

# INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY AND ST ANSELM'S RC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Whitworth, Rochdale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119697

Headteacher: Mr J Cunningham

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lynne Read  
21199

Dates of inspection: 15 - 17 January 2001

Inspection number: 190902

Full 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 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: John St  
Whitworth  
Rochdale  
Lancashire

Postcode: OL12 8DB

Telephone number: 01706 853545

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Mooney

Date of previous inspection: 5 - 9 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
(Ofsted No. 21199)	Lynne Read	Registered inspector	English. Foundation stage. Music.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
(Ofsted No. 19439)	Doreen Shotton	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
(Ofsted No. 19154)	Steven Dobson	Team inspector	Mathematics. Art. Design and technology. Physical education. Equal opportunities. Special educational needs.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
(Ofsted No. 8316)	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Science. Information and communications technology. Geography. History.	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Our Lady and St Anselm's RC Primary is situated in the semi-rural village of Whitworth that lies within moorland country half way between Rochdale and Bacup. It consists of two main buildings, recently extended and refurbished to provide accommodation for children under five years of age, and four classes. Reception children are kept together as one group and pupils in Year 6 are taught as a single age cohort, whilst the remainder of the pupils are in mixed age classes. An additional part-time teacher allows for most literacy lessons to be delivered in single age groups. The school serves the parish of Our Lady and St Anselm's and 99 per cent of pupils are of the Roman Catholic faith. Most pupils come from the village, where there is a mixture of private and local authority housing. There are 142 pupils on roll.

The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational need is well below average, at 10 per cent. This low figure is indicative of the school's commitment to early identification of problems and the success of strategies employed to tackle them. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. All pupils are of white ethnic origin and have English as their first language. Few pupils leave or enter the school, creating a stable environment for learning. There is no nursery class but the school maintains good links with local nurseries and playgroups. Attainment on entry varies from child to child but is average overall.

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

The school achieves standards that are well above average for pupils aged seven and eleven. In some subjects, standards are so high that they place the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. Teaching is mainly very good and excellent. Leadership and management are excellent and firmly focused on constant improvement. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by age eleven are well above the national average. A very high number of pupils achieve the advanced level in English, putting the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. At age seven, standards in writing are well above average. For mathematics and science they are very high, putting the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. For reading, standards are close to the national average. However, the percentage of pupils gaining the advanced level is very high indeed, yet again placing the school in the top 5 per cent in the country.
- Teaching is never less than satisfactory, the majority being of a high standard. In 11 per cent of lessons teaching is excellent, in 36 per cent it is very good and good in 42 per cent.
- Excellent strategic leadership is provided by the headteacher, management team and governing body for all aspects of the school's work.
- Very good use is made of information gathered about pupils' learning to plan challenging lessons, especially in English and mathematics.
- Pupils have very good standards of behaviour, very positive attitudes to their work and there are excellent relationships throughout school.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good within the supportive Christian ethos of the school.
- Provision for the young children in the reception class is very good. They enjoy a stimulating learning environment and are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their academic, personal and social skills.
- Links with parents are very good and make a significant contribution to learning. Parents help in school and work with their children on homework tasks.

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

- Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology by improving resources for the subject.
- Provision for pupils' cultural development to meet the same high standards seen in the school's commitment to social and moral education.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected fully in November, 1996. There has been excellent improvement in all the identified key issues of that report. The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is mainly good, with a high percentage of very good and excellent practice. Teaching and learning objectives are clearly established and detailed programmes of work ensure that pupils make sustained progress. The improved quality of teaching has had a direct impact on the very good standards of achievement at the school. The provision for design and technology and geography have both seen good improvements and standards are in line with national expectations. Teaching in information technology has undergone a major improvement. The level of staff expertise is higher and teachers have a very good understanding of how to deliver all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils have a sound level of skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject but could progress further if there were more opportunities to access resources and time to consolidate what they know. There have been excellent improvements in the systems for assessing pupils' achievements and progress and in curriculum planning. Systematic, analytical assessments of pupil progress are carried out and the information gathered is used to plan learning targets for future lessons. This ensures very good progress and is another factor behind the high standards of pupils' achievements. The role of the senior managers and subject co-ordinators has been extensively developed. All are now closely involved in monitoring classroom practice and the effectiveness of the curriculum. School development planning is now thorough and illustrates clear educational purpose. The governors exercise their strategic over-view of financial planning very effectively and the school now provides very good value for money. Since the last report the school has had several monitoring visits from Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools who have recorded the good, on-going progress towards improving areas identified as key issues from 1996 to early 1999. All the recommendations made in their last report of 1999 have been fully addressed, including the issue of teaching in mixed age classes.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

Very high-in the top 5% in the country A\*

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

Results for eleven year olds show the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level four in English, mathematics and science to be well above the average. The number of pupils gaining the advanced level five in English is very high and gives an overall points score that puts the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. The number attaining the advanced level in mathematics is well above the national average and results in an aggregate points rating of well above average. For science a lower than expected percentage of pupils attained the advanced level in 2000, giving an overall rating that puts the school close to the national average. Trends of improvement in standards at the school are higher than that found nationally, especially in English.

Results for pupils aged seven show that the number of pupils gaining the average level two in reading is close to the national average but the high percentage achieving the higher grade puts the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. In mathematics and science 100 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level two, putting the school yet again in the top 5 per cent in the country. The number of pupils gaining the advanced level three was well above the national average. Trends over time show that attainment in reading is improving at a faster rate than the national average, with relatively sharp increases in attainment for writing and mathematics. When results at the end of both key stages are compared with similar schools, the grades are exactly the same as above.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are very well motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good throughout school, in lessons and on the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent and make a significant contribution to learning and to the calm, orderly atmosphere within school.
Attendance	Attendance rates are well above the national average. Pupils arrive on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good with a significant proportion of excellent	Very good with a significant proportion of excellent	Good with a high percentage of very good and excellent

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

Teaching is never less than satisfactory at the school. In 11 per cent of lessons teaching is excellent, in 36 per cent it is very good; in 42 per cent it is good and satisfactory in a further 11 per cent. The quality of teaching is a major strength of the school and is directly responsible for the much improved, high standards of attainment.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good, broad and interesting curriculum with a suitable emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is a good balance between the teaching of knowledge, skills and understanding and opportunities for pupils to question, experiment, investigate and engage in private study.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. Early identification of difficulties and targeted teaching ensure that problems are tackled quickly and that pupils have individualised learning programmes to meet their needs. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum and all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good throughout the school. For spiritual development it is good, and satisfactory for cultural development. Pupils have a good knowledge of local heritage but lack a wider awareness of the cultures and traditions of the different ethnic groups that make up our present day society in Britain.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures and practices ensure a high standard of pupil welfare. Rigorous systems for assessing pupils' progress lead to the setting of appropriate targets that build on prior learning. Positive
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	strategies and a strong school ethos support the high standards of behaviour and very good attitudes demonstrated by the pupils.
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The school works very well in partnership with parents. They are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning. The response to the parents' questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership, management and direction for the school, well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior teacher. Curriculum co-ordinators for the core subjects are very effective in monitoring provision and in constantly driving standards upwards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide excellent leadership and management. They have a very accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas that require further development. They are fully involved in school development planning and monitoring, showing a strong commitment to their stated aim of constant improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The monitoring and evaluation of teaching for English, mathematics and science are very good. Teachers analyse test data to constantly check on progress made. Senior management and governors receive regular reports on performance and use the information to inform whole school planning.
The strategic use of resources	School finances are managed prudently. All expenditure is linked to identified areas for development. The principles of best value are applied and governors evaluate spending in terms of improved provision but not always in terms of gains in pupils' learning.

The school has a suitable number of staff to deliver the National Curriculum programmes of study. The recently extended and refurbished accommodation provides sufficient space for all age groups except the reception class. Here, floor area is very limited and there are no facilities with direct access for outdoor play. The curriculum for these young children is not adversely affected because staff work hard to overcome the problems. Resources are limited for English, information and communications technology, design and technology and for the Early Years curriculum. Only in the case of information and communications technology does this affect attainment. The governors are aware of shortages and have plans to rectify the situation when funding allows.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils like coming to school</li> <li>• High standards of behaviour</li> <li>• Teaching is of a high quality</li> <li>• The school has a successful open door policy and staff are approachable</li> <li>• Teachers have high expectations of pupils and expect them to work hard, achieving their best</li> <li>• The good standard of leadership and management</li> <li>• The school's commitment to personal development-pupils are encouraged to be mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like more information about the provision for pupils in mixed age classes and to understand how teachers cater for the wide range of prior learning.</li> </ul>

The inspection team fully endorses parents' positive views of the school. During the inspection teaching and learning were observed in the core subjects of mathematics and science in all mixed age classes.

English was also observed in single age groups. In all cases the work given to pupils was accurately matched to their abilities, talents and prior learning, ensuring that all pupils succeeded in making good or very good progress. Because of some misconceptions amongst parents, the inspection team feels that it would be useful for the school to provide further information in this area and to illustrate to parents the success of the strategies used.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds show the number of pupils achieving the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science to be well above the national average and that for similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in English is very high and puts the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. The number attaining the higher level 5 in mathematics is above the national average and for science it is close to the national average. Trends over time show attainment at the school in English to be rising much faster than the national trend, especially over the last year. For mathematics, attainment is also rising faster than expected and the science results show a big improvement in 1998 that has been sustained. These impressive results represent very good progress in English and mathematics since the last inspection and excellent progress in science. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven year olds show the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level 2 in reading to be in line with the national average but for those achieving the advanced level 3, results are very high, putting the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. In writing, the number of pupils gaining the level 2 is above average, as it is for those attaining the higher level 3. In mathematics and science 100 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level 2, putting the school, yet again, in the top 5 per cent in the country. The number of pupils gaining the advanced level 3 was well above the national average. When comparing results with those of similar schools, the comparative grades are equally high. Trends over time show that attainment levels at the school are rising steadily faster than the national average in reading, with a relatively sharp increase in achievements in writing and mathematics. All these results show very good improvement in reading and writing since the last inspection, with excellent improvement in mathematics and science. Observations during this inspection and scrutiny of pupils' work at both key stages indicate that similar high levels of attainment can be expected in the forthcoming tests of 2001, with an expectation that a higher number of eleven year olds will gain the advanced level in science. The school has exceeded its set targets for achievement in English, mathematics and science.
2. Children enter the reception class with widely varying levels of prior experience and learning. A number of them experience some difficulty in discriminating, segmenting and blending letter sounds within words, putting attainment on entry for language and literacy just below average. In mathematical understanding, many can count and some can recognise numbers but few have a sound understanding of mathematical concepts. Children enter school with broadly average skills in physical, personal and creative development. Their knowledge of the world is in line with what might be expected at this young age, but again there are wide variations. Some children's knowledge is relatively limited whilst others have good understanding. Taking into account the skills evident, attainment on entry to school is broadly average. By the age of five, the vast majority of pupils have made very good progress, not only attaining the early learning goals set for them but also pushing their skills, knowledge and understanding into the National Curriculum level 1 programme of study. Skills in personal, social and emotional education are very well developed and contribute to the positive, enthusiastic response to teaching in future years.
3. In Years 1 and 2 some pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. The large number attaining the higher level 3 make excellent progress. In writing, pupils make good progress overall and for mathematics and science, learning is very good. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a very useful range of reading strategies that they use effectively to help them tackle unfamiliar texts. Their comprehension is very good and many have advanced skills of inference and deduction and in understanding the writer's intentions. These factors directly account for the advanced levels of achievement. Their writing is well sequenced, imaginative and accurately punctuated. They spell words by splitting them into sounds and know many irregularly spelt key words from memory. In mathematics, pupils compute accurately using pen and paper methods and mental strategies. They achieve good levels of knowledge and understanding in all areas of the science curriculum and use their investigative skills effectively. In information and communications technology pupils have good word processing skills but have few opportunities to develop their competence to a higher level because the school has too few computers. By the time pupils are

seven years of age, their skills in all other subjects are in line with national expectations and they have made satisfactory progress.

4. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to make rapid gains in their learning. Pupils' reading is fluent and expressive. They enjoy a very wide range of genres and have favourite authors. They understand sophisticated story structures and experiment with different techniques to improve their own writing. Pupils give their own views about books, justifying them with examples from the text. Their writing is lively and often has a mature, original feel. Grammar and punctuation are both excellent. The higher achieving pupils have the knowledge and confidence to experiment with subordinate clauses and the full range of punctuation to achieve the desired effect. In mathematics, pupils have a very good understanding of number, including decimal fractions. Their skills of mental computation are excellent and they have a good range of strategies to use when problem solving. In science pupils' skills of scientific enquiry, investigation and fair testing are well developed and applied across the curriculum. Their knowledge and understanding of living processes, materials and physical processes are good. Pupils have sound skills in all areas of information and communications technology. They produce material using word processing and desktop publishing programs, organise and analyse information using a database and control a floor robot. However, skills in this area are less well developed than those in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, again because of the school's having too few computers for them to practise on. By age eleven, pupils' attainment in all other subjects of the curriculum meets national expectations and they have made satisfactory progress.
5. The high level of pupils' attainment results from very good teaching, based on a thorough analysis and assessment of exactly what they can do and what they need to be taught next. The school's target setting process is excellent and is translated into increasingly challenging tasks. Pupils are not taught according to age-related objectives but to attainment targets that provide maximum opportunities for individual success. This ensures that pupils in mixed age classes are very well catered for in all the core subjects. Pupils' commitment to hard work is another important factor in their achievements.
6. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress in relation to prior learning and abilities. A tailored programme of support is devised and all staff involved with those pupils know their specific learning targets. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the school's work, having access to extra-curricular activities and to school visits.
7. Higher attaining pupils are always given suitably challenging work and this is evidenced in the very good numbers of pupils gaining advanced levels in English and mathematics. The percentage achieving the higher level in science was lower in 2000 but looks set to improve this year. There is no lack of challenge or underachievement for these pupils.
8. Very good attendance at a range of extra-curricular activities enhances academic and personal development. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to practise their games skills and the challenge of playing against teams from other schools. The art, gardening and computer clubs all support pupils' attainment.

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

9. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting and those who completed the questionnaire, indicate that their children enjoy school. Since the previous report, when it was judged that the pupils showed good attitudes, the picture is even more positive. Enthusiasm for school, relationships and pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions on others, are all outstanding. In discussions with the pupils, it was obvious that they are very proud of their school.
10. The pupils know that they are in school to learn. They are punctual, settle down quickly after breaks and are keen to start their work. They listen attentively and are eager to answer questions. Pupils enjoy the challenge of learning, showing a high level of interest and involvement when undertaking an activity. They work hard with very good levels of concentration.
11. In returned questionnaires and at the meeting, parents agree strongly that their children's behaviour is very good. These views are confirmed by the inspection evidence. Pupils behave particularly well in lessons and this makes a considerable contribution to the good rates of

progress. There is a clear code of behaviour and pupils know what is expected from them. From the reception class to Year 6, pupils are courteous, considerate and give of their best. A major factor behind these impressive standards is the consistent, whole-staff approach and high expectations. As a result, pupils' behaviour in the playground and in the dining room is just as good as in the classroom. A very good example was observed during the inspection, when Year 2 pupils helped to serve meals to the local senior citizens, joining them for their monthly lunches at the school. The pupils ensured that the occasion was an enjoyable one for the visitors by talking to them and by making them feel very welcome. These experiences help the pupils to grow into thoughtful, considerate young people.

12. The pupils display exceptional maturity and confidence for their age. These qualities are carefully nurtured through the school's policy for teaching and learning, and strengthened by the values embodied in the Christian ethos of the school. The very high standards of moral teaching ensure that the pupils respect the values and feelings of others.
13. The quality of relationships in the school is excellent. Pupils co-operate willingly with adults and with each other, and are developing essential social skills. These are in evidence in the way the pupils help one another when working in a group, or playing together, sharing the limited space outside. They understand the importance of taking turns and of showing respect for other people's space. Pupils readily listen to and consider one another's views. A very good example was observed in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, when they discussed the need to listen carefully and to share opinions. Pupils eagerly offered their observations in the full knowledge that all contributions would be valued by the teacher and other pupils. These factors all contribute well to the school's operating as a harmonious community, where everyone is equally valued.
14. As they move through the school, pupils begin to demonstrate a good deal of independence. Extra responsibilities, such as taking the register to the office, are accepted enthusiastically. During lunchtimes, pupils answer the phone and take messages politely and convey them reliably to the secretary or their teachers, as required. Older pupils look after the younger ones at breaks and during wet play times. They share books and ensure that time is profitably spent for all concerned.
15. A school council, set up in September, provides the pupils with good opportunities to participate actively in the life of their school. At the time of the inspection, elected members discussed the purchase of resources required for each class for wet playtimes. They offered suggestions, arising out of class discussions, as to their requirements. Careful consideration had to be given to budget allocations, provided by the Friends of the School. This is a very good example of the confidence pupils show in voicing their opinions and participating in decision-making.
16. Attendance has been maintained at a similar, very good level to that found in the previous inspection and is well above the national average. There has been little unauthorised absence over the last year. There are very few latecomers which is a further indication of pupils' eagerness for, and commitment to, their schooling.

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

17. During the inspection, 36 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and most of the teaching was of the two highest standards. In 11 per cent of lessons teaching was excellent, in 36 per cent it was very good; in 42 per cent it was good and in a further 11 per cent it was satisfactory. This represents a vast improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is now a major strength of the school and is directly responsible for the high standards of attainment.
18. The Foundation Stage caters for children up to the age of five and is more commonly referred to as the reception class. Overall, for this age group teaching is mostly very good, with a significant proportion being of the highest standard. In detail; in 13 per cent of lessons teaching was excellent, in 62 per cent it was very good and in 25 per cent it was good. A notable strength of teaching in this class is the high quality of detailed planning that covers all areas of learning for children under five years of age. Lessons very cleverly consolidate and extend pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding, especially in language and literacy and mathematical work. The teacher and nursery nurse work effectively together, paying great attention to establishing

routines and to developing confidence and independence in their pupils. This sets a very firm foundation for later learning.

19. In Years 1 and 2, there was an equal amount of very good and good teaching, again with a significant proportion of excellent practice. In 43 per cent of lessons, teaching was good, in a further 43 per cent it was very good and of the highest standard in 14 per cent. Lessons are taught with flair and imagination. The teachers make learning exciting, ensuring that pupils remain challenged and motivated. A good balance of practical and recorded activities provides a rich level of experience. There is a suitable emphasis on teaching the basic skills, including phonics. In one lesson, pupils were engaged in games that involved identification of letter sounds at the beginning, middle and ends of words. This interactive activity led to very good progress and much enjoyment.
20. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was mostly good with a high proportion of very good and excellent lessons seen. In detail, in 10 per cent of lessons teaching was excellent, in 24 per cent it was very good, in 48 per cent it was good and in 18 per cent it was satisfactory. Teachers set challenging learning targets for the pupils, ensuring very good levels of motivation and sustained concentration. Very good use is made of exposition and demonstration. A commendable feature of teaching for the oldest pupils is the challenging pace of lessons and the development of mental agility. In one literacy lesson, pupils drew out parallels between the two themes in the story, working at a level normally expected of 14 year olds. However, challenges for the younger junior pupils are not always set as high and this accounts for the relatively lower grades in teaching. There have been staffing changes for these pupils and some classroom systems are not, as yet, fully established. Homework is very well used in all classes. Tasks set are interesting and usually provide either an introduction to new learning, or reinforcement and extension activities.
21. There are many strengths in the teaching at Our Lady and St Anselm's across all age ranges. Teachers establish excellent relationships with the pupils. An industrious atmosphere pervades the school and this encourages very good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers set clear learning goals for children in the reception class and pupils in both key stages. They always tell pupils what they are going to learn, providing a clear focus for the lesson. Sessions are usually concluded with a focused session to assess progress, tackle any misconceptions and to congratulate individuals on their successes. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own work and supports the development of confidence. Questioning techniques are excellent and all pupils' replies are treated with sensitivity. This creates stimulating discussions and encourages all pupils to 'have a go'. The quality of marking is very good. Teachers' comments are helpful and pupils are encouraged to reply, creating additional opportunities for assessment and dialogue. Teachers' planning is detailed and exemplary. All ages and groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well catered for and lessons build accurately on prior learning. There is a very good balance between teachers instructing and explaining, followed by pupils working on tasks set. This ensures a very good pace to lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to ask questions, investigate and experiment, and provide good opportunities for collaborative work and private study. There is excellent class organisation and management, even in some rather cramped conditions. Carefully chosen resources are organised and are readily available, pupils' books and other consumables are always to hand and classroom routines are well established. The result is that the maximum amount of time is used for learning and this makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved.
22. Teachers throughout school have a good understanding of the most effective ways to teach literacy and numeracy and are successful in supporting pupils to develop skills in these areas. Literacy and numeracy lessons are imaginatively delivered with high expectations of class, group and independent working. A rigorous assessment process directly contributes to the setting of future tasks. Teachers' knowledge of information and communications technology has been greatly extended and well used to improve the curriculum for this subject. In the Foundation Stage, pupils are constantly encouraged to use their skills in communication, language, literacy and mathematical understanding in all their work. Across all age groups, skills in literacy and numeracy are often used to extend learning in other subject areas. This results in some valuable opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their competence in writing, especially across the non-fiction genres.
23. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs or who may be experiencing learning difficulty is very good throughout the school and enables them to make good gains in learning. The requirements of individual education plans are built into daily activities. Designated teaching

and support staff provide targeted, unobtrusive support to meet individual and group needs. This ensures that all pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school community and that all develop good levels of self-confidence.

24. Teachers make good use of the school grounds and local environment, especially in the teaching of science, geography, history and physical education. Parents' returned questionnaires show that 97 per cent are of the opinion that teaching is good and that the school expects pupils to work hard. The same sentiments were very strongly repeated at the parents' meeting.

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

25. The school provides a broad and balanced range of opportunities relevant to the needs of all its pupils. Issues relating to schemes of work, planning, and the needs of higher achieving pupils identified in the last report have all been successfully resolved. Schemes of work now provide good guidance for teachers' planning that is detailed and meticulous. The higher achieving pupils are well challenged and this is shown in the high numbers who gain the advanced levels of attainment at ages seven and eleven. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and includes provision for personal, health and social education. All pupils have equality of access to all subjects of the curriculum and aspects of school life.
26. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children under five years of age in the reception class are very good and a strength of the school. The curriculum for these young children is based on the nationally recognised areas of learning and forms a solid basis for later school work. Children transfer very smoothly into the National Curriculum programmes of study when they are ready.
27. The school has taken account of the national guidance for the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy and has adopted effective strategies. This ensures that provision for these two core subjects is very good. Teachers have a good level of expertise, especially those working with the oldest pupils in Years 2 and 6. All teachers plan learning opportunities for pupils to develop extended pieces of writing in other areas of the curriculum. They also grasp opportunities to link the teaching of numeracy with other subjects, such as by drawing graphs in science or working out the dates of maps in geography. The successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has been a major factor in raising attainment.
28. Since the last inspection curricular planning has been extensively revised and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science it is now very thorough and accurately builds on pupils' prior learning. In the other subjects, planning is satisfactory but a current review aims to improve processes further. In keeping with its mission statement and aims, the school places a strong emphasis on religious education and the development of pupils' personal and interpersonal skills. National Curriculum guidelines are used in all subjects and the school is in the process of putting the new recommendations of Curriculum 2000 into place. Planning takes full account of the mixed ages and abilities within classes. Constant assessment provides teachers with relevant information that they use to plan clearly differentiated tasks. This ensures that high achievers are suitably challenged and that pupils who need additional support are catered for. Planning is regularly monitored by the senior management to check for pace of learning, class organisation, continuity and progression. Pupils' work is collected half-termly and the quality of the curriculum taught is analysed for relevance, breadth and balance.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has a policy of early intervention, no matter how small the difficulty experienced. This pro-active approach ensures that support is well targeted and that major problems are avoided wherever possible. The progress of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is closely monitored through individual education programmes. Additional staff are effectively deployed to support pupils and all are aware of each individual's learning targets.
30. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular activities that are very popular with the pupils. Many sports are played, including football, netball and rounders. These activities enable pupils to mix and compete with others from neighbouring schools. Art and computer clubs take place regularly after school each week where many pupils enjoy the opportunity to pursue



personal interests and develop their talents. To avoid problems of over-subscription, activities are sensibly run on a rota basis so that all pupils have an opportunity to take part. After-school 'booster' classes for the older juniors in mathematics and English provide valuable opportunities for consolidation of learning and preparation for formal assessments and are attended by all those who are invited.

31. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. Due attention is given to health education, mostly through science. The governors have decided that sex education should not be taught formally but there is a programme in place to help pupils understand the health issues of growing up. There is a healthy eating policy in school and pupils are aware that diet choices can affect their well-being. Pupils develop personal responsibility by readily volunteering for jobs in and around the school. A school council provides very good opportunities for meaningful debate and decision making.
32. The school has good links with the community. There is a very hardworking Friends Association that organises fundraising activities and social events for all the family. The pupils take part in the annual Rochdale Arts Festival and sing for the Rochdale Hospice. Residents of the nearby home for the elderly visit the school each month and are served lunch by the pupils. This provides a good opportunity for pupils to develop their inter-personal skills. The curriculum is further enhanced through the annual book fair and the employment of specialist teachers in swimming and music.
33. There are very good links with partner institutions that help to ensure a trouble-free entry into school for the young children, and an easy transition into secondary education for the older pupils. The reception teacher visits the local nurseries and gets to know children before they enter school. Older pupils have opportunities to use facilities at the high schools and to experience some foreign language teaching. An induction day is planned for all. There are also visits to the school by older pupils from the high school. Information about pupils' progress is transferred at liaison meetings. Parents strongly agree that pupils are well prepared for secondary school education and 97 per cent say that the school helps their child to become mature and responsible.
34. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has close links with the local church and the ethos within school contributes to the pupils' spiritual development. Through the religious education programme, all children are encouraged to know that they are unique individuals. The school succeeds in enabling pupils to see clearly how Bible stories relate to their own, everyday lives. In assemblies and in classes, pupils are given opportunities for periods of reflection when they often consider the less tangible aspects of life.
35. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. The school has a well-planned personal, social and health education programme. Pupils consider those less fortunate than themselves when they collect for charities. They are taught a clear understanding of right and wrong. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on mutual respect and self-discipline. Both these factors contribute to the excellent relationships seen. Older pupils take part in a residential holiday each year and this helps to develop their sense of independence. All adults in the school act as very good role models. Their calm, caring approach is reflected in pupils' actions. Parents speak of warmth and welcome at Our Lady and St Anselm's. It is evident that pupils are encouraged to develop a strong sense of belonging and are proud of their school.
36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, overall. Good opportunities are provided for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the local culture, for example through its links with the community. However, the development of pupils' multi-cultural awareness, including the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society, is not as strong. Further opportunities could be exploited in subjects such as art, literature, geography and music to teach about the traditions and values of other cultures and to give pupils a wider understanding of the world in which they live.

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

37. The school provides a secure, supportive environment for all its pupils. Their health, safety and welfare are a high priority for all members of the staff and this is manifest in the school's routines

and interactions observed. In returned questionnaires 99 per cent of parents said that their children enjoyed coming to school. This is further evidence of the caring family ethos that is successfully promoted. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting expressed great satisfaction at the way the staff care for pupils.

38. Some very good improvements have taken place since the previous report. These are in the procedures and use of assessment information to guide curricular planning. The school has worked very hard to ensure that systematic and analytical assessments of pupils' progress and attainment are undertaken regularly. As a result of these arrangements, programmes for teaching and learning are now specifically targeted on what pupils need to learn next, especially in the core subjects. Pupils are fully involved in the assessment and evaluation of their own learning. In all classes, they are informed of the targets for the lesson. In the plenary sessions, they discuss with the teacher whether these have been achieved. Consequently, pupils' knowledge of their learning is very good and makes a significant contribution to motivation, progress and subsequent attainment. When asked how they know if they are making progress, the pupils explain that 'our teachers tell us'. They show record booklets, for example, in reading or information technology, explaining how 'the teachers help us'. A further improvement to these arrangements is planned for the next parents' evening. The pupils are to be invited to attend with their parents to receive reports on their academic progress and personal development. This three-way partnership demonstrates the importance that the school places on the way it cares for its pupils.
39. Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development are very good. Teachers analyse National Curriculum assessments in English, mathematics and science, identifying strengths, weaknesses and trends over time. The school also analyses results from the end of year tests. The information is carefully recorded and school-wide targets are developed. This rigorous process has contributed greatly to the very good improvements in the standards that pupils achieve. Since the previous inspection, when assessment and monitoring featured as a key issues for action, there has been excellent improvement.
40. Annual reports to parents provide clear information on the academic progress and personal development of each child. They meet all statutory requirements. Parents are appreciative of the information they receive and of the 'open door policy' that the school operates. In returned questionnaires 87 per cent were satisfied with the amount of information they receive about how their child is getting on.
41. At all times, teachers and non-teaching staff are very watchful and responsive to individual needs. There is good provision for first aid, with several trained personnel and facilities in each building. The supervision of pupils around the school is very good. Lunchtime supervisors provide a high standard of care. They know the pupils very well and carry out their duties diligently. They place themselves in strategic positions so that they keep a watchful eye, especially in cloakrooms, on corridors and the three outside playgrounds. The school has good procedures and day-to-day routines to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all its pupils. The headteacher is the child protection officer and ensures that staff are well trained and aware of their responsibilities. He is very well supported by a knowledgeable governor and maintains the necessary contacts with expert outside agencies. The staff handbook is clear and ensures that all adults know what is expected of them in the organisation and operation of the school. Regular health and safety checks are carried out by the site manager, the headteacher and governors. Results are recorded and any necessary action taken immediately. Emergency evacuation practices ensure that pupils know how to leave the building quickly and safely should the need arise. Substances are safely stored. Checks to electrical, fire fighting and physical education equipment are carried out by appropriately qualified outside personnel. The standard of maintenance is good, considering the age of the property. Cleanliness is of a very high standard.
42. Playground arrangements, despite the limited space, are good. Different recreation activities are allocated to each of the three small outside areas, ensuring that boisterous and quiet play areas are segregated, providing a safe environment. Pupils express their approval of this arrangement, describing how they can have a noisy, active game on one day and choose to do something relatively quiet on another day without being disturbed.
43. Procedures for monitoring absence are appropriate. Registers are correctly and accurately maintained and sent promptly to the office for safety reasons.

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

44. The effectiveness of established links with parents is very good and is a strength of the school. The school conducts regular questionnaires and uses the results to make changes and build strong relationships with parents and carers. The headteacher and staff make themselves freely available to ensure that any concerns are shared between teachers and parents at the earliest opportunity. Newsletters about the curriculum keep parents informed about what their children are studying and homework diaries provide a good vehicle for communication.
45. There was a very positive atmosphere at the parents' meeting, when the very high regard for the school was made obvious. Parents especially value the 'village' school atmosphere in which all staff know the pupils well. They expressed great satisfaction with the emphasis on social and moral development and the resulting respect that pupils show for one another. Parents confirmed some of the views expressed through the returned questionnaires. The quality of teaching, care for pupils and the high standards achieved all received praise. In returns, 95 per cent of parents said they felt comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. This was endorsed by parents explaining how the headteacher and staff make themselves available out of school hours and how issues are dealt with promptly. There was great satisfaction and admiration for the dedication and commitment of staff. When asked about school developments, parents were keen to describe improved standards, better leadership, better facilities and resources for the pupils, very good discipline, improved organisation and useful newsletters. There was unanimous agreement about the 'transparent' way in which the school is run that allows the parents to have a very good understanding of routines, systems and expectations. The one issue on which parents wanted more information was about mixed age classes. In particular, some were uncertain as to how the school catered for the wide age differences. Inspection findings conclude that the work set for pupils is challenging and that tasks are related to actual attainment targets at specific levels, not simply based on the age of the pupils. This ensures that core skills are developed in a systematic way, regardless of which class pupils are in. The evidence for the success of this strategy lies in the very high results achieved by the eleven year olds in the national tests, when 96 per cent achieve level 4 in English and science with 92 per cent in mathematics. There is no underachievement in the core subjects at the school.
46. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. Parents who help in classrooms offer a valuable service and are much appreciated. Those involved in the "parents as educators" scheme, run by the deputy headteacher, have done some excellent work in designing educational games and programmes to support learning. The Friends Association runs events and raises money to provide much-needed equipment for the school, such as musical instruments, a projector for use in lessons and a football strip for inter-school matches. They work tirelessly to provide social and community functions, making a significant contribution to the aims of the school and to pupils' social development.
47. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The school prospectus is well presented and informative. Together with the annual report from governors, it provides a useful overview of school life. Regular newsletters ensure that parents have a detailed diary of events and are aware of the course work their children will cover in the coming term. The annual reports to parents are well received and parents' evenings are very well attended.
48. The contribution of parents to children's learning at home is very good. Homework tasks are usually completed promptly and information between school and home is efficiently transmitted through the homework diary. Parents have welcomed and signed the home-school agreement.

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

49. The headteacher provides excellent, visionary leadership, setting very high expectations, continually striving for improvement and driving the school forward. He is instrumental in maintaining a supportive environment in which staff and pupils feel secure and valued. He is actively supported by the deputy headteacher and a senior member of staff. They are very successful in promoting an environment where pupils work hard, enjoy excellent relationships, and show respect for staff and their friends. All staff and governors are firmly committed to the school's aims, that include an emphasis on personal as well as academic development. An

analysis of the large number of returns from the parents' questionnaires show that 99 per cent are satisfied that the school is well led and managed, a view that was strongly endorsed at the parents' meeting itself. There have been excellent improvements in leadership and management since the last full inspection.

50. The delegation of responsibilities to key staff is effective and efficient. The deputy headteacher shares responsibility for the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Both she and the senior manager ensure that excellent systems of communication and support are maintained for all staff. Subject co-ordinators for the core areas of English, mathematics and science have a thorough overview of the quality of teaching and the standards attained. They are conscientious in their approach, regularly monitoring planning, observing classroom practice and scrutinising pupils' work. From a detailed analysis of assessment, they set challenging targets for pupils' performance, constantly monitoring progress and resolving any issues that may arise. They contribute to the school development plan and are regularly invited to report on their subjects to the governing body. The success of this corporate management style is evident in the vastly improved attainment at the school. Curricular co-ordination for the other subjects is good and very good for information and communications technology.
51. The governing body, with its valuable range of expertise, is committed to ensuring the highest quality education for all pupils and works closely with the headteacher to achieve this objective. Governors know and understand their roles clearly and maintain a successful approach to meeting their statutory responsibilities. The proceedings of the governing body are efficiently conducted and committees are well organised. There is a very positive and productive relationship between the governing body and the school. Governors' high level of effectiveness represents a major improvement since the last report.
52. The school is staffed by an adequate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers who are effectively deployed to meet the demands of the curriculum and to support pupils with special educational needs. All the teachers have very high levels of professionalism, dedication and commitment. They plan all their work conscientiously, readily sharing experience and expertise. An experienced nursery nurse and classroom assistant provide very good support for pupils' learning, especially for children in the reception class or those who have special educational needs throughout the school. There are established arrangements for staff development, guided by the agreed priorities of the school. Recently, the main focus for training has been on English and mathematics, resulting in improved learning and attainment across all age groups. An experienced mentor provides good support for the newly qualified teacher, who has a planned programme of induction. This includes professional development through lesson observations, staff training and visits to outside agencies, where appropriate. Our Lady and St. Anselm's school is very well served by appropriately skilled non-teaching staff, all of whom are totally committed to its aims and policies. Lunchtime supervisors provide a high standard of care at midday and know the pupils well. The site manager ensures that the buildings, grounds and resources are very well maintained. He also ensures a very high standard of cleanliness and hygiene at all times. Administrative support is very effective and efficient. The secretary makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school, discharging a wide and diverse range of responsibilities.
53. New procedures for performance management have been successfully implemented. The headteacher and staff all have personal targets that are reviewed and assessed on a regular basis.
54. The accommodation has recently been extended and modernised to provide adequate facilities for the teaching of all programmes of study contained in the National Curriculum. However, the space available for children in the reception class is very limited. The school has an action plan that includes ideas for a conservatory extension to provide valuable facilities for additional practical activities and outdoor play for these young children. However, this initiative depends on funding being available. The three playgrounds provide adequate facilities for pupils in the rest of the school, cleverly segregated into areas for boisterous and quiet recreational activities. The hall, playgrounds and games field provide satisfactory accommodation for physical education and extra-curricular activities.
55. Overall, resourcing is just adequate for teaching and learning but there are some significant shortages. Resources for information and communications technology have recently been

improved and most classes now have access to the Internet. However, there are too few computers, especially for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. This restricts their opportunity to practise and consolidate the skills they have learnt, resulting in attainment levels that, although satisfactory, are below those in the other core subjects. In English, the limited amount of large texts for shared reading and guided reading books does not cover the full-recommended genre range in fiction and non-fiction. At present, there is no current detrimental effect on levels of attainment, since the teachers spend much time finding and adapting other material to use. However, this is not an efficient way to provide necessary resources. The children in the reception class have a barely adequate selection of resources, despite every effort made by parents and the classteacher to supplement equipment and materials. They have no large outdoor play equipment and just one computer. The range of equipment for design and technology is just satisfactory but a limited selection of materials restricts pupils' experiences in designing and making. The school is well aware of these shortages and has plans to rectify matters when funding and budgeting limits allow.

56. School development planning is thorough and illustrates clear educational purpose. Funding is linked to priorities, with implementation strategies, timescales and success criteria specified. Both staff and governors are involved in the planning process and in the evaluation of the initiatives taken. This shared involvement ensures that the plan is a useful management tool.
57. The school's finances are very carefully monitored and controlled. Spending is closely linked to the stated priorities. There is a clear, delegated limit to spending and governors exercise their strategic over-view of the school's financial planning very effectively. Recently, the major part of funding has been allocated to essential building work and to maintaining the current staffing level. A reserve was prudently held over from last year to ensure that a sufficient number of teachers could be employed in the face of uncertainty about roll numbers. The finance committee receive regular financial updates to enable them to monitor the budget closely. Best value principles are very well applied to all purchases and contracts. The school provides very good value for money. Governors monitor the impact of spending decisions by checking that new materials and equipment purchased lead directly to improved provision. They sometimes evaluate the benefits in terms of pupils' learning but this is not routine and could be improved. The school has systematic procedures in place for the ordering, receipt and payment of goods and services. Procedures for dealing with cash and private funds are safe and effective. Specific grant funding is appropriately allocated and money provided for special needs pupils is very effectively used.
58. The school is well organised, with established and efficient routines making excellent use of information and communications technology. All statutory requirements are met. The excellent quality of leadership and management are major factors in the vastly improved level of provision and the standards achieved. This area is a major strength of the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to improve further, the school should:

- Improve pupils' attainment for information and communications technology to meet the high standards achieved in English, mathematics and science by:
  - increasing the number of computers in school and ensuring that pupils have sufficient access to hardware and software to consolidate and extend their skills in all aspects of the subject. *(paragraphs 3,4, 55, 114, 115, 117)*
- Improve provision for the pupils' cultural development to the high standard seen for social and moral development by:
  - providing a wider range of books and resources that illustrate and reflect different cultures in our British society and around the world. *(paragraphs 36, 84, 101, 121)*
  - placing more emphasis on multi-cultural issues in teachers' planning. *(paragraphs 36, 84, 101, 121)*
- In addition, when funding allows, the governing body should consider the following for inclusion in its action plan:

Improving resourcing for the teaching of English by:

- providing a better selection of sets of reading books to cover the full range of genres in fiction and non-fiction at both key stages *(paragraphs 55, 84)*
- providing a wider selection of large shared reading texts at both key stages to cover the recommended genre range *(paragraphs 55, 84)*
- Improving the range of equipment and materials to support the curriculum for the young children in the reception class as outlined in the reception class action plan. *(paragraphs 55, 62)*
- Improving the range of equipment and materials available for the teaching of design and technology to extend pupils' experiences. *(paragraph 104)*
- Ensuring that the governing body routinely incorporates the evaluation of expenditure in terms of improved pupil attainment alongside improved provision. *(paragraph 57)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	36	42	11	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		142
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		14

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (92)	94 (96)	100 (96)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	15	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (96)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	17	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	23	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (71)	92 (71)	96 (83)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	23	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (67)	92 (79)	96 (79)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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	139
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	27.8

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	272,451
Total expenditure	270,980
Expenditure per pupil	1,760
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,572
Balance carried forward to next year	24,998

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	139
Number of questionnaires returned	68

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	31	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	43	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	53	6	1	3
The teaching is good.	53	44	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	59	9	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	57	9	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	43	56	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	46	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	53	19	3	6

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The very positive responses recorded above were confirmed at the parents' meeting. There was much praise for the warmth and welcome at their village school. Parents especially appreciate the high quality of teaching, the standard of care provided and the dedication of the staff. They are pleased with the high levels of pupils' attainment and give strong endorsement for the excellent leadership and management. The main issue that arose from discussions with parents was about provision in mixed age classes. The inspection team feels that it would be useful for the school to provide further information in this area and to illustrate to parents the success of the strategies used.

## **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**

60. Children enter the Foundation Stage, often referred to as the reception class, during the September following their fourth birthdays. Most gain early learning experiences at local nurseries and playgroups before starting school. Overall attainment levels are broadly average when children come into reception but there are very wide variations in their prior learning. Due to the very good provision for them and the very high standard of teaching they receive, children make consistently good progress towards early learning goals. There has been very good improvement in provision since the last monitoring report from Her Majesty's Inspectors in 1999.
61. Very good links have been established with parents. All are very supportive of the school and appreciate the 'open door' policy that allows them to freely discuss issues, should the need arise.
62. The day-to-day organisation of children's learning is very good. Planned activities embrace all the recommended areas of learning. Children are sometimes given opportunities to select activities and work independently. Other tasks are carefully directed and supported by the teacher in order to develop key skills systematically. There are few opportunities for children to actually plan their own activity programme. The introduction of such routines could further develop their independence. Assessment and monitoring of children's progress are very good. The classteacher and nursery nurse know the children very well and work as an effective team to provide an exciting and stimulating learning environment within the confines of a very small early years classroom. Budget limitations have restricted funds for the purchase of resources that are therefore limited in scope and quantity. However, intelligent buying has ensured that all areas of the early years curriculum are catered for to some extent. The teacher, well supported by parents, does all she can to compensate for shortages by making resources and games. When funding allows this is a priority area for development.
63. The quality of teaching across all areas of the curriculum for the early years is very good. The teacher exploits every possible opportunity to reinforce and extend learning. In one excellent creative dance lesson, the children refined their physical skills, consolidated their knowledge and understanding of the world, were engaged in creative thinking and extended their skills in language. This careful planning and cross-curricular approach ensures challenge and excitement in learning.
64. The reception class teacher maintains good liaison with the local nurseries through visits and the transfer of records and other useful information. Parents of new children are invited into school in the summer term and asked to complete an initial questionnaire about their child's development. At the start of the term, they are invited back to share the results of baseline assessment with the classteacher. They are kept well informed.

### **Personal Social and Emotional Development**

65. Children enjoy coming to school. They settle quickly into daily routines such as registration and show very good development of social skills. The reception teacher and nursery nurse provide a welcoming and secure learning environment. During group discussions children take turns to speak and listen politely to others. After physical education lessons children dress themselves without fuss and with a minimum of support from adults. They respond to the high expectations teachers have of them and manage buttons and zips efficiently. Children show increasing levels of self-confidence, for example when selecting the activities which interest them. They handle construction kits, computers and books skilfully, often sharing activities with friends. Children are confident when interacting with adults, easily engaging in conversation or role-play. The teaching of personal and social skills is very good. During class sessions, children explore feelings and relationships with others. High expectations and consistent routines ensure that children get out and tidy away equipment with very little prompting. They willingly help each other, respect other people's space and share resources freely. This was seen in one lesson where children investigated dark and light, using a torch and boxes. They took turns to experiment with the equipment, making sensible suggestions and collaborating on their final hypothesis. There is a

constant emphasis on the development of personal responsibility and initiative, with children being encouraged to find solutions to problems before adults step in to help.

### **Communication Language and Literacy**

66. A number of children have some difficulty in hearing and articulating sounds within words when they start school. The excellent support they receive and the quality of interaction with adults ensure that all make very good progress towards the reading and writing targets set for them, many of which are taken from the National Curriculum programmes of study. Children's speaking skills are encouraged through role-play. For example, a group of children work in the class café, taking on the different roles of customer, waitress or cook, often mimicking adult language. Children enjoy a range of activities that are specifically prepared to encourage discussions, for example, when working with an interactive story on the computer. A comfortable reading corner has been created where pupils enjoy some quiet time to browse or to share a book with friends. Early reading skills are developed well through the teaching of letter sounds and key words. The children then enjoy playing games to consolidate and practise their new learning. Additional support is targeted for those who need it. Most children are beginning to write their own names and know how to form letter shapes accurately. They use their developing writing skills for different purposes, such as compiling a letter or labelling the names of rooms on their map of a house.
67. The teaching of language and literacy is very good. Assessments are used very carefully to ensure that skills are taught systematically. All adults talk to children continuously to extend their understanding and development of language. The teacher's story telling is lively and animated, so that children develop a keen interest in books. The vast majority of children are on line to achieve the language and literacy goals set for them when they are five and many will exceed this target.

### **Mathematical Development**

68. Most children can count when they begin reception class, but their understanding of mathematical concepts is not so well developed. They make good progress because of the very good teaching and curriculum provided. Most are likely to meet the early learning goals by the time they are five and a higher attaining group will exceed these and begin National Curriculum programmes of study.
69. Children recognise numbers to five and are beginning to count to and back from ten. More able children count confidently to twenty and say what comes 'before' or 'after' a given number. Skills of estimation are developing well, with some children 'guessing' the number of objects up to 20. There is very good reinforcement of number work in the range of activities provided. Mathematical understanding is taught effectively through computer programs, and through other areas of learning. For example, children in the class café handle money, calculating bills and giving change. They examine the properties of 2 and 3 dimensional shapes in the construction area. Children begin to understand the basic concept of 'measures' when exploring the capacity of bottles and jugs in the sand tray. The class 'birthday' graph was completed as a collaborative task to provide experience in early data handling.
70. The teaching of mathematical development is very good and every opportunity is grasped to extend learning, even working out how many boxes of milk are needed at break time. Teaching is brisk and the teacher skilfully assesses knowledge and understanding by questioning all children in the group. The resulting information is then used to plan the next lessons, ensuring that progress is maintained.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of The World**

71. Children have widely varying levels in their knowledge and understanding of the world when they begin their reception year. Most know the names of some everyday things that are within their personal experiences but their knowledge of the wider world is less well developed. Provision for development in this area of learning is very good and the teacher seizes every opportunity to consolidate learning. Children work confidently on the computer. They use the keyboard and mouse effectively to find their way through programmes that support their language skills. Children have very good opportunities to explore the possibilities of a range of construction materials and to copy structures. Children find out about their immediate locality by going on a walk and then

creating a class map to trace their steps. They learn about the past and have a good understanding of how life was different. They explain some 'old fashioned' methods of housework, such as beating carpets and relate these to 'granny's' time. Children are discriminate in selecting equipment and materials for a specific purpose. When making mobiles, they use trial and error to find the best way of attaching parts together. They show great determination when faced with some tricky paper fasteners.

72. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. The teacher conscientiously seeks opportunities to support and extend children's knowledge through practical and meaningful experiences across all areas of the curriculum.

### **Physical Development**

73. Children have sound basic skills in physical development when they enter the reception class. However, some find manipulation and accurate use of smaller equipment difficult. Children make very good progress over the year, showing increasing levels of confidence and co-ordination of movement. They are on target to meet the early learning goals in this area by the time they move into Year 1. Manipulative skills are encouraged by using construction equipment and materials such as dough. Children begin to show attention to detail when cutting out with scissors. Their developing levels of accuracy and control are evident when they are glueing and sticking their own creations. During physical education lessons they use space well and show consideration of others around them. Children consolidate and extend the skills of running and skipping. They appreciate the effects of exercise on the body and know to rest at appropriate times. Because of limitations to the accommodation, there is no dedicated outside area for these young children and there are no large toys or equipment for outside play. The classteacher has produced an action plan to cover and incorporate an area adjacent to the classroom, when funds become available.

### **Creative Development**

74. Children's creative development is average for their age on entry There is very good provision for this area and children make good progress. An interesting range of percussion instruments in the music area enables children to explore sounds and rhythms independently. Children's paintings show an awareness of colour. There are planned opportunities for children to explore three-dimensional media when building models. Teaching is very good. In one music lesson the teacher encouraged children to experiment with sound making to achieve the desired effect. A permanent feature in the classroom is an easel where children can choose to work in different media, such as paint, crayon or chalk. Children demonstrate creativity when working in the play-house and play-castle. They create characters and develop stories to enact. Adults suggest ideas for children to try, but also allow sufficient freedom for them to develop their individual likes, dislikes and talents.

## **ENGLISH**

75. The National Curriculum tests for seven year olds show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 2 or above is close to the national average in reading. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the advanced level 3 in reading is very high when compared with the national average, putting the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. Observations during the inspection indicate that this year's results will show a higher percentage at level 2 and at least the same number of pupils achieving the advanced stage. The percentage of pupils achieving level 2 in writing is well above the national average and the number attaining the advanced level 3 is above average. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work indicate that these high standards will be at least maintained in this year's tests. Trends over time show that attainment in reading at the school is rising faster than the national trend, with a comparative steep rise in writing. When pupils enter school their language and literacy baseline assessment indicates an average level of skills, with a significant percentage having difficulty in discriminating and articulating sounds within words. When taking into consideration the percentage of pupils achieving the expected and advanced levels in reading and writing, progress in English for the five to seven year olds is very good.

76. For the eleven year olds, the percentage gaining the expected level 4 in English is well above the national average. The number gaining the advanced level 5 is very high, with an incredible 63 per cent achieving this challenging standard, placing the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. When compared with similar schools the results again show attainment at level 4 to be well above average and very high at level 5. Over time, standards show a steep improvement when compared with the national trend. Lesson observations, interviews with pupils and scrutiny of work during the inspection indicate that these very high standards will certainly be maintained, with a good percentage of pupils in Year 6 already achieving the advanced stage.
77. There have been very good improvements in the teaching of English and the standards of pupils' attainment since the last full inspection. A key issue for action identified in the last report of Her Majesty's Inspectors, relating to the refinement of the literacy hour, has been fully rectified. Good strategies are in place to teach all the word, sentence and text work from the National Framework and this is leading to the high standards of achievement seen.
78. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are high. Pupils express their ideas clearly and listen well to others. All readily engage in conversation about their work. In a Year 2 lesson a group of pupils read their parts from a playscript very confidently and with good expression. Pupils discuss their opinions, organising their thoughts to focus on exactly what they want to say. They listen very carefully to other points of view, extend their ideas through sophisticated exchanges and give clear reasons for their opinions. In Years 3 to 6 pupils talk at length about a range of topics and respond sensitively to their classmates' ideas. They speak with clarity and assurance, using appropriate vocabulary to express complex ideas and meanings. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils showed maturity when discussing the underlying themes of a sub-story within a text. Their ideas were thought-provoking, relevant and contributed well to the overall level of understanding achieved. In drama, pupils use dramatic techniques to successfully explore issues and characters. Progress for all groups of pupils in speaking and listening is very good.
79. Pupils' achievement in reading is very good at both key stages. Those who have special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate in relation to prior learning and make equally good progress. Guided reading is used effectively in Years 1 and 2 and there is a good match of texts to pupils' prior attainment and developing expertise. Skills such as the recognition and articulation of letter sounds are well developed and help pupils to tackle unfamiliar text, supporting the very good rate of progress seen. Most pupils recognise the features of both fiction and non-fiction texts and know how to use the contents and index sections to find information. All take reading books home regularly and are well supported by parents. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and show very good levels of comprehension. They recall in detail what they have read and skills of inference and deduction are exceptionally well developed. Pupils state their preferences for favourite books and authors, justifying their views. They extend their reading experiences across a wide range of genres by borrowing from the class and school libraries. They understand classification systems and can locate information when they need it. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress, due to the very good quality of teaching, the exacting challenges presented to them and the very positive attitudes fostered by the school.
80. Year 1 and 2 pupils practise writing in logically sequenced sentences. They apply their knowledge of letter sounds effectively when spelling words. By the time pupils are seven, writing is well structured. Capital letters and full stops are used consistently to demarcate sentences. Many pupils are also using speech, question and exclamation marks correctly. Writing shows a good range of fiction and non-fiction work. Pupils investigate writers' styles and experiment with some techniques in their own work. They study how characters appear and are developed throughout a story. For example, in 'Little Red Riding Hood' they examined the wolf's cunning and greediness. Handwriting is well formed and legible. In Years 3 to 6, pupils write imaginatively in different styles. By the age of eleven, their work is lively, thoughtful and sophisticated. They use simile and metaphor to create effect, often modelling their writing on work of significant writers. Pupils experiment with writing in different genres, including poetry. Skills are effectively used to enhance learning in other subject areas. For example, pupils write a model explanatory text on 'The Water Cycle'. They have a secure grasp of punctuation and grammar, using subordinate clauses effectively to add detail and engage the reader. Year 3 pupils choose powerful verbs to add interest and use a range of successful story structures. By Year 6, pupils show an awareness of the reader in their choice of vocabulary. Most pupils spell accurately, using a range of appropriate

strategies. Handwriting is generally of a high standard, with some pupils developing their own style.

81. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual programmes of learning are used to plan work and pupils have targeted support within the classroom. Higher attainers are always challenged and this can be evidenced by the very high achievement in English.
82. The literacy hour has been very successfully implemented in the school. The quality of teaching is mainly good, with a very high percentage of very good and excellent practice seen, especially in Years 2 and 6. The high quality of teaching positively and directly impacts on pupils' learning, resulting in the very high standards of attainment in the school. All teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use it very effectively to plan and prepare lessons. Expectations are very high. Meticulous assessment, especially in Years 2 and 6, gives teachers a very clear view of what pupils can and cannot do. This information is then used to plan targeted programmes of work to take pupils forward at a challenging pace. For example, Year 2 pupils are often working from the Year 3 programmes of study. They confidently read, practise and perform poems, discussing the impact of rhyme, choice of vocabulary, style and humour. Some Year 6 pupils are working at a very advanced level as they identify layers of meaning in texts, commenting on language, structures and themes. Homework is very effectively used to enhance and reinforce learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils extend their reading skills by taking books home and eagerly write stories for Anselm Bear. In Years 3 to 6, teachers set meaningful tasks either as preparation for classwork or to consolidate learning. For example, in the Year 6 class, pupils had studied the text used for guided reading at home the night before. This allowed the teacher to focus on the higher order comprehension skills she wanted to address during the lesson time. The pupils were then set an additional homework task to extend learning even further. Each pupil has a 'reading log' that is regularly checked to that ensure a wide range of reading experiences, including graphic novels and poetry. Excellent relationships are established throughout school. As a result pupils are attentive, understand what they have to do and work very hard.
83. The quality of leadership and management for the subject is excellent. The English co-ordinator is exceptionally knowledgeable, not only in terms of subject knowledge, but also in teaching technique. She is very well supported by the governor for English. Together, they drive for excellence and ensure a suitably high profile for the subject. Through her monitoring work, the co-ordinator has a thorough and detailed overview of pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching and planning throughout school. She also advises teachers on the application of English skills in other subject areas across the curriculum. Information and communications technology is very well used at both key stages to support learning. Pupils carry out personal research using CD ROMS. They draft, edit and produce final, polished pieces of written work using word processing and desktop publishing programs. Older pupils design and produce the school newsletter with a minimum of help.
84. There are bright, attractive reading areas in all classrooms that are stocked with an appropriate range of books. These are helpfully colour coded to enable pupils to choose material that is suitable for them. The libraries are comfortable and inviting for pupils and this encourages them to read for pleasure. Books in the Year 3 to 6 library area are not catalogued using the Dewey System. This limits pupils' experiences. In all library areas there is a lack of books that illustrate cultures and traditions from around the world. The commercial resources to support the teaching of the literacy hour are not sufficient in range and quantity. There is a lack of large texts for shared work. Sets of guided reading books are insufficient in range and quantity to cover the full, recommended genre range for fiction and non-fiction at the different reading levels. Resources for the teaching of phonics for the reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are limited. At present, teachers spend a lot of their time and energy finding or making alternative material to supplement the school's resources. They are highly successful in ensuring that shortages do not affect pupils' learning or attainment but this is not an efficient way to provide resources. Classroom displays are very effectively used to support pupils' learning. In Year 2, for example, there are several useful prompts to help pupils with their writing and interactive areas where they can add their own ideas. In Year 6 a large display reminds pupils of the work they have covered and acts as a well-used point of reference to support writing in all areas of the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. Standards for seven year olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 are well above the national average when compared to those in all schools and in similar schools. The number of seven year olds achieving the expected level 2 in all aspects of mathematics is very high. The proportion of pupils achieving the advanced level 3 is well above average. At the end of Year 6, when pupils are eleven, test results are again well above average. The number of pupils achieving the advanced level, when compared nationally and with similar schools, was also above average. The four-year trend of standards in mathematics in the school is one of good improvement, at a greater rate than that seen nationally. This is because the school has improved assessment and substantially revised the planning for mathematics. Both factors have had a very positive effect on teaching and learning.
86. The inspection findings are that standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6, where a high proportion of pupils are working at advanced levels. The rigorous implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, coupled with specific target setting, has contributed to the very good progress made. Pupils in both key stages attain very high standards in number work and are able to apply their skills to solving problems. They have a good understanding of the application of mathematical skills and are able to change worded problems into numerical calculations. When pupils are seven, they have a good understanding of place value, adding and subtracting mentally. They apply these skills well when dealing with problems related to money and measurement. Pupils estimate distances with reasonable accuracy. They measure to the nearest centimetre, using a ruler, as seen when they were comparing shoe sizes. Most pupils readily identify geometrical shapes such as cylinder, sphere, cube and cone, and know their properties. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a very good understanding of number, including decimal fractions. Their mental skills in dealing with complex numerical problems are excellent. They solve complex calculations that involve all four rules of number as well as the use of brackets. Many pupils add and subtract by splitting numbers, and this greatly increases the speed at which they calculate. All pupils know the importance of checking the accuracy of their answers by rounding off and estimating. They readily apply their numerical skills to solving problems involving percentages and speed. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and space. They name many two and three-dimensional shapes and identify lines of symmetry. They accurately measure and calculate the sizes of angles, and solve problems involving area and perimeter. Pupils' data handling skills are good. They collect and tabulate their own data and display patterns and relationships through graphs and pictorial diagrams. They know how to find averages and when to use mean, mode and median when handling their data. Pupils have a sound understanding of probability and chance.
87. The progress at which pupils learn mathematics is very good. On entering the school they begin to learn to count, order, add and subtract numbers to 10. As pupils move through Years 1 and 2, they develop their numerical skills through solving problems. Early on, they learn to estimate. This enables them to recognise any errors in their calculations and accounts for the high degree of accuracy that pupils show when dealing with complex mathematical problems later on in the school. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to collect their own data, for example, by measuring the sizes of their heads and waists using tape measures and devise their own systems for tabulating and displaying data. As a result, in Years 3 to 6, most pupils are able to produce their own graphs and bar charts, and interpret information correctly. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school.
88. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning; they enjoy mental mathematics and most are very willing to explain how they arrived at their answers. From a very early age, pupils demonstrate sustained concentration and endeavour when working independently. Because of their good standards of mental agility, some higher achieving pupils work at a very fast rate, constantly enjoying the new challenges set. This is an important factor in the high standards of achievement.
89. The quality of teaching is at least good and often very good. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils at the start of a lesson. This has the positive effect of enabling pupils to monitor their own progress through the lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a very good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Time is used well and activities are varied so that pupils remain interested in their learning. Most lessons are brisk. Quick-fire questions at the outset rapidly focus pupils' attention and encourage them to participate actively. However, sometimes questioning can be too fast and lower attaining pupils are not given enough time to think. Teachers make very effective use of equipment in their lessons, as seen when very young children were challenged to count from different starting points



on a "counting hoop" and to estimate the number of cubes in a perspex box. Mathematical games are also effectively used to enhance pupils' mental skills. Where appropriate, teachers take opportunities to extend literacy skills in mathematics lessons, for example in a lesson where younger pupils read aloud the instructions for the activities. In group activities, teachers monitor the progress of the pupils well. They intervene as necessary with challenging questions that encourage thinking skills. This good monitoring enables teachers to set appropriate targets for individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and higher attainers are extended. Teachers use the plenary sessions very well to enable pupils to recap and consolidate what they have been learning. In the best lessons, teachers use this time to set further challenges to the pupils in order to lead them into the next lesson. Homework extends and consolidates learning in mathematics.

90. The curriculum takes full account of the national guidance. Pupils benefit from after-school "booster" classes in mathematics for those who need extra help to enable them to achieve high grades. Currently, these classes are attended voluntarily by about 10 pupils. Leadership and management of the subject are excellent. The mathematics co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure progression and coverage of all the programmes of study. Teachers analyse pupils' responses to questions in the National Curriculum and end-of-year tests. This enables them to set priorities within their planning and concentrate their teaching on areas identified for improvement. Recent staff training has taken place to further extend the level of expertise. This has resulted in greatly improved teaching and learning which has enabled the school to surpass its attainment targets. "Bridging" courses in mathematics are taught in Year 6 to help the pupils to prepare well for new challenges in mathematics at their secondary schools.
91. Since the last inspection the school has made very good progress in raising the standards of teaching and learning and, consequently, the levels of attainment of the pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

92. Since the previous inspection the school has made very good improvements to the provision for science. These are due to more confident teaching, the good co-ordination of the subject and rigorous assessments of the pupils' progress. In addition, pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn, experiment and investigate.
93. The results of the formal assessments at the end of Year 2, when pupils are seven, show levels of attainment to be very high compared with those of other schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. At the end of Year 6, when pupils are eleven, the percentage attaining the expected level 4 is well above average. The percentage of pupils in that cohort who reached the advanced level was close to the national average. Since then, the co-ordinator for science and all staff have taken steps to ensure that a good percentage of Year 6 pupils are on target to reach the higher levels this year. There is an emphasis on constant improvement and success as evidenced in the very good team-work that exists among all staff.
94. Inspection observations indicate that the majority of pupils are well placed to achieve high standards in science. This is partly because the investigative and experimental aspects of the subject are systematically taught and applied.
95. Pupils achieve well in science in Years 1 and 2 and build on their previous learning in a structured way. They have good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, of materials and their properties, and of physical processes. During the inspection, the mixed class of Year 1 and 2 pupils investigated a variety of materials. They identified all by name, then sorted them according to their properties such as texture. They went on to describe possible usage of materials, linking this very well with the identified properties. They explained why door hinges are made out of metal and describe why this is the most suitable material for the purpose. Pupils know about energy sources and which everyday appliances use electricity. They light a bulb in various electrical circuits. Pupils recognise uses of electricity in environmental contexts, such as in warning lights or a lighthouse. They record their observations in writing or tables and charts, using appropriate language. Pupils use their knowledge and understanding to find patterns and draw conclusions. The small number of pupils with special educational needs also make good progress and achieve well in comparison with their prior attainment.

96. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are well placed to attain advanced levels in science. Knowledge and understanding are very secure. Skills of scientific enquiry are also very good. Pupils experience a wide range of practical and investigative activities, recording their findings in a variety of ways, including tables, diagrams, charts and graphs. They carry out fair tests, for example, in the mixed Year 4 and 5 class, when studying habitats. They explain clearly how they control variables when investigating whether wood-lice prefer light or dark conditions. In one very good Year 6 lesson, the pupils used their knowledge from previous investigations to predict change in materials, before experimenting to separate mixtures. They suggested different ways of making solids dissolve more quickly and were able to alter one variable at a time. They make relevant observations, measure accurately and use equipment appropriately. The majority of pupils know and understand that scientific ideas are based on evidence. They demonstrate this clearly when investigating micro-organisms.
97. There is an equal amount of good and very good teaching in the lessons observed. As a result, pupils throughout the school make very good progress. Since the last inspection there have been substantial improvements in the quality of teaching and the standards that pupils achieve in science. Through rigorous in-service training, teachers' knowledge is now very secure. In addition, there is a whole-school approach to planning, with clear learning targets and assessments, so that pupils' progress can be followed. This information is recorded systematically and used well to plan the next steps of learning. The teachers have high expectations of their pupils, providing them with consistently challenging work, while ensuring that they meet the pupils' differing needs. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with a good balance between teacher's input and pupils' activity. The final sessions are effectively used to summarise key learning points. Through skilful questioning, teachers effectively deepen pupils' understanding. For example, when asked how conclusions are derived, pupils explained how they analysed their results, looking for patterns. Marking is very good. Pupils are praised for their efforts and often provided with further challenges. For example, in Year 6, the teacher asked the pupil to describe the process involved, to which he responded, 'the sunlight mixes with the chlorophyll that is already in the leaf.' Regular homework consolidates and extends pupils' knowledge. All these factors make a valuable contribution to the pupils' progress and subsequent attainment in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. For pupils aged seven and eleven attainment in art is in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
99. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use a range of techniques and materials to explore ideas. They make observational drawings of objects and houses using pencils, felts and crayons. Pupils use paints to produce pictures. They make hand-prints as a basis for angels, which they cut out and decorate using silver paper. They gain experience of making collages, using materials such as corrugated paper, straw, wooden sticks and coloured paper. Pupils have a sound knowledge of pattern and composition. For example, they make reversed patterns using two coloured papers. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of colour mixing. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to develop their skills in observational drawings that clearly demonstrate their understanding of line and shade. At the time of the inspection, some pupils had produced a very attractive display based on enlarged line drawings of cut fruit. They used ink and paint to emphasise the lines and colours and the drawings had been combined to produce a "fantasy fruit". Pupils study the work of Claris Cliff, the English pottery designer, and decorate paper plates in the style of her 'bizarre ware' characterised by brightly coloured floral and geometrical shapes. They make use of the local environment to produce drawings of landscape features and learn to use aids to drawing, such as viewfinders. By the end of Year 6 pupils talk confidently about the work of a number of artists, clearly describing their likes and dislikes of specific techniques and effects.
100. The quality of teaching in the few lessons seen was at least good and, in one, it was very good. In the very good lesson, pupils were asked to think about their feelings in response to pictures. Not only did this enhance the pupils' spiritual development, but they were also prompted to think about the techniques used by the artist to convey these emotions. Pupils then experimented with a range of media to try to discover how combinations of line, shade and colour might be interpreted. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to select different media when producing works of art. As a result, pupils gain experience of using a range of materials and learn that some

media combine to make more effective pictures than others. In some year groups, pupils use computer programs to produce drawings.

101. The curriculum is developing. It is based on the national guidelines and is adapted to suit the limited art resources in the school. The co-ordinator monitors standards through art work and displays. However, opportunities are often missed to enhance the cultural, including multi-cultural, development of the pupils through visits to art galleries or by studying traditional art from other countries. The curriculum is enhanced by the after-school art club, in which pupils are provided with a good range of activities and experiences in an informal setting. The club does much to enhance pupils' enjoyment of art and contributes well to the excellent relationships in the school. Since the previous inspection, planning has developed and the teaching of art has improved. Standards have been maintained.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. During the three days of the inspection no lessons in this subject were timetabled. Therefore it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. However, through displayed work and talking to pupils, it is evident that a range of media has been used and pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of design and technology are broadly in line with national expectations.
103. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make pencil holders and learn how to fix a card tube to a flat base. In discussions with pupils, they describe opportunities to plan and evaluate their products. Pupils in Year 2 described making cat-flaps from card, in response to a story. They used different materials, such as paper fasteners, pins and tape to make the "hinge", then evaluated the cat-flaps by comparing how well each one was made and worked. Pupils have also made moving vehicles out of cans and boxes and can describe how they fit the wheels onto straw axles. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 talk about making three-dimensional greetings cards that were on display. They learn how to make parts that "pop up" when the card is opened and also produce three-dimensional effects. Pupils design and make slippers. They draw annotated diagrams to show what materials will be used and how the parts will be joined together, for example using a glue gun and a stapler. Pupils also gain experience of sewing when making hand puppets. They describe their experiences of making biscuits for Easter and then evaluating the quality. Pupils are skilful in using a mathematical net to make cubes and cuboids. For example, they made a biscuit box and then decorated it to a suitable standard of finish. Year 4 and 5 pupils design a model fairground ride, including useful construction details. Pupils use design and technology to support their learning in other subjects. In history, for example, Year 6 pupils make a model Anglo-Saxon village out of recycled materials. At the time of the inspection, similarly made models of Roman buildings were on display.
104. The curriculum for design and technology is based on the national guidelines that are being adapted alongside a long-term planning model based on topic work. All teachers have relevant parts of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance on the subject to support planning. The school has limited resources for the teaching of the subject and this results in a relatively narrow range of experiences for the pupils and limited opportunity to experiment and investigate. A wider range of tools, electrical and mechanical components and food are needed, together with textiles and materials that have different properties and those of a mouldable nature.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

105. Only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection. However, further evidence was gathered from speaking to pupils, teachers and the subject co-ordinator. Teachers' planning and work previously completed by the pupils were scrutinised. Standards in the subject are in line with those expected nationally for pupils aged seven and eleven. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection report.
106. From their studies, pupils in Years 1 and 2 know about the geographical feature of their locality. They use correct terminology when describing geographical features such as landscape, mountains, hills and cliffs. Pupils show skills in simple mapping work. They survey the amenities of Whitworth and Struay, expressing likes and dislikes and justifying their views. They

recognise change and offer an opinion as to whether it is for the better or worse. They carefully consider the impact of new houses in the locality.

107. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils build on their earlier knowledge and skills through their studies. In the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils show a good understanding of settlements. In the very well conducted lesson observed, the pupils gave clear explanations as to reasons for humans choosing a specific site to live. They listed water, food and building materials. Pupils understand how people sustain and improve the environment and describe how human activity affects and changes places. They use old Ordnance Survey maps to compare and contrast settlements of the past and present. Older pupils study the region around Delhi and make comparisons between life in India and in Britain. They give very good explanations of climate and weather and how these factors affect people's lives. They understand and confidently use terms, such as 'temperate' or 'tropical'. The pupils learn to use maps and atlases and to identify different scales. They make good use of information technology, whenever possible, to extend their knowledge. Pupils' skills in literacy and mathematics are effectively consolidated through the subject.
108. From the evidence available, it can be judged that the overall quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Planning shows that correct geographical terminology is used and activities are well matched to the differing needs of the pupils. High expectations are set and resources are effectively used. The school has made good improvements in the provision for this subject since the last report and has rectified the weaknesses then noted.

## **HISTORY**

109. During the period of the inspection, it was possible to observe only one lesson. Judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays and discussions with the pupils. Evidence indicates that pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Seven and eleven year olds attain standards expected for their age.
110. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils are beginning to develop a sense of chronology and have an awareness of differences between the present and the past. Through examination of pictures, they understand how features of everyday life have changed over time. They learn about Florence Nightingale when studying significant figures in history. Their enquiry skills are progressively developed through activities in which they look for clues from illustrations and consider the information gathered. Whenever possible, technological aids are used to clarify thinking and to extend understanding of history. In the lesson observed, the pupils planned to use a tape recorder to record their findings.
111. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are consolidated and extended appropriately. They demonstrate knowledge of everyday life and the characteristics of past societies, such as the Saxons. Older pupils in this key stage talk about different periods and people they have studied, such as the Celts, the Romans and the Vikings, placing them in chronological order. They understand how we gain information about the past. In a discussion with Year 6 pupils, it was evident that their enquiry skills are being well developed. They explained that we learn about the past through 'artefacts that archaeologists have found', or 'word of mouth passed on through the years,' from books, and through use of the Internet. They show good understanding of cause and effect. For example, they recount some incidents of World War 2 and quote changes that took place following it. One pupil talked about the Cold War and showed a mature understanding of its implications.
112. The subject contributes well to the pupils' moral and social development. Through their studies about Martin Luther King, or Mother Theresa, they begin to understand the effects of prejudice and the endeavours that people make to improve the quality of life for others.
113. While the resources for history are adequate, the school makes every effort to extend these by borrowing from sources such as the Schools' Library Service and from the museum at Whitworth. Educational visits to places of interest and visitors, such as the local historian, provide an extra dimension to learning. Parents are regularly informed about the work their children are covering so that they can help with research. All these factors help to enhance the curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

114. Standards meet national expectations at the end of both key stages. The majority of the pupils have experience of using computers outside school and this assists in their appreciation and understanding of the importance of the latest technology. However, the pupils' overall progress and attainment do not match those in English, mathematics and science. This is directly due to the lack of resources. There are too few computers to enable development in the short and long term or to allow pupils to practise and consolidate their skills. Nevertheless, since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below expected levels and the quality of teaching was in need of some improvements, the school has made good progress to rectify these weaknesses. Rigorous in-service training has resulted in increased confidence and expertise among the staff. The development of new schemes of work, combined with improved planning and assessment procedures, is also beginning to pay dividends. Information and communication technology features on the school development plan and targets are set for greater improvements in the subject.
115. By the time the pupils are seven, they display good word processing skills. They have a secure control of the mouse and use the keyboard to type their work. They use the computers to support their learning in other subjects, notably in mathematics, English, science and art. The pupils know how to enter, save and retrieve their work. However, through a serious lack of appropriate resources, the pupils have too few opportunities to practise the range of skills that they are acquiring. Consequently, progress is just satisfactory across all the aspects of information and communications technology. The school is aware of the situation and is making every effort to rectify matters.
116. In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their skills. In a discussion with some Year 6 pupils, they described a range of activities in the subject. These include word processing, the use of graphics, control of equipment and the use of databases to handle information. They also know how to present information using spreadsheets. They save their work on a floppy disk so that they can use and revise it later. This is especially useful in English, where pupils edit and refine their compositions over time. Pupils access the Internet when available, sometimes at home, and send mail electronically. They obtain information using CD-ROM sources. The pupils are confident in using the digital camera recently acquired by the school. In a very good lesson observed in the mixed Year 4 and 5 class, the pupils learned how to make a tree diagram to organise information. Their progress was enhanced through effective assistance provided by a knowledgeable parent. In lessons, as part of the whole-school approach to teaching and learning, targets are shared with the pupils, who engage in self-evaluation.
117. The co-ordinator and staff have all been very creative in trying to overcome the shortcomings due to the lack of resources. One of the receiving secondary schools regularly helps out by making its computer suite available and providing further challenging work. Through participation in a residential course in Kingswood, the pupils are given opportunities to extend and practise their skills. A successful after-school club is another example of the way the teachers try to overcome limitations. In these sessions, the pupils are given additional tuition and practical experiences that effectively enhance their learning.
118. Teachers seize every opportunity to extend their pupils' learning through real and meaningful assignments. At Christmas, the pupils produced tickets for their production, using their developing skills practically. Year 6 pupils are responsible for producing the school newsletter. They write articles, organise the layout of the paper using desktop publishing skills, and adhere to the deadline as required. Pupils enjoy typing and printing notices for display around the school. These opportunities effectively support learning and contribute well to pupils' social development.

## **MUSIC**

119. Attainment in music for pupils aged seven and eleven is in line with national expectations and learning proceeds at a satisfactory rate throughout school.
120. In Years 1 and 2 pupils clap and tap a beat on a variety of simple instruments. They listen attentively and recognise ways in which sounds can be made and altered. Pupils identify a basic range of instruments and explore different ways to play them and create effect. For example,

some Year 1 pupils mimicked everyday sounds, such as running water, using percussion instruments. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to create sound patterns. They rehearse to improve performance. Pupils recognise contrasting musical elements such as quiet and loud, quick and slow. By age eleven, pupils have a sound understanding of duration, tempo and dynamics. They sing with enthusiasm and expression, although some have difficulty controlling pitch.

121. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' learning and progress relate directly to the quality of teaching they receive. For example in Year 1, direct intervention by the teacher helps pupils to appraise their own performance and to suggest ways to refine it. A detailed scheme of work adequately integrates the elements of performing, composing and appraising. Extra-curricular opportunities enhance pupils' experiences in Years 3 to 6. They sing for patients at the local hospice, perform in the local arts festival every year and take part in the school's annual Christmas and Summer productions. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to experience the music of countries from around the world and to become familiar with characteristic rhythms and styles.
122. The subject has not been featured in the school development plan in recent years and no training has been provided to help non-specialist teachers improve their skills. The co-ordinator is aware of this situation and is currently considering an action plan. The quality of resources is good but they are few in number, especially in Years 3 to 6. This limits opportunities for improvisation and composition. All the available instruments are well organised and used. Expert tuition in the playing of keyboard and string instruments is available to pupils, and some older ones take advantage of this provision to extend their skills.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

123. Pupils aged seven and eleven achieve standards in physical education that are in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress in the subject throughout school.
124. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop good games and gymnastic skills. Most Year 2 pupils throw accurately and catch balls and beanbags coming from different angles. They show good control and co-ordination when working in pairs, sending a ball to each other by rolling, throwing and side-kicking. Many successfully control small equipment, for example, by bouncing balls for prolonged periods of time. They know that there is a need to warm up before exercise and have begun to notice the effects of exercise on their bodies. The youngest pupils walk and jog with a good awareness of space. They express their thoughts and ideas through movement in response to music in dance lessons.
125. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to develop games skills in lessons and in extra-curricular clubs. In gymnastics, they learn to create sequences of movements. For example, they link running, jumping and rolling across the floor and apparatus, although with varying degrees of skill. Pupils learn to evaluate their own and other people's performance by careful watching and comparison. They comment constructively on one another's efforts and recognise examples of good gymnastic skill. All pupils have swimming lessons at the local baths for part of each year and by the end of the key stage most are competent swimmers.
126. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some excellent teaching in Years 1 and 2. All lessons have a clear purpose. The stated learning objectives enable the teachers to plan the development of skills in small steps. For example, in one lesson they progressed from throwing and catching to rolling the ball, then bouncing it through a hoop. In the final stage, pupils challenged the receiver to anticipate and intercept the ball. These activities were carried out with an increasing degree of accuracy. The teacher modified the lesson in the light of pupils' performance with the result that they were continually being challenged to extend their skills. The pupils remained attentive throughout and greatly enjoyed the lesson. This illustrates the typical pattern of progression in the better lessons. Teachers consistently ensure that everyone works within safety limits. Pupils respond sensibly and use their initiative.
127. The curriculum is based on the Local Authority's and national planning documents. However, there school is tending to become over-reliant on the Local Authority's guidance. The lessons seen that were based on this scheme tended to be activity-based rather than focused on results.

Several pupils appeared to find them unchallenging and repetitive. The physical education curriculum is enriched by a number of extra-curricular activities that are very well attended. One session is run by a volunteer helper who brings additional expertise to the school curriculum. Pupils take part in several team competitive sports with other schools, including football, netball, rounders, athletics and cross-country running. This supports and extends their social skills.