

# INSPECTION REPORT

## MIDDLETON PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL

Middleton, Manchester

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105821

Headteacher: Mrs Brenda M Rogerson

Reporting inspector: Mr David Cann  
20009

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 189803

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: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Springfield Road  
Middleton  
Manchester

Postcode: M24 5DL

Telephone number: 0161 643 0753

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend N. Feist

Date of previous inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
D J Cann	Registered inspector	Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards?
J Butler	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
L Parkinson	Team inspector	English Geography History	How well is the school led and managed?
R Isaac	Team inspector	Science Information and communications technology Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
V Wilson	Team inspector	Under fives Art Music	How well are pupils taught?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Middleton Parish School is a school for pupils aged four to eleven with 242 pupils on roll (126 boys and 116 girls). Pupils mainly live in the immediate area and are drawn from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Their attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year but skills are generally below average. Currently 20 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is in line with the national average. The number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register is 23 per cent which is in line with the national average but the number of pupils with statements is below average. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.

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

Middleton Parish School is an improving school which benefits from the energetic leadership of the headteacher. She and the staff work closely together to raise the quality of education and teaching is good. New policies and approaches towards teaching and learning are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Children receive a good start to their education and by the age of eleven their attainment is in line with nationally expected levels. The school provides a caring and supportive environment and effectively promotes Christian values which parents appreciate. The school offers sound value for money.

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

- Pupils attain good standards in information and communication technology and music.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and particularly strong for pupils aged seven to eleven.
- Pupils receive a good start to their schooling in reception where teaching is well organised and supportive.
- The school teaches pupils the importance of good manners and behaviour in a supportive and caring environment. It is very effective in presenting spiritual values and in helping pupils to understand their responsibilities to one another.
- The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs.

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

- Pupils' attainment in English and science by the age of seven and in their writing throughout the school
- The way teachers carry out assessments and use the information to plan future learning.
- The setting of clearer priorities in the school's improvement plan.
- Opportunities to make all parents feel more involved with their children's learning.

*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 and six major recommendations were made. The school has successfully addressed most of the key issues raised in the report but changes in headteacher and staff have raised other priorities which the school has had to meet. The standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs have been improved and support is well organised through the school. New systems for assessing pupils' progress have been introduced but the school recognises that these need further review to ensure their effectiveness. Teachers give pupils annual tests in language and mathematics, the results of which are used well to monitor the progress of groups and individuals. Good schemes of work have been completed, often building on recently published government documentation and these are being used to guide teaching. The school's development planning has been significantly improved and is now clearly linked to financial planning. Staff development and training needs are well managed and identified in regular interviews. Arrangements for supporting new staff are in place but their effectiveness needs to be reviewed. With the arrival of the new headteacher the pace of change has accelerated and new systems for monitoring the curriculum have been introduced, although procedures are not yet fully implemented.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	D	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	D	C	A	
Science	E	D	D	C	

In tests and assessments at Key Stage 2 in 1999 pupils attained standards which were in line with the national average in English and mathematics but below average in science. In comparison with pupils in similar schools attainment was above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. The attainment of current pupils indicates that pupils are attaining levels in line with national expectations which reflects the school's focus on improving teaching and learning in English and science. Children make good progress in reception and by the age of five most attain levels which are in line with expectations in all areas of learning. By the age of seven pupils attain levels in mathematics which are in line with expectations but in English and science their attainment is below expectations and their progress slow. Attainment has improved over the last two years but was still below average in all three subjects in 1999. Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology is in line with expectations by the age of seven but exceeds them by the age of eleven.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have a positive attitude to school and take a pride in what they are achieving.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally good; pupils are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good with pupils willing to take on responsibilities as they mature; relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff reflect a high quality of mutual respect.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
60 lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.*

Over 60 per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better and only two per cent were unsatisfactory. Teaching for children under five was good or very good in nine out of 10 lessons. For pupils aged five to seven teaching was mainly sound with one third judged to be good and only one lesson unsatisfactory. For pupils aged seven to eleven lessons were never less than satisfactory, over 40 per cent were good and nearly 20 per cent were very good. The teaching of literacy does not

extend pupils' writing skills sufficiently at Key Stage 1 but is sound at Key Stage 2. The teaching of numeracy is sound at Key Stage 1 and stimulates pupils' learning well at Key Stage 2.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced both for children under five and those following the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are well supported both in class and in group and individual lessons. They make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school presents spiritual values to pupils very well. Teachers are good role models for pupils and give them clear moral and social guidance. The school offers a good range of cultural experiences for pupils especially through its lively musical activities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know their pupils well and support their academic and personal development successfully.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides vigorous leadership and works well with staff. Changes in the composition and roles of senior staff mean that responsibilities are not yet clearly established.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors keep themselves well informed of the school's affairs and fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is developing good systems for measuring its performance and identifying areas of strength and weakness.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources and links financial planning to its areas for development.

The school deploys the staff well and makes good use of its resources and accommodation although opportunities are limited for children under five to experience outdoor play activities.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Nineteen parents attended a meeting prior to the inspection and 77 questionnaires (32 per cent of those distributed) were received.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children progress well.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about how children are getting on.</li> <li>• Insufficient homework.</li> <li>• The school should work more closely with parents.</li> <li>• More activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. They consider that the information provided to parents has improved over the last year and are also of the opinion that there is a good range of activities outside lessons. Homework for older pupils is generally appropriate but younger pupils do not have a consistent programme and parents are unaware of what to expect. Parents concerns about communications have been raised with the headteacher and governors who plan to address the problems which some parents have.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. At Key Stage 2 in tests and assessments in 1999 pupils attained standards which were in line with the national average in English and mathematics. Their attainment in science was below the national average. In comparison with schools where there are a similar number of pupils receiving free school meals, pupils attained levels which were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and in line with the average in science. The trend over the last three years has seen an improvement in pupils' attainment in all three subjects.
2. At Key Stage 1 in tests and assessments in 1999 pupils attained standards which were below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Their results were in line with those achieved in similar schools. In science attainment was close to the national average. Although pupils' attainment has improved over the last two years the rate of improvement in English has not kept pace with the improvements seen nationally. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
3. Inspection findings indicate that at the age of eleven current pupils attain levels which are broadly in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. The school has exceeded the targets agreed at Key Stage 2 for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology and music is above expectations and in all other subjects pupils attain the levels expected for their age.
4. The attainment of current pupils at the age of seven is below national expectations in reading and writing but broadly in line with expectations in mathematics. Pupils' attainment overall has declined in English with very few pupils achieving above average levels in either reading or writing. In mathematics there are more pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 2 this year than last, but the number of pupils who exceed it is below expectations. In science pupils attain levels which are below those expected for their age. In music they attain levels which are above expectations and in all other subjects achieve the levels expected of them.
5. There are significant variations in the skills which pupils have on entry but overall they are below average in spoken language and number recognition. They make good progress in reception and by the age of five children generally attain the levels expected of them in all areas of learning. They listen well to adults and answer question confidently. They recognise letters and enjoy taking part in familiar stories and rhymes. They are good at counting up to 20 and identifying different patterns. Most relate well to one another and adults and adapt easily to school routines.
6. Progress in literacy and science over Key Stage 1 is often slow. In both reading and writing pupils do not develop skills as well as expected. The majority of pupils attain levels which are in line with the nationally expected Level 2 but very few achieve beyond this. In science pupils make sound progress in their knowledge of living things but they do not develop a wide enough knowledge of investigation and testing

and their range of vocabulary is limited. Pupils' progress in mathematics is sound for pupils of average ability but higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged.

7. At Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in their reading skills and are introduced to a wide range of literature. They do not express great enjoyment for reading and opportunities to research non-fiction material have been restricted with the recent relocation of the library. In writing pupils make sound progress but teaching does not place enough emphasis on extending pupils' vocabulary in English and other subjects. As a result pupils do not express their ideas concisely nor do they have a good command of a wide range of vocabulary. In mathematics pupils develop confidence in using and applying their knowledge of number. They make sound progress in investigative work but their experience of data handling is limited. In science pupils progress well and they develop a good understanding of fair testing as well as a broad knowledge of forces and physical processes.
8. In literacy teachers are refining their assessment procedures in order to measure more precisely how well pupils are developing skills in writing. This has only been recently introduced and it is too early to measure its impact. The amount of time allocated to different aspects of English is not consistent in all classes. In some classes extra time for reading is used well and this is having a positive impact on standards at Key Stage 2. However, the school is still adapting its use of the National Literacy Strategy and has not agreed guidelines for the school as a whole which has had an adverse affect on standards at Key Stage 1.
9. The school has made improvements in the teaching of numeracy which have raised attainment. In mathematics teachers are good at developing pupils' skills in mental and oral work. This is increasing their confidence in tackling all aspects of the subject. There is a appropriate emphasis on investigative and problem solving activities and teachers use computer programs well to develop learning. Teachers also extend pupils' number skills by their work in other subjects such as science and design and technology, although teachers do not plan this in sufficient detail.
10. In science teachers plan learning more systematically than before, making good use of new guidelines. However, assessment procedures are not consistent in all classes and teachers are not always accurate in monitoring how pupils are progressing. At Key Stage 1 teachers do not challenge pupils' learning nor move them on at a sufficiently fast pace.
11. In information and communications technology pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1 and exceeds them at Key Stage 2 where they make good progress. Pupils have good keyboard and mouse skills and know how to print and save items. Pupils write stories and articles using word processing packages and are confident about using computers to help them find information. They find information about local history from the internet and communicate by e-mail. They use computers well to extend their learning in other subjects such as mathematics and art.
12. Pupils' attainment and progress in music is above expectations at both key stages. Teachers, both visiting and permanent, have very good subject knowledge and make the subject exciting. Pupils develop good skills in making music and many achieve high standards on individual instruments. The quality of singing and the performances of the school band raise pupils' enjoyment of the subject and do much to enliven the cultural life of the school.
13. In other subjects pupils attain levels which are in line with national expectations. There are no significant variations between the attainments of boys and girls. The

attainment of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the targets set in their individual educational plans and they make good progress.

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

14. The good attitudes to school, good behaviour and good personal development identified at the last inspection have been maintained and are valued by parents. Pupils are keen to attend school, show interest in their lessons and work hard. They are proud of their achievements and sometimes want to extend their lessons into free time, for example, when investigating topics or in the computer club. This positive approach to study is established in the reception class where pupils are encouraged to make their own choices and to have a go at doing things independently. Year 6 pupils showed an excellent level of interest when a visitor to school shared his experiences of being evacuated during the war. They were keen to ask questions and find out more.
15. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. Pupils are self-controlled, respond well to the promotion of positive behaviour and respect the need for rules. The school has not had to exclude pupils until this year when a fixed-term exclusion was necessary to ensure the safety of other pupils. Politeness, kindness and respect for property are much in evidence and pupils can be trusted to use the computer suite with minimal supervision. Hot weather during the inspection made classrooms most uncomfortable, but only in one lesson was learning disrupted by inattentive and fidgety behaviour.
16. Relationships in the school are good both between pupils and between adults and pupils. There is a friendly, relaxed and harmonious atmosphere in which pupils play well with one another and are happy to co-operate in pairs or groups for class work. All members of the school community show mutual respect for each other and there is no evidence of any anti-social or bullying behaviour.
17. Pupils' personal development is good and is a reflection of the consistent and sensitive approach by all staff to encourage the development of the whole child. In reception children learn to share, to understand and value the feelings and thoughts of others and to become self-controlled. As they grow older opportunities in circle time allow pupils to express their feelings and to reflect on those of their peers. They become increasingly confident and are encouraged to fulfil their potential through performing at musical concerts and church services, as well as sports matches. Pupils, especially those in Year 6, demonstrate well their ability to take responsibility both for their own study, in investigative work and in carrying out a variety of duties. They have a mature approach to life and show consideration by their actions.
18. Attendance in the school is satisfactory and has improved in the last 12 months. Although the majority of pupils attend school regularly and are punctual, there is still a minority who tend to arrive a few minutes late each morning. Several families take their children out of school for holidays during term time, which has a disruptive effect on their progress. Unauthorised absence is very low.

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

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In 60 per cent of lessons teaching was judged to be good or better and of these 15 per cent were judged to be very good. Only two per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.

20. The quality of teaching in the reception class is good or very good for 90 per cent of the lessons and is never less than satisfactory. The team work well together to provide a consistency of approach based on a very good understanding of the children's needs. Teachers have very clear objectives for their lessons and manage activities across all areas of learning effectively. The time and effort invested in improving the children's listening skills provides a good foundation for developing their concentration and learning. Very clear teaching objectives are shown in well-structured lessons, supported by a good range of suitable resources and activities. Nursery nurses and support staff make a good contribution to teachers' assessment of children's understanding. This information is used effectively to plan work that is matched appropriately to their varying needs.
21. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory with 36 per cent of lessons judged to be good. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils but class management is not always consistent. Teachers have not established clear expectations of how they want pupils to behave and what they expect them to achieve in a lesson. They do not always calm and focus pupils' attention successfully. As a result some pupils do not make profitable use of their time. Teachers use support staff well and give them clear directions as to what they want pupils to do. There is also a good level of communication between teachers and support staff in discussing pupils' progress. However, teachers are not always accurate in assessing how well pupils are learning. This means that planning for the next stage of learning is not clearly identified or expressed, particularly in English where higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Teachers make good use of the school's schemes of work but they do not always identify precise learning objectives for their lessons. As a result expectations are sometimes imprecise or too low to challenge all pupils.
22. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is mainly good with teaching in 19 per cent of lessons judged to be very good and 45 per cent judged to be good. The rest was judged to be satisfactory. Management of pupils is very good at Key Stage 2. Teachers know their pupils well and set them tasks to work on in pairs and groups which hold their interest and attention well. They have high expectations of behaviour and generally give pupils a clear indication of what they want them to achieve in a lesson. This has a beneficial effect on their levels of concentration and presentation of work. Time and resources are used efficiently, particularly in music and information and communications technology. Support staff work well with teachers and have a good understanding of their roles in each classroom. Teachers provide them with clear instructions and guidance on whom they are to help and how. However, teachers do not often deploy support staff well during plenary sessions when they have few opportunities for contributing to pupils' learning.
23. The use of specialist teaching in information and communications technology and music has had a very positive effect on children's attainment. The instruction which teachers and support staff give in the computer suite is very effective in developing pupils' skill in focused sessions. Pupils are keen to practise what they have learnt in computer club and break-time activities. Pupils are also very enthusiastic participants in out-of-school activities such as the choir, brass band and guitar club, which is testimony to the hard work and dedication of the peripatetic music teachers and school staff. There are good opportunities built into Key Stage 2 music lessons for higher attainers to extend their understanding. Pupils benefit from good opportunities for performing their work. Their appreciation of music is developed by hearing other musicians during concert visits and in performances of visiting musicians to the school.

24. The quality of day-to-day assessment is good in the reception class but not always specific enough in other classes, especially at Key Stage 1. Marking is not always consistent with the school policy and does not indicate ways in which pupils can improve their work. Steps to rectify this have been introduced with the setting of individual and group targets which is having a positive effect on teaching and learning in Year 2. The emphasis on using medium term planning as a teaching plan means that learning objectives are sometimes too broad to be an adequate guide for the purpose of a single lesson or topic. Teachers do not always break down the objective into realisable steps to share with pupils and to help them all to measure progress. A newly introduced system of observations in a weekly planning diary has yet to be evaluated but provides useful data to help teachers. However, by not having detailed weekly planning the information is not always usefully absorbed into planning the next stages of teaching.
25. Since the last inspection improved arrangements for the teaching of reading have led to a structured approach involving the teaching of phonics. This has helped the youngest children to make a good start in their early reading activities. The clear programme for the teaching of art now produces some very interesting work, especially that based on the knowledge of famous artists. Pupils use a digital camera and computer software to record and create pictures and pupils' learning is extended by visits to art galleries such as the Lowry Centre.
26. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are given a good level of individual support in lessons and they receive weekly focused help from the special needs co-ordinator and support staff which is very effective in promoting their learning. Individual educational plans are drawn up by the special educational needs co-ordinator in consultation with class teachers and these are regularly reviewed. Pupils' progress is discussed with parents who are invited to review meetings where outside agencies are also present for pupils with statements of special education needs. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need is below those in similar schools nationally but in line with numbers on statements locally. The lack of statements for some pupils reflects the good level of support which the school provides.
27. Homework is set regularly in Years 5 and 6 and effectively extends pupils' learning across many subjects. For younger pupils homework is mainly confined to literacy and numeracy which helps them to develop reading and number skills. This does not often provide opportunities for pupils to develop research skills by using reference books. The quantity and regularity of homework for younger pupils is not consistent and parents do not feel they know what to expect or how to work with the school to ensure that work is completed.

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

28. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum for children under five and at both key stages of the National Curriculum. The organisation of the curriculum is generally good apart from the insufficient allocation of time for teaching design and technology. The development of knowledge in each subject is arranged sequentially so that pupils successfully build upon prior learning and make good progress overall as they advance through the school.
29. The curriculum for the under fives is planned with regard to the six recommended areas of learning. Children are prepared well for the National Curriculum and the school provides pupils with a good experience of physical education which

compensates to some extent for the lack of outside play space and equipment. The breadth and balance of the curriculum at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. All subjects have good policies and schemes of work which lay down clear guidance for teaching and learning throughout the school. There is a good range of extra curricular activities particularly in competitive sport, information and communications technology and music. Peripatetic music teaching extends the quality of the music curriculum for a significant number of pupils with practices and performances.

30. The subjects of the curriculum provide pupils with a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy. At Key Stage 1 pupils write accounts of the fire of London in history and develop their writing skills in the process. Apart from some worthwhile discussions in circle time the school does not adopt a consistent approach to the provision for pupils' personal and social education. Given that speaking and listening skills are often identified as a weaker area for pupils the school does not place sufficient emphasis on developing them through drama or guided discussions. However, teachers make good use of a wide range of educational visits to enhance pupils' learning such as the Year 6 residential visit to London and class visits to concerts, galleries and the Lake District.
31. All pupils have equal access to the broad and balanced curriculum. Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in the equality of opportunity enjoyed by pupils with special educational needs who now have full access to the curriculum. In supporting these pupils the school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>. Teachers also make sound provision in their teaching for talented pupils although attention to higher attainers is not consistent across Key Stage 1 with the result that few pupils achieve above average levels. The school's provision for equal opportunities is satisfactory overall but boys are listed before girls in registers and in some classroom charts.
32. The overall provision made by staff and governors for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The provision made for pupils' spiritual development is usually very good and occasionally outstanding. Staff and governors work hard to ensure that all pupils develop a belief in themselves, gain confidence in the relationships they make and acquire positive attitudes about themselves and towards their work. They are taught to listen and to value the ideas, thoughts and feelings of others and not to be afraid to express their own. The safe ethos and the positive relationships between members of the school community enables pupils to grow into mature, self-disciplined individuals by the time they leave the school.
33. Acts of collective worship are reflective occasions when pupils often explore the deeper meanings of life. In moments of prayer pupils have the opportunity to come to terms with their own thoughts and feelings. Teachers evaluate pupils' work sensitively and positively and pupils value the assessments teachers make of their work.
34. The provision for moral development is good. Pupils show that they have a clear understanding of the principles which distinguish right from wrong. The class rules they make support positive behaviour within the school community. Teachers set high standards of personal behaviour and pupils are greatly influenced by the examples they set.

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

35. The provision for social development is good. Teachers create many opportunities for pupils to show initiative and exercise real responsibility. Older pupils, for instance, undertake a series of small responsibilities in the course of each day. School resources are handled with care and put away safely. The good range of extra curricular activities organised by teachers enables pupils to gain effective understanding of musicianship and sportsmanship and helps them to establish the will to succeed. Pupils are very keen to be successful at competitive sport.
36. Teachers' provision for cultural development is good. Art, music and sporting opportunities in particular help develop pupils' awareness. Teachers organise a wide range of educational visits which help pupils to become aware of the heritage around them and further afield. Pupils' multicultural awareness and their attitudes towards ethnic minorities are not so successfully developed although their understanding is enhanced by visits to places of non-Christian worship.

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

37. The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good and is a high priority for the caring and supportive teaching and non-teaching staff. Regular risk assessments are conducted and since the last inspection the procedures for child protection have been brought into line with government guidelines. They are thorough and well known to all staff. First aid arrangements are satisfactory.
38. The individual needs of pupils are well catered for in a secure and supportive learning environment. In this regard there have been improvements since the last inspection as the provision for pupils with special educational needs is now good. However, the lack of a whole school policy for personal and social development limits the full range of opportunities for pupils to prepare thoroughly for life and there is still no assistance provided by the school in understanding and preparing for the changes brought about by puberty. Otherwise the personal support and guidance provided through circle times, assemblies and the special events in Year 6 like the Crucial Crew course and the residential visit are good and help the pupils to grow in their understanding of themselves and their peers.
39. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating bullying are good and are based on consistent use of praise and reference to good role models. Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour and good attitudes to work as well as for high standards achieved. Classes decide on their own set of goals to be reached in the bronze, silver and gold award scheme and the system is very successful in motivating the pupils. When inappropriate behaviour is checked by loss of privilege or writing letters of apology pupils' response to their punishment is suitably contrite and the sanctions are successful in preventing re-offence.
40. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. A focus on persuading parents to avoid holidays in term-time as well as rewarding pupils who achieve 100 per cent attendance in a term has helped to improve attendance figures. Absences are monitored carefully and parents are required to explain all reasons for absence. However, the recording of attendance by a few teachers lacks rigor and the procedures for recording latecomers is also too lax.
41. There have been several recent improvements in the procedures for assessing pupils' work and the academic guidance given, but full implementation of these procedures across the curriculum has yet to be achieved. A new system of assessment is giving the school a clearer picture of how well pupils are achieving

both against their own prior progress and against national standards. Whilst satisfactory overall, these procedures are still not sufficiently established in all curriculum areas. For example, there are no agreed guidelines for assessing pupils' skills in information and communications technology and the assessment of science is inconsistent. Teachers' use of assessment information to plan what a pupil needs to do next to make progress is still unsatisfactory. This limits the ability of pupils to reach their full potential and is a particular problem in English at Key Stage 1 where more able pupils are not achieving higher levels in reading and writing.

42. Pupils are helped to improve their attainment levels by the setting and monitoring of targets. The system is not yet fully developed but is satisfactory overall. Parents are involved in the negotiation of academic and personal targets for improvement for their children at termly progress meetings, but pupils do not yet have full ownership of these targets except in Year 2 where they are given cards with clear, achievable objectives.

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

43. Since the last inspection there have been some changes to the nature of the school's partnership with parents and these have given rise to some dissatisfaction. Overall the parents' views of the school are satisfactory and the majority of parents are happy with the school's policies and its attempts to involve them in their children's education. The school is over-subscribed and parents are particularly pleased with the teaching, the progress their children make and their good behaviour. However, responses to the parental questionnaire also showed a significant level of unhappiness with the inconsistent approach to homework, the range of extra-curricular activities, the information about progress and the quality of the partnership. Some justifiable concerns appear to be caused by frustration at the lack of progress made by the specialist agencies in formalising special needs provision, although this is beyond the school's control.
44. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and carers is improving but does not meet the expectations of all parents. The school works hard to keep parents informed and provides good quality information ranging from topic sheets, newsletters and annual progress reports to three well attended formal progress evenings each year. In response to parental requests the number of these evenings was increased and parents are involved in setting their child's targets for improvement. However, a vocal minority of parents expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the way in which they feel they can work with the school. This underlines the need for management to seek ways of removing what is perceived as a barrier to communication.
45. There are good opportunities for parents to speak with teachers at the beginning or end of the day in Key Stage 1 and reception, as well as a willingness to arrange for parents to discuss any concerns with Key Stage 2 teachers by appointment. An independent survey highlighted some areas for improvement to strengthen the partnership which the school has already implemented, including a very successful curriculum information evening held last year. There are some opportunities for parents to share in celebrations and church services, but these are insufficient to build a close supportive partnership in which parents can become more aware of the work done by all adults in school to benefit their children.
46. The impact of parents on the life and work of the school is satisfactory. Parents support their children by hearing reading at home and in Years 5 and 6 they take an active interest in homework tasks. A few parents volunteer to help in school and



there is support for the fund-raising and social activities of the parents and teachers association. The absence of a published, consistent and developmental approach to homework throughout the school limits the effectiveness of parents in support of their children's education. The home-school dialogue has been improved by introducing a new format for reading diaries this year as well as target cards in Year 2, but these systems are not sufficiently widely used to have measurable impact.

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

47. The headteacher provides good leadership and provides clear educational direction for the school. The school's aims and values and commitment to equal opportunity are reflected in all its work and developments. The school's policies and organisation have been extensively reviewed and improved since the last inspection. For example, annual staff development interviews with the headteacher are particularly effective and are linked to staff training and the school improvement plan. The headteacher has succeeded in building the staff into a team with a strong commitment to improving standards, although this has not yet had a significant impact at Key Stage 1.
48. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. It is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and so takes its part in shaping its future direction. It is active in monitoring the work of the school. Governors are closely involved in the school's financial planning and monitor spending well. They meet regularly with the headteacher and school administrative officer who maintains an excellent control of the school's day-to-day finances. Governors also keep themselves well informed of the school's programme for improving and maintaining the premises where some give valuable practical support. The monitoring of the curriculum and special educational needs has been good and has improved since the last inspection.
49. There has been improvement since the last report with regard to how the governing body and staff with responsibilities monitor and offer support in their areas of responsibility. New staff appointments have necessitated changes in the way responsibilities have been allocated but co-ordination roles have been well distributed. Co-ordinators do not all have the opportunity to monitor teaching but the school is aware that the role of the co-ordinators is still underdeveloped and has highlighted training within the school improvement plan. A large amount of monitoring has been carried out since the appointment of the new headteacher. Co-ordinators along with the headteacher monitor teachers' planning. The senior management team and staff monitor samples of work and offer support in their individual subjects. The headteacher monitors all teaching. She is supported by two other members of staff in supporting newly qualified teachers. These initiatives have gone some way to addressing the issues in the previous inspection report but monitoring procedures are not always leading to well-defined action programmes as is evident in English and science teaching at Key Stage 1. The precise role and policy for the school management team has also not yet been completed.
50. While there have been significant improvements in the school development plan since the last inspection, objectives are not always directly linked to raising pupils' attainment or improving the quality of education. The preparation of the plan and its structure are good. There is open discussion and governors and teaching staff have an input into its content. Clear links are made between objectives and costings. While the plan includes success criteria these are not defined in measurable terms which enable management and teachers to see improvement. People with responsibilities are highlighted and target dates are included although the target

“ongoing” is too imprecise. However, the plan places too much emphasis on monitoring and agreeing policies and not enough on the timing of decisions and the programme for implementing them. The plan also covers only one year with no longer term view and the lack of priorities for whole school developments reduces its effectiveness as a management tool.

51. The school is well staffed with a balance of experienced and more recently qualified teachers, full-time and part-time staff. There is a wide range of subject knowledge amongst the staff. Pupils gain considerable benefit from the specialist teaching in music, physical education and religious education. There has been a recent appointment of an additional teacher to allow for smaller teaching groups in the next school year. At present this arrangement allows for two teachers to provide a good level of support for the reception class.
52. Although classes are large, the classroom assistants and three qualified nursery nurses give valuable help to pupils groups across the age range, including working with particular pupils under the guidance of the special needs co-ordinator. The higher proportion of assistance for Key Stage 1 classes is helpful in permitting smaller teaching groups suited to the younger pupils’ need for more individual attention.
53. The school offers good support for student teachers with two members of staff acting as teacher-mentors during student placements. Newly qualified teachers continue their professional development in a variety of ways. The local education authority arranges suitable courses for newly qualified teachers as part of its induction scheme. Within the school each newly qualified member of staff may seek advice from an identified mentor but there is no formalised school induction scheme. An extra half day of non-teaching time is allowed in addition to that allocated to experienced teachers.
54. In the absence of an appraisal system annual staff development reviews are effective in defining action plans, which identify areas for personal or whole school development. The school is generous in its support for personal professional development goals. Since the last inspection there has been an increase in the number of teachers and classroom assistants. This has widened the range of teaching skills available and allowed for flexibility in the deployment of specialist teachers. Non-teaching members of staff ensure that the clerical, cleaning and midday supervisory duties are carried out very efficiently on a day to day basis.
55. The school makes good use of its accommodation and the quality of facilities is good. The school is maintained to a high standard although there have been many problems to overcome at the same time as developing a new classroom. The hall is spacious and well used for physical education, assemblies, music and meal-times. However, the acoustics are poor and make teaching difficult. Teachers make good use of the computer suite and the facility is having a positive effect on raising pupils’ attainment. The current arrangements for Year 1 are difficult for teachers inasmuch as pupils and staff must pass through the classroom to reach another class which distracts Year 1 pupils from time to time. While outdoor facilities are satisfactory, there is no outside play area for children under five. Resources are generally appropriate for the needs of all pupils and the curriculum but the lack of play outdoor equipment for under fives reduces their learning experience.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

56. In order to improve the standards in the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

raise pupils' attainment in English at Key Stage 1 and in writing throughout the school by:

- improving teachers' planning of structured writing activities;
- extending pupils' command of vocabulary in spoken and written English by identifying terms to be understood and employed in all subjects;
- improving the detailed focus on assessing pupils' skills and using this in planning;

*(paragraphs 2, 4, 6, 8, 66-70 and 72)*

raise pupils' attainment in science at Key Stage 1 by:

- clarifying lesson objectives;
- improving the quality and use of assessment;
- providing more practical activities in which pupils can develop their observation skills and their understanding and use of vocabulary;

*(paragraphs 2, 4, 6, 10, 83-85 and 88)*

improve the way teachers plan their lessons by:

- identifying precise learning targets in lesson plans and sharing these with pupils;
- linking targets to assessment criteria, measuring and recording pupils progress and using this information in setting future learning goals;

*(paragraphs 21, 24, 31, 41, 42, 74-76, 82, 88, 90, 99, 102, 107 and 114)*

identify priorities and targets in the school improvement plan which are directly linked to improving pupils' attainment or the quality of their learning;

*(paragraphs 49 and 50)*

examine ways of drawing all parents into partnership with the school to make them feel more involved with their children's learning.

*(paragraphs 27, 43-46 and 72)*

The school should also examine ways of improving the outdoor play experience of children under five.

**(PARAGRAPHS 55 AND 63)**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	15	47	36	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	242
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	48
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	55
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	13
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	26	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (68)	85 (81)	82 (76)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	26	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (70)	82 (70)	88 (100)
	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	16	19	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	17	12	12
	Total	28	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (61)	74 (47)	74 (61)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	12	11
	Girls	12	11	8
	Total	21	23	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (31)	66 (44)	54 (44)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	242
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	35

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	380,977
Total expenditure	390,663
Expenditure per pupil	1,614
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,509
Balance carried forward to next year	12,823

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 31.8%

Number of questionnaires sent out	242
Number of questionnaires returned	77

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	32	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	49	5	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	48	8	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	49	23	12	0
The teaching is good.	38	52	6	3	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	41	16	13	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	34	6	13	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	40	6	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	19	53	14	14	0
The school is well led and managed.	26	55	13	5	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	52	11	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	26	25	12	12

### Other issues raised by parents

Concern about the process of obtaining statements for pupils with special educational needs and the level of support given to pupils.

## **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**

57. The children enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Two teachers share the class for five mornings each week with the support of a nursery nurse and occasionally a nursery student. During the afternoons one teacher and the nursery nurse are present. At the time of the inspection 32 of the 34 children had reached the age of five.
58. Teachers administer the local education authority's assessment system when the children start school. They use the information well to plan purposeful learning activities. This year levels of ability are lower than expected for children of this age, particularly in speaking and listening. Effective teaching and high expectations have helped the children to make good progress and by the time they are five they achieve the levels expected for them in all areas of learning. Suitable activities are planned for children with special educational needs. They make good progress towards meeting their identified learning targets. By the age of five most children have made good progress in reaching the desirable learning outcomes<sup>2</sup>, maintaining the standard reported in the last inspection.

#### **Learning and literacy**

59. The children make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing and attain levels which are in line with expectations by the age of five. Most listen attentively to the teacher and to each other and respond confidently when answering questions. They enjoy joining in with familiar stories and rhymes. Children learn to use imaginative vocabulary, describing unusual shells and coral as 'bumpy', 'smooth' or 'spiky'. They learn to recognise letters and some whole words when reading together and in their own reading books. The most able children can read and write single syllable words such as 'bat' by building up the sounds. They make good recognisable attempts at longer words in their independent writing. Practising writing patterns helps children to learn correct letter formation. Children can recognise and write their own names. Some write a sentence with good attempts at spelling while others can start a word with the correct initial letter.

#### **Mathematics**

60. Children make good progress in their learning about number and shape and achieve the levels expected of them by the age of five. They become familiar with number sequences to 20 by counting forward and back from a given number. Children enjoy learning to count and match by making up number stories about the animal soft toys. The paired legs on a toy caterpillar help children to count in twos. By making colour patterns with cubes or counting the dots on two big dice the children learn to add two numbers together or take away a number. They learn the correct way to write numbers and to recognise and draw circle and square shapes. Teachers effectively use action stories such as 'The Bear Hunt' to help children's understanding of 'position' vocabulary such as 'over', 'under' and 'through'.

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<sup>2</sup> Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy (*speaking, listening, reading (recognising their own names and common words, enjoyment of stories, books and pictures) and writing, e.g. writing their names and recognising UPPER and lower case*), numeracy (*recognising the meaning of numbers, beginning to add and subtract small numbers, sorting and matching objects and numbers and recognising common shapes and patterns*) and personal and social skills (*showing confidence, self-respect, ability to work with other children and adults, concentrating, offering ideas, taking turns and sharing*). These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.



## Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Children make good progress in learning about the world in which they live. They are very interested in their experiments with objects made of different materials. They give reasons for their predictions as to whether an object will float or sink in water and watch each other's experiments closely. Children learn to observe weather changes and to record them using picture symbols. Their understanding about land and water features is developed through stories about the *Isle of Struay*, by examining shells and coral and looking at sea pictures. The *Dressing Teddy* computer program helps children to learn about basic computer controls. Explanatory and descriptive language is developed well during the children's building with large bricks or construction toys. A robot was built with a 'special engine', operated by 'remote control' and moved 'without batteries'. Two children created an elaborate model mousetrap with a sequence of complicated traps made out of wooden bricks. The children gave detailed and lengthy explanations about how the 'mouse' was cornered and trapped.

## Creative development

62. Children use an appropriate range of tools, textured materials and colouring mediums to make patterns and pictures. They are encouraged to use their senses and their imagination in expressing ideas and feelings. They make good progress in their discoveries. Children learn that music can tell a story when listening to 'The Aquarium' from *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saens. They listen attentively when they try to identify the music's theme and then imitate the rippling sounds on the xylophone. When distinguishing between high, medium and low sounds on the percussion instruments the children link the sounds with the voices of *The Three Bears*. The children enjoy singing and remember words very well. Their voices are lively with a good sense of rhythm, particularly in their up beat rendering of a jazz version of *The Three Bears!*

## Physical development

63. The children progress well in their physical development. Most develop sound control of writing and drawing tools and the manipulation of connecting parts of construction apparatus. Children move very confidently, making good use of space in the hall, when practising curling and stretching movements. They co-operate well when working in pairs to match each other's movements. The teacher's precise targets and high expectations lead to very well controlled movements. Although some activities are timetabled to be taught outside, there are no wheeled toys and no secure play area for outside play to be a part of children's daily experience.

## Personal and social development

64. The focus in class on taking turns, listening to others and sharing has led to very good progress in this aspect of children's development. Most children respond well to instructions and concentrate well on class activities. In groups they are well aware of the need to take turns and to listen when others talk. They co-operate when sharing equipment. When answering questions they are confident enough to express their ideas and show independence when carrying out their tasks. The success of lessons designed to teach co-operation, such as the parachute lifting exercise outside, shows how effective this input has been. The children co-operated very well in controlling the large parachute, changing places with great care and much enjoyment.
65. The quality of teaching of the children under five is good in each area of learning. Teachers are clear about the children's needs and their teaching priorities. They

provide clear guidance for nursery nurses so that they fulfil an important role in teaching support. Staff work together very well to provide effective graded learning activities which are carefully planned to develop children's particular needs. They make good use of everyday assessment of children's achievements to guide the next stage of their teaching. The high expectations of care that children take with their work is reflected in the attractive, well organised learning environment.

## ENGLISH

66. Pupils' attainment is below national expectations at Key Stage 1 and is in line with expectations at Key Stage 2. Results in the 1999 tests and assessments were below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. When compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils the results at the end of Key Stage 1 are average and at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average. The trend over the previous four years is variable but one of slow improvement. However, the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels is low at Key Stage 1 and was low at Key Stage 2 in 1999. Progress in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory but it is good in Key Stage 2. Since the last report the school has been successful in raising the standards of reading at Key Stage 2 where the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels has risen although the number of higher attainers remains low. The school has been less successful in raising standards of writing and has highlighted this in the school improvement plan.
67. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory but listening is significantly better than speaking for the majority of pupils. When teachers provide opportunities for pupils to speak and listen most pupils demonstrate confidence. They talk to each other easily and fluently when in groups and make satisfactory progress. For example, there was a real buzz of noise reflecting vibrant discussion in a Year 6 lesson when groups of pupils were asked to dramatise small parts of a story. They had to organise themselves and make decisions how they were going to deliver the lines. In more formal situations progress in speaking is less evident. Pupils' vocabulary and their use of spoken grammatical structures are limited. In a Year 2 lesson in which individual pupils confidently gave short talks on subjects of interest the rest of the class demonstrated their ability to listen very well by the good number of very relevant questions which they asked of the speakers. In a Year 5 lesson pupils listened well because they were spell-bound by the teacher's dramatic storytelling. However, teachers do not as a rule give pupils sufficient instruction on how to improve their spoken delivery or place enough emphasis on increasing their vocabulary and ways of expressing themselves to differing audiences.
68. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in reading are improving but are still below the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in reading are good. However, at both key stages pupils do not express a great interest in reading, especially out of school, and the number of pupils attaining above average skills is low at Key Stage 1. Younger pupils know the letters of the alphabet and know how to sound out and build up words although a number of Year 1 pupils struggled to remember all the names of letters. Throughout the school pupils usually know when they have made mistakes. Those who do try to correct them usually sound out and build up words automatically, but they do not have quick recourse to other methods such as use of context and meaning to help them. Pupils' library skills are not consistently developed. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 have more knowledge of library systems such as book categories and indexes than older pupils. The relocation and re-organisation of the libraries during the past academic year have disrupted teaching of library and research skills. Pupils research for information from

the Internet and Encarta for subjects other than English and use topic information in the classroom but few were observed using the junior library during the inspection.

69. Standards in writing are below national expectations at both key stages and at Key Stage 1 progress is unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 1 many pupils use simple punctuation but not in a consistent fashion. They use full stops but not capital letters or use both a few times without maintaining the practice and some do not really understand where sentences begin and end. Handwriting is often below expectations. Pupils of above average ability learn to write in sentences and put their thoughts down on paper in logical order. They communicate meaning, write quite fluently, make good attempts at spelling and are developing their use of commas. Other pupils make good attempts at a reasonable amount of writing but find handwriting, sequencing and punctuation difficult. Lower attaining pupils make progress with staff support but do not always sustain their efforts when working independently.
70. At Key Stage 2 pupils achieve satisfactory levels in spelling and punctuation but they do not apply their learning of grammar and punctuation to their narrative writing. Teaching does not place sufficient emphasis on ensuring pupils understand and use vocabulary with accuracy. As a result pupils cannot clearly explain their ideas and thinking. There are good examples of teaching widening pupils' knowledge of vocabulary such as the use of adjectives and 'technical' language for different purposes. In learning to write newspaper articles pupils used words such as 'tabloid' and 'broadsheet' and learnt the use of persuasive language. However, in other subjects like science teachers do not focus attention on key words or list them in order to help pupils incorporate new words in their writing. Although many pupils use paragraphs effectively, more involved and complex language still eludes many pupils. Handwriting and presentation are often below expectations until pupils reach Year 6 when they suddenly make very good progress and achieve a good standard.
71. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. When given a good level of challenge and interest pupils respond by listening carefully and offer reasonable and often good answers to questions. Though pupils sometimes take a while to settle down to work in a lesson they usually apply themselves well and sustain good concentration. They benefit from good relationships with their teachers. Many pupils are good at working co-operatively in groups. This was especially evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils worked together researching and writing letters about the second world war.
72. The quality of teaching is good overall with a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 1. Relationships are good throughout the school and teachers usually manage pupils well. In Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, however, there are occasions when the noise level is too high or there is an undercurrent of distracting chatter. Where teaching is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 it often arises from setting unchallenging tasks for pupils of average and above average ability. Teachers plan different tasks for groups of different ability but do not ensure that each group always understands what is expected of them in terms of output. They often organise appropriate help for lower attaining pupils and for those with special educational needs. However, they do not accurately monitor the work of all groups with the result that some make insufficient progress. The introduction of reading diaries is helping pupils' reading to progress. Both teachers and parents make comments in them but as yet there is no real partnership between the two.
73. At Key Stage 2 teachers are good at giving clear instructions so pupils are aware of what is expected of them and they use imaginative ideas to capture pupils' interest.

Support staff are well deployed in helping both lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs and have a significant impact on their learning. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of literature although they do not include sufficient poetry and drama. Information technology is well used in terms of word processing and reading for information. Language and literacy is used frequently across other subjects in the National Curriculum for writing accounts in history or labelling in geography. Teachers set homework but the level of importance placed upon it varies from class to class.

74. The quality and use of assessment has recently been the subject of whole school discussion and developments, but it is too early to see how effective these have been. Teachers are taking a much closer check on how pupils' writing skills are developing and using this to set targets for themselves and pupils. Teachers' marking of work is often encouraging and positive, although spellings are not always corrected accurately. In pupils' writing continuation books teachers indicate ways for pupils to improve but do not always explain what these targets mean or how pupils can achieve them. In evaluating lessons especially at Key Stage 1 teachers do not always consider how effective learning has been for all groups of pupils. As a result they do not set appropriate challenges in planning subsequent lessons. Teachers keep a close check on pupils' reading development but the monitoring of speaking and listening skills is underdeveloped.
75. The school is adapting the National Literacy Strategy by combining elements of it with methods which it has used previously. The school is not implementing these consistently throughout the school so it is having a mixed impact. It is giving pupils extended writing time but at the expense of other literacy activities such as discussion and whole class teaching. In some classes pupils are given extra reading time, as in Year 6. This is an excellent strategy which takes place three times a week and widens pupils' knowledge of fiction. However, not all classes do this and it takes a large amount of time out of literacy lessons rather than adding to the time given to English. Teaching strategies vary from class to class and also sometimes from week to week. Teachers do not regularly focus on small groups in the class in order to teach specific skills. This means that often their efforts are dissipated. The variety of approaches in the school means it is difficult to evaluate which are effective and impairs the introduction of whole school systems designed to improve standards.
76. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. New reading schemes have been introduced and a detailed and comprehensive phonic system has been implemented which has had a positive effect on raising standards in reading. The co-ordinator has a wide subject knowledge which she shares with other teachers. She has done a great deal of hard work on the English policies and scheme of work, combining the content of the National Literacy Strategy with previous school documentation.

## MATHEMATICS

77. Pupils attained levels in 1999 tests and assessments which were below the national average at Key Stage 1 but in line with the national average at Key Stage 2. In comparison with similar schools pupils attained average standards at Key Stage 1 and well above average standards at Key Stage 2. Inspection findings indicate that current pupils attain standards which are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2. The levels of attainment are similar to those reported at the last inspection but there have been significant variations in test results from year to year. Attainment at Key Stage 1 over the last four years has been consistently below the national average but improved in 1999. Attainment at Key

Stage 2 over the last four years has been below the national average but also improved significantly in 1999. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has helped to raise pupils' current attainment. Teaching has placed a greater focus on developing pupils' number skills and their ability to use and apply these is evident in the work completed in class and in tests.

78. In Year 1 pupils have a good understanding of place value and are learning to count on and back using two digit numbers. They measure items in the classroom using cubes and paper-clips and estimate the length of shapes with reasonable accuracy. They have a sound knowledge of shapes, their names and properties. In Year 2 pupils gain a secure knowledge of number bonds to 20 and use these to calculate the difference between two-digit numbers. They understand odd and even numbers and count confidently in twos. Pupils read the time in analogue and digital displays and higher attainers work out the length of journey times in simple problems. Pupils have a good understanding of how to measure items. They estimate and calculate whether packets are heavier or lighter than a kilogram. Pupils know how to double numbers and halve them to make them bigger or smaller. Their number skills are in line with the levels expected but their capacity to use mathematical language for explaining processes is limited.
79. Pupils make good progress in Year 3 and are confident about ordering numbers up to 1000. They have a secure understanding of place value and count on and back in tens and hundreds. Pupils develop a good knowledge of shapes and their properties. They describe the faces and angles of regular polygons and calculate the lines of reflective symmetry. They begin to calculate area using squares to help them. Pupils handle data well and produce charts to illustrate the most popular crisps. In Year 4 pupils build on their knowledge of fractions to recognise similar expressions. They carry out simple problems with confidence. They know the properties of a circle such as the diameter and circumference and use mathematical terms with accuracy to describe processes. Year 5 pupils make very good progress in developing their mental arithmetic skills. They are good at identifying patterns and are keen to investigate the relationships between numbers in making their own problems and puzzles. They have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and how they relate. Their command of times tables is good. In Year 6 pupils attain satisfactory levels in number work and apply this knowledge to solving problems with reasonable confidence. Most understand how to calculate areas and perimeters and they know about both imperial and metric measurements. When challenged to explain the difference some refer to conversion graphs which they have constructed. Pupils attain a sound level in number work but they lack sufficient vocabulary to explain their working in detail and their experience of data handling is limited.
80. At the age of five pupils' skills are broadly average and most make satisfactory progress by the age of seven. Pupils of average ability achieve the expected levels and pupils with special educational needs progress well. However, teaching does not always challenge the thinking of higher attainers and only a few of the current Year 2 pupils are achieving levels beyond the expected Level 2. Pupils' progress across Key Stage 2 is satisfactory in number work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils also do well overall and an appropriate number of pupils achieve the higher levels in tests at the end of Key Stage 2. They find the right operations for solving problems and demonstrate confidence in carrying out calculations. However, their range of vocabulary is sometimes restricted and they have difficulties in explaining and sharing ideas. Their progress in investigative work is good but their experience of data handling is limited.

81. Pupils are generally well behaved and respond to lessons with interest. They enjoy challenges as in mental arithmetic sessions and apply themselves well to working out problems. Where pupils are given activities to pursue in groups and pairs they work well together and sustain their concentration. Pupils in Year 5 worked hard to see the patterns in a sequence of numbers and applied themselves well to explaining them and creating their own. Pupils in Year 6 sensibly discussed the elements needed to furnish an imaginary bedroom and produced realistic costings by consulting catalogues.
82. The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers base their lessons very closely on the National Numeracy Strategy which is helping to develop pupils' number skills well. Teachers' knowledge and confidence is good and they pace lessons well, making purposeful use of mental arithmetic sessions. At Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress but there is not always sufficient challenge to extend the learning of higher attainers. At Key Stage 2 teachers pay more attention to adapting tasks to meet the needs of different pupils. However, in whole class sessions they do not always prepare specific questions or areas of enquiry to promote the thinking of above average pupils. They take good advantage of the computer suite to provide pupils with reinforcement or more demanding tasks and they support pupils with special educational well. These often work in groups with classroom assistants and adults who are well briefed on how to prompt their learning. Support staff are generally well deployed although they are not encouraged to contribute sufficiently during introductory and plenary sessions. Teachers regularly check on pupils' understanding and progress and measure their attainment against standardised tests. However, they do not fully use this information to help them in planning subsequent lessons. Teachers identify overall learning objectives in their planning but do not specify the outcomes of individual lessons in order to focus teaching and measure pupils' learning. Teachers have good strategies for helping pupils to visualise and remember concepts. In a Year 4 lesson pupils were highly absorbed in constructing containers from card as an introduction to work on capacity. In a Year 3 class pupils paraded with number placards to help them sequence three-digit number correctly. Teachers are often good at questioning pupils but do not place sufficient emphasis on developing their technical vocabulary to help them explain their thinking.

## SCIENCE

83. In the 1999 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment was below the national average although in line with the levels achieved in similar schools. At Key Stage 2 in 1999 pupils' attainment was below the national average but in line with those achieved in similar schools. In tests and assessments at Key Stage 2 standards have improved from 1996 to 1999. Inspection findings indicate that current pupils are attaining levels which are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment show that standards are now higher and the standards of work observed during the inspection confirm this judgement.
84. Pupils in Year 1 learn that their senses help them to identify objects, materials and foods. In Year 2 pupils have begun to use their observational skills effectively. Some could predict, for example, that seeds need sunlight, earth and water to survive but others were less sure. However, because teachers do not plan their lessons with sufficient precision pupils' general levels of ability are below average in both scientific method and in using scientific language. They do not, for example, have an understanding of how to conduct a fair test or why it is a good idea. A

significant minority of pupils have limited powers of expression and lack a broad knowledge or understanding of the subject.

85. In Year 3 most pupils are developing a good understanding of magnetism. They explain that the same poles of magnets will repel each other whereas opposite magnetic poles attract each other. Pupils also know that some materials such as wood are never magnetic whilst some, but not all, metals are magnetic. They are able to conduct experiments and record the results but in general teachers do not ensure that the standard of recording findings is sufficiently clear. As a result pupils' written work is only just satisfactory. Year 4 pupils have learned about creatures such as the frog and know that it is an amphibian. They know that tadpoles are cannibals but frogs are not. They know that mosquitoes suck blood but do not realise that they are classified as insects. In Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of the correct scientific terms in describing how matter turns from solid to liquid or liquid to gas. They have also gained knowledge about the anatomy of muscles such as the human heart. When questioned pupils know that various garden animals need food, water, air and safety in their habitat. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in these lessons and make good progress as a result.
86. Teaching in Year 5 places a strong emphasis on practical investigations which significantly helps pupils to understand the concept and process of fair testing. They recognise that a fair test of the sound-blocking qualities of different materials in earmuffs must have constant factors such as always using the same person to hear in test conditions. They also know that such an experiment will have variables such as the cotton wool or foam to be tested. In other lessons on sound pupils show a good understanding of volume and pitch. Most knew about the principles of hearing, but some were still muddled about sound production and only knew a little about the way sounds vibrate. The standard of presentation in Year 5 is good. Pupils' handwriting is neat and legible, but often still in pencil. Spelling is usually accurate. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have completed sufficient work on force and electricity but not enough on light.
87. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good in both key stages and they generally work co-operatively with one another. In the best science lessons pupils formulate ideas through discussions with their teacher and each other. Where younger pupils are not so willing to listen carefully this leads to lessons which are of necessity overly directed by the teacher and where independent research or practical work is more limited. Many pupils have only a limited vocabulary which hinders their progress in the subject. Some teachers do not ensure that pupils are taught the correct vocabulary which limits their capacity to pose questions and develop hypotheses.
88. The quality of teaching seen at Key Stage 1 is sound and at Key Stage 2 it is good but lesson plans do not always set out sufficiently clear objectives. Teachers' planning is generally satisfactory but they do not define the precise skills or knowledge which they want pupils to develop in lessons. This makes it difficult to evaluate whether a lesson's objectives have been achieved. Also, teachers do not often highlight how they intend to match work to the abilities of different pupils. This can mean that sometimes pupils with different abilities will all be given the same work to complete or simply further examples for those who finish early. Teachers provide some excellent resources for practical work, which include visual stimuli such as drawings and posters, relevant videos on magnets, the raw materials to build wormeries and snail compounds, useful CD-ROMs and teachers' own personal resources such as cameras. All of these are vital to the quality of teaching and help significantly to make learning more immediate and real for pupils. On a few

occasions, however, teachers set pupils to complete work that is more a study in English rather than practical science. This reduces the opportunity for pupils to discover for themselves whether their predictions are true.

89. When teachers use information and communications technology to complement teaching as, for example, in research on garden wildlife held on CD-ROM it is very effective in helping pupils to understand concepts. Generally, teachers do not yet provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use a good range of computer hardware and software regularly for their science work. They do not, for instance, use a variety of graphs or spreadsheets to exemplify results. However, teachers are making better use of the facilities available in the new computer suite. Pupils are, for example, beginning to access the Internet easily and safely to support their work.
90. The curriculum is satisfactory in many respects and the scheme of work is sound. Planning in year groups is helpful in ensuring coverage and avoiding repetition of work. Assessment is carried out well in some classes and less well in others. Overall, procedures are at an early stage and are inconsistent from class to class in format and quantity. This limits the effectiveness with which the information can be used to guide planning. There is no portfolio of moderated work to help guide teachers and there is also no formalised system of tracking pupils' attainments from term to term or year to year. The quality and quantity of resources is very good. Generally, classroom and external accommodation is spacious for practical work. The classroom accommodation for pupils in Year 1 limits the scope of practical experiments.

## **ART**

91. Pupils experience an interesting and balanced range of art activities throughout the school. They make sound progress and achieve the standards expected of pupils of their age. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their lessons.
92. Pupils are interested in the subjects and clearly enjoy their work. They show sustained levels of concentration as they develop a theme or practise a technique. The value pupils attach to their achievements is evident in their conversations about the detail in their work. They like to explain their colour mixing and use of particular brush strokes when painting impressions of different seasons. Following a workshop at the Lowry Centre pupils are enthusiastic about drawing portraits from family photographs. Their visits to art galleries enhance pupils' awareness of art in the community.
93. Lessons include good links with other means of communication such as computer technology. Pupils in Year 4 investigated the work of Mondrian on the Internet. They produced their own similar grid designs on the computer, using software to develop the same colours. In Year 5 pupils learned to use the computer to repeat their own digital portrait photographs. After studying examples of computer-manipulated portraits, including work by David Hockney, they created a similar effect by combining their photograph with their silhouette drawing. Contrasting portrait work by Year 5 pupils based on paintings by Picasso, Modigliani and Klee show an impressive use of colour and demonstrate their understanding of the artists' characteristic styles.
94. Pupils in both key stages have a variety of opportunities to draw from observation. Work produced by Year 6 pupils shows good attention to detail. To illustrate their



learning about different geographical locations they used appropriate variations in line and tone to effectively indicate distance and foreground.

95. The quality of teaching is sound in both key stages. Teachers introduce suitable tools and materials for the development of themes and techniques. Appropriate pictures, photographs and posters are used to illustrate the creative ideas of famous artists. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about integrating art with computer technology, particularly in experiments with the digital camera. Outside expertise at the Lowry Centre and the Whitworth Gallery is used well to extend the pupils' experience through specialist workshop activities. There is an adequate supply of materials and tools but some resources such as palettes are not always available for each pupil which limits their experience of colour-mixing. In addition reference material in the library is limited.
96. Since the last inspection clearer direction for teaching and assessment has been produced in a comprehensive programme of work. This provides for a balanced range of two and three-dimensional experiments with different techniques and materials within a suitable range of subject and artist themes. Pupils' achievements and any particular abilities are recorded to assist future curriculum planning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97. Only two lessons were taught and observed during the week of inspection, both at Key Stage 2. Evaluations are based on work completed over the last two years. This reveals that pupils' attainment is broadly in line with expectations at both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress by the age of eleven and have good attitudes to their learning.
98. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Teachers capture and hold pupils' interest well by using resources such as articles which they need to evaluate. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher helped pupils to understand the important elements of designing a soft toy by getting pupils to concentrate on aspects such as purpose, shape, health and safety, texture, colour, size and cost. Pupils were then able to cite a range of criteria to be borne in mind when designing their own. Teachers often use plenary sessions well to draw conclusions from lessons. Teachers' planning on occasion lacks specific, clear, relevant, short-term learning objectives. This means that it is much more difficult to judge the success of lessons or how well pupils have progressed.
99. The curriculum is broad and balanced with a policy and scheme of work which are both of good quality. The curriculum action plan is useful in prioritising developments but some key tasks are scheduled as simply ongoing rather than being ascribed a target date for completion. Some monitoring of work has been done but not enough to enable the school to evaluate progress. The amount of work completed in some year groups such as Year 6 is too little to enable pupils to gain a range of design and technology skills. The school has not had a rigorous system with which to assess pupils' work over the last four years, but is trialling a good, new system now.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. Attainment by the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have developed an awareness of places beyond their own locality such as Benllech in Wales and are able to comment on features in the immediate environment. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have sound knowledge

and skills in understanding relief maps, cross sections and grid referencing. Their work on mapping is impressive.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and progress is satisfactory in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to contrast town and country. They are made further aware of contrasts in their work on journeys to other places and on countries in Europe and America. In Key Stage 2 pupils have gained a sound knowledge of places such as St. Lucia. They are developing the use of geographical language along with correct definitions of words such as industry. In both key stages a good feature of the teaching and geography curriculum is that activities are well linked to other subjects, for example literacy, history and mathematics. In Key Stage 1 work on initial mapping and positioning skills is linked to history and contrasting old and new kitchens. Their work on world explorers links both history and English. In Key Stage 2 in a Year 5 lesson on learning to ask and answer geographical questions work was connected to both mathematics and English. Pupils constructed a data collection sheet and made decisions about the best questions to ask the general public about distances and methods of travel. This provided a very good opportunity for speaking and listening to each other in their discussions.
102. Teachers give pupils clear instructions so pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Question and answer sessions between teachers and their classes are often good and activities are interesting. As a result pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally satisfactory. They enjoy the lessons and put a good level of effort into their work. On occasion teachers allow an undercurrent of chatter and noise at inappropriate times which reduces the level of concentration. However, teachers have good control and soon bring pupils back onto the immediate task in hand. Pupils' behaviour is usually satisfactory but is affected when audio-visual resources are not well prepared and arranged. This causes delays and leads to restlessness. Planning is sound but does not always identify precise learning outcomes for individual lessons, nor does it include the vocabulary which teachers want pupils to learn and use.
103. Since the previous inspection there has been an increase in the amount of fieldwork carried out and so pupils have a greater understanding of the techniques involved and why fieldwork is useful. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and annual samples of pupils' work but does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching in class.

## **HISTORY**

104. Standards in history are in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages and progress is satisfactory throughout, including that for pupils with special educational needs in comparison with their peers.
105. In Key Stage 1 pupils are developing an understanding of concepts such as a sense of time and the difference between legends and myths. They have acquired an appropriate amount of knowledge about famous people such as Elizabeth I and Florence Nightingale. Their own accounts of the Fire of London make good use of their literacy skills, for example, 'it was a hot night the fire went faster and faster'. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are developing skills as historians because they are learning to ask the right kind of questions. Their knowledge of what it was like to live through a war is helping them to develop an empathy for people who did. Through Key Stage 2 pupils are learning about their own locality and the well-known people associated with it as well as acquiring knowledge of other nations who were invaders and settlers. Pupils' research leads to a good range of writing.

106. Pupils' attitudes to learning are at least satisfactory and often better. In a Year 6 lesson where the pupils were able to ask questions of a local inhabitant they had obviously thought hard about what was relevant and what was not. They addressed the visitor to school with courtesy and respect. In a discussion about their local church Year 5 pupils described it as 'like a good home'. They were full of details about the fascinating history of the church and the parish and talked animatedly about the founder of the local grammar school. Later on a pupil demonstrated real spiritual awareness when talking about the teaching of rhetoric at the old grammar school and how many angels could stand on the head of a pin. Other pupils in Year 5 are so enthused by the subject that they follow up work in lessons by looking for the grave of Samuel Bamford and exploring the local environment in their own time. Another pupil went back to the commemorative plaque to do a brass rubbing out of school hours because it had not been possible on the school visit due to inclement weather. Other pupils researched a local church and aspects of Tudor England during their holidays and took pride in presenting their findings beautifully.
107. The quality of teaching is sound and was very good in a Year 5 lesson. Resources are used well and support staff are often deployed well to help pupils with difficulties or with special educational needs. As a result these pupils make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. At other times tasks are adjusted to the needs of these pupils. In the very good lesson the teacher's love of history communicated itself to pupils and held their interest. There was very good emphasis on the pupils becoming historians and using resources to find information. In Year 4 the range of work covered is wide and the pupils are given imaginative tasks leading to well completed projects. The quality and use of assessment is unsatisfactory because teachers do not have a consistent system for carrying this out.
- 108. THERE HAVE BEEN IMPROVEMENTS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION. THERE IS NOW A VERY EFFECTIVE CO-ORDINATOR FOR THE SUBJECT. PUPILS' WORK IS SAMPLED ANNUALLY AND DISCUSSED, BUT THE CO-ORDINATOR HAS NO OPPORTUNITY TO MONITOR TEACHING. THE POLICY HAS BEEN COMPLETED ALTHOUGH THE SCHEME OF WORK IS DUE FOR REVISION IN LINE WITH CURRICULUM 2000. A GOOD RANGE OF ARTEFACTS HAS BEEN PURCHASED SINCE THE PREVIOUS REPORT AND THESE ARE BEING WELL USED BY TEACHERS.**

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and exceeds it by the end of Key Stage 2. By the age of seven pupils use a simplified word-processing program and operate peripherals such as the mouse and the printer. By the age of eleven pupils use a word-processor to enter, save, amend and retrieve data, generate computer graphics, design leisure centres by using appropriate software and also access information held on CD-ROM media or the Internet. Pupils at both key stages do not use spreadsheets sufficiently to model or record data in science but can use programmable toys to draw distances and angles.
110. Throughout the school some, but not all, pupils can use computers to support their learning in literacy with a high degree of success. At Key Stage 2 pupils have used computers to write good stories about dramatic rescues. Pupils are also able to operate the functions of a word processing program such as changing the font and size of characters. Year 6 pupils have used e-mail to a limited extent and all have e-mail addresses. The school plans to increase the opportunities for this in the near future. Pupils are beginning to use information technology to extend and support their learning in other areas of the curriculum such as art, design and technology, history, mathematics and geography. There is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
111. Pupils' progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress through both key stages. Pupils, including those who are more able, are provided with challenging opportunities to learn more about, for example, famous historical figures such as Samuel Bamford through their use of the World Wide Web. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons are good in both key stages. They listen attentively to instructions, concentrate well and handle resources with care.
112. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it is good. The allocation of the well-qualified co-ordinator's time for group work ensures that pupils have excellent support when they use computers. The quality of teaching and support provided by the information technology co-ordinator and the classroom assistants in the computer suite is first-class. It is reinforced by amount of access which pupils have to this facility, including lunchtimes and after school.
113. Teachers have either had or are going to have sufficient in-service training to keep abreast of developments. Teaching is most successful when it is part and parcel of teaching planned for other subjects such as history. A good example of this was when pupils were taught about the history of the Old Grammar School in Middleton and then were able to find Queen Elizabeth I's original charter for that school, a primary historical resource, on the Internet. This made history an exciting reality for Year 5 pupils because of the combination of skilled, knowledgeable and inspired teaching supplemented with relevant, careful guidance on using information and communications technology. The same is true of mathematics teaching when pupils are able to use software to create and print complex symmetrical patterns as part of their study of symmetry.
114. The quality of leadership and management and the school's long-term planning is good. There is a sharp focus upon the development of information and communications technology as a top priority. The government scheme of work provides good guidance to teachers and they are using this with increasing effectiveness. Teachers keep some portfolios of pupils' work, but this practice is in its infancy and does not yet assist the moderation of assessment or the monitoring of

individual or group progress. The procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory. There is currently no system for the assessment of pupils' work. This means that teachers are unclear about the progress which individual pupils make.

115. Hardware and software resources are good, particularly in the computer suite where research facilities such as those held on CD-ROM or via the Internet are excellent. The computer suite is a recent development and the school is making good progress in using this facility as an important feature of teaching. The school has made very good progress in the development of learning in the subject over the last two years.

## MUSIC

116. Music is well developed throughout the school. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils' attainment is above expectations at the end of both key stages.
117. There is very good specialist teaching of the subject and this is supported by peripatetic brass, percussion and woodwind teachers who contribute significantly to the good standards of pupils' learning. Teaching is thoroughly planned to develop pupils' experience in each area of the music curriculum and follows a good scheme of work. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils learn to play the recorder and others have very good opportunities to learn to play brass, woodwind, guitar or keyboard instruments in class or well-attended out of school clubs.
118. Arrangements are made for pupils to listen to professional musicians through visits to Halle concerts or by performers' visits made to school such as the London Mozart Players. Pupils also perform with other schools at community music events such as 'Festival 80' and 'Musical Match of the Day'.
119. The teaching is characterised by excellent subject knowledge and very good lesson planning, preparation and organisation. Good use of questions, analysis and praise helps to consolidate pupils' learning and aid assessment of their understanding. As a result of this pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to sing tunefully with good timing, sometimes in two parts. They correctly identify loud and soft passages in a recording of Handel's *Zadok the Priest*, listening closely as they anticipate the *crescendo*. Pupils distinguish the high and low sounds of their tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They also identify them when listening to a recording of Britten's *A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.
120. In Key Stage 2 pupils understand musical terms for loud and soft. In one class pupils are able to write and perform their own composition on a percussion instrument, choosing their own symbols to indicate volume. In a choral arrangement of *Drunken Sailor* pupils blend their voices well as they practise singing several harmonies and accompaniments. The oldest pupils learn to distinguish between 'rhythm' and 'pulse'. They use their understanding to compose a pentatonic melody which they write using musical notation. One group is able to include a 'drone' accompaniment which they perform on the piano. A good range of graded tasks helps each pupil to develop their own ability level.
121. Behaviour is good. Most pupils give the activities their full attention and are well motivated. This is because lessons are well planned and resourced with very clear learning objectives implemented by a variety of appropriate teaching methods. Pupils listen attentively to each other's contributions and co-operate very well in group compositions and performances. Since the last inspection a very good

collection of instruments has been built up, including small bagpipes! Pupils' skills in individual and group composition are now developed well throughout the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122. Pupils reach appropriate standards in gymnastics, dance and games at the end of both key stages. It was not possible to observe swimming but the school meets statutory targets for swimming at Key Stage 2.
123. At Key Stage 1 pupils attain satisfactory levels in gymnastics and dance. They listen to instructions carefully and work with self-control. They understand the need for safety, have an awareness of space and take care to support one another. In gymnastics they move well with a good understanding of position and balance. In dance pupils work well in pairs and are successful in expressing their feelings through their movements.
124. At Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills in games, athletics and gymnastics. Year 4 pupils concentrate hard on improving their running skills and how to change a baton in relay racing. Pupils work well in small groups and pairs and think about their positions in gymnastics, helpfully suggesting ways of improvement. In Year 6 pupils worked very well in pairs to develop a synchronised sequence of movements. They discussed, practised and performed with sustained application. Pupils of all levels of attainment made good progress in the session and higher attainers were encouraged to attempt demanding routines.
125. Pupils' response to lessons is satisfactory and occasionally good. They are keen to participate in all sporting activities and enjoy the opportunities given to them in lessons. Pupils' exuberance threatened to disrupt teaching on occasions and teachers had to work hard to keep their classes focused. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has many good features. However, teachers do not all establish and maintain common expectations regarding pupils' listening, behaviour and the times for them to discuss and exchange ideas. Teachers have a good level of technical knowledge. They provide appropriate warm-up activities and give clear instruction. Occasionally activities are over-prolonged and this causes pupils to lose interest but most lessons are well paced and challenging. Teachers give pupils opportunities to observe and assess each other's performances but they do not always require them to identify and explain exactly what is good or needs improving. Pupils enjoy performing in front of the class and there are many keen to participate in out of school sporting activities when weather permits. The school makes good use of the hall and the outdoor space available and resources are satisfactory.