentrating on rigid form and structures. They test their finished products and make adjustments to improve the strength of their working models. Younger pupils assemble vehicles and buildings using construction kits. They confidently move between the designing and making phase as they evaluate their models to make the best use of the available components. A sound range of cutting, assembling and fixing skills is acquired. The displayed work indicates that many pupils have successfully linked the designing process with the assembling activities.

125. The subject provision has improved since the previous inspection. A policy and scheme of work, which identifies the projects to be taught, is in place. This gives good guidance to the teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, ensuring that the design and make applications of the subject are included in the learning. The co-ordinator monitors the medium-term plans.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

126. During Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in history and standards are average. They have a satisfactory understanding of the historical concepts and knowledge expected of seven-year-olds by the end of the key stage. Pupils know about people's lives in the past and understand that some common household appliances, such as irons, have changed over a period of time. Their skills in historical enquiry are appropriately developed through the careful examination of artefacts. Pupils have gained a good awareness of chronology by sequencing events in their own lives from when they were born up to the present time.

127. Satisfactory progress continues to be made during Key Stage 2 and standards are in line with those found in most schools. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when progress was found to be inconsistent across the key stage and standards of attainment occasionally below expectations. By the age of eleven most pupils can identify and describe the main characteristic features of life in a past civilisation such as the Ancient Greeks. They gain appropriate insights into what life was like for people living in significant periods in English history such as the Victorians. Pupils in Year 5 understand the reasons why Heywood changed from a farming area to an industrial one.

128. It was only possible to see one geography lesson during the week of the inspection. However, evidence from a scrutiny of workbooks from the current year, teachers' planning and discussions held with pupils and the acting co-ordinator provide sufficient information for judgements to be made.

129. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography during Key Stage 1. They study the local environment and have an increasing awareness of its physical and human features. They learn about the different types of amenities in Heywood such as shops and garages. They develop a good awareness of a contrasting place through looking at climatic conditions in Africa and the effect weather can have on people's lives. Pupils have an appropriate geographical vocabulary and use such terms as equator and arctic regions with confidence. They can use maps and globes well to find different places. Attainment for the majority of pupils is similar to that found in most schools.

130. A well structured programme of geographical topics ensures that satisfactory progress is made during Key Stage 2 and standards of attainment are average. By the age of eleven pupils have an appropriate knowledge about their own region and contrasting areas including other countries, for example India. They successfully develop an awareness of environmental issues such as the effect a proposed by-pass might have on the inhabitants of the local area. This topic was appropriately linked to further work on developing pupils' mapping skills as they identified physical and human features.

131. The quality of learning in the lessons seen was good overall in both key stages. It has improved considerably in history at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection. Pupils are now acquiring a good range of skills as they answer historical questions. For example, questions about why Heywood changed from being a farming area to an industrial one. They research census documents, examine maps and artefacts from different periods to find the information. In geography the quality of learning is better when work is based upon the study of real places. This makes the lesson more interesting and the activities more relevant. In both subjects pupils develop their language and literacy skills well when discussing ideas or reading for information. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills and work is not always well presented.

132. Pupils enjoy their history and geography lessons. They listen carefully and are willing to contribute their own ideas to class discussions. In both key stages pupils apply themselves well to tasks. Most make sensible observations from the resource materials available to them. For example, they like finding out about where they live and enjoy identifying local landmarks on maps such as mills. Though pupils are encouraged to make appropriate use of information technology for research purposes, they sometimes are allowed to copy or print the information direct from the screen instead of making their own notes.

133. The quality of teaching in history is good overall at both key stages with some very good teaching observed in Key Stage 2 with a group of older pupils. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in geography because only one lesson was seen. Teachers prepare their lessons conscientiously and are clear about the facts they want pupils to learn. Planning clearly identifies the evidence they wish pupils to investigate. Good use is made of time and a range of appropriate resources. A strength of the teaching is the care taken to ensure that follow up activities take account of pupils' prior attainment. Explanations are clear; questioning is used well to keep the pupils involved and to assess their understanding. When the class is engaged in tasks, the teacher continues to be actively involved in the learning process by moving round giving support and checking pupils' understanding.

134. The school has recently updated its geography and history schemes in the light of the recommendations from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The schemes are well considered and provide a good coverage of key themes and skills. They take appropriate account of the classes with mixed ages. Assessment procedures have improved in history since the last inspection and are now good. Resources in both subjects are satisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

135. By the time they leave the school pupils achieve standards of attainment which are below those found in most schools. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are also unsatisfactory. There are insufficient reliable and up-to-date computers to ensure that all pupils have immediate access to suitable machines to practise and reinforce the skills they acquire during group information technology lessons. These lessons are not fully effective because too many pupils are required to observe new skills being demonstrated on one machine.

136. There are some examples of word processing displayed around the school, which are of good quality. They indicate effective use of the keyboard and mouse skills to set up text, choose letter size and font style. However, many older pupils do not type direct to screen. They prepare hand written drafts before in-putting their final copy. This practice leads to unsatisfactory learning and progress.

137. The school has access to the Internet and has set up its own web site which includes a good range of information composed by the pupils. Good use is made of the Internet to retrieve information and suitable sites have been located to download relevant facts. Many older pupils are able to access the Internet and good use is made of these skills during the historical project 'The Ancient Greeks'. Sound use is made of CD ROM to identify information using mouse skills to scroll through the menu. There are good, and some very good, examples of pupils adding text to maps and illustrations retrieved from CD ROM to create informative and well laid out documents.

138. Due to the structure of the timetable no judgements about the quality of teaching in either key stage can be made. In those short lessons observed, teachers showed secure knowledge of the subject, there was good planning and organisation of pupils who responded with good levels of interest and enthusiasm. Pupils gained new skills in respect of the inputting of information into the fields as they learned how to organise and interrogate a database but only one computer was available for them to practise these new skills. Therefore opportunities to reinforce learning were lost. In Key Stage 1 effective mathematics teaching ensures that pupils are able to sort and classify shapes logically according to their attributes. However, pupils are not able to immediately apply these skills by using the mouse to, for example, lift and drag symbols of mathematical shapes to form sets on the computer screen. This is because only one outdated computer is shared between three classes.

139. The shortage of information technology equipment throughout the school adversely affects pupils' pace of learning and leads to unsatisfactory progress.

140. The management of the subject has improved since the previous inspection report. A scheme of work has identified the programmes and software for all applications to ensure that statutory requirements are met, but planning for control technology at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

141. During the inspection week only a few lessons were seen. Evidence from the Key Stage 1 lessons show that by the age of seven standards are in line with those found in most school nationally. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 because no Year 6 lessons were seen. Pupils at both key stages of all attainment levels have opportunities to sing and develop their skills. This matches the standards of the previous inspection.

142. Key Stage 1 pupils are given opportunities to learn songs, explore sound and experiment with instruments. They listen to and appreciate music that is accompanied by orchestral instruments so that they can relate the sounds they hear to the instrument they see. They learn about pulse and beat and develop their musical skills through learning about graphical notation. Key Stage 2 pupils understand how mood can vary with different styles of music. Orchestral music is used in assembly and this helps to develop pupils' listening skills. Singing in assembly is tuneful. Pupils are given the opportunity to play an instrument. Pupils who do learn to play the violin, guitar, flute or brass instruments achieve a satisfactory standard.

143. Pupils' learning is good overall. One example of good learning at Key Stage 1 occurred when pupils were enjoying trying to play brass instruments. In the same lesson they developed their understanding of graphic scoring. The teacher's enthusiastic approach had a positive impact on the quality of learning. Key Stage 2 pupils are given good learning opportunities to express the mood of a musical extract through words and drawing. This evoked good quality responses through showing awareness of feeling by using the music in a thoughtful way. Pupils concentrate on their tasks and listen well, and in discussion could analyse how they had interpreted the moods of music.

144. At both key stages pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good resulting in good concentration. They become totally focused on the tasks.

145. The teaching in both key stages is good overall. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and use questioning effectively. They plan their lessons well and encourage the pupils by making the tasks interesting and exciting.

146. Time is used well, and resources are sufficient. Pupils are appropriately assessed each term by their teachers and the observations are recorded. There are sufficient percussion instruments. Compact disks and tape recorders are used to good effect. However, there is no evidence of the computer being used to develop musical skills.

147. The music scheme of work is good with considerable detail and with resources identified. It covers all areas of the curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous report and is having a marked impact on pupils' learning. Currently there is no co-ordinator in place.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. The weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 2 identified in the previous inspection have been rectified and during the week of the inspection the quality of teaching in both key stages was satisfactory. The school still does not have its own playing field but this is an issue outside the control of the governing body. Outdoor games skills are taught well both in the hall and on the playground and the school has access to a field for those competitive sports that need to be played on grass.

149. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils attain standards in line with those found in most schools. Pupils can successfully perform activities that take adequate account of their own level of skill. For example, Year 6 pupils competently build both forward and backward rolls into a sequence of movements. Younger pupils respond well to music during dance lessons and produce movement of satisfactory quality linked to the topic they are studying in history. Pupils are able to recognise the strengths of a performance and what improvements might be made. Evidence from school records show that by the time pupils leave most can swim 25 metres.

150. By the age of seven pupils attain standards that are higher than those found in most schools. They can successfully pass a ball to a partner using a variety of throws. Pupils understand the importance of keeping an eye on the ball. They demonstrate good skills in catching. Younger pupils show good spatial awareness and are adept at changing direction when running.

151. Most pupils respond well in physical education lessons. They are keen to participate and most behave well. Pupils co-operate in pair or group work and use apparatus and equipment sensibly and safely.

152. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and occasionally very good. In all lessons there is a suitable focus on developing skills. Lessons are well planned and organised and most require pupils to engage in sustained and vigorous exercise. However, the actual length of lessons for younger pupils sometimes means that by the time they have changed only a small amount of time is left. Due regard is paid to health and safety. Where teaching is sometimes very good very good use is made of teacher demonstration and individual pupils are supported well.

153. The quality of learning is good in both key stages. Pupils' make good progress because basic skills are well taught and they given time in most lessons to improve their own performance. Pupils gain by working well together in pairs, thereby learning from each other. Special educational needs pupils take a full part in lessons and are well supported, where necessary by classroom assistants. Pupils who speak English as a second language develop their skills well.

154. The range and quality of documentation has improved since the time of the last inspection. Resources are generally satisfactory but fixed apparatus is in need of renewal. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school takes a full part in competitive sporting fixtures with other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. By the age of eleven, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of religious topics for their age in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Key Stage 1, discussions with pupils and with the co-ordinator indicates that pupils are meeting expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. This is similar to the previous inspection.

156. In Key Stage 1 the pupils learn about Christianity as a main theme, with both Islam and Judaism introduced. Discussions with pupils show that by the end of the key stage they know the major Christian festivals and can recount the Christmas story in detail. They also appreciate that the Millennium is Jesus' 2000 birthday. Pupils recall well-known Bible stories, for example Jonah and the whale. They are knowledgeable about their current study of Judaism and could talk with confidence about festivals of light, and the use of the Menorah.

157. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to discuss in more depth issues that different faiths have in common and which are relevant to them. They considered the Muslim way of life and compared it with their own. Very good moral and social and cultural development is also much in evidence along with the spiritual aspect. Pupils are encouraged to think before making choices and to try to see issues from another's point of view. Pupils are familiar with the characteristics of different places of worship for different faiths. They have been to the Jewish museum. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons because they are made relevant for today and are interesting.

158. The school has devised a new scheme of work, which complies with the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. It is very thorough and clearly shows how the different faiths are revisited over time. There are themes for each term and a programme of study that gives a very good outline for planning lessons.

159. Throughout Key Stage 2 learning is good with some very good instances of pupils' learning occurring. Pupils concentrate well and the work in their books and on displays is satisfactory overall. Very good learning was seen when pupils were making posters about their choices of needs and wants. They had opportunities to discuss and reflect on this in some depth. Pupils' attitude to the subject is good and sometimes very good. Their behaviour is very good.

160. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good with an example of excellent teaching. Teachers show good knowledge and make appropriate use of the well structured scheme of work. This enables good learning opportunities to be provided for pupils. Excellent teaching involved pupils in very thoughtful discussion. The plenary session provided an excellent summary by the pupils of what they had achieved. Pupils are managed very well. Time is effectively used. Pupils are assessed at the end of each term and these assessments are used to inform teachers' planning. From time to time pupils have homework that is research about the topic they are currently studying. This enables further learning to take place.

161. There have been improvements since the last inspection, in particular the new scheme of work which is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Resources have been improved. The new co-ordinator had only taken on the role the week previous to the inspection.