

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MANCHESTER ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Droylsden, Manchester

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106208

Headteacher: Mrs K Feeley

Reporting inspector: Mrs O Cooper  
10859

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 189453

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

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## 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:	Manchester Road Droylsden Manchester
Postcode:	M43 6GD
Telephone number:	0161 370 3079
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Turner
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs O Cooper	Registered inspector	Art	What sort of school is it?
			Schools results and achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Mr R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its' pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs A Lowson	Team inspector	Information technology	
		Physical education	
		Under fives	
Mr V J Leary	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Music	
		English as an additional language	

Mr W A Lowe	Team inspector	Science	
		Design and technology	
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	
Mr T Handforth	Team inspector	English	
		Geography	
		History	
		Equal opportunities	

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Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a large community school for boys and girls 4 –11 years old. It has 429 full-time pupils. Taken together, pupils' attainment on entry is well below that found nationally. Seventy-nine pupils have special educational needs; a figure broadly in line with the national average. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, however, five have English as an additional language; a proportion a bit higher than in most schools. None of these pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English.

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

This is a good school with improving standards. Pupils make good progress as a result of the good teaching throughout the school. The leadership and management of the school are good and the action taken to raise pupils' attainment has been successful. The school is providing good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils make good progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science during their time in the school.
- The teaching is good.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership, which has been effective in raising standards. She is well supported by the staff and governors.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to work support their learning.
- Test results are analysed thoroughly to pinpoint areas where the school can improve further.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in information technology are improving but have not yet reached the level expected for pupils aged 7 and 11.
- Strategic planning for the longer-term development of the school.
- The school's partnership with parents.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996, when it was found to be a good school. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection. The action plan drawn up in response to the key issues has been successful in overcoming most of the weaknesses and standards in mathematics and science by the age of eleven have improved.

- The school aims have been reviewed and are in line with the values and policies that influence the work of staff and governors. The mission statement is publicised in the school.
- The large carry forward in the budget at the time of the last inspection was used to support the priority areas in the school development plan and so have a direct and successful impact on teaching and learning.
- The transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is now a smooth operation with time made available for the exchange of information between the teachers concerned.
- Key Stage 2 pupils now show more initiative and take on responsibility willingly, for example in organising a fun day for Year 1 pupils.
- More emphasis is placed on developing pupils' understanding of the diversity and richness of modern multi-cultural society and the provision is now satisfactory.
- Some progress has been made in raising standards in information technology. Teachers have a better understanding of the National Curriculum programmes of study and, the decision to establish a computer suite has enabled the teaching of specific skills to whole classes, which is improving the rate of progress. Whilst there has been notable improvement in these aspects, the school has only recently obtained the funding to access the National Grid for Learning which will extend the number of computers and range of software needed for pupils to practise their skills. It will, therefore, take time for standards to rise in line with those expected for pupils by the age of 7 and 11.



## 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	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	D	C	D	E
Science	D	C	D	E

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

Standards in English were in line with the national average in 1999, but were below the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics and science the results were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools.

The inspection findings show there has been improvement in standards in all three subjects for 11 year olds, both at the level expected for their age and at the higher level as teachers' expectations of pupils have been raised. Standards are average in English and mathematics at age 11 this year and rise to above average in science. There has been a significant improvement in standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1, where results have risen from well below average to broadly average.

The school achieved its target in English in 1999 but failed, by a small margin, to reach the target set in mathematics. Inspection findings show the school is likely to exceed the higher targets, set in both English and mathematics, for 11 year olds in 2000. Standards in history, geography, singing and observational drawing are above average for 11 year olds. In information technology standards are below average.

Over the last four years the trend in the school's results for English, mathematics and science was broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings show standards are improving in most subjects, are in line with those expected by the age of 11 and are satisfactory.

Standards at the age of seven are above average in science, history and geography and are broadly average in all other subjects except information technology. At the end of the under fives phase pupils' attainment is average in all areas of learning and is above average in personal and social development. The school is doing a good job in raising pupils' attainment from well below average levels on entry to average levels by the age of eleven.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory; pupils are happy to come to school and the large majority show positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, behaviour in virtually all lessons is good. Most pupils play happily together at lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good, pupils work well together and show respect for all adults in school. They accept responsibility willingly when given the opportunity. They have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	The published attendance rate in 1998/9 was below the national average. For the current year the attendance rate has improved and is average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons. It is good in 69 per cent which includes 16 per cent which are very good and occasionally excellent. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the good, and sometimes very good and excellent teaching of English and mathematics are the key factors in the improvement in pupils' attainment. Teachers are very competent and confident in teaching the basic skills in these subjects. There were very few lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, the main weakness was in the management of the pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their class teachers or by classroom assistants and they make satisfactory progress towards their targets. None of the pupils who have English as an additional language receive extra support; they are making satisfactory progress. The consistently good quality of teaching enables most pupils to make good progress in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding. Along with pupils' positive attitudes to their work, the good teaching is enabling the large majority of pupils to achieve well and reach their full potential.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children under five and satisfactory at both key stages. All National Curriculum subjects, religious education and personal, social and health education are included and statutory requirements are met. Limited range of extra-curricular activities and no residential visits to enrich the curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory provision. Good support is provided in lessons. External support for specific problems is provided when necessary.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	None of the pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English. They are supported well by their class teachers or classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for social and moral development is good and pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development and in the support and guidance provided. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is a particular strength. Procedures for monitoring attendance could be better.

The school's partnership with parents has weaknesses. The school does not seek the parents' views about the life and work of the school. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality and informative.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good, the headteacher is clear about how to raise pupils' attainment. The senior management team and curriculum leaders have all taken action, which has led successfully to school improvement. The special educational needs co-ordinator does not have sufficient non-contact time to carry out her responsibilities and keep records up to date.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all their statutory obligations and provide good support for the headteacher and staff. They now need to plan strategically for the longer-term development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The wealth of data available is used most effectively to pinpoint areas for improvement and to set challenging targets for year groups and individual pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory use and deployment of staff, resources for learning and the accommodation to support pupils' learning. Strategic use of financial resources is unsatisfactory.

There are sufficient teachers and support staff for the number of pupils on roll. There are adequate learning resources, although there are no large wheeled toys for the under fives. The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils and is satisfactorily maintained with the exception of the toilets for the reception classes, which are in urgent need of refurbishment. The school already has plans to carry out this work. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• They feel their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping children to become mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Closer partnership with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive and negative comments about the school. The range of extra-curricular activities is limited and, in sporting activities, parents are required to pay for the services of professional coaches who lead the activities. This makes it financially difficult for some parents with more than one child wishing to take part. Parents reported that some activities had only been organised in recent weeks. This was only confirmed in respect of one activity during the inspection.

Parents raised concerns at classes being split up at the end of each year and children being separated from their friends. Parents are not adequately involved or informed of the decisions taken or the reasons and inspectors share their concerns.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Standards in English and mathematics are broadly in line with the national average at the age of 7 and 11. In science, standards are higher and are above the national average by the age of 7 and 11. This indicates some improvement in standards in the last year, which has brought them up to levels similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The results of national tests in English in 1999 showed pupils' attainment to be in line with the national average at the age of 7 and 11. When compared with similar schools the results for 7 year olds were broadly average but those for 11 year olds were below average. In mathematics, the 1999 test results for 7 year olds were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. The test results for this year show a significant improvement, with four fifths of the pupils reaching the national standard and over one fifth achieving the higher level. Mathematics results at age 11 in 1999 were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainments in science at age 7 in 1999 showed attainment was above the national average. Test results for 11 year olds showed attainment to be below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Inspection findings show there has been improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age, or higher, in all three subjects by the age of 11, and in English and mathematics at the age of 7. The national test results over the last three years have shown boys have done better than girls. The school identified this trend, took action to overcome it and inspection findings indicate this to have been successful, as there is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys this year. Most pupils make good progress over time in the school. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
- 2 Assessment of pupils soon after admission to the reception classes shows pupils' attainment to be well below average for other similar schools in Tameside and well below that found typically in other primary schools nationally. For the current year, the assessment of pupils' attainment at the start of the reception year shows almost 60 per cent of pupils had below average scores, which includes a small percentage of very low scores. The scores for the previous year were very similar. The school is doing a good job in raising pupils' attainment from this low starting point to average standards by the age of 11.
- 3 As a result of the good and sometimes very good teaching in the under-fives phase, pupils achieve well. A large number of them are on target to reach the level expected soon after the age of 5 in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. In personal and social development, the large majority of pupils are likely to exceed the expected outcomes on entry to compulsory education. The adults provide good examples for the children in personal and social skills and every opportunity is taken to develop these skills and to help pupils to begin to understand the impact of their actions on others.
- 4 Inspection findings show standards in speaking and listening are above average and in reading, spelling and writing are broadly average at age 7 and 11. Pupils gain in confidence and speak with increasing clarity as they mature. They initiate conversation with adults and show by their responses to questions that they have usually listened carefully. They make good progress in developing early reading skills in reception and continue the good rate of progress in both key stages. By the age of

seven they attempt to read unfamiliar words by splitting them into smaller parts, by using their knowledge of letter sounds, or by looking at the illustrations for clues. By the age of 11 most pupils are confident readers, often re-reading sentences when attempting to read unfamiliar words. They talk about the books they have enjoyed reading showing clear understanding of the characters and the plot. Insufficient use is made of pupils' reading skills, especially at Key Stage 2 to research information from books in the library and CD ROM.

- 5 Pupils make good progress in developing independent writing skills over time in the school. They are actively encouraged to attempt to spell words themselves and strong emphasis is placed on helping pupils to learn the most commonly used words. This builds their confidence in their abilities as writers. Spellings are sent home weekly and many parents support their children in the development of these skills. Through the literacy hours and the emphasis on the correct use of punctuation, pupils gain the skills and accuracy needed to begin to write their own stories by the age of 7. By the age of 11, pupils are able to write for a variety of purposes and use and develop their skills further through many other subjects. They do not have sufficient opportunities to use computers to support the development of writing skills. The pupils are taught to join letters from an early stage and this helps them to develop a good fluent style of writing and to present their work neatly.
- 6 Standards in mathematics fell below average levels following the previous inspection but the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has led to improvement, especially at Key Stage 1. Inspection findings show standards are average for 7 and 11 year olds. Pupils are making good progress in developing skills in mental recall and strategies for solving problems. By the age of 7, pupils can use addition, subtraction and multiplication to solve problems mentally and are developing a good understanding of which rule to apply to a given question. They have a sound understanding of the Key Stage 1 programme of study for shape, space and measures. By the age of 11, pupils can answer mental questions quickly and with reasonable accuracy, including questions on fractions, percentages, decimals, area and multiples. Good emphasis is placed on developing correct mathematical language throughout the school and pupils use correct terminology. Most pupils enjoy numeracy lessons, particularly brisk introductory sessions, and their interest supports their rate of learning.
- 7 Inspection findings in science show pupils' attainment to be above average at the age of 7 and 11. Skills in experimental and investigative science develop well as pupils mature. They have a good level of knowledge of life and living processes, of materials and their properties and of physical processes by the age of 11. The work in pupils' books shows standards to be higher than lesson observations indicate.
- 8 The school reached the target set for English in 1999 but not for mathematics. The inspection findings indicate it is likely to achieve and exceed both targets this year. The targets set are realistic and challenging and the school and its pupils are rising to the challenge. The trend in the school's national test results over the last four years has been broadly in line with the national trend.

- 9 Standards in information technology have improved since the last inspection and the teaching of skills is now good, as staff have gained in confidence and knowledge. However, it will take longer for standards to rise to average levels as the funding to access the National Grid for Learning has only just been received and additional computers are yet to be installed. These are necessary to allow pupils sufficient opportunities to practise the skills taught each week. There are insufficient resources for information technology to support pupils learning effectively in other subjects. The school has a clear action plan already drawn up to remedy the weaknesses.
- 10 In religious education, standards are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus for pupils' aged 7 and 11. Pupils have a sound knowledge of stories from the Bible and of the special books from some other major world faiths. They gain some knowledge and understanding of the main celebrations and festivals of major world faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.
- 11 Standards in history and geography are above average for pupils' aged 7 and 11. In design and technology, music and physical education they are average and in art they are average at the age of 7, rising to above average for 11 year olds. The pupils have particularly good skills in observational drawing which they use well to support learning in other subjects, for example when drawing accurate diagrams in science. Standards in singing are also above average by the age of 11. Good quality teaching and enthusiasm from the curriculum co-ordinator enable pupils to make good progress.

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

- 12 Pupils display satisfactory attitudes towards school. The vast majority of parents say that their children enjoy coming to school but a small minority disagrees. Most pupils show enthusiasm to start in the morning but a significant number arrive a few minutes after the 8.55am start time. When stimulated well in lessons, pupils display keenness to participate and enjoyment of challenge. This was particularly strong in well-taught literacy and numeracy lessons. Where the teaching is less stimulating, however, some pupils are inattentive when the teacher is talking and this impedes their learning, as they are not always clear about subsequent work. Many pupils display a pride in their work and are keen to show it to outsiders. Pupils with special educational needs are generally positive about their learning, fully integrated into school life and are accepted by their peers. As there are relatively few extra-curricular activities, the majority of pupils have little chance to take an interest outside lessons. In some cases, for example music, those that are held are well supported and pupils respond eagerly. Other activities attract too few pupils to make them worthwhile.
- 13 Generally the behaviour of pupils is good. In most lessons pupils do as they are asked and work conscientiously. Where the teacher exercises good classroom management, most pupils are disciplined in putting up their hand to answer questions and refrain from interrupting others. When admonished they respond obediently. On the few occasions behaviour is unsatisfactory, it is because teachers are too tolerant of such behaviour. On such occasions pupils speak when others are being asked questions or interrupt each other. They do not respond when asked to stop what they are doing and listen. Pupils move carefully in groups around the school and are polite to each other and adults at doorways. Behaviour at dinnertime is good, even though the restricted space for eating means that they have to co-operate well with staff. In assemblies, pupils are attentive, listen with appreciation to the speaker and participate with enthusiasm in the singing. Although a few parents have had experience of their children being bullied, no examples were seen and, in discussion, pupils said that this was not generally a problem. There are a few ethnic minority pupils and they are well

integrated into school life and no racial harassment was seen.

- 14 Personal development and relationships within the school are good. Pupils gain respect for the beliefs of others through discussion of other faiths, although there are no visits to places of worship other than Christian, as a significant number of parents refuse permission for their children to go. Pupils generally show care for resources but incidents of vandalism involving members of the public have led to restricted access to the computer suite, which limits its usefulness. They generally treat staff at the school with respect but the rapport between teacher and pupil varies considerably. In the best classes, where it is very good, a relaxed yet disciplined atmosphere allows all to get the most out of the lesson. In a few lessons relationships are strained and this impedes learning. Relationships between pupils are generally good and they work well together, sharing resources and showing awareness of the needs of others. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities in class and around the school to show initiative and take responsibility, for example in tidying up or as energy monitors. However, experiments giving the oldest pupils supervisory responsibilities have failed because some of the pupils were insufficiently reliable.
- 15 Pupils' attendance was below average last year. Attendance has improved this year and is now in line with the national average and there is little unauthorised absence. This is an improvement on attendance figures in recent years. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have also been sustained since the previous inspection and no pupils have been excluded for unacceptable behaviour.

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

- 16 The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons. It is at least good in 69 per cent, which includes 16 per cent that are very good and occasionally excellent. Overall, teaching is good for children under five and at both key stages. The good quality of teaching has been sustained since the previous inspection and enables pupils to acquire knowledge and deepen their understanding at a good rate during their time in the school. The variation in teaching at Key Stage 2, noted in the previous report, has been overcome. There are examples of good teaching in all subjects except design and technology, where teaching is consistently satisfactory. Teaching of children under five, of English and mathematics at both key stages, and of physical education at Key Stage 2, is sometimes very good.
- 17 There are examples of excellent teaching in literacy hours and in these lessons pupils achieve their full potential through challenging tasks that lead to very good progress for all pupils in the time available. Teaching of literacy is rarely less than good. The teachers have worked hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully and some have made good quality resources which are well matched to the needs of the pupils and enable them to achieve well. All teachers are competent and confident in teaching the basic skills for literacy. There are clear targets for each week on classroom walls and these are referred to often during lessons to focus pupils' thoughts. In the most effective lessons the targets for each element of the literacy hour are shared with pupils at the appropriate time. There are examples of very good use of time towards the end of lessons to check on the level of understanding and to extend pupils' knowledge of their own learning. For example in a Year 3 lesson on pronouns, all pupils had two cards with the words 'personal' and 'possessive' written on them. The pupils had to display the correct word in response to the question asked. The teacher could see immediately which pupils understood and those who needed further work. Effective use is made of the overhead projectors in junior classrooms during sentence and word level activities so all pupils can see what is



being written and check the accuracy.

- 18 In three-quarters of the numeracy lessons in Key Stage 1 the teaching is good, and sometimes very good. This proportion of good teaching has partly led to the significant improvement in pupils' attainment evident in the national test results at age 7 this year. There are a small number of examples of satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching. At Key Stage 2, half the lessons are good, the remainder are satisfactory except for an example of poor teaching of lower attaining pupils. Unsatisfactory and poor teaching is a direct result of slow pace and ineffective management of pupils, which hinder their progress. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively and fully implemented and again there are examples of teachers making their own resources, well matched to pupils' needs and which result in good progress. Teachers are accurate in their use of mathematical vocabulary and encourage pupils to follow their example.
- 19 The other example of excellent teaching is in art in Year 5. Here a subject specialist offers very good quality support and guidance for pupils, which enables them to achieve success. The key features are the sharing of the purposes of the lesson with the pupils, the quick revision of previous work to set the lesson in context, high expectations, brisk pace and good preparation of resources. A clear explanation was given on how to approach the task of drawing a wine glass, placing the emphasis on close observation and concentration. This clear explanation led to pupils becoming totally absorbed in what they were doing, working in silence for most of the time and achieving their full potential. The method of allowing pupils to walk around all the groups and see the finished work led to a good evaluation of their work by the pupils themselves.
- 20 The teachers in the reception classes are very secure in their understanding of how young children learn. Teachers at both key stages have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. There is effective use of specialist teachers in information technology, music, literacy, numeracy and physical education and this is beneficial for pupils' learning and progress.
- 21 Lesson plans are very effective in supporting the teaching of children under five and sufficiently detailed to support teaching at both key stages, although few contain information on activities for specific pupils with special educational needs. A strength of the lesson planning is the clear identification of learning objectives which are shared with the pupils and checked at the end. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and these have a positive impact on learning. Virtually all pupils respond well, try hard and present their work neatly. A wide range of teaching methods is used, appropriately matched to the activity being undertaken. For example, there was effective use of role-play during a literacy hour, when pupils acting as the characters from 'Fantastic Mr Fox' were questioned about their actions, thoughts and feelings. Good use is made of question and answer methods, with most teachers demonstrating good skills in questioning pupils to challenge their thinking, elicit information from them and extend their learning.
- 22 The management of pupils is very good in the reception classes where there is full-time support available, and is good overall at both key stages. The classroom support assistants offer very good quality support in the reception classes and do much to promote pupils' progress. The classroom support assistants make a significant contribution to the progress of lower attaining pupils in literacy, particularly where the Additional Literacy Strategy is used.
- 23 Frequent assessments of pupils' attainments are carried out through observing them

at work, questioning them and through marking. The quality of marking is variable. Some pupils' books contain helpful comments, which inform them as to how they can improve upon their work and so make good progress. In other classes marking is up-to-date, shows if work is accurate but gives little guidance for improvement. The information gathered is used well to plan tasks closely matched to the abilities of the pupils and to note progress towards the individual targets identified inside the front cover of pupils' English books. Homework is often set and the policy is satisfactory. However, inspection evidence shows homework is set for English and mathematics only. This is not consistent with the policy, particularly for pupils in Years 5 and 6, where the policy states that homework should be ranging widely over the curriculum. The focus on English and mathematics for homework, with no work set in other subjects and the same tasks repeated, was raised by parents at the pre-inspection meeting, as some have difficulty in getting their children to complete the tasks. Inspection findings confirm their views. The homework policy is not being fully implemented and is leading to some boredom for pupils in the tasks being set.

- 24 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the under fives phase and satisfactory progress in both key stages. The work provided is well matched to their prior attainment and is outlined in their individual education plans. However, the use of the individual education plans, as an aid to lesson planning, is not always apparent. There is no evidence on the individual education plans reviewed during the inspection to suggest that evaluation of pupils' progress towards the targets is taking place. The pupils who have English as an additional language receive support from their class teachers which enables them to make satisfactory progress as none are in the early stages of learning to speak English.
- 25 The quality of teaching enables pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. The productivity and pace of working is good in most lessons. Pupils' own knowledge of their rate of learning is developing well, especially in Key Stage 2, through using time towards the end of lessons to check on new learning and the setting of individual targets. Literacy and numeracy targets for each week are displayed in all classrooms and this is effective in keeping them in pupils' minds.

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

- 26 The curricular opportunities offered to the pupils are satisfactory, prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education and have been sustained since the last inspection. Provision includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, health, sex education and drugs awareness education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements overall, although a small part of the programme of study for information technology is not currently being taught, due to lack of resources. Whilst increasing the emphasis on English, mathematics and information technology in response to national priorities, the school has maintained broad provision in all other subjects. Time adjustments have been made to the provision in foundation subjects to ensure realistic time allocation for all subjects on the timetable.
- 27 The curriculum for children under five is good. It is based on the nationally recognised areas of learning for children of this age and is well planned to provide a broad and balanced programme which covers the six areas of learning. It provides a good foundation for early learning. Children transfer smoothly from the under fives phase to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum soon after becoming five. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented successfully. Teachers' planning is consistently and securely based on these strategies. Medium and short term planning is generally good in all subjects and teachers use the same

format. This provides a consistency of approach that was lacking at the time of the last inspection, and is proving effective not only in raising standards achieved by pupils, but also in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do. In literacy, this is evident in pupils' growing competence in handling a broad range of written tasks and in numeracy, in pupils' sharp mental arithmetic skills. In religious education, work is based on the locally agreed syllabus. It provides good guidance and helps to promote pupils' learning in this subject. The daily acts of worship provide sound support for pupils' cultural and spiritual development. The school has policies for all subjects. It has adopted national guidelines as schemes of work for science, art, information technology, design and technology, physical education, history and geography and has discussed and agreed the sections of these to be taught each year. The school has developed its own scheme of work for music, which is satisfactory.

- 28 Provision for personal, social, and health education is good. There is a detailed policy and a good programme for personal and social education which is continuous through both key stages, and there are satisfactory elements of health and sex education. However, a policy on drug awareness is not yet in place. Assemblies make a significant contribution to the high standards of behaviour achieved. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils. There is satisfactory provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language; most receive adequate support from their teachers and occasionally from nursery nurses or classroom assistants.
- 29 Provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. Their needs are met through appropriate work which is provided in lessons, or in withdrawal groups. Individual education plans are based on the needs of the pupils and have appropriate targets. External support is available for those with specific needs or formal statements. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to what the school has to offer and they are encouraged to take on responsibilities by the school to promote their self-esteem.
- 30 Provision for extra-curricular activities is currently unsatisfactory. Very few pupils attend the few activities available. Parents are rightly critical of this provision. The school is beginning to address this issue and a new art club has been formed recently. The school provides a satisfactory range of visits and visitors to extend and enrich the curriculum. Useful visits are made to areas beyond their locality, for example Thurstaston, on the River Dee and Gawsworth Hall, Cheshire, extending pupils' awareness in history and geography. Pupils also explore the local environment to carry out geography surveys. Pupils are involved with visitors to the school, including the local clergy, community police officer, school nurse, professional sports coaches and local residents from different cultural traditions. Currently there are no opportunities for pupils to participate in residential pursuits. Homework is focused mainly on English and mathematics and amounts of homework vary from class to class. The school needs to make its practice more consistent and more comprehensive so that all pupils benefit equally from homework. Satisfactory links are made with the main receiving high school. Year 6 make visits there and appropriate records are passed on.
- 31 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies meet statutory requirements. The act of collective worship allows pupils to reflect and pray in their own manner, following a biblical, religious or moral theme. For example, throughout the week of inspection, the theme was about 'Special Books.' Pupils were given the opportunity to reflect on how books inform us of past events. The atmosphere created by music played and hymns chosen allowed the pupils to sing with feeling and

sincerity. However, in lessons spiritual development is an element that happens rather than one which is specifically planned.

- 32 Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school rules are displayed in every classroom along with each classes own rules. The pupils are clearly taught right from wrong and show self – discipline in their conduct. They modify their behaviour readily when spoken to by an adult. Staff provide good examples of personal and social skills, and show respect and concern for the individual needs of all pupils. In assemblies pupils are provided with opportunities to learn and think about positive personal qualities such as acts of kindness.
- 33 Provision for pupils' social development is good. In lessons there are opportunities for pupils to discuss their opinions on various issues. For instance, in one lesson pupils shared their experiences and expressed opinions on fox hunting. The good relationships between pupils and teachers enhance pupils' social development. A very effective activity for developing the pupils' social role is the school's Fun Day. Year 6 pupils organise a range of activities for the Year 1 pupils, for example, last year, working with these pupils they created stories and made them into books. There are also 'paired reading' activities where Year 6 and Year 5 pupils assist the younger readers. All pupils are strongly sensitive about taking responsibility for their local environment. Pollution issues are given a high profile involving pupils in litter collecting, and various planting activities. There is involvement in charity work, such as collecting for cancer sufferers and donating to the homeless charity, 'Lifeshare' following the annual harvest festival.
- 34 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils are provided with a curriculum at both key stages which promotes an understanding of their own country and gives the opportunity to discover and understand other cultures. The curriculum for religious education makes a valuable contribution to this with the study of world faiths. Assemblies and music lessons incorporate a variety of songs, hymns and the playing of instruments from different cultures. In dance, the pupils participate in national folk dancing. In art and music they study the work of famous artists and composers. There is the occasional visitor who contributes to pupils' understanding of other cultures. For example, a visitor shared with a Year 3 class her Muslim wedding ceremony. The provision for cultural development is progressing and the school is aware that the current good work needs to be extended further.

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

- 35 There are satisfactory procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well looked after and the provision is similar to that found at the time of the previous inspection. The school's care for its pupils is beneficial to their learning and the raising of standards. Appropriately trained staff care for pupils who are ill or who have accidents at school. Staff are kept very well aware of which pupils have specific medical conditions. The school has adopted local child protection procedures and the designated teacher is trained. Appropriate support is given by external agencies such as social services. Health and safety procedures are in place and equipment is appropriately checked. However, the state of repair of some of the toilet facilities, particularly for reception children, gives cause for concern on hygiene grounds.
- 36 Procedures for monitoring academic and personal development are good overall, although monitoring of personal development tends to be informal. Children are assessed when they start in the reception class and informally throughout the year. This allows evaluation of learning in that year and provides confirmation of the need for their additional support. In the rest of the school, pupils' progress in mathematics, science and English is formally assessed well at least once each year and recorded regularly. The information is used effectively to track the progress being made by individual pupils and the improvement in standards. At the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils take the optional national assessment tests, with the results providing further valuable data on the rate of progress. Other subjects are monitored satisfactorily and records of achievement with photographs of work have been started, covering the lower three years at present. Staff use their good knowledge and relationships with pupils to record personal development in the pupil's report. This information is maintained in a pupil's personal record, which is kept in the school office. Incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour are recorded and there are good systems for rewarding good attitudes to work and behaviour. Anti-bullying procedures are effective. Registers are completed each day but their use for monitoring reasons for absence is ineffective. Insufficient care is taken to ensure that the presence in school of pupils is accounted for by registers or other means.
- 37 The school makes good use of data to improve educational, and to a lesser extent, personal support for pupils. Teachers use regular assessment in lessons to modify plans for subsequent lessons. Often classes are set targets based on these assessments. Longer term detailed records are in a variety of formats and tend to be based on class lists. However, attainment in all subjects at the end of each year is summarised well on a pupil's individual record sheet which will follow it through the school. The teachers' files do not contain formal records of attitudes, behaviour or attendance for individuals, so that support is not based sufficiently on the broad assessment of both personal and academic development. Appropriate plans are afoot to reduce the workload and improve the facility to track and identify support needs by using a computer database. In some subjects, for example mathematics, pupils are set individual targets, told when they reach them and then set new ones. This good practice has not yet been extended to other subjects. Pupils who are a level below the attainment expected for their age are placed on the special educational needs register and assessment used well to set their individual education plans. The school makes effective use of specialists such as education psychologists and behavioural support workers to enhance its special needs support and help pupils to achieve their potential. The school has made very good use of detailed analysis of completed national assessment test papers to modify teaching methods and the curriculum, where weaknesses are identified.

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

- 38 Generally parents are satisfied with the school although some have concerns. From a school population of over 400, only 14 parents came to the meeting held before the inspection and only 67 returned questionnaires. This is a poor response. Those that expressed views think that their children are expected to work hard and are making good progress; and that they behave well. The vast majority would be comfortable in approaching the school but some feel that the school does not work closely with parents. However, there are significant concerns over the lack of extra-curricular activities, with less than half responding agreeing that these are satisfactory. Some parents at the meeting were concerned about the quality of their communication with the school, feeling that it did not always explain clearly what was required. Some were anxious to help but did not feel sure what they could do or feel confident in asking. In this respect the school's partnership with parents has not been sustained since the last inspection.
- 39 The inspection team supports most of the parent's positive views, particularly those on standards, which are satisfactory, good progress and quality of teaching. However, it also supports the concerns over the lack of extra-curricular activities and the lack of involvement by parents.
- 40 The school's links with parents are currently unsatisfactory. The school could do more to involve parents, seeking their views and encouraging participation both in their own child's education and in the life of the school in general. In turn, parents do not presently respond sufficiently to the opportunities that the school gives them. They are provided with good reports on their children's progress. There is a half-year progress report form on standards and effort, which gives a good indication if there is a cause for concern, and more comprehensive reports at the end of the year. These meet statutory requirements and give good detail, particularly in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science. They are clearly written about each individual pupil and discriminate well between differing abilities. Some contain targets for improvement. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements but are rather brief in key areas such as support for pupils with special educational needs. The prospectus does not give a clear statement on the curriculum for children in the reception year. However, when their children start school, parents are given a good guide on how the school approaches reading, writing and mathematics and how parents can help at home.
- 41 The school has held a well-supported evening to tell parents about the National Numeracy Strategy. Several parents at the meeting held before the inspection and in the questionnaire had concerns over the attitude of the school towards them, for example when expressing concern at splitting up classes. They felt that concerns were not always addressed and that there were insufficient newsletters from the school encouraging them to help. The home-school agreement has been issued and returned by most parents but has had little effect. This document is too school-centred. For example, parents have to agree that 'the parents will:-', as opposed to 'we, as parents, agree to:-'. Other general information for parents is satisfactory but gives insufficient encouragement for parents to donate their skills. Some parents feel excluded by the arrangements for dropping off their children at the start of the day. These arrangements are appropriate but the school has not done sufficient, in the perception of parents, to provide alternative contact. The school visitors' entrance, which should set the tone of the school, is a narrow door and short corridor, which does not present an inviting aspect.

- 42 Most parents with children in the infants hear them read at home and some comment in the reading diary. This helps to raise standards in English. However, this drops off rapidly as pupils get older. A similar picture applies to the number of parents who attend consultation evenings. Whilst the school invites the parents of all pupils with special educational needs to attend meetings to discuss progress against individual education plans, many do not bother to attend or sign these documents. Very few adults help in the school, which the school believes is because most are at work. Those who do give valued support. Although there is no formal school-parent organisation, when the school asks for volunteers for specific events, it receives good support. Very few parents attend the annual parents' meeting which would provide an opportunity to express their views and opinions on priorities for future development.

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

- 43 The leadership and management of the school are good, are beneficial to pupils' learning and progress and have been sustained since the previous inspection. The headteacher provides clear direction and a firm steer for school improvement and development. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff, who are hard working, carrying out their delegated tasks conscientiously. The special educational needs co-ordinator has been hindered in her overview of provision by a lack of non-contact time but this has not been detrimental to the pupils' progress, as much has been done in her own time. However, with the number of pupils on the register, time is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the individual education plans and to keep the records up to date. The action taken in response to the key issues identified in the previous inspection report has been successful in overcoming most of the weaknesses. The school is successful in meeting its aims with the exception of actively encouraging closer partnership between home and school. The way in which the staff have responded to and implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been a key factor in the improvement in pupils' attainment in these subjects. The thorough analysis of data from tests is another important factor in the school's success. Challenging targets for improvement have been set which the school partially reached last year and is likely to reach and exceed this year.
- 44 The governors are committed to supporting the school but most work full-time and this makes it difficult for them to spend as much time in the school as they would like. They fulfil all their statutory obligations and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Individual governors are linked to curriculum subjects and liaise with the co-ordinators to monitor the progress of the action plan for each subject. This enables governors to keep abreast of developments and improvements. The governors discuss and agree the school development plan devised by the headteacher and staff. However, the discussions are not based on a strategic analysis of the schools' needs in the longer term. Consequently, the plan only covers a period of one year and is produced following publication of the budget figures. There is a lack of strategic planning for the longer-term improvement and development of the school as a whole and to which the three-year financial plan is clearly linked. This is even more important as the school is facing falls in the number of pupils on roll in the coming years and has not considered the possible implications.

- 45 There are good procedures for monitoring teaching, pupils' attainment and progress and for supporting the professional development of staff. There is a good strategy for appraising the work of teachers and for identifying the professional development needs of individual members of staff. All teachers have targets for improvement. The headteacher has carried out most of the monitoring to date but other staff are now becoming more involved. These procedures are indicative of the school's commitment to improvement and inspectors judge the school to have the capacity to improve further. The induction procedures for newly qualified teachers are good and teachers say they feel well supported.
- 46 There are sufficient staff to keep reception and Year 1 classes to 30, or less, pupils but classes in all other year groups exceed this number. The larger numbers in classes do not have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress, as teachers without class responsibilities teach groups for literacy and numeracy. There is a good number of classroom support assistants who offer good support and promote pupils' learning and progress. There is a good range of subject expertise amongst the staff and specialist teaching is used effectively at Key Stage 2 to give more pupils the opportunity to benefit from this specialist knowledge. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and standards. The school also benefits from having two leading literacy teachers and one leading numeracy teacher. This is a local education authority initiative, which identifies good practitioners who then give demonstration lessons for teachers from other schools. Such a lesson took place during the inspection when four teachers from other schools came to observe a literacy hour. Resources for learning are adequate when taken overall. The libraries contain an adequate range of fiction and non-fiction books. The setting up of the computer suite now gives all pupils access to computers each week and some classes have computers to practise the skills taught. Whilst unsatisfactory at the time of the inspection additional learning resources for information technology will soon be available. For children under five there are no large wheeled toys available. There is sufficient accommodation, which is mostly well maintained. However, the toilets used by pupils in the reception classes are in urgent need of refurbishment. The playing field situated close by is rarely used for athletics and games for health and safety reasons; dog fouling being the major problem.
- 47 The school makes unsatisfactory strategic use of its financial resources. Spending decisions are not linked clearly enough to school priorities through a comprehensive, whole school development plan which extends for longer than one year. The current school improvement plan concentrates exclusively on one year's curriculum and staff development and the expenditure of a very small proportion of the budget. This part of the planning is good and funds allocated for specific purposes have been properly spent for those purposes. However, the school has become too focused on these short term funds instead of standing back and taking a longer term strategic view of the school's needs and how to best meet them with all the funds available. Although the school plans its budget carefully and accurately, and projects current expenditure patterns several years ahead, it keeps too rigidly to historic expenditure patterns. It is therefore not an effective means for allocating resources to areas with the highest priority. Once funds have been allocated, financial control is good. Governors monitor the progress of expenditure against budget to ensure financial propriety. The recommendations of the most recent audit report are being implemented.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48 In order for this good school to improve further, the headteacher and governors should:

1. Improve progress in information technology as identified in the school development plan by:

- increasing staff knowledge and confidence in using computers and a range of software so they can fully support pupils' learning;
- fully implementing the scheme of work and the action plan for the development of the subject already formulated;
- extending the resources available using the National Grid for Learning funding now available to the school;
- making better use of information technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects, especially English;
- setting targets for improvement and measuring progress towards them.

Discussed in paragraphs 9, 26, 103 - 109

2. Improve strategic planning by:

- planning for more than one year in the school development plan;
- Including all aspects for development in the school improvement plan, prioritising in order of importance and linking financial planning to the priorities identified.

Discussed in paragraphs 44, 47.

3. Improve the procedures for working in partnership with parents by:

- seeking ways to obtain parents' views, and giving these due consideration;
- telling parents clearly how best they can work in closer partnership with the school;
- encouraging parents of pupils with special educational needs to be more involved in discussing their children's needs.

Discussed in paragraphs 38 - 42

In addition the governors should consider including the following minor issues in the action plan:

1. Improving the condition of the toilets in the reception classes.  
Discussed in paragraph 35.

2. Improving procedures for the completion of attendance registers so that reasons for absence can be monitored more effectively.  
Discussed in paragraph 36.

3. Increasing the range of extra-curricular activities provided.  
Discussed in paragraph 30.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	84
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	11	53	28	2	1	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	429
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	56

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	93

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.0	School data	0.5
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year. These figures are for 1998/9.

### 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	31	34	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	27
	Girls	27	26	30
	Total	53	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82(73)	83 (73)	88 (81)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	30
	Girls	28	31	33
	Total	54	59	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (75)	91(91)	97 (84)
	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	31	29	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	23
	Girls	21	16	23
	Total	43	39	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	65 (62)	77 (78)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	21	22
	Girls	19	16	21
	Total	38	37	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (64)	62 (70)	72 (80)
	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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	361
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	30.6

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	643,518
Total expenditure	647,723
Expenditure per pupil	1,507
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,670
Balance carried forward to next year	21,465

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	429
Number of questionnaires returned	67

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	39	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	36	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	51	1	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	46	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	58	33	6	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	51	6	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	31	6	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	30	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	34	52	10	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	37	3	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	39	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	30	18	9	24

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents expressed concern at classes being split up at the end of each year and children separated from their friends. They are unable to play together at playtimes because of the way classes are allocated to different areas of the playground. Parents felt their concerns had not been listened to.

## **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**

- 49 Education for children under-five is provided in two reception classes. On entry into the reception year, the children's attainment is well below the level expected of children of their age, but the full ability range is represented. At the time of the inspection, approximately 25 percent of the children were still under the age of five. On entry to compulsory education soon after becoming five, the majority of children have reached the Desirable Learning Outcomes for five year olds in all areas of learning, with the higher attaining children working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team to promote high educational standards. Children make good progress in their early years education and make particularly good progress in their personal and social development. The curriculum is well planned and provides a broad and balanced programme of learning experiences suitable for children under five. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection in 1996 and is well placed to continue to provide children with a good start to their education.
- 50 The personal and social development of the children under five is very good and is a strength of the provision. Standards are above average by the age of five. Children demonstrate their growing independence as they work quietly during independent and group activities. Children are aware that some activities in the classroom have to be shared; for example, they know that only three children can play in the Teddy Bears picnic area, and patiently wait until it is their turn. Children demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of others as they listen to the views and opinions of other children during whole class discussions. The majority of children are confident, readily engaging in discussions about their work. Relationships in both classes are very good. The children are polite and respectful to their teachers and other helpers in the classroom. Children are friendly, self-assured and behave well; they follow classroom rules, know the difference between right and wrong and are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others. Classroom resources are used carefully; for example hand lenses are used appropriately when looking closely at seeds and sunflowers. Children show a sense of wonder when looking at new things; this was particularly evident as the children saw seeds under the hand lens for the first time. They sit quietly in assembly to hear a story and respond with respect during a shared prayer. Children can concentrate on their tasks and activities for extended periods, either when listening carefully to a book during the Literacy Hour, or when persevering with the careful cutting out of a ladybird shape. Children select their own activities during free choice periods and settle down to share the activity with others. They dress and undress without fuss for their physical education lessons and move about the school with a developing sense of confidence. Teaching is good as every opportunity is taken to develop the children's skills. All adults provide the children with a good example in personal and social skills.

- 51 In language and literacy standards are average by the age of five. Children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Children listen to their teachers and others during shared stories. In a discussion about places that would be suitable for a picnic, they offered very sensible suggestions and knew that Market Street would not be a good place because it is too busy. Vocabulary skills are good as children talk about things they might find in a park; for example, *we would find swings, a slide and a nice bench to sit on*. Children talk confidently about their own experiences of picnics on sunny and wet days. Listening skills are developed well as children listen intently to taped stories, or listen and responded to the instructions given during a dance lesson. When reading, children joined in enthusiastically with the story of *The Hungry Giant* in the big book. They recognise many familiar words, especially words beginning with the letter of the week *w*, for example, *was, will and what*. Children know how books are organised and that authors write stories in books. Favourite stories and rhymes are re-visited and enjoyed. Children know the difference between storybooks, information books and simple dictionaries. Higher attaining children can confidently find words in a simple dictionary by looking for the initial letter. Early writing skills are very well promoted as children practise writing the letter and word of the week. Their letters are carefully written, with the majority of children forming their letters with accuracy. Notes, shopping lists and picnic invitations are written with enthusiasm, with *invitations to the picnic* posted in the class post box. Teaching in this area of learning is good, and it is often very good. All adults are competent in teaching basic skills in literacy and do not miss opportunities which arise to promote understanding of phonics.
- 52 Children make good progress in developing their mathematical understanding and standards are average by the age of five. They sort coins into bronze, silver and gold and calculate simple amounts when shopping. Children read and write numbers to 10 and fill in the missing numbers on a number line. Higher attaining children successfully estimate the number of 2-D shapes that will fit into an oblong shape, whilst lower attaining children follow and continue a 2-D shape pattern. The majority of children can count on from a given number and can successfully subtract 3 from 5 to leave 2. The ability to recognise 2-D and 3-D shapes and copy and repeat symmetrical patterns is well established. Children use their increasing understanding of mathematical language to understand the difference between 'smaller' and 'bigger', 'above', 'behind', 'below' and 'beside'. Good progress is made in the knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics because teaching is good. Activities are interesting, well prepared, challenging and often linked to real life experiences. Support assistants give clear instructions and provide valuable help to the children.
- 53 Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed well and they attain levels that are at least average by the age of five. Children begin to understand and appreciate the natural world as they plant seeds. They know that plants and seeds need special conditions to grow and flourish, caring carefully for their own sunflower seeds. Children know that animals and insects are living creatures that need special care and attention, needing to be handled carefully. Children's knowledge and understanding of their local environment is good; for example, they know that Market Street is a very busy place, but that Lewis Road Park is much quieter and a safer place to play. Teachers use the opportunity to explore the local environment to look at houses and homes, for example, children looked at terraced houses in Manchester Road, then used their technology and creative skills to make models of houses with doors, windows and roofs. Geographical and historical skills are developed as children place their model houses on a map and appreciate that some houses are new whilst others are much older. Early information technology skills are developed as children independently load a tape into a tape recorder and switch on the *play* button. Computer skills are developed as they experience using a keyboard to write

their names, or use a simple program to draw *computer homes*. Pupils make toys that push or pull, rock backwards and forwards, or have moving parts. Early concepts of science are developed as children look carefully at seeds using hand lenses and observe the process of germination. Teaching is good. Through appropriate topics the children gain knowledge and skills which provide a good foundation for future work in science, history and geography.

- 54 Children make good progress in their physical development and standards are average by the age of five. In physical education lessons, they warm energetically by shaking their arms and legs and jog in time to the music. In a dance lesson, children respond well to music, clapping and tapping to the beat. They stride, jog and jump; making *wide steps and quiet strides* at the teacher's commands. Children use the hard outdoor playground area for small games and play with balls, hoops, ropes and bean bags. They are unable to use large wheeled toys for independent or co-operative play because of a lack of equipment. When using the large indoor hall space, children use the space well and are aware of how to move to keep themselves and other children safe. They respond quickly to instructions and show enjoyment when moving. Children use scissors skilfully, and are given many opportunities to cut out, glue, paint and crayon to develop their handing skills. Construction kits, jigsaws and shape games are handled appropriately. Teaching is good and enables the children to make good progress.
- 55 Standards in creative development are average by the age of five. Children's creative skills develop well as they make ladybirds and spiders for their Teddy Bear's picnic area, and carefully paint the houses they made for their terrace street and countryside areas. Paintings and drawings are carefully executed, showing a growing awareness of shape, line and colour. When visiting the nearby Lewis Street Park, they observed how leaves change shape and colour in the autumn and spring, and looked carefully at the form and colour of a sunflower. Sound is explored as children listen to music, or use percussion instruments to make *loud sounds* or *happy sounds*. Children join in with Key Stage 1 pupils in assembly and sing songs and hymns responsively, reflecting a good understanding of the mood of the music. The creative play area reflecting the Teddy Bear's picnic is used for imaginative play as children *go into the woods* to enjoy a picnic with the bears. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Many varied activities are provided which encourage the development of creativity.
- 56 The teaching of under-fives is always good, with examples of very good and excellent teaching. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of how young children learn and develop, resulting in carefully planned learning activities which build on what the children already know and then challenge and extend their learning. Children's progress is monitored by frequent assessment, which is used to help teachers in planning future lessons. Expectations of both work and behaviour are high and children respond to this by behaving in a very mature way, producing good quality work. A high priority is given to the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, with particular emphasis on developing good speaking and listening skills. Support assistants are used very effectively. They provide good support for pupils with special educational needs and to small groups working on a practical activity; this careful use of support enables all children to make good progress. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and direction to the early year's curriculum, ensuring that curriculum planning embraces the new government guidelines from September 2000, and in ensuring that standards are rigorously monitored and remain high. The relationships in classrooms are very warm and caring and children respond to this by behaving well and working hard. Children with English as an additional language are few, but they make satisfactory progress and have their needs well supported in class. Relationships with parents are effective and liaison with local playgroups and



nurseries enable children to move into their reception year smoothly.

- 57 Resources are used well and are generally good, but there is a lack of large wheeled toys. The school's accommodation for the under-fives is satisfactory in classrooms, but the toilet facilities for the reception children are very poor and require urgent attention. The outdoor learning environment is not a stimulating place for young children and lacks the opportunity for the children to take part in play interesting and stimulating play activities together.

## ENGLISH

- 58 Pupils' attainment in English at the age of seven and eleven is broadly average and standards have been sustained at similar levels to those found at the time of the previous inspection. The school's 1999 national test results in reading at the age of seven showed pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. Pupils' standards of attainment in writing at age seven were in line with the national average but were below the average for similar schools. At the age of eleven, the school's 1999 results of national tests showed pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average, but below the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows an improvement on the 1999 results with an increased proportion of eleven year olds reaching the level expected for their age, or higher, and an increased proportion at the higher level.
- 59 The National Literacy Strategy is being effectively implemented across the school. The head and staff have analysed the school's English results in great detail, and set in place realistic, though challenging, targets for improvement overall, and to ensure that both boys and girls attain in line with their ages and abilities. The school has two leading literacy teachers, whose skills and expertise are available both to colleagues and to other local authority primary schools in the area. Additional tuition has been made available for pupils with special educational needs and extra tuition has been given to better prepare pupils in Key Stage 2 for the national tests. A further feature is the extra reading practice and confidence gained via the paired reading scheme, where pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 help those in Year 3 and Year 4. All of these strategies, together with the setting of classes in Key Stage 2 and a strong lead from the subject co-ordinator, have produced demonstrable improvements.
- 60 Standards of attainment in reading at the age of seven are average and for a significant number they are above average. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress Pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills to help them in attempting to read unfamiliar words. Many of these are based on the sounds that make up words and splitting words into smaller parts. Pupils show interest in books, most read fluently, with higher attaining pupils using expression. They begin to express preferences for reading, giving simple reasons for their chosen book or author. Through reading as part of literacy hours and at other times, pupils continue to develop their skills satisfactorily at Key Stage 2. By the age of eleven, many pupils enjoy reading a wide variety of books both fiction and non-fiction. They can locate information in reference books or when using CD ROM on computers, although opportunities for this are limited. They translated most of the words to modern English when studying an extract from an original version of 'The Canterbury Tales'. They compare books by the same author and discuss the common features. When attempting to read unfamiliar words they often read the sentence again. Many pupils use the school's own and the local library and this supports their rate of progress.
- 61 Pupils' speaking and listening skills have been maintained at above average levels

since the last inspection. Pupils up to the age of seven talk easily to their friends and also respond well in the more formal classroom situations. They listen carefully to their teachers and other adults. By the age of eleven, pupils can structure their ideas in a logical manner and express their ideas and opinions clearly in a variety of situations. They show by their responses to questions that they have listened carefully. Drama is used as an enriching activity and effectively supports the development of pupils' speaking skills.

- 62 Writing standards at the age of seven are average with pupils writing about events in their daily lives and stories read to them in class. They understand simple story structure and show increasing understanding of sentence structure and the correct use of capital letters and full stops. Higher attaining pupils begin to use question marks and speech marks in their writing. Spelling of the most commonly used words is usually accurate and pupils make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds and spelling patterns when attempting to write unfamiliar words. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 and standards by the age of eleven are average. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, for example when writing letters of complaint, writing accounts or poetry, using punctuation correctly and usually spelling words accurately. They use carefully chosen words for effect in their poems. Their writing skills are broadened through their positive response to a range of texts, comprehension and grammatical activities and drafting and redrafting their work, showing improvement. Handwriting is good. Pupils in Year 1 begin to join up writing, a logical development of the letter shapes taught in the reception classes, and most have a legible, often neat hand by the end of the key stage. This is well developed across Key Stage 2 and by the end of their time in school, most children's work is neatly written and well presented. A feature which greatly enriches pupils' writing is the strong links made with other curriculum areas, for example, in history. The historical periods and famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, provide both a stimulus to writing and a broadening of historical awareness. The new computer suite is beginning to make a contribution to pupils' word processing skills and their subsequent written work, although this remains an area for development.
- 63 The majority of pupils in both key stages approach their work in a positive and committed manner, and give their work their full attention. Behaviour in classes is of good quality and makes a positive contribution to the pupils' progress in lessons.
- 64 The quality of teaching in each key stage is good overall with several examples of very good and occasionally excellent teaching observed. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers in both key stages demonstrate a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use it effectively. This is a significant factor in the improving progress evident in lessons. Reading is effectively taught, with teachers using a satisfactory range of strategies including phonics and providing some opportunities for pupils to engage in reading outside the literacy hours. Classroom assistants are deployed well to provide good support for small groups. This is a significant factor in the progress made by pupils. Teachers provide an interesting range of individual or group activities that build effectively upon what pupils already know. Teachers end lessons effectively by reflecting on what has been learned, assessing pupils' understanding and celebrating achievement. Where teaching is most effective, teachers demonstrate personal enthusiasm for the work in hand and create a motivating atmosphere in which good learning can take place. Good teaching is evident where teachers explore shared-reading activities in such a way as to develop pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the text being studied as a piece of literature and not simply for the language skills used in the passage. Very good progress was made in lessons where the group activities provided by the teacher were closely linked to the text studied, rather than isolated English skills activities. For

example, in Year 3 where pupils' questioning skills were carefully used by the teacher to enhance their awareness of 'Fantastic Mr Fox' or in Year 5 where pupils linked the events in the story 'The Machine Gunner' to their own views, beliefs and wider reading.

- 65 The subject is well led and co-ordinated. The school has invested a great deal of time and money in resources and training for the National Literacy Strategy. The school has two libraries. The one in the infants building is spacious and has a satisfactory range of books which are well-stored and accessible to pupils. The junior library shares accommodation with the computer suite. It has a satisfactory range of books which are well stored and arranged, and pupils act well as monitors tidying, replacing and sometimes helping to find books. However, the situation of the Year 6 pupils in mobile' classrooms leads to insufficient use of the library as a support for research and development of pupils' independent work. The school has remedied the weakness in resources noted in the previous inspection report.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 66 Standards are improving and are now broadly average for pupils aged seven and eleven. The 1999 national test results for eleven year olds were below the national average and were well below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the tests was also well below the national average. A notable feature was the significant underachievement of girls. Taken over the last four years, attainment at the age of 11 was below the national average. Inspection findings show standards are now improving although are not yet matching last inspection findings when standards were judged to be above the national average. However, most teachers are successfully developing their expertise in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and the benefit to pupils is now evident in the good rate of learning in lessons. In addition, the analysis of test results and strengths and weaknesses identified are shared with the staff resulting in realistic targets being set for all pupils. Effective strategies are now in place to improve the attainment of girls. There is a clear trend of rising standards in both key stages. The attainment of the large majority of pupils aged seven, and of over seven tenths of eleven year olds is average.

- 67 The 1999 test and assessment results for seven year olds, indicate that attainment was well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. National results have been steady over the past four years but in recent years the school's results have fallen to well below the average. However, the attainment of pupils currently aged seven is now average and the majority of pupils are making good progress.
- 68 By the age of seven, almost all pupils add and subtract accurately and many also understand multiplication and division. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a sound knowledge of number facts to 20. They can identify tens and units and can arrange numbers to 100 in order. They know that there are different ways of arriving at the same answer, and by the end of the key stage, recognise that, for example,  $7 + 13$  is the same as  $24 - 4$ . They have a good understanding that addition can be done in any order and higher attainers recognise simple number patterns and relationships between numbers and are developing the confidence to predict simple number relationships. They recognise and describe the names of common shapes such as rectangles, circles and triangles. The higher attainers are able to identify three-dimensional shapes such as cylinders, pyramids and cuboids. The large majority, have a good knowledge of their tables, counting in multiples of 5,6,8 and 10 with real skill. They use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and symbols. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are making good progress.
- 69 By the age of eleven, most pupils understand place value to 1,000. They can multiply whole numbers by 10 and multiples of 10. Most pupils add and subtract numbers to one decimal place in their heads. The majority also add and subtract numbers to two decimal places on paper. Higher attaining pupils use all four number operations to two decimal places and can calculate fractions and percentages of numbers and quantities. For example in Year 5, pupils involved in data handling were able to interpret accurately 'pie chart information and record their results in fractions and decimal fractions. They are developing good strategies for solving problems, identifying the important parts of the information and using approximation and rounding to estimate the answer. As they move through the key stage, pupils build on their previous learning and develop a sound understanding of shape and space, learning to recognise reflective symmetry in two-dimensional shapes. By Year 6, therefore, the majority of pupils can sketch the reflection of a simple shape in two mirror lines at right angles, where the sides of the shapes are parallel or perpendicular to the mirror line.
- 70 The National Numeracy Strategy is being effectively implemented throughout the school. Pupils' understanding of mathematical terminology is well developed mainly because it is used to good effect by the teachers in lesson introductions and whilst explaining the targets set. However there are still too few opportunities for pupils' to solve mathematical problems by the use and application of mathematics. This aspect is underdeveloped and pupils are not always confident in which number operation to use. Also, the majority of pupils have too few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. The presentation of pupils' work is satisfactory overall and is good in those lessons where teachers have high expectations. Good use is made of information technology, for example in data handling.
- 71 The progress made by most pupils throughout both key stages is good overall, with very good progress in some classes. For pupils in one Year 2 and one Year 4 class, the very good rate of progress relates directly to the high degree of challenge and the rigour of pace set by the teachers. Pupils are given a range of challenging tasks and the quality of questioning results in pupils extending their knowledge and

understanding of mathematical processes. Throughout both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set for them.

- 72 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. It was at least good in 60 per cent of lessons observed during the inspection and satisfactory in all other lessons with the exception of a single lesson in each key stage. At Key Stage 1, teaching is good or better in 75 per cent of lessons and the rest are satisfactory except for one unsatisfactory lesson. In Key Stage 2, 50 per cent of lessons are good or better, with the rest satisfactory, except for one poor lesson. Where the teaching is very good, as in a Year 2 lesson, a brisk pace is sustained throughout. The quality of questioning deepens pupils understanding of number. It was with real delight that pupils working with three consecutive numbers discovered the relationship of the middle number to the first and final number. Higher attaining pupils suggested extensions and were able to make a general statement. This led to very effective learning. Here, and in a very good Year 4 lesson, the effective questioning probed pupils' prior knowledge and the teachers used their responses well to challenge their thinking and move them on. Common features of the better teaching are high expectations, good subject knowledge and effective use of assessment to inform lesson planning so work is well matched to the pupils' needs and enables them to make good progress. Where teaching has significant weaknesses and is poor, planning is not sufficiently detailed. Pupils are unclear on what they are supposed to be learning and classroom management is poor resulting in bad behaviour and underachievement.
- 73 Where teaching is good pupils' attitudes to mathematics are also good. They work with commitment and enthusiasm and respond well to questions in whole class sessions. In the few instances where behaviour was inappropriate it directly related to the poor management strategies of the teachers concerned.
- 74 Observations during the inspection indicate that the grouping of pupils according to their ability in Key Stage 2 is effective. Pupils are making better progress and there is now no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. There is flexibility in the system allowing pupils to move within the settings. Teachers are making good use of the Numeracy Strategy. The setting of learning targets is proving effective in helping to raise standards. Lessons are suitably planned and mostly include specific objectives. Lessons begin with good introductions. Good questioning techniques are used to support and extend pupils' learning. Time towards the end of lessons is generally well used to assess the learning and point up future learning goals. Teachers meet in year groups to ensure consistency and progression between classes. The provision of regular homework is effectively re-enforcing learning. However, the school's marking system is inconsistently applied. Overall, marking of pupils' work does not indicate the next stage of learning.
- 75 Informative displays of mathematical work have a high profile in the school. They are present in all classes and circulating areas. Pupils develop their skills of numeracy in other subjects satisfactorily at both key stages. For example, work on data handling in information technology and measuring in science.

- 76 The mathematics curriculum is well planned. Comprehensive long, medium and short term planning ensures that pupils make good progress as they mature. The National Numeracy Strategy is being effectively implemented. The co-ordinator works closely with the headteacher, key stage co-ordinators and the local authority mathematics advisor. This is a very good partnership and the intensive support from the local education authority is helping to improve standards throughout the school. The recently appointed leading mathematics teacher, (good practitioners identified by the local education authority) will provide good support for the school in its efforts to achieve higher standards. There is regular checking of teachers' planning and monitoring of teaching. Assessment procedures are good.

## SCIENCE

- 77 Standards at age seven and eleven are just above national averages. Inspection findings represent an improvement in the standard of attainment since the previous inspection. During this inspection no significant differences were noted between the attainment of boys and girls. Over the past three years the school has made good progress in improving its provision for the subject. The main factors in this improvement have been time management, more emphasis on investigative work, the maintenance of the good standard of teaching noted in the last report and the continued development of the science policy and scheme. The subject co-ordinator has analysed both national and school based test results to look for areas where they can be improved. This analysis has led to the adoption of a new scheme of work for the subject that ensures that pupils have suitable opportunities to develop their skills and a more focused approach to what is taught.
- 78 Pupils in Year 1 know the conditions that living things need in order to survive, for example, light and water. They carry out simple experiments and record their results using bar charts. By the age of seven, pupils know that materials have different properties and that some can be changed, for example, melting ice. They understand simple life processes such as the function of seeds and know the different parts of flowering plants. When working with electrical circuits, pupils are able to identify those that are complete and will work. They understand the need for fair testing. When recording their experiments, for example, investigating the effect of forces when going down a slide, they use and extend their literacy skills effectively. By the age of eleven, pupils have developed their scientific skills and are able to make simple predictions, test them and record their findings in a number of different ways. Line and bar graphs, charts and written descriptions are used to show results. Pupils have good understanding for their age of the human eye and ear and carry out investigations into sight and hearing. They draw conclusions from their observations during experiments. Pupils identify various situations that cause materials to change, for example, the evaporation of liquids.
- 79 The standard of teaching in both key stages is good and this has a beneficial effect on the learning and the pupils' attitudes towards the subject. The planning of lessons is detailed and provides a good mixture of explanation by the teacher and practical work. Pupils with special educational needs are given work suited to their ability and support staff are used well. Teachers provide a logical sequence of work by following the agreed scheme. The subject knowledge of the teachers is good overall and this results in clear explanations, a good use of the vocabulary of the subject and a brisk pace to lessons. Assessment is carried out at the end of each unit of work and the results are recorded and used effectively to inform future planning. In lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in their learning. For example, pupils in a Year 4 class are making good progress in their understanding of the way their muscles work to control their body movements. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in their

understanding of the different processes that shape their world. In both key stages, pupils develop their awareness of the need for safety when using equipment of any kind.

- 80 Pupils respond well to all of these elements and demonstrate their enthusiasm for the subject by working hard and co-operating with their teachers. The majority take a pride in their work and demonstrate enthusiasm when discussing it. They are well behaved, share resources and co-operate effectively with each other when working in groups. Despite the good overall teaching, however, there is an inconsistency in the quality of marking which has a detrimental effect on the work produced in some year groups. Marking is sometimes confined to ticks and crosses and very little else. The result of this inconsistency is that the work of a minority of pupils is untidy and disorganised.
- 81 The management of the subject by the co-ordinator is good. Although no classroom monitoring is possible the co-ordinator looks at all planning, checking it against the scheme of work to ensure that it is fully covered. Pupils' record sheets are reviewed and the results used to formulate future development in the subject. For example, the use of a Year 6 teacher with secure subject knowledge to teach science in Year 5 enables pupils to develop their skills and understanding and so work at higher levels. The scheme of work has already been adapted in the light of experience and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to structure some of the programmes of study to meet the new requirements.

## **ART**

- 82 Standards are average at the age of 7, rise above average by the age of 11 and have been sustained since the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over their time in the school, particularly in developing skills in observational drawing. These skills support pupils' learning in other subjects such as science where accurate drawing of diagrams is required, and in geography and history, for example, in Year 5 when drawing pictures of life in India and recording their visit to Gawsorth Hall. The intricate detail on the Tudor furniture, including a four-poster bed, was very well represented in pupils' work and the use of shading was equally good.
- 83 At Key Stage 1, pupils make good attempts at representing what they see such as when painting pictures of their favourite toys and their teachers. They begin to develop their observational skills, looking carefully at the different features of their teachers. Their self-portraits begin to show detail such as eyebrows and eyelashes. They explore and experiment with a range of media and materials, for example, they begin to understand the use of texture in their work when making clay houses as part of a montage. They understand that different thicknesses of paint give different textures to finished models. Pencil drawings by Year 2 pupils in response to music successfully capture the mood of the music. For example, a pair of cats stalking in the rain were drawn in response to Montagues and Capulets by Prokofiev, and a country scene of a pond and trees in response to Morning from the Peer Gynt suite. The latter was of particularly good quality for the age of the pupil, with the reflection of the trees clearly shown in the water. Paintings on display show good use of line and colour, for example the bowls of cacti. The pupils' rate of progress begins to improve in Year 2 and becomes good.

- 84 Pupils continue to build on these experiences in Key Stage 2, gaining secure knowledge of famous artists and the techniques they used, and in developing their own skills and techniques. By the age of 11, pupils are confident in drawing and painting, although opportunities for painting are less evident in Key Stage 2 work on display. Their paintings inspired by the work of Monet show their ability to use fine brushes and small strokes well to create the desired effect. Pupils select the picture they wish to paint and have some choice over their work in this respect, but their sketchbooks and work on display show they have little choice over the materials they use. This does not allow pupils the opportunities to make preferences for materials they wish to use and restricts their progress in these areas. The work based on patterns by William Morris shows close attention to detail and good use of line, colour and tone. Pupils develop their skills in modelling, for example when making Greek vases from papier-mache and making three-dimensional models of landscapes. This work again is of a high quality, joining three slabs of clay to a base to give the effect of waves on the sea. There are few opportunities for pupils to choose what they paint and this hinders the development of their creativity. There is little evidence of work in textiles, although the scheme of work shows adequate coverage of this aspect.
- 85 Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for the subject, particularly in Key Stage 2 where teachers with talent in the subject offer good quality support during lessons which enables pupils to succeed and have pride in their finished work. Pupils work well together, realising the need to leave an object in the same position once others have started to draw. They work very quietly, such is the level of concentration. They take great care not to spoil the work of others, accept advice and guidance given and tidy away carefully. They evaluate each other's work, giving reasoned judgements about why it is good. By Year 5, they are able to say what they have learned, or how their work has improved during the lesson.
- 86 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 and this enables pupils to progress from the low levels of development evident on entry, with progress being good in the junior classes. There was an example of excellent teaching at Key Stage 2, where the lesson was well prepared with sufficient resources for all pupils to have close sight of what they are drawing. The teacher has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort, maintains a brisk pace whilst allowing them a degree of choice over their work. Time deadlines for the completion of drawings are set and pupils are expected to organise their work within that time. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is less effective at times when the teacher's lack confidence in teaching the subject and do not give sufficient support by way of demonstration before expecting pupils to draw their own self-portrait. Resources of good quality are available and used effectively.
- 87 The co-ordinator has only been in the post since January 2000 but has already drawn up a good action plan and new scheme of work for the development of the subject. She has had some influence over the quality of displays which are good and add much to the pleasant environment within the school. The weaknesses in the provision in Key Stage 2, identified in the previous report, have been overcome. The strength in the use of sketchbooks has been maintained and the co-ordinator has plans to extend the use of these to Key Stage 1 to show pupils' progress over time.



## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 88 Standards in design and technology are average at the age of seven and eleven years of age. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection. Evidence of standards was obtained from a limited number of lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work and looking at the portfolio for the subject kept by the co-ordinator. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to use a variety of materials ranging from construction apparatus to paper. Pupils in the reception class, for example, have used paper to make different kinds of hats under the general heading of "People who help us." While doing this work they have developed their paper folding skills. In a link to music, pupils in Year 1, have drawn the designs for musical instruments, listing the materials needed. By the age of seven, pupils have considered the making of a sandwich from the point of view of healthy and unhealthy ingredients thus linking their design and technology work to science. As part of their work on making a sandwich pupils produced a recipe which listed the sequence of events for making one.
- 89 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their ability to follow the design process by producing descriptions of how to make pop-up flowers, listing the materials, methods to be used and a description of the finished product. Pupils are able to evaluate their work. For example, after completing work on the making of a "mouse house" pupils in Year 5 completed the project by producing a written evaluation. By the age of eleven, pupils use their scientific knowledge to complete an assignment, for example, they make a creature or an object that uses two light bulbs and can be switched on and off. Pupils develop satisfactorily their ability to evaluate articles in terms of their practical use, design, strength and colour. They understand that the potential user is an important consideration when designing anything.
- 90 In both key stages pupils demonstrate an enthusiasm for the subject and a pride in what they produce. They are willing to keep trying if at first their work does not meet the criteria outlined for the task. A strong feature of the lessons observed was the way in which pupils co-operated with, and helped, each other.
- 91 Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages and supports the pupils' acquisition of skills and knowledge. The teachers plan the sessions well, with tasks that are well-organised and linked to clear learning objectives. They demonstrate effectively the techniques to be used and make good use of materials. Lessons generally provide satisfactory learning experiences for the pupils in which they are encouraged to develop their own ideas. However, the level of noise in some classrooms is too high for careful, thoughtful work.
- 92 The subject has strong links to other curriculum areas. In Year 4, in a clear link to geography, pupils have noted some of the different types of bread to be found in the world. The literacy skills of pupils are developed through their work in the subject, for example, the development of their ability to follow verbal and written instructions and explain what they are doing when asked. In the work scrutinised there were a number of examples of written descriptions. Pupils in Year 5 have developed their knowledge of the history of fashion by making some Tudor ruffs.

- 93 The subject co-ordinator is unable to monitor teaching directly, but checks planning termly and reviews the work in classrooms. The scheme of work enables teachers to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding at appropriate levels. Teachers assess pupils' attainment on an individual basis using their own recording methods, and this is an area identified in the management plan for future development. The co-ordinator keeps a photographic record of some of the work produced. The resources for the subject are well organised; every teacher has a list of what is available, and are kept centrally. At the time of the inspection the school's policy was in the process of being reviewed.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 94 The previous inspection found that attainment in geography was above average at the age of seven and average at the age of eleven. From the lesson observations, discussions with pupils and teachers and examination of pupils' work and school displays, inspection findings show attainment in geography is similarly above average at the age of seven, and has improved to be above average at the age of eleven. Most pupils make good progress in acquiring skills and knowledge over time. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
- 95 In Year 1, pupils know about the seasons, they keep simple weather records, start to become familiar with maps of the British Isles and begin to acquire simple mapping skills using their journeys to school as a basis for map construction. They also widen their geographical vocabulary and knowledge of localities world-wide by using the 'Barnaby Bear' project. Pupils in Year 2 have well developed mapping skills and sound knowledge of the local area of Droylsden. They can also make sketch plans of their school and classrooms. Visits and trips further afield are a strong feature of the geography curriculum and give pupils first hand experiences which support the rate of learning. Year 1 pupils have visited St Andrew's Church and Stamford Park in Stalybridge, whilst Year 2 pupils have travelled to Thurstaston on the River Dee estuary. This latter trip has enabled them to describe and make comparisons between each area's physical and human features. High quality displays in classes, the library and hall, all enrich geography at Key Stage 1.
- 96 In Year 3, pupils used a visit to the Moravian Settlement in Droylsden to extend their geographic knowledge. Year 4 pupils visit the village of Little Lever and make good gains in their knowledge of other localities and geographical features. Their preparations include mapping skills and a detailed consideration of both the features they will see and giving simple reasons for their development. Year 5 pupils use the school's immediate locality and examine a range of environmental issues, for example, noise pollution. Pupils in Year 6 use walks to a local canal and to the River Medlock as stimuli and references for their work and understand river features and their effects on the landscape. In both key stages, progress in learning is good. Teaching, from lesson observations and completed work seen, is of good quality at both key stages. Classes are well-prepared and managed. Teachers know the subject well and use their own enthusiasm to raise pupils' levels of knowledge, understanding, interest and involvement. A number of adults also give valuable support to the visits. Resources, such as aerial and other photographs, maps, both printed and specially drawn by staff and books are all used well to enhance the quality of lessons taught and promote the subject's vocabulary and skills.
- 97 Pupils enjoy the subject and this aids their good rate of learning. They work well

together and produce some well-presented work. Issues affecting the environment are taught well through geography. Co-ordination of the subject is well managed. The school has a good scheme of work and the co-ordinator is working with colleagues to adapt the existing programme of study to conform to the new government guidelines, whilst retaining the good features of present provision. Resources for the subject are sufficient, though they will need re-examining in the light of the new requirements. There are insufficient links with the information technology curriculum; this is an area for development.

## **HISTORY**

- 98 The previous inspection report stated that pupils' attainment in history was average for seven and eleven year olds. Inspection findings from observing lessons, discussions with teachers and pupils, and examining pupils work in books and on display show that pupils' attainment is above average for seven and eleven year olds and progress in learning is good for most pupils at each key stage. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
- 99 Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a good sense of the order in which events in history occur and enquiry skills through studying time, the calendar and seasons together with old and new objects. In Year 2, pupils begin to understand the differences in the way of life of people in Victorian times. In Year 3, pupils acquire knowledge about Romans, Vikings and Saxons and link them to a time line. Year 4 study the Ancient Greeks, and know about the links to the Olympic Games and their alphabet. Year 5 pupils know about life in Tudor times and, through an effective link with geography, changes in Droylsden from Victorian times. In Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of the causes, effects and leading figures in World War 2 and can relate them to family experiences through the recollections of their grandparents. Pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of major periods in history at a good rate and many achieve their full potential. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils enjoy their lessons and, when spoken to, readily recall work done previously.
- 100 The lessons seen and the work examined show that teaching at both key stages is of good quality. Strong, positive features are teacher enthusiasm and subject knowledge, effective use of visits, for example, to the Manchester Museum of Egyptology or to Gawsworth Hall, and well-chosen visitors – some interesting reminiscences of 'life as an evacuee' were shared with Year 6 pupils who had prepared some relevant questions for their guest. A great deal of enrichment and extension of curricular time are created by the very strong links with literacy.
- 101 Historical figures and events often feature in reading and in written work. The very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred when a lack of pace and insufficiently challenging questioning caused pupil inattention and unsatisfactory progress in learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress. The subject is being co-ordinated temporarily by the headteacher owing to the co-ordinator being absent. The scheme of work is being revised to match national guidance and resources have been ordered for this purpose. Although there are some links with information technology, these are under-developed at present. Insufficient use is made of the library at Key Stage 2 to develop pupils' research skills.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 102 Attainment at the age of seven and eleven is below average. This was a key issue for development in the previous inspection and although satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous report, there is still further work to be done. All pupils now have weekly lessons in which specific computer skills are taught and there is effective use of a teacher with secure subject knowledge to teach several Key Stage 2 classes. Pupils are now making good progress in lessons, but it will take a little longer for standards to rise to average levels. The new subject co-ordinator has successfully identified the main strengths and weaknesses of provision within the school and has written a very clear strategy to move the school forward. The lack of resources, including computers and suitable programs has been a major stumbling block to pupils' progress. The resources have improved. However, pupils are unable to fulfil all the requirements of the controlling, monitoring and modelling elements of the curriculum because the resources are not there for them to do so. However, many positive features are clearly evident. Staff are being well trained by the co-ordinator, are developing their skills at an appropriate pace and have a positive attitude to the subject. A computer suite has been created and is being used regularly by all pupils to develop specific skills. Most pupils are now making good progress in lessons and are enthusiastic in their attitude to learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress. The recent bid for the National Grid for Learning funding has been successful, and the school is well placed to develop further when the new machines arrive. The co-ordinator anticipates that the school will be achieving the expected standards in information technology by 2002 and this appears to be an accurate assessment of where the school is now and an achievable target for the future.
- 103 Five year old pupils in reception classes can use the keyboard to write their names, with capital letters correctly placed, with help from the subject co-ordinator. They draw simple house shapes using the mouse. In Year 1, all pupils use their information handling skills to gain access into a database, know how to click onto an icon bar to choose the correct file and use the mouse to *drag and drop*. They use their increasing skills to draw and print a pictogram to show information recently collected on a traffic survey. In Year 2, pupils retrieve previously stored work on a database. They enter data carefully and are beginning to appreciate that the computer will only respond to specific commands and that words not spelt correctly will not be recognised. Pupils' do not recognise that control is integral to many every day devices.
- 104 In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 appreciate that the information about previously completed work is stored in their own work file, or in the teacher's file, and they can gain access to this. They are beginning to solve simple problems; for example, inability to access a file means that they have probably loaded the program incorrectly. Pupils are beginning to access *sort cards* and choose the correct search fields when answering specific questions related to sandwich fillings. In Year 4, children can read and extract information from a simple bar chart and produce data for a new graph, but entering data is a slow process for some pupils, and many do not have the skills to correct mistakes without asking for help from the teacher. In Year 5, pupils use their developing skills to search a prepared database. They pursue straightforward lines of enquiry to select a search criteria to interrogate data on houses. Pupils realise that instructions must be specific; for example, the computer will initiate a search for houses costing 66 000, but not for £66,000. In Year 6, pupils *drag and drop* to move text and are beginning to use a *string search* and a *field search*. The school does not have access to the Internet and cannot send e-mails, therefore, pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of communication and

controlling, monitoring and modelling are not yet secure. Most pupils are making good progress in lessons in their ability to gain access, search and interrogate a database to answer questions relating to their work in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. All pupils are making good progress in their social development as they work with a partner in a mutually supportive way to solve problems.

- 105 Although pupils are often working within the required National Curriculum level in a particular aspect, for example within information handling, evidence of work in other areas of the information technology curriculum is very limited. This is specifically due to a lack of appropriate software and insecurity in teaching specific aspects of the curriculum at the higher level. As yet, the school has no Internet link and therefore the pupils do not have the opportunity to become familiar with e-mail as a form of communication, although in discussion with pupils, many already have this technology at home. This presents the school with the further problem of keeping pace with the pupils' often rapidly developing expertise at home, with parents or older brothers or sisters who are skilled at using computers.
- 106 The teaching of skills in lessons held in the computer suite at both key stages is mostly good and never less than satisfactory. Teachers have worked hard to improve their own computer skills and this is now having a positive impact on the rate of progress being made by pupils in lessons. The school is providing some specialist teaching in particular year groups; this is a clear strategy to improve the skills of pupils to prepare them for the additional new hardware, software and scheme of work that will shortly be in place. In lessons, learning objectives are made clear to pupils and the pace of lessons is appropriate to the age and existing skills of the pupils. Pupils are given opportunities to work with a partner to help, support and solve problems together. Effective cross-curricular links are made in mathematics, particularly in data handling, but information technology is not represented well enough in other areas of the curriculum. Scrutiny of work in books and on classroom walls indicates a particular weakness in using information technology to support work in English, history and geography. However, specific skills are now being taught in a systematic and progressive way and this is clearly evident as the pupil's expertise develops.
- 107 The subject co-ordinator is providing good leadership and the impact of his work in school is evident. He has a very clear grasp of what the school needs to do to improve, and is very aware that increasing resources is only one part of the answer to higher standards and that increasing staff expertise must go hand-in-hand with this. Planning now follows the new government guidance. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor the provision in school and has started to work with reception and Year 1 staff and pupils. He monitors and evaluates the work of pupils by looking at their work stored on disk. He has clearly identified the gaps in the curriculum and the resources needed to bridge the gap. He has provided good quality training, particularly in the use of the digital camera, which all staff now use enthusiastically and has used specialist teaching to *kick start* skills in Years 5 and 6. Assessment of the work being done by pupils is brief, but is being done. Extra-curricular activities are provided at St Mary's primary school and approximately 25 percent of mainly Year 4 pupils attend regularly. The co-ordinator tries to involve parents in aspects of the curriculum by sending home a termly ICT Newsletter to help keep parents informed of information technology issues.
- 108 The school has rightly identified the improvement of standards in information technology as a continuing priority and is well placed to make further improvement when the present action plan is fully implemented, resources and training extended

and information technology fully integrated into all curriculum areas to support learning.

## MUSIC

- 109 In the previous inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be average at age seven, and well above average at eleven years of age. Although the school has continued to give appropriate attention to music, due to the increased demands of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the school has not been able to maintain the standards noted in the last report. Currently, attainment at the age of seven and eleven is average. Pupils make satisfactory progress through both key stages, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language.
- 110 By the age of seven, pupils sing clearly and in tune. They perform well together in singing practice. Pupils are able to sing simple songs tunefully, keeping in time with the music. For example, in their singing practice they sang a range of songs, from memory, keeping good time, and remembering that the chorus is repeated after each verse. They are developing an awareness of patterns in music. The majority of pupils can remember and repeat a simple pattern by clapping correctly and keeping to the beat. Using untuned percussion instruments they make up their own short rhythm and sound patterns. These are usually linked to their topics. For example, they created rain, wind and lightening sounds when working on their weather topic. However, composing is at an early stage of development. Pupils listen to a wide variety of music, which includes music of other cultures and times. They are able to talk in simple terms about the sounds they hear.
- 111 Pupils in Key Stage 2, listen to and respond to music from different times and places. They are introduced mainly to the music of Western classical composers, for example, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev and Vivaldi. They are developing satisfactory listening skills being able to identify some of the instruments being played in an orchestral arrangement. Pupils in Year 5 identify keyboard, string and woodwind instruments when listening to a variety of orchestral excerpts. They perform their own rhythmic patterns using a range of percussion instruments but the quality of sounds lacks detail; little attention is given to the pace of the music or how it changes from loud to soft. Recording of their compositions is of an inconsistent quality. However, in singing, progress is good. The strength in singing results from good quality teaching. By the age of eleven, pupils sing 2 and 3 part songs with good expression, clear diction and improved voice control. A small number of boys and girls, from Years 3 to 6, learn woodwind instruments and make good progress in reading notation. Their attainment is good. They sight-read formal notation skilfully and confidently play their chosen instrument with a degree of competence. The extra-curricular choir, composed mainly of girls from Years 3 to 6, also attains high standards. The skills developed in their instrumental and singing lessons do impact on their class lessons. Pupils from Year 5 who are in the choir influenced standards achieved in the Year 5 music lesson.
- 112 The pupils are well behaved, attentive and interested. Their attitude to music, across the key stages, is good. They persevere to improve both their individual and group performances. The pupils are confident when performing in front of an audience knowing that their contribution is valued. They generally select and handle instruments with care.
- 113 Teaching at both key stages is satisfactory and generally has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are planned with learning objectives and assessment criteria clearly identified. Pupils' previous knowledge and understanding are used

particularly well in the Year 5 lesson to extend and develop skills. Performing skills, in particular singing, are taught well. There is a satisfactory pace to the lessons and practical opportunities for pupil involvement. Teachers evaluate skilfully what the pupils are able to do and provide more challenging activities. For example, pupils in a Year 6 lesson were taught to compare music from two contrasting musical traditions (Gershwin and Tchaikovsky) and respond to the differences in character and mood. Good relationships with pupils and encouragement of pupils to evaluate their work are features of the lessons seen. However, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to refine their skills in using instruments to compose their own music. This weakens the quality of teaching. Some teachers lack confidence in their teaching of this subject. There are opportunities to learn the recorder during Friday afternoon options.

- 114 The subject coordinator has a clear understanding of the school's strengths in music and the areas requiring further development. She has produced a scheme of work which provides a good basis for teachers' planning which is monitored. Currently, the impact of her expertise is limited to teaching in several classes in Key Stage 2. Resources are satisfactory and include instruments representing non-western music traditions. However, assessment procedures for monitoring the systematic development of skills are underdeveloped. There are only isolated examples of pupils' recorded work in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 115 Standards are average for pupils aged seven and eleven. Although it was not possible to observe the full range of work in physical education, teachers' planning and discussion with the subject co-ordinator and pupils indicate that the school provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. Dance, gymnastics and games are taught in Key Stage 1, with swimming included in Key Stage 2. Little provision is made for outdoor and adventurous activities and no provision made for pupils to experience outdoor activities through a residential visit. All pupils are involved in warm-up activities as part of their lessons and have a satisfactory understanding of the relationship between exercise, health and fitness. The school has maintained standards at age seven since the previous inspection and has improved standards at age eleven; skills are now taught progressively, the curriculum provides continuity between the key stages and teaching is good. Pupils' positive attitudes to physical exercise support the rate of progress at both key stages.

- 116 The National Curriculum requirement that all pupils swim safely for at least 25 metres was met by 99 percent of pupils in 1999, with 85 percent of the current pupils achieving this standard. The school estimates that almost all pupils will reach the required standard in their swimming by the end of the summer term.
- 117 In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their games skills, in developing a specific skill, for example a correct underarm throw, and in responding well to new challenges. In Year 1, games skills are developed as pupils use a bat and ball to practise their striking and ball control skills, whilst bean bags are used to practise throwing and catching activities. In Year 2, pupils develop their awareness of the safety aspects of exercise by removing jewellery, dressing correctly and moving sensibly. They listen carefully to instructions and take part enthusiastically in team games. When working independently, pupils concentrate and persevere when throwing and catching a beanbag. All pupils respond well to challenges, as activities are extended appropriately to develop their throwing and catching expertise. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set for them. Pupils who have English as an additional language are few, but make satisfactory progress in their lessons and integrate well with other pupils.
- 118 In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in lessons, particularly in the awareness of keeping to specific rules within team games, working well with others in pairs or small groups and developing correct skills in holding a cricket bat or hitting a ball accurately. In Year 4, pupils use their throwing and catching skills to work with a partner, developing pushing and pulling skills and using a correct stance. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and work hard to practise and improve their performance. In Year 5, pupils quickly get into mixed gender groups to take part in an energetic warm up activity involving a game of tig. They use their throwing, catching, aiming and fielding skills well when taking part in *Quik Cricket*. The majority of pupils hold the cricket bat correctly, keep a score fairly and abide by the rules of the game; personal and social skills are therefore developed well. In Year 6, one class working with a specialist coach develop their cricket skills as they hit the ball with a straight bat, keep their elbow high when batting and stand correctly positioned at the stumps. Other Year 6 pupils work hard to refine their skills of working with a partner or within a small group to bounce a small tennis ball, changing the angle of the bounce. Pupils demonstrate their expertise to other groups of pupils and carefully evaluate the work of others. Good attitudes develop as pupils practise, perform and transfer their skills. They are developing well the concept of working as a *team player*.
- 119 The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. The school makes good provision for specialist teaching by a coach provided by the local education authority and specialist teaching within the school; this provision is making a clear impact on the quality of skills being taught, particularly in games, and ensures that pupils make good progress in their lessons. In Key Stage 2, some very good teaching was seen because the teacher has very good subject knowledge, insisted on good quality movements and gave immediate and effective evaluation to pupils, enabling them to quickly improve and refine their skills during the course of the lesson. Pupils' attitudes are good; they enjoy their activities and respond well to new challenges. Not all teachers change their clothes for lessons however and this does not provide pupils with a good example of how best to dress for physical education, or give the subject a positive image.



- 120 The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership to her colleagues. A new curriculum policy has been written and a scheme of work to follow new curriculum guidance from the government. Specialist teaching has been introduced and this is effective. No formal assessment of physical education is yet in place, but the teachers are effective at giving feedback to pupils from assessment in lessons. Resources have been increased since the last inspection and a storage problem solved. The school does not have a field and this does narrow the activities available to pupils. Extra curricular activities are provided by a local education authority coach and are of good quality, but only involve pupils in Years 5 and 6. No activities are offered for younger pupils as yet and the school has no football or netball teams. No parents or teachers are involved in extra curricular activities and this narrows the opportunities offered to pupils. The provision for outdoors and adventurous activities is a weakness in an otherwise satisfactory curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 121 The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education on which its yearly planning is based. The standards attained by the pupils are in line with the requirements of the syllabus for pupils of seven and eleven years of age. The school has maintained the level of attainment noted in the previous inspection report. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress over time, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language.
- 122 By the age of seven pupils make satisfactory progress with their learning and are aware of the main events in the life of Jesus. Pupils understand the connection between Jesus and events such as Christmas and the Ascension. They understand that Jesus used stories to teach his followers. Pupils know that God, through Moses, gave us the Ten Commandments to help us live our lives properly. They have acquired sound knowledge of stories from the Old Testament such as the story of Abraham and Isaac. Pupils are aware of the trust that Abraham had in God when he showed that he would sacrifice Isaac if that was what the Lord expected of him.
- 123 In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 are making satisfactory progress in the understanding of some of the differences between Christianity and Islam. They are, for example, aware that Muslim weddings are different from those in the Christian tradition. Pupils know about Ramadan and can explain some of the customs associated with it. They understand that the Muslim calendar is different to that generally accepted in this country and that festivals do not take place on the same date every year. They know about some of the festivals and customs of the Jewish tradition. Pupils are aware of the different creation stories belonging to different cultures and religions. By the age of eleven, pupils in Year 6 have made further progress in their understanding of the teachings of Jesus. Pupils know the story of the Prodigal Son and understand its meaning in terms of kindness and particularly forgiveness. A strong feature of pupils' spiritual development is their understanding that sometimes moral issues lead to difficult choices. For example, in a discussion about forgiveness they were aware that it is sometimes very difficult to do what God wants.

- 124 Teaching in both key stages is satisfactory and sometimes good. Lessons are planned carefully and teachers demonstrate good communication skills when discussing difficult ideas, which helps pupils' understanding. The materials used are appropriate and teachers maintain good relationships with their pupils. However, there is an overuse of worksheets in some classrooms and the standard of marking is not consistently detailed enough. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas about religion and in the case of older pupils to think beyond the obvious. It is clear that some lessons are planned to develop the ability of the pupils to discuss their own views and listen to those of others. Pupils respond well to the stimulus provided, particularly at Key Stage 2, by working hard, increasing their understanding, being generally co-operative, and willing to discuss their work. They are generally well behaved.
- 125 The subject co-ordinator is an ordained priest and the school has benefited from her considerable knowledge of the subject. The management of religious education within the school is good. The curriculum is well planned and the co-ordinator monitors rigorously lesson plans and samples of work to check on teaching and learning. Resources for the subject are adequate and visitors from other faiths enrich the provision.