

INSPECTION REPORT

Sacred Heart Primary School
Battersea
London

LEA: Wandsworth

Unique Reference Number: 131520
Inspection Number: 191012

Headteacher: Mr John Murphy

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Canham
1353

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd September 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

Type of control: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Este Road
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Wandsworth
London

Telephone number: 0171 223 5611

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Sr Margaret Power

Date of previous inspection: not applicable (the infant and junior schools were amalgamated to form Sacred Heart Primary School since the previous inspections)

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Canham <i>(Registered Inspector)</i>	Science; Physical education.	Attainment and progress; Leadership and management.
Anthony Mundy <i>(Lay Inspector)</i>		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Attendance; Partnership with parents and the community; The efficiency of the school.
Urszula Basini <i>(Team Member)</i>	Geography; History; Equality of opportunity; English as an additional language	The curriculum; Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Paul Evans <i>(Team Member)</i>	Mathematics; Information technology.	The quality of teaching; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Helen Mundy <i>(Team Member)</i>	Areas of learning for pupils aged under five; Art; Design and technology.	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare.
Kathryn Taylor <i>(Team Member)</i>	English; Music; Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	Assessment.

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- English and mathematics are consistently well taught in Key Stage 2, and pupils make good progress in lessons. Reading and listening skills are particular strengths.
- Pupils develop good skills in information technology at Key Stages 1 and 2 as a result of specialist teaching.
- Just over half of the teaching was judged to be good or very good.
- The headteacher gives strong leadership.
- The recently amalgamated school gives pupils a safe, supportive and caring environment which promotes very good relationships.
- The provision for moral and social development is very good, and pupils are very well managed.
- There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, including sport.

• **Where the school has weaknesses**

- I. The lack of appropriate planning for children aged under five.
- II. Whole school assessment is under-developed.
- III. The additional support for pupils with special educational needs lacks focus.
- IV. Teachers' planning lacks sufficient detail, in the foundation subjects.
- V. The monitoring role of the governing body lacks rigour.

The school's strengths significantly outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses will form part of the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

• **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

Since the previous inspections the infant and junior schools have amalgamated to form one primary school, using the existing buildings on the same site. No reference has been made in this report to the judgements in the previous reports. However, judgements have been made on the progress made by the new school on its development plan, which is based in part on the action plans drawn up in response to the findings from the previous inspections. The school is well placed to make further progress because of decisive leadership, the quality of teaching, and the willingness of the staff to work together towards a common goal.

.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests in the junior school just before the amalgamation with the infant school:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>high</i> A*
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E
English	A	A*	
Mathematics	C	A	
Science	D	B	

Standards were high in English and well above average in mathematics when compared to those of similar schools. Standards were above average in science. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher levels of attainment in the national tests were well above average in English. Evidence from the inspection indicates that, by the age of 11 years, pupils reach above average standards in information technology, art, music, and some aspects of English including reading and listening skills. Standards in writing are improving significantly and their further improvement is one of the school's priorities.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Science	N/A	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	N/A	Very Good	Very Good
Religious education	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. Good and very good teaching was observed in 51 per cent of lessons, with 7 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching. English and mathematics are consistently well taught in Key Stage 2. Information technology is consistently well taught in both key stages; pupils make good progress because they benefit from the focused

teaching of the subject co-ordinator. The teaching of art is good in Key Stage 2.

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Some families take extended holidays during term time.
Ethos*	Good. All but a few pupils are keen and hard working. The school values and respects its pupils and is committed to raising standards further.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides strong and decisive leadership, and gives the recently amalgamated school clear direction. He is ably supported by two deputies. Some members of the governing body bring considerable knowledge and expertise to the work of the school and visit regularly. They have yet to develop a rigorous monitoring role.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. It is broadly balanced and relevant. It is not sufficiently guided by the assessment of pupils' progress.
Pupils with special educational needs	There are significant weaknesses in the support and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good moral and social provision. The school provides well for spiritual development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. There are good levels of staffing. The learning environment is interesting and well maintained.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- VI. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the school.
- VII. The school is approachable.
- VIII. The school encourages children to get involved in more than their daily lessons.
- IX. The school achieves high standards of behaviour.
- X. Children like school.

What some parents are not happy about

Parents' views were expressed in response to questionnaires, at a pre-inspection meeting for parents, and in personal interviews during inspection. Inspectors' judgements confirmed parents' views with regard to all the above qualities of the school.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To improve the standards of work and pupils' learning, the governors, headteacher and the staff should:

·

XI. Raise standards further in the nursery and reception classes by developing and teaching a comprehensive and progressive curriculum for children aged under five, which focuses on the children's needs, as identified in the school development plan;
(Paragraphs: 36, and 47)

· Improve curriculum planning and assessment throughout the school by:
(Paragraphs: 44, 47, 56, 58)

*.identifying clear and specific learning objectives in lesson planning;

*. using information from ongoing assessments of children's progress to guide planning and set realistic and appropriate targets, as identified in the school development plan.

●. Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by ensuring that:
(Paragraphs: 50, 90)

*.the school produces and implements a whole school policy for pupils with special educational needs, as identified in the school development plan;

*.individual education plans contain specific targets which are broken down into small, measurable goals;

*.support staff for pupils in class and withdrawn sessions consistently focus on targets in their individual education plans.

●. Strengthen the role of the governors to meet the developing needs of the new school by:
(Paragraphs: 46, 50, 91, 104)

*.taking a more rigorous and active role in the management of the school;

*. ensuring that the school produces and implements policies for sex and drugs education, as identified in the school development plan.

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

(Paragraph 92)

*.ensure that the school prospectus includes the required information with regard to the parents' right to withdraw their children from collective worship.

*

INTRODUCTION

*** Characteristics of the school**

1.Sacred Heart Primary School is located in Battersea, south west London, within the London borough of Wandsworth. As a catholic school, it serves three local parishes: Sacred Heart, St Vincent de Paul and St Mary Magdalene. In September 1998, the infant and junior schools amalgamated into one new primary school, using the existing buildings which are located on the same site.

2.The school serves a broad, diverse and a mixed cultural community. A high proportion of pupils come from single parent families and many are housed in local authority accommodation. Currently, the school caters for 400 pupils aged from four to eleven years, with similar numbers of boys and girls. The school is large in size when compared with other schools of the same type. In addition, the nursery accommodates 50 children part time and 26 children full time. Children enter the nursery in the year in which they are aged three. They transfer to two reception classes during the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Attainment on entry into the school is broadly average for their age.

3.Currently, 25 per cent of pupils are on the register for special educational needs and 24 per cent have English as an additional language. Both these figures are above national averages. Just over 30 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this figure is well above the national average. The small proportion of pupils (1 per cent) who have statements is below the national average.

4.The school's stated mission is to:

‘create a climate in which Christian values are taught, experienced, lived and celebrated; ensure every individual child is loved, appreciated and affirmed; enable and expect all pupils to achieve their full potential by providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum with equal opportunity to develop their academic, social creative and sporting skills’.

5.Key priorities for the next two years focus on the:

- *.establishment of assessment procedures for literacy;
- *.organisation of a new suite for information communication technology;
- *.successful implementation of the Numeracy Strategy and the raising of standards in mathematics;
- *.monitoring and improvement of punctuality and attendance;
- *.monitoring of the core curriculum with the help of targets and performance data;
- *.monitoring and implementation of the school development plan

1.The school has set the following targets by 2000 for pupils aged 11 years:

- *.In English, 77 per cent Level 4 and above;

*.In mathematics, 71 per cent Level 4 and above.

7. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	31	25	56

7. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	27	26	28
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	49	48	50
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (79)	86 (90)	89(85)
	National	80	81	84

7. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	28	28	26
	Girls	21	21	22
	Total	49	49	48
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88(83)	88(84)	86(96)
	National	81	85	86

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the most recent results but they have yet to be compared with national averages.

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	30	25	55

7. National Curriculum Test Results

		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	22	17	20
	Girls	23	16	14
	Total	45	33	34
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	85(74)	62(57)	64(64)
	National	65	59	69

7. Teacher Assessments

		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	21	26	25
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	43	48	47
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	81(70)	91(72)	89(64)
	National	65	65	72

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the most recent results but they have yet to be compared with national averages.

7. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised	School	6.2
Absence	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised	School	0.3
Absence	National comparative data	0.5

7. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

7. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	17
Satisfactory or better	93
Less than satisfactory	7

7.

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

7. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

7. Attainment and progress

1. The nursery and reception classes provide satisfactory provision for children aged under five, although there are inconsistencies and weaknesses in the planning. In the early years the children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Children settle very quickly into the routines of the nursery and they enjoy coming to school. Many children have good listening skills and show positive attitudes to learning. Most are confident and quickly learn independence. By the time the children are aged five, they have made satisfactory progress in most areas of the curriculum, but good progress in reading and numeracy. Attainment is broadly average on entry to Key Stage 1.

2. Standards in numeracy and literacy match expectations and children listen well. They enjoy books, handle them carefully and understand their purpose. Children are beginning to use simple computer programs with confidence, and they have positive attitudes to learning; they enjoy coming to school.

3. Information concerning the 1998 national tests and assessments refers to the performance levels of pupils who attended the infant and junior schools before their amalgamation.

4. In the 1998 national tests for pupils aged seven, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in reading was well above average, in writing it was broadly in line, and in mathematics it was above average when compared to the national averages for all schools. When these results are considered against similar schools, they are very high in reading, above in writing and well above in mathematics. In the assessments made by teachers, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in science was similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age for reading was well above average; for writing the proportion was below average, and in mathematics it was average. There has been an improvement in standards over recent years, with a significant improvement in reading. However, results in the national tests for 1999, which have yet to be compared with national averages, show a slight fall in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in reading and mathematics, although the proportion has increased in writing.

5. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1. However, standards in reading are above average and pupils' attainment in information technology exceeds expectations. Standards in other subjects are similar to those found in other schools nationally.

6. In the 1998 national tests for pupils aged 11, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels was well above in English, broadly in line in with the national average in mathematics, and below in science. When these results are considered against those of similar schools, they are very high in English and mathematics, and above in science. The proportions of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age was well above for English, close to the national average for mathematics, and well below for science. Over the last three years, the school has performed consistently well against national results in some aspects of English, particularly reading. The school has broadly matched

national results for mathematics, although it has under-performed in science. However, results in the national tests for 1999, which have yet to be compared with national averages, show a fall in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in English and mathematics, but a similar performance to last year's results in science.

7. The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics for the Year 2000, and the most recent results indicate that the school is well on its way to achieving them in English.

8. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms that pupils' attainment is average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. However, standards in reading continue to be above average and listening skills are good. Standards in information technology are above expectations. Standards in art and music are above those found nationally, whilst standards in other subjects are similar to those in most other schools.

9. Literacy and numeracy skills are soundly developed across the curriculum. Teachers use opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills through other subjects, for example, through history, science and geography. Good standards in reading make an important contribution to pupils' learning across the range of subjects. Pupils use a sound range of writing styles, including note taking, recording scientific experiments in an appropriate style, and extended writing for both fiction and non-fiction work. Pupils are competent in their application of mathematical knowledge to other subjects. Numeracy skills are used to collect and present data, for example during science investigations and in geography.

10. Pupils made satisfactory progress in 46 per cent of lessons observed, and good or very good progress in a similar proportion. Pupils in Key Stage 2 made good progress in lessons more often than pupils in Key Stage 1; this picture mirrors the quality of teaching seen during the inspection. In lessons, pupils were seen to make consistently good progress in English, mathematics, information technology and art throughout Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils made good progress in several lessons in different subjects including English, but the progress was not consistently good. The progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language was never less than satisfactory and often good in the lessons seen. Pupils with special educational needs made satisfactory progress in lessons seen, and they make similar progress over time.

11. Pupils make good progress in reading in both key stages with the help of effective whole class teaching in the literacy hour, through individual support in school, and at home where parents are encouraged to listen to their children read. Pupils are taught to use books effectively to find information. For example, when pupils in a Year 4 class were exposed to several different texts which provided information about life in Ancient Egypt, they discovered not only that written accounts can vary, but were also introduced to the skills of skimming and scanning. Pupils make good progress in writing throughout the school because they are given a good range of opportunities to write for different purposes, such as letters and stories. Good attention is given to developing the skills of

drafting and redrafting. Pupils regularly learn spellings as part of their homework and this policy has a positive impact on their progress and confidence and independence in writing.

In mathematics, pupils' numeracy skills are improving well with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy because teachers are beginning to match the tasks closely to pupils' attainment levels. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons because they listen and respond to the teachers' instructions. However, they have yet to make good progress through their own research skills to find out information for themselves. Pupils are motivated by a broad and balanced curriculum that systematically develops their knowledge and skills in information technology. The teaching is so well focused that pupils of all attainment levels make very good progress in the use of information technology. In art, pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1, but good progress in Key Stage 2 where schemes of work are used well to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are developed systematically. In geography, pupils in Year 5 made particularly good progress because they experienced a broad variety of work which included a balanced variety of skills and concepts. In music, pupils made good progress in well taught lessons in which they were fully involved, such as singing and when listening to some pieces of music. In physical education, pupils made good progress in dance and swimming because the objectives were clear and pupils were encouraged to evaluate their performances.

12. In English, pupils listen attentively for sustained periods in both key stages. By Year 6, pupils are quite confident speakers, although they are more willing to express their ideas when working in small groups and in informal contexts. By Year 6, pupils read from a range of texts with confidence and good understanding. They are developing a good knowledge of different genres, and of authors and the style in which they write. Standards of handwriting and presentation are very good. By Year 2, average and higher attaining pupils' written work is well structured and capital letters, full stops and sometimes speech marks are used correctly. By Year 6, pupils' understanding and knowledge of texts is extended significantly through reading and learning about the methods which authors employ. Pupils develop a good knowledge of grammar because it is well taught.

13. Pupils benefit from the school's well-balanced curriculum for mathematics. They are able to consolidate their numeracy skills in several subjects such as geography and science. By Year 2, average attaining pupils can count successfully beyond 50 and they have sound skills in the development of number patterns. Higher attaining pupils add hundreds, tens and units to totals in thousands and can multiply and divide by single digits. By Year 6, average pupils understand a sound range of two-dimensional shapes, change the orientation of shapes using grids, and identify and measure angles. Higher attaining pupils know how to calculate fractions and they use their knowledge and understanding of mathematics to make investigations. Pupils successfully use frequency charts to gather data.

14. Investigative work is not sufficiently well developed in mathematics and science. However, by Year 6, the pupils' scientific knowledge, understanding of scientific principles, and ability to

transfer knowledge to everyday situations is soundly developed. Higher attainers use good recording procedures and clearly labelled diagrams.

15. Standards in information technology are above average and exceed those found in the majority of schools because the subject is well taught and pupils have regular access to computers. By Year 6, pupils collect and record data, and use multi-media machines to research various areas of study using applications such as Encarta. Pupils learn how to gain access to the Internet and investigate research materials.

16. Standards of art work in Key Stage 2 are sometimes higher than those found nationally. Pupils' drawings show good detail of shape and proportion. Pupils use a wide range of media, although the use of textiles is limited. Pupils are given good opportunities to observe the techniques of famous artists. Pupils' skills in design and technology are appropriately developed, and they are used to support work in other subjects such as science and history.

17. Pupils develop a sound understanding of geography, and the school journey to the Isle of Wight makes a significant contribution to their knowledge and understanding as they study a locality which is in contrast to their own. In history, pupils in Year 6 develop a sound understanding of chronology. Pupils are able to order periods of history they have studied on a timeline as well as draw their own family trees. However, in both history and geography pupils do not ask enough questions for themselves, although they do respond well to those raised by the teacher. Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities to listen to and develop an appreciation of music in assemblies and class lessons. Singing is a strength of the school. Standards in physical education, including swimming, gymnastics and game skills are similar to those in other schools. Standards in some aspects of dance are higher than average. Pupils in Year 6, respond imaginatively in dance and successfully develop co-ordinated movements whilst expressing their feelings. In swimming, pupils are successfully developing their techniques with the help of different strokes. Pupils are given exceptional opportunities to develop their self defence skills during Karate club.

24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

18. Children aged under five show positive attitudes to learning. Most children are confident and quickly learn independence. They behave well, and they develop very good relationships with each other and with adults. Children select activities with confidence, and they help to tidy classrooms at the ends of sessions. They are valued as individuals, and all have high self-esteem, including children with special educational needs and with English as an additional language.

19. Throughout the school, pupils have good attitudes to work, although a significant number become restless when not stimulated. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes

were judged to be satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons observed and good or very good in 60 per cent of them. In the large majority of lessons, pupils at all levels of attainment work independently without needing close supervision. They watch and listen attentively to their teachers. For example, in a music lesson seen in Key Stage 1, three classes were singing and moving together in response to the hand gestures and occasional spoken instructions of the music co-ordinator. Similarly, in a Year 5 literacy hour, a class was wholly absorbed in a story selected for shared reading.

20. Pupils are keen to ask and answer questions, cheerfully extending or clarifying discussions. They enjoy problem-solving activities, although they have limited opportunities for research outside classrooms. They respond well to challenges set by their teachers. For example, pupils in Year 1 were seen making complex two- and three-dimensional models during a design and technology lesson. In discussion with visitors, they are all justifiably proud of the school's achievements.

21. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language have positive attitudes to their work, both when working in the classroom and when working in small groups in withdrawal sessions. When teaching is well matched to pupils' specific needs, pupils work hard and concentrate for good periods of time.

22. Behaviour in classes and in the open areas of the school is good. Behaviour was particularly impressive during the inspection when poor weather restricted activities. At break times and lunchtimes no friction between pupils was observed in classrooms or, between showers, in the playground. All pupils know and conform to the brief rules of the discipline policy. Parents confirm that incidents of aggression or bullying are rare, and are dealt with effectively. No pupils are currently excluded from school. Pupils take very good care of the school buildings, equipment and personal property. The pupils' good behaviour has a positive impact on their learning because little time is lost and, in nearly all cases, they are keen to learn.

23. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils are kind, thoughtful and respectful to each other and to adults. Most pupils in all age groups work very well in groups, exchanging ideas and sharing materials in practical activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy reading with younger pupils, and helping them with meals at lunchtimes. All pupils share the caring attitudes demonstrated by staff and emphasised in classroom prayers each day, in assemblies and in religious education lessons. They feel secure in the school's happy, family atmosphere.

24. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They listen to each other's views, and they answer questions without fear of mockery or humiliation. Each member of the school community has equal status and receives sensitive and effective support at work and play. Although a significant number of pupils require supervision, the majority are always willing to take responsibility for everyday classroom duties, such as washing paint palettes and taking registers to the school office. Some older pupils have responsibilities as library monitors.

25. Pupils elected to the school council in Year 6 discuss and implement the expenditure of a small budget, but younger pupils do not have opportunities to experience the council's routines and to maintain continuity. Generally pupils have too few opportunities to show initiative and to make decisions about their own learning.

32. **Attendance**

26. Attendance is satisfactory in all year groups, although, overall, it is slightly below the national average for primary schools. The progress of most pupils is well supported by good attendance. However, the progress of a small minority is hampered by periods of absence during extended holidays.

27. Most pupils arrive punctually at school and settle quickly to work. Registration periods are efficient, and most lessons begin promptly.

34.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

34. Teaching

28. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons seen, of which 51 per cent were good or very good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in 7 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching was judged to be similar in both key stages. There are significant strengths in teaching throughout the school and they are found in different year groups, and in relation to different subjects in both key stages. A particular strength of the teaching is in the very good management of pupils throughout the school. However, teachers do not plan with sufficient detail and assessment procedures are unsatisfactory in lessons and in the planning of the foundation subjects.

29. For children aged under five, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and it was judged to be good in 47 per cent of the lessons seen. Children are managed well in the nursery and reception classes. However, the quality of teaching in the reception classes is better than that seen in the nursery because teachers make effective use of guidance for literacy and numeracy, and children make good progress.

30. The teaching of literacy is good overall in Key Stage 2. Teachers have benefited from professional development and the experience of teaching the strategy for the past year. The teaching of mathematics through the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory. Pupils are being encouraged to develop mental strategies and to expand their mathematical vocabulary in order to explain their thinking. However, mathematics teaching is at its best when lessons end with an opportunity for pupils to explain their work and their strategies. Information technology is particularly well taught. Pupils benefit significantly from the focused teaching of the subject co-ordinator who has good subject knowledge and uses effective teaching strategies.

31. A significant proportion of music and art lessons are taught well because they include imaginative and challenging tasks which grab the pupils' attention.

32. Teachers have consistently high expectations of behaviour and almost all pupils respond well to teachers' sensitive and consistent class management. This is a strong feature of all teaching in the school and contributes well to raising standards.

33. Homework is given through both key stages, building steadily through the school. The main focus is literacy and numeracy, although some subject research is undertaken in other areas. Homework contributes soundly to standards of attainment and progress.

34. In both key stages, teaching is at its best when the teacher has a good understanding of the subject. When this is the case, the purpose of the lesson is made clear to pupils and this helps them to concentrate on achieving their objectives. For example, in a dance lesson in Year 6, pupils clearly understood the task and they benefited significantly from the expertise and confidence of the teacher. As a consequence, pupils made good

progress and attainment

was above average. However, the lack of subject knowledge and confidence in teaching physical education had a significant impact on the pace and range of activities undertaken by pupils during a movement lesson in Key Stage 1. In science, teachers with a good subject knowledge approach the teaching of the subject with confidence and provide pupils with interesting practical activities. In contrast, pupils make little progress in their understanding of science when teachers talk for prolonged periods of time.

35. There is some highly effective teaching in literacy and numeracy in both key stages. In a Year 5 literacy lesson, the text used was historical, concerning Perseus. Well-structured shared reading was interspersed with good quality word work. Clear explanations of important spelling rules were given. Pupils were fascinated and completely absorbed in the story. In a Year 2 information technology lesson, pupils made very good progress in their understanding and skills of control technology because of the very good preparation, the level of knowledge and understanding of the teacher, and the very high pace of the lesson.

36. Class teachers plan work which is well matched to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, particularly specific needs in literacy and mathematics. Teachers support pupils well in lessons either through directly supporting the group or effectively deploying support staff to do so. When teaching to the whole class, during introductions to lessons and plenary sessions, teacher's skilfully direct specific questions to pupils on the school's register for special educational needs in order to check their understanding and facilitate learning. Teaching by the special needs teachers in those lessons seen during the inspection was judged to be satisfactory. Support teachers know the pupils well and provide praise and encouragement. Activities in lessons are interesting and encourage progress, although improvements to the individual education plans would enable a sharper focus to lessons. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are appropriately supported.

37. Throughout both key stages there is a lack of clearly focussed learning objectives, and lesson plans are not linked to National Curriculum attainment targets. There is insufficient development of the assessment of pupils' work in many subjects, and future work is often planned to meet a prescribed pattern of tasks in the subject rather than being based on what pupils have learned in previous lessons. Teachers plan lessons together in year groups, but the insecure subject knowledge of some teachers has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the teaching and the progress made by pupils. As a consequence, the quality of teaching is not consistent even when the same lesson is taught to classes of the same age group.

38. Teachers know their pupils well and in literacy, numeracy and science lessons tasks are modified to match the levels of attainment, including pupils with special educational needs. Higher attainers are also stretched in some subjects but it lacks consistency throughout the school. The quality of marking is also inconsistent. Most work was marked using ticks or crosses with infrequent use of analytical or helpful comments.

45. **The curriculum and assessment**

39. The curriculum offered by the school is broad, balanced and meets its stated aims, although the school has no stated policy on the teaching of sex and drugs education. At present, the school is in a state of transition due to the recent amalgamation and the appointment of a new headteacher.

40. The overall curriculum for children aged under five is barely satisfactory. It is particularly weak in the nursery because the planning for language and literacy and mathematics is not consistently related to the required areas of learning. However, planning in the reception classes is better because national strategies for literacy and numeracy are followed, although there is inconsistency in the systematic teaching of the other areas of learning.

41. The curriculum promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares pupils aged 11 for the next stage of education. Development work in the structuring of the curriculum has occurred with the formation of a curriculum framework for the whole school. Health education, including information about drugs, is included in the newly created personal and social education programme. Curricular priority has been given to national initiatives, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, information and communication technology and religious education. There are policies for English, maths, science, and information technology. The geography policy is awaiting ratification by the governors. Subject guidance is in place for physical education and the school follows the national guidelines for science. Schemes of work for English and mathematics follow the guidance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The geography scheme of work is in draft form. Other subjects are at the planning stage.

42. A generous amount of time is dedicated to English, a priority in this school where almost a quarter of the pupils come from homes where English is a second language. This has made a significant contribution to the high standards achieved in English in comparison to similar schools. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, including personal and social education and drama. However the balance of time for subjects is inconsistent with the school's guidelines, resulting in insufficient time being dedicated to some subjects. For example, the time given to science is insufficient to raise the level of achievement.

50. The provision for pupils on the school's register of special educational needs has significant weaknesses. Some regulations and guidance from the code of practice are not fully implemented. Teachers' files for special educational needs contain some useful information, although there is an urgent need to draw up and implement a whole school policy to meet statutory requirements and ensure that staff and governors are fully informed of the requirements and procedures. Pupils' individual education plans vary in quality, but in general lack detail about pupils' specific learning needs. They contain targets which are far too broad. When planning lessons, teachers pay insufficient attention to pupils' individual education plans, not least because they lack the necessary detail to inform teachers about the pupils' precise learning needs.

43. An overall strength of teaching is that class teachers know pupils well and plan appropriate work for them in the literacy and numeracy sessions, and pupils' linguistic, mathematical and behavioural needs are both identified and addressed.

44. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported in their learning. A range of strategies and methods are used to support these pupils to ensure that they make progress.

45. The school provides equality of access and opportunities for all pupils to learn and make progress. Equal opportunities are appropriately emphasised in the school's mission statement and equal opportunities policy. The extensive extra curricular provision, visits in the local area, museums and the residential field trip greatly enhance and extend the schools' curriculum. Provision for extra curricular activities is a strength of the school.

46. Curricular planning is in the early stages of development. Currently, planning lacks sufficient detail at all levels and is not explicitly targeted at the National Curriculum. A new planning procedure was introduced last term, which has not yet fully impacted on an improvement in standards. Daily planning is very brief and does not give support to the new teachers or those experiencing difficulties with new initiatives and the QCA schemes of work.

47. All subjects, except history, have co-ordinators who have a sound understanding of their role and are developing it well. Monitoring of teaching and learning by co-ordinators has been introduced in the core curriculum areas, but yet to be established in all subjects. Curricular planning has been monitored by the headteacher and is targeted for future development.

48. There are significant weaknesses in assessment procedures in almost all subjects. The school has already identified assessment as an area requiring further development. The most recent teacher assessments at the end of both key stages are inaccurate, as teachers tend to overestimate how many pupils will attain or exceed the expected levels. Assessment procedures in reception are better than those in the nursery because the criteria are judged against curriculum guidance and clearer. Data pertaining to target setting suggest that staff continue to experience difficulty in projecting the number of pupils who will attain or exceed the expected level in the national curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that this arises because teachers have an insecure knowledge of National Curriculum levels.

49. The optional tests in mathematics, English and science for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are used, and the school has also recently set up an individual target sheet for each child which will provide an ongoing summary of pupils' attainments as they move from one class to another. This information, alongside pupils' results in the end of Key Stage tests and assessments, should provide a useful tool when setting targets for pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2.

50. The school's recently drawn up assessment policy is a brief document, which sets out the current procedures used. Giving further thought to, and providing greater detail about, the purpose of assessment and how the school's objectives might be met would guide the school in developing efficient procedures. For example, two areas of proposed development in assessment for this term are: 'to introduce termly child-conference procedures, and to build in a weekly assessment opportunity to inform teacher's planning'. However, it is

unclear how either of the proposed developments will improve teachers' ability to level pupils' work accurately, or assist in end of key stage target setting. Furthermore, teachers are already planning literacy and numeracy work which is well matched to the prior attainment levels of different groups of pupils in their class, and they assess pupils' progress well during lessons. Detailing the precise learning objectives for each group in teaching plans would provide a set of criteria against which pupils' progress could then be assessed. This would require the minimum of paperwork, and weekly planning would naturally follow on from assessment.

51. Diagnostic tests are successfully used by the co-ordinator for special educational needs to provide detailed information about the needs of, and progress made by, pupils on the school's register. Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed. However, as the targets on pupils' individual education plans most often lack precise detail, and targets are often too broad, it is difficult to assess the progress which has been made.

59. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

52. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although there is no policy for the development of these areas, there is a strong mission statement which is evident in the schools' ethos.

53. Provision for spiritual development is good, mainly supported through collective worship, the ethos of the school, religious education lessons and the school's environment. The quality of the daily act of collective worship is good, sometimes very good, and statutory requirements are met. Assemblies are well planned. They include: the active participation of pupils in responding to questions, engagement in prayer, singing and the celebration of pupils' achievements. Spiritual development is less well developed through the curriculum, except for religious education, where significant contribution is made to pupils' spiritual development. There are successful moments for reflection following the lessons.

54. The provision for the development of pupils' moral awareness is very good. The ethos of the school has a positive influence on the moral development of the pupils. There are high expectations for good moral behaviour within the school. Pupils are made aware of the differences between right and wrong. These values are promoted through classroom practices, assemblies, the daily life of the school and its routines. Religious education strongly contributes to the development of pupils' moral education. Moral values are well promoted by staff through their consistently good relationships with pupils. Staff set very good role models of behaviour by example and by their support of the pupils. The pupils clearly understand the school's code of practice displayed in every classroom. The school council successfully provides opportunity for pupils to develop responsibilities to the school. Older children contribute to the smooth running of the school as monitors during lunchtimes in the dining room and supporting younger children.

55.The strong behaviour policy supports pupils with behavioural difficulties. The policy is reinforced through a system of rewards and sanctions encouraging good behaviour. In most lessons teachers manage pupils very well, setting high standards of discipline. Throughout the school, pupils' self-esteem is recognised and consistently supported.

56.Provision for social development is very good. It is nurtured through classroom management structures, a residential visit to the Isle of Wight, other educational visits, and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are encouraged to adopt responsible attitudes towards each other and to property. These attitudes are evident in the classrooms and playground. Pupils listen to and respect one another's views and opinions. The recently established 'circle time' provides an opportunity to consider self esteem and feelings, to share ideas and build confidence.

57.Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Knowledge and understanding of the traditions, festivals and customs of this country are well established through school celebrations. However, the knowledge of other cultures is less well developed. The school is aware of this situation and has made provision for this in the School Development Plan for this year and the next two years.

65. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

58.The provision for support, guidance and pupils' welfare is good, and has a positive effect on the educational standards achieved by most pupils. Teachers and other adults know the children well and are committed to their health, safety and welfare. In this large school, teachers maintain relationships with many pupils in classes other than their own. Pupils receive very good individual care and support from class teachers and from the head teacher, who is very accessible and reassuring. Informal relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated. Good systems support parents and their children when entering the school's nursery. Very effective procedures in Years 5 and 6 prepare pupils for transfer to secondary education.

59.Satisfactory procedures are established for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development. Concise, effective summaries are passed on from teacher to teacher at the end of each year, but tests and assessments in all curriculum subjects are not yet fully in place. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in classrooms but are less well supported when withdrawn from lessons.

60.A number of after-school clubs encourage pupils to develop sporting talents, and a special club on Monday evenings, attended by as many as 100 pupils, offers a very wide variety of sporting, musical, artistic dance and social activities.

61.Systems for monitoring attendance are good. Morning registrations are efficient in most classes, and set the working tone for the day. Registers are completed neatly, and

the computerised registration system conforms with legal requirements. Where pupils are absent abroad for extended periods, every reasonable effort is made to settle them into routine again upon return. Most parents are aware of the importance of good attendance, and they confirm the school's rigorous documenting of absence and lateness.

62. Several staff are qualified first-aiders. All staff are caring and sympathetic to injured and distressed pupils. Staff monitor the use of nasal inhalers by younger pupils.

63. The school has high expectations and very good procedures for behaviour management. A brief, effective policy for the management of behaviour is implemented consistently by all the staff. The few basic rules displayed in each classroom are well known to pupils and parents and ensure that all are clear about the school's expectations of behaviour. An effective system of conflict resolution is used by the headteacher to deal with incidents of bullying. A system of house points, merits and consistent praise for individuals promotes good behaviour in classes and open areas. The school functions very well as a happy and orderly community.

64. The school has not yet adopted a policy on the use of restraint by staff, and does not have provision for recording incidents of restraint. Other policies are implemented consistently, and the school conscientiously promotes the health and safety of pupils. Much useful advice is included in the handbook for staff and in the prospectus for parents. Procedures are established to ensure pupils' safety on the school site, and when away from the school on educational visits. Regular risk assessments are conducted, and the school site and buildings generally present no risk to health and safety. During the inspection, some combustible materials were observed to be stored in the boiler house. Good procedures for child protection are dealt with sensitively by each teacher. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and the staff have received recent training.

65. Playground supervision is well organised to ensure pupils' safety at break times and lunchtimes. Good safety practices are evident in physical education lessons. The school's programme for personal, social, health and moral education has been introduced this year, but as yet is unstructured, and does not include the legally required statement on sex education. The recently appointed co-ordinator has developed an action plan and linked themes to the programme for religious education. A police liaison officer visits the school regularly to speak to pupils in all year groups about road safety, personal safety and stranger danger.

73.

Partnership with parents and the community

66. Partnership with parents and the community is good, and is greatly beneficial to pupils' attainment, progress and personal development. The school has established an effective liaison with parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

67. At a pre-inspection meeting for all parents, opinions of the school were overwhelmingly positive. These opinions were confirmed by responses to questionnaires and by discussions with a number of parents during the inspection. The school is valued and respected by parents and the local community.

68. Parents are welcome in the school at all times. They make very good use of a parents' room, and evidence from the inspection confirms their good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. A number of parents and friends help regularly in

classrooms and in the weekly after-school club; accompany pupils to swimming lessons, and join them in football practice.

69. An active friends' association organises popular social and fund raising events and contributes significantly each year to the school's budget. Activities in 1998/9 provided funding for theatre groups and storytellers to work with pupils, and for the purchase of compact disc players, a fridge-freezer and numerous smaller items for classrooms. Very good co-operation is maintained between the friends' association and the school.

70. The quality of information for parents is good. Weekly newsletters are very informative, and are well designed and well written. The school prospectus is very attractively designed and includes much useful information and advice for parents. However, a small amount of required information is not included. The school has not yet issued an annual governors' report to parents.

71. Regular questionnaires invite parents to judge the quality of numerous aspects of the school's educational and welfare provision. Parents value the opportunities to comment, and they confirm the school's positive response to their opinions.

72. Teachers' written reports to parents accurately identify what pupils can do but, generally, do not indicate how attainment can be further improved. Two consultation evenings each year are very well attended, and parents are certain of a sympathetic response from teachers at any other time if difficulties arise.

73. Parents' involvement with their children's learning is good. Parents are aware of the school's policy for homework which is varied and relevant. All homework is marked, and house points may be awarded for special effort. Parents are encouraged to read with their children at home, and to note progress in the home-school book. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well-informed of progress, and they understand the school's procedures for support and discipline. They are appreciative of the school's sensitivity to individual feelings.

74. Parents of children entering the nursery are very well informed of the school's routines. The school successfully bid for funds to support a programme for parents and their pre-school children. Parents report that the programme was helpful and informative. Parents of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are well informed about secondary transfer. Secondary schools confirm the good behaviour and social confidence of Sacred Heart pupils, and the high levels of support and co-operation provided by their parents.

75. Good links are maintained with university teacher training courses and with secondary schools. Each year, student teachers and work experience students benefit from effective mentoring, and make a valuable contribution to school life.

76. The school makes good use of community resources. Pupils visit local places of interest, including a fire station, and national museums and galleries in central London. Recent visitors from the community have included writers, a potter, a film director and theatre groups. The parish priest, the police liaison officer and the school nurse are

regular and welcome visitors. The school's floodlit sports court is used as an annexe to a local leisure centre. The school does not receive continuous sponsorship, but donations of computer hardware are obtained each year from commercial benefactors.

77. Local and national charities are supported throughout the year by collections and sponsored activities. At Christmas, pupil singers and instrumentalists visit a retirement home. Pen pal letters are occasionally exchanged with schools in Australia and North America. Although pupils represent many ethnic groups, the school has not yet developed multi-ethnic or multicultural links.

85. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

85. Leadership and management

78. The headteacher has been in post for just one year, following the amalgamation of the junior and infant schools on the existing site. He was appointed to lead and manage the development of the new school and approached the complex task by focusing on the strengths of the two previous schools. He is successfully overcoming some of the problems brought about by the amalgamation by providing strong leadership and very clear educational direction. He sets a very good example with his own teaching and by his support of colleagues. The headteacher is ably supported by two deputies who give effective support in the classroom and in dealing with the school's management. They have been instrumental in assisting in the development of the new school. Soon after his appointment, and in response to the findings of the inspections of the primary and junior schools, specific targets for improvement were identified within the school development plan. In the first instance, these necessarily focused on the development of a mission statement which involved teaching staff, non-teaching staff and governors to develop a strategic overview and agree on a set of common goals to raise standards.

79. The headteacher, with the help of the senior management team, has implemented procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, and coverage of the curriculum. These provide helpful information, although they would benefit from the setting of clearly defined criteria. Targets for development were set for subjects, including the early years, assessment procedures, finance systems and personal, social, health and moral education. However, the school has yet to introduce a policy for sex and drugs education and provide parents with a statement concerning the right of parents to withdraw their children from collective worship.

80. Parents have expressed their firm support for the changes that have been made during the headteacher's short period of time at the school, and the school is successfully working towards achieving its own targets.

81. The documentation clearly identifies roles and responsibilities, some of which have involved, by necessity, the joint management of subjects and aspects. In the main, this

strategy has proved to be successful, with teachers working together well, sharing their knowledge and experiences, and focusing on each action plan with a commitment to raise standards further. Members of the senior management team and other co-ordinators have yet to evaluate the results of the end of key stage tests and assessments to help understand, for example, the differences in the performance of girls and boys in mathematics and English in recent years. Several subjects do not have a policy and planning is weak because there is not enough detail to help teachers. As a consequence, some subjects such as history, geography and art are not taught systematically across the key stages. In addition, the lack of a policy and guidance in the early years hinders children's progress.

82. The school has yet to introduce a policy for special educational needs, and statutory requirements are not fully met. The provision for special educational needs is managed by two part-time co-ordinators, one in each key stage. They are aware of a number of the shortfalls in the current provision and are addressing these in their current development plan. However, there is now a need to give prompt attention to addressing the weaknesses and to set up a system to monitor the provision across the whole school. Good links with outside agencies, including local authority support team staff, are maintained to the benefit of pupils.

83. The new governing body includes members who were involved with the governance of the two previous schools. Governors are familiar with the new school and a few make regular visits; they bring a range of experience and expertise. However, they have yet to establish their role as critical friends and set up formal strategies, such as success indicators and targets for management, to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. The headteacher welcomes the opportunity for the governing body to strengthen its monitoring role through, for example, the school development plan, and to develop a strategic view of the new school's future.

84. The governing body meets its statutory requirements, with two exceptions. It has yet to ensure that the prospectus includes the required information, such as the right to withdraw from collective worship, and it has yet to introduce policies for special educational needs, sex and drugs education .

85. The school has developed a good ethos since the recent amalgamation. Expectations are high and pupils respond well to the consistent approach used by teachers. The good relationships between pupils and adults are used effectively to raise standards.

93.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

86. The school is well staffed with appropriately qualified teachers who, as a team, are able to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils. A number of teachers are in the early part of their careers, but more than a half of teachers are very experienced and some have been in the school for many years. All curriculum areas have a teacher

who co-ordinates the subject across the school. The part-time teacher who is engaged to support the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language is used effectively and pupils make good progress.

87. Job descriptions are in place. These are well written and include clear expectations for general duties. They also contain specific curricular and other responsibilities where applicable. Teachers meet formally with the headteacher each term to discuss progress in meeting targets agreed in their job descriptions. These targets are modified, if necessary.

88. The very efficient secretarial staff help to keep administrative demands on the headteacher to a minimum, and provide a friendly and supportive welcome to the school. The site manager maintains a comprehensive programme of site reviews. Together with the cleaners, he maintains the school to the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness. Staff who supervise pupils at lunchtime are effective in providing a friendly, secure and supportive environment.

89. The Governing Body and the senior management team have developed strategies to manage the problems of over staffing which occurred at the time of the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools in September 1998. Staffing levels were reduced in 1998/99 through natural movement and plans are in place to manage further reductions sensitively during the coming year. The difficulties of combining the separate staff of two schools have been thoughtfully and effectively managed and staff work cohesively as a team.

90. The good number of support staff provides effective support in helping teachers and pupils. The school uses this support in classrooms where it feels it will be most effective. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by class teachers.

91. The arrangements to promote the professional development of staff are good. The priorities of the school development plan, coupled with national priorities, guide training. There is also an attempt to accommodate staff's individual needs, but the level of funding limits this. All teaching and non-teaching staff are offered appropriate training for their role in the school.

92. Appraisal is not, as yet, in place. The local education authority has advised the headteacher not to introduce appraisal until he has completed appraiser training. Newly qualified teachers are given a systematic programme of support, which they find very helpful and value highly. Trained mentors support them.

93. The school buildings are approximately ten years old. The internal and external decorative repair is very good. The size of classrooms provides good areas for teaching and learning, including practical subjects such as art and design and technology. Classrooms and corridors are enhanced by the numerous colourful displays of pupils' work. They are well labelled and show a good mixture of teacher directed and child initiated work. They include work from several subjects, including English, in the form of illustrated poems about fire, and art. The school is generously provided with extra rooms.

There are dedicated spaces for two libraries. Two halls provide assembly space and a music area; one hall is appropriately equipped for teaching physical education. One atrium area is well equipped for use by nursery children, while the other is very well used as an information and communication technology area. The sixteen-station computer network is very well used by all classes. There is a separate room for each deputy headteacher, and these are also used to provide effective specialist support for pupils with special educational needs. The staff room, medical room and suite of offices are modern and of a good size. There is a dedicated parent's room, and toilets for both pupils and staff are good in number and quality. There are adequate areas for storage overall, but there is limited space within classrooms and for larger equipment around the school.

94. The playgrounds provide good large and small areas for play and have lines painted on some surfaces. The school does not have its own dedicated grassed area, but there is an adjacent green space, and a public park is within easy reach. These are both well used, as is the local swimming pool.

95. The level of teaching resources is sound overall. It is good in some subjects and very good in information and communication technology. In English, resources are sound in texts for literacy and for word building activities in Key Stage 1. The two libraries are accessible and used well to support pupils' literacy skills. There is some shortfall in textbooks as the new numeracy strategy is introduced, but these are on order and some were delivered to the school during the week of the inspection. Resources for mathematics are good and they are very good for information and communication technology. The school has a sixteen-station computer network, multi media machines within classrooms and an Internet link. This network is to be further upgraded this year using more modern equipment, which is already in stock. Each classroom has a tape recorder with sets of headphones and television and video equipment. The resources for art are good and there is a good range of texts for history but a low level of visual material and artefacts. There are sufficient resources for geography, but the variety of textbooks is limited, as is the range of pictures. Teaching resources for music and physical education are satisfactory and some new equipment for physical education is on order. All teaching and learning resources are accessible. The information and communication technology suite is easily accessible and is well used. Good use is made of resources in English, mathematics, history and geography. Satisfactory use is made of resources for science, design and technology, art and physical education.

103. The efficiency of the school

96. Financial planning is satisfactory. The school has a three-year development plan with some costings, but the plan does not indicate priorities for any year. Budgeting to date has been the responsibility of the headteacher. Some governors have limited roles in financial planning, but most governors have yet to have an effective overview of the process, or to monitor the effects of spending decisions. An indicator of this weakness is the governors' failure to set spending limits.

97. The school has benefited greatly from amalgamation of the separate budgets of the infant and junior schools. Although additional funds will be gained from an increase in the number of pupils on roll, projected income for next year and subsequent years will not sustain current levels of expenditure on staffing. The headteacher is aware of the difficult decisions required to keep within budget while increasing the school's contingency fund from the current forecast of only £1000.

98. Administrative routines are good, and the school office functions smoothly. The school's administrator ensures that updated financial information is available to the governors, headteacher and senior managers. Good systems are established for checking and collating purchases, and paying creditors. A recent audit by the local education authority required a number of changes to financial procedures and bank accounts. Some of these changes are not yet implemented. The audit indicates the proper expenditure of all funds allocated to the school, including those for pupils with special educational needs.

99. Teachers are effectively deployed; for example, the deputy head teaches information technology effectively throughout the school. Support staff are generally well deployed, although the provision for special educational needs would benefit from careful monitoring to ensure that declining resources, including staffing levels, are deployed effectively and efficiently. Very good use is made of the building, external areas and learning resources. The core curriculum is adequately funded. Spending totals for each curriculum area easily available to the staff.

100. Overall, the school makes very good use of its resources and accommodation. Pupils benefit significantly from support provided by the number of teachers engaged by the school following the amalgamation. The budget is closely linked to the school's educational objectives.

101. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average, and they make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The unit cost per pupil is high, due in part to the emphasis the school places on staffing and adult support. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the standards of pupils' work are above average in several subjects, including some aspects of English, information technology and art. The school now benefits from strong and decisive leadership, although this has yet to have a full impact on standards and pupils' progress. Bearing all these factors in mind, the school is giving satisfactory value for money.

109.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

109. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

102.Children enter the nursery in the year in which they are aged three. They transfer to two reception classes during the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Currently, 26 children attend nursery full-time; 29 attend morning sessions, and 20 attend afternoon sessions. Sixty children attend the reception classes full-time. Three nursery children are identified as having special educational needs. Children’s attainment is below average when they enter the nursery. By the time the children are aged five, they have made satisfactory progress in most areas of the curriculum, but good progress in reading and numeracy. Attainment on entry is broadly average on entry to Key Stage 1.

Language and literacy

103.Children speak confidently to adults and to each other. Many children who enter the nursery with limited vocabulary quickly learn new words. Children speaking English as an additional language make particularly good progress. Most children have good listening skills. All children enjoy looking at books, and they handle books carefully. They understand that print conveys meaning. They are able to recall familiar stories, and they enjoy discussing illustrations in books. Children in the nursery know the names and sounds of some letters, but these are not taught systematically. In the reception class, they know the names and sounds of many letters, and they enjoy reading. In the nursery, children have some success when attempting to write their names and record their ideas and experiences through drawing and writing. But when they enter the reception class, many children are still writing their names in capital letters. Examples of children’s writing are attractively displayed in the nursery and reception classes. In the nursery, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in language and literacy. In the reception classes, the quality of teaching of language and literacy is always satisfactory, and is often good. Children in the reception classes make sound progress in this area of learning. Most children are likely to attain the standards expected nationally by the age of five.

Mathematics

104.Children in the nursery learn to sort objects by colour, shape and size. They attempt to count to ten, sometimes successfully. They learn and remember many number rhymes, and demonstrate practical applications of their knowledge. Children in the reception classes are able to count backwards from nine, and most children are able to recognise numbers missing from the series 1-9. They understand the meaning of more and less. Most children in the reception classes are able to make two-dimensional shapes. In the reception classes, when measuring ingredients during cooking lessons, children learn new mathematical vocabulary, including ‘more’, ‘less’ and ‘enough’. Mathematics teaching is satisfactory in the nursery. In the reception classes, where the national numeracy strategy is used effectively, mathematics teaching is always satisfactory and is often good. Overall,

children make satisfactory progress. By the age of five, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

105. Children learn about themselves by making figures from modelling clay, and naming parts of the body. Visitors from the community, including a policeman, a dentist and a librarian help the children to learn about the local environment. Although many ethnic groups are represented in the nursery and reception classes, staff do not focus upon cultural diversity or link the children's origins to the countries of the world. Children in reception classes learn very successfully about change. For example, they understand that adding ingredients changes the texture and characteristics of mixtures. Children select materials to make collage, and they learn the skills to stick materials together. During the inspection, staff in the nursery were teaching computer keyboard skills. The children were able to follow simple pictorial instructions, and use keys to scroll up and down. In this area of learning, teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes. Children make satisfactory progress. By the time they are five, most achieve the standards expected nationally.

Creative development

106. Children in the nursery and reception classes enjoy singing and playing instruments. They are able to name several instruments, including drum and tambourine, and to sustain simple rhythms when singing and accompanying nursery rhymes. Children in the reception classes are able to follow simple notation but this experience is not extended to enable them to create their own music. For imaginative play, children enjoy using simple resources such as milk crates. A satisfactory variety of media techniques is used in the nursery and reception classes, such as collage, printing and painting. Staff write the children's names on their paintings and add simple explanations to identify what the paintings depict. Creative development teaching in the nursery is satisfactory. In the reception classes, creative development teaching is always satisfactory and is sometimes good. Most children achieve the standards expected nationally by the age of five.

114. Physical development

107. Children in the reception classes have regular, planned sessions in the hall to develop confidence in physical movement. All children enjoy physical development lessons, and demonstrate good awareness of space. They confidently use small apparatus, such as hoops. Nursery and reception classes have daily opportunities for safe outdoor play. They use a wide range of equipment with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They share wheeled vehicles and balance collaboratively on a climbing frame. Children in the reception classes demonstrate satisfactory control of paint brushes, rolling pins and pastry cutters. They play effectively with construction kits and malleable materials, such as dough. Physical development teaching is satisfactory in the nursery. In lessons seen in the reception classes, teaching was good. Almost all children reach expected levels of by the age of five.

Personal and social development

108.Children settle very quickly into the routines of the nursery. They enjoy coming to school. Many children have good listening skills, and show positive attitudes to learning. Most children are confident and quickly learn independence. Most children behave well, and they develop very good relationships with each other and with adults. Children select activities with confidence, and they help to tidy classrooms at the ends of sessions. They are valued as individuals, and all have high self-esteem, including children with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. Children show respect for each other, but there is little evidence that they learn of different cultures. Dressing up clothes are of western design. Teaching in this area of learning is good in the nursery and in the reception classes. Children reach expected to levels by the time they are five.

109.Relationships are very good between adults and children in the nursery and reception classes. Adults are used effectively, and provide good support for all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teaching in the nursery is satisfactory. Adults give clear instructions and use questions effectively. The management of children is sound, although sometimes random. Children are effectively grouped for story telling. However, lesson objectives are often unclear and no lesson structure is provided to help class teachers. Teaching in the two reception classes is never less than satisfactory and is often good. Adults always use questions well to help children with their understanding. Where teaching is good, teachers follow the guidelines for numeracy and literacy strategies. However, on occasion, too many activities are provided simultaneously, preventing teachers from identifying the needs of all the children.

110.The curriculum in the nursery is weak, particularly in language and literacy and mathematics, because it is not always related to the required areas of learning. Planning is poor because lesson plans do not have clear objectives, and are not always linked to the areas of learning. In the two reception classes, where the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are followed, the curriculum is stronger in language and literacy and mathematics, but not in all other areas of learning. Staff in the nursery and reception classes do not collaborate in structuring what children are to learn. As a consequence, the curriculum lacks a systematic approach.

111.Adults in the nursery and reception classes contribute to day-to-day assessment of the children, and the information is used to guide informal planning. However, formal assessment in the nursery is weak and guidelines have yet to be introduced to ensure a consistent approach. A profile is developed for each child entering the nursery, and is passed on to the reception classes, with a copy of the written report previously sent to parents. Information from formal assessment procedures is used effectively to group children in the reception classes.

112.The nursery and reception classes provide children with very good accommodation.

Additionally, some large, well equipped areas are shared with Key Stage 1. Learning resources are good, including resources for children with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Resources are not always used effectively in the nursery to promote all areas of learning. An attractive safe area is used for outdoor play, and is well equipped with wheeled vehicles and climbing apparatus. Links between the nursery and the two reception classes are weak.

120. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

120. English

113. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven, the proportion of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected level was well above average. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher level was also well above the national average. The proportion of girls who achieved the expected level and above was significantly higher than the proportion of boys. When the school's results in 1998 are compared with those of schools with similar intakes, standards are very high. Results in the 1999 tests, which have yet to be compared with national figures, show a fall in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level, although the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher level was similar to that reported in 1998. Before the school's restructuring, the performance of pupils were above national averages in 1996 and 1998, and they matched them in 1997.

114. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in reading and writing, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in reading was above the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils which reached the higher Level 3 in reading was well above average. In writing, the proportions of pupils attaining Levels 2 and 3 were also above average. At the end of the key stage, the proportion of girls which achieved the expected level and above was slightly higher than the proportion of boys. When the school's results in 1998 were compared with those of pupils from a similar background nationally, standards in reading are very high and they are above average in writing. Results in 1999 tests show a fall in the proportion of pupils attaining or exceeding the expected level.

115. Evidence from the inspection indicates that attainment for pupils aged seven and eleven years is average overall, except in reading which is above average. Listening skills are also good. The standards in writing are average but improving, and reflect the focus the school has placed on writing development. Pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, reports, letters, and newspapers. Pupils are able to plan their own writing, and good attention is given to developing the skills of drafting and redrafting and to learning spellings and correct use of grammar. Standards of handwriting and presentation are very good.

116. Evidence from the work scrutiny shows that pupils of all prior attainment levels in all

year groups are making good progress in writing throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 for example, develop their writing skills initially by completing sentences about the characters in their reading scheme. Later, they go on to sequence a series of sentences to make a story, and progress to making their own books which include a glossary and a contents page. By the end of Year 2, average and higher attaining pupils' written work is well structured and capital letters, full stops and sometimes speech marks are used correctly. In Key Stage 2, pupils' understanding and knowledge of texts is extended. Through reading, and learning about the methods which authors employ, pupils extend their own vocabulary and are able to employ techniques to improve their own writing skills. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are taught well through Key Stage 2, and in context, and pupils develop a good knowledge. Pupils throughout the school regularly learn spellings as part of their homework and this has a positive impact on their progress, confidence and independence in writing.

117. By age eleven, a higher than average proportion of pupils is reading at or above the expected level. Pupils read from a range of texts with expression, enthusiasm, confidence, and good understanding. They can select useful points from the text, and use inference and deduction as appropriate. They are developing a good knowledge of different genres, and of authors and the styles in which they write. They discuss and explain their preferences confidently. They have a good understanding of how to find and extract information from non-fiction books, and how to use the Dewey System to find books in the school or public libraries.

118. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in reading. At the time of inspection at the beginning of the academic year, higher attaining pupils in the reception class are able to turn the pages correctly and to use the picture on the front cover to guess what the story may be about. By age five, when they join Key Stage 1, average and higher attaining pupils are able to read simple reading scheme books fluently. Lower attaining pupils know some of the words in their books and use picture clues and phonics to help them to decipher unknown words. By the time they start in Year 2, many pupils are reading confidently, with expression and good understanding of the text. Lower attaining pupils have good skills in decoding and in interpreting the story. Pupils of all prior attainment levels can answer questions about the stories and characters. Reading skills are well developed by teachers as pupils move up through Key Stage 1, using a mixture of whole class teaching in the literacy hour and individual support.

119. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in reading. They read with growing independence and increased fluency and extend their knowledge of authors, the styles in which they write and the literary skills employed. For example, pupils in Year 3 at the time of the inspection learned how Robert Louis Stevenson used a beat in his poem which sounded like a railway carriage, the title of the poem. Pupils are taught to use books effectively to find information. For example, when pupils in a Year 4 class were exposed to several different texts which provided information about life in Ancient Egypt, they discovered not only that written accounts can vary, but were also introduced to the skills

of skimming and scanning.

120. Through access to a range of age appropriate children's literature in the literacy hour, and through their personal choice as readers, pupils throughout both key stages are given good opportunities to develop and extend their enjoyment of reading. Pupils are expected to read regularly at home and parents are encouraged to listen to their children reading. This makes a good contribution to pupils' progress in reading.

121. In both key stages, pupils listen attentively for sustained periods. Speaking skills are average. While some speak confidently in a range of contexts and use a varied and interesting vocabulary, a number of pupils are less confident to converse at length or in the whole class context. In smaller groups and in less formal contexts, however, pupils are more confident to express their ideas.

122. Pupils' response in lessons is almost always at least good and sometimes very good. Pupils quickly settle to work and in most instances sustain good levels of concentration which enables lessons keep up a good pace. The majority of pupils willingly join in discussions. At times they show intense interest and enthusiasm, as was seen in a number of lessons during the inspection. During independent work and group work, pupils in both key stages sustain very good levels of concentration and work very well without supervision while the teacher targets a specific group. They help each other effectively, as was seen for example when pupils in Year 2 helped each other to learn the week's spellings. Pupils listen respectfully to the suggestions and ideas that others volunteer, and pupils of all prior attainment levels are confident to offer answers knowing that their contributions will be respected. Pupils take great pride in the presentation of their written work.

123. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, although there is some good and very good teaching. At Key Stage 2, the equality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching. In all but one lesson across the whole school, teaching is at least satisfactory, and in two out of three lessons teaching is good or very good. Strengths of teaching include secure subject knowledge, confident delivery, and good and often very skilful use of questioning to check that pupils of all prior attainment levels are understanding and can contribute. Teachers' methods and organisation are good and their management of pupils is very good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and work is well matched to pupils of different prior attainment levels. The best lessons are characterised by very confident delivery; they develop at a swift pace and time is used to the maximum effect both to re-inforce previous learning and extend pupils' understanding. In the one lesson where teaching is unsatisfactory, this occurs because curriculum plans and teachers own plans are insufficiently detailed to support teachers who are less confident in the subject or with the literacy strategy.

124. The teaching of reading is given good attention and is taught well, initially with the help of a commercial reading scheme. Handwriting and spelling are consistently given good attention, which has a positive impact on the standards of handwriting, presentation

of work, and pupils' independence in writing. There are some planned opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their speaking skills, for example through drama. However, this is an area which could be developed further. Homework, especially in reading and spelling, is used very effectively and this makes a very positive contribution to the standards which pupils achieve.

125. Teachers' planning follows the National Literacy Strategy and activities are planned which match pupil's different prior attainment levels well. There is evidence that the Literacy Strategy is building on teachers' previous good practice and raising teacher's expectations about what pupils can achieve. The school is now in its second year of using The National Literacy Strategy. This provides a broad and balanced curriculum, and work covered in each year group builds effectively on that covered in previous year groups. Work on the strategy is started in the reception classes.

126. Teacher's assessments at the end of both key stages are not reliable, and the school is keen to develop its assessment procedures further. Assessment arrangements have been improved in recent years and now include the use of the QCA tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Planned work takes into account the learning needs of pupils of different prior attainment levels, including those on the register of special educational needs. In their weekly planning meetings, teachers review pupils' progress the previous week, when planning for the next step in learning. Providing a set of clear and detailed learning objectives for each group would provide specific criteria against which teachers could assess the progress which individuals and groups of pupils make. Pupils' attainment in spelling is regularly tested. The quality of marking is satisfactory.

127. The co-ordinators are keeping abreast of developments within the subject and have successfully assisted teachers in implementing the literacy strategy. The co-ordinators' role includes monitoring the planning and samples of pupils' work, as well as providing support and advice to other teachers. Staff at the school have received appropriate training. Resources, though not extensive bearing in mind the number of pupils on roll, are well chosen, varied and of good quality. The school libraries, one in each key stage, are to be combined and re-sited in a central area of the school. This will enhance the stock available to pupils in both key stages. Resources are well organised and accessible to pupils.

128. Pupils' good standards in reading make an important contribution to their learning across the range of subjects. Teachers also use opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills through other subjects, for example, through history, science and geography. The school's very good provision in information technology has a positive impact on pupils' literacy skills. However, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to develop their writing in other subjects.

136. **Mathematics**

129. The results of the 1998 end of key stage tests show that by the end of Key Stage 1 the school's performance was above the national average in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and above. At the higher Level 3, the school's results were also above the national average. When compared to the results of similar schools, these results were well above average. The school's 1999 test results have yet to be compared to national averages, but they show a slight fall in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 and above, but a significantly lower number reaching the higher Level 3.

130. The 1998 end of key stage test results for Key Stage 2 show that the school's performance was close to the national average for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 and above. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was also close to the national average. When compared to the results of similar schools these results were well above average. The school's 1999 test results have yet to be compared to national averages, but they show a slight fall in the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 and above, and a significantly lower number reaching the higher Level 5. Before the school's restructuring, the performance of pupils broadly matched national averages.

131. The inspection evidence confirms that pupils are achieving broadly average standards at the end of both key stages. The school has worked hard to develop a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that provides coverage of all the required elements of the National Curriculum. An appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of numeracy in both key stages. Teachers encourage pupils to use and consolidate their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example in collecting data and using graphs in both geography and science lessons.

132. Pupils aged five have broadly average levels of attainment in mathematics when they start school. By the end of Key Stage 1, average pupils add to totals beyond 20 and subtract single numbers from numbers up to 20. They can count successfully beyond 50, recognise and identify words and numerals representing numbers up to 100 and have sound skills of developing number patterns. Pupils can count in intervals of two, five and ten, recognise and draw common two-dimensional shapes, use standard and non-standard measures of length and weight and translate simple data into block graphs. Pupils are taught about and begin to tell the time. Exercises using coins improve their knowledge and understanding of money. Higher attaining pupils add hundreds, tens and units to totals in thousands and can multiply and divide by single digits. Investigations such as 'Donna's dartboard' encourage all pupils to discover a variety of solutions to number problems. There is good use of computers in mathematics at Key Stage 1. For example pupils in a Year 1 class gained good information technology skills while investigating pattern making using the 'Maths with a Story' programme. Tasks are suitably modified for lower attainers and those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils learn specific mathematical language. The standard of numeracy and mental mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is average and is improving with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils of all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. Teachers are beginning to successfully match work to pupils' attainment levels and build on previous knowledge and understanding.

133. By the end of Key Stage 2, average pupils can add and subtract hundreds, tens and units; multiply hundreds, tens and units by two figure numbers, and divide by single digits.

They understand a sound range of two-dimensional shapes, change the orientation of shapes using grids and identify and measure angles. Pupils know how to calculate fractions of numbers and money. They use standard measures of length, weight, time and speed and study volume and capacity. Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of mathematics to investigate, for example when converting centimetres to millimetres in a 'Bigfoot' investigation. Frequency charts are used to gather data, and block and line graphs are drawn from the data collected. Mathematical skills are well used in other areas of the curriculum, for example using Newton meters and drawing graphs of their pulse rate in a science experiment. Work is suitably matched to the attainment of low and high attainers. The standard of numeracy at the end of the Key Stage 2 is similar to that found in other schools and, with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers are encouraging the development of mental strategies. This is helping to raise standards and pupils made good progress in the lessons seen. This good level of progress has yet to have an impact on overall progress in mathematics through the key stage.

134. The relative weakness in mathematics in both key stages is in investigation. The school is aware of this and a more rigorous programme of open-ended investigations is planned. Together with the sound planning of the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, this will raise standards of attainment in both key stages.

135. The provision of suitably modified work is well adjusted to the attainment levels of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers also give sound support to these pupils and use support assistants well when they are available. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in mathematics in both key stages.

136. In Key Stage 1, pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning, but they are good in Key Stage 2, where the large majority show real enthusiasm and enjoyment in their mathematics work. In both key stages, pupils co-operate well when appropriate, and take pleasure in explaining their work, when asked, using sound mathematical vocabulary. Pupils treat equipment with care and almost always share resources sensibly. Standards of presentation are mainly good, with pupils taking care and pride in their work. Behaviour is almost always very good.

137. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, with examples of good practice within lessons. Teachers have begun to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy and are beginning to encourage the development of mental strategies. The balance of time for introduction and main task is not yet fully developed and the school plans to develop the use of the plenary session later in the term. When one teacher used the plenary session well to review what they had learned, pupils' knowledge and understanding were enhanced. Teacher's knowledge and understanding of mathematics have been enhanced by their numeracy training and are now good. There are some testing pupils in most classes, but teachers implement the school's behaviour policy well and good

class management ensures satisfactory outcomes to all lessons.

138. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was judged to be good. It was good or very good in all but one lesson observed. When teaching was very good, teachers maintained a high level of pace throughout the lesson. Questioning was varied carefully to match the attainment levels of pupils. Both open and closed questions were used and thinking time was allowed before answering. Although the school has not yet formally introduced the plenary session in mathematics lessons, the best lessons were concluded with an opportunity for pupils to present their ideas and findings and to learn from each other. The scrutiny of pupils' work revealed that marking had been inconsistent. The use of written guidance on how to improve was infrequent, and some work was not completed even after teachers had requested this in marking. The issue of marking has been highlighted and during the inspection was greatly improved.

139. Resources for mathematics are sound overall in both textbooks and equipment. The subject co-ordinator is a very capable and knowledgeable mathematician and manager. Another teacher is shadowing the co-ordinator to provide a high quality replacement should this ever be required. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is soundly planned and is being satisfactorily introduced in all classes.

147. **Science**

140. In the 1998 national curriculum assessments, pupils aged seven achieved results which matched national expectations. Results for pupils achieving the higher level were below the national average. The results for pupils aged 11 were just below the national average in the tests, but well above in the assessments made by teachers. The performance of pupils was above the national average when considered against schools in similar contexts. The proportion of pupils which reached the higher levels was also well below the national average. The most recent end of key stage results, which have yet to be compared with national figures, show an improvement in Key Stage 1 and a fall in Key Stage 2. Findings from the current inspection indicate that standards are similar to the national expectations by the end of both key stages. There was insufficient evidence to support the high performance of pupils reported by the teacher assessments for pupils aged seven.

141. By the end of both key stages, standards in lessons and in other work around the school are similar to age-related expectations, although there was limited evidence of investigative work, particularly in Key Stage 1. Pupils would benefit from the development of experimental and investigative skills through some well-planned practical lessons with clear learning objectives. However, by the end of Year 6, pupils' scientific knowledge, understanding of scientific principles, and ability to transfer knowledge to everyday situations is soundly developed.

142. By the age of seven, pupils are aware of their body, and they are developing a sound understanding of living and non-living things. They understand that organisms, such as

butterflies, pass through clear stages in their life cycle. Pupils are beginning to understand that animals survive in different habitats and that plants grow and develop well in certain conditions. Familiarity with investigative procedures has yet to become firmly established, although some pupils are beginning to predict with confidence. Pupils know about senses and they are aware of the need for a balanced diet; they are familiar with terms such as carbohydrate and vitamins.

143. By Year 6, pupils develop a sound understanding of investigative procedures and some of the work is clearly presented. Higher attainers use good recording procedures and clearly labelled diagrams and pictures. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding and know about changing materials, electrical circuits, classification of animals, the body's organs and systems, the earth and beyond, solids and gases, and some of the properties of sound and light waves. Much of the work is quite well presented and the majority of pupils are able to record their science work in an orderly way and write up investigative procedures. Higher attainers produce well presented accounts of their work and include confident predictions, methods and conclusions. During the inspection, examples of interesting investigations focused on the separation of solids and liquids from solutions.

144. Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. They are encouraged to talk about their work, using science vocabulary. All but a few pupils listen carefully and value each other's contributions. Average and higher attainers successfully build up and reinforce their scientific knowledge and the associated vocabulary. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. The large majority show considerable interest in their work, especially during practical investigations, although they are often noisy. Pupils have yet to develop sufficiently their own research skills and find out information for themselves.

145. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Throughout the school, the teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally sound. The most successful elements of teaching are characterised by interesting introductions which capture and hold the pupils' interest, by lucid explanations, and by learning objectives which are made clear in well-planned lessons. Pupils are well managed. Most teachers ask probing questions, and insist on answers which go beyond superficial explanations. However, a weakness in the teaching is the lack of scientific investigations of a kind which encourage pupils to work independently and strengthen their practical work.

146. Currently, the subject has two co-ordinators who work well together. The subject is passing through a transitional stage and the school is beginning to use the recently published national guidelines for the teaching of science. This document contains clear opportunities for assessing pupils' work, but the school has yet to introduce assessment procedures. Teachers plan in year groups to achieve good consistency between classes, and resources are adequate.

154. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

154. **Information technology**

147. By Year 6, standards in information technology are above average and exceed those found in the majority of schools. A well-equipped computer suite has been developed, so that a whole class can work together on computers simultaneously. In addition, a non-class based deputy headteacher with high level skills in information and communication technology is leading the subject development and teaches every class. Class teachers are receiving high level in-service training with their own classes and act as effective support teachers in lessons. Each classroom is equipped with television and video equipment, high quality tape recorders with multiple headsets and multi-media computers and CD ROM software. The sixteen-station computer network allows pupils considerably more 'hands on' experience than is seen in most primary schools and there is more direct teaching of computer skills. All these factors have a major impact on progress and levels of attainment in both key stages.

148. In Key Stage 1, pupils gain familiarity with the functions of the keyboard and the mouse. They gain these skills in a carefully developed programme, which uses software relevant to other areas of the curriculum. For example, a Year 1 class was observed improving their pattern-making skills in mathematics while learning to control the cursor by use of the direction keys and gaining understanding of the 'Y' and 'N' keys for response. Another key element of this lesson was the use of the space bar.

149. Good skills are continuously built upon in Key Stage 2. Pupils learn to follow routes in menu-driven programmes and to select the applications they require. They collect and record data; for example a Year 4 class were observed using LOGO while refining their judgements on screen distances and use of angles. Pupils use multi-media machines to research various areas of study using applications such as Encarta. Pupils in both key stages benefit considerably by having access to the internet. During one lesson with a Year 5 class, the class teacher taught groups of three pupils to access the Internet and investigate a range of research materials on ancient Greece. The main body of the class was engaged on the computer network being taught by the information and communication technology specialist.

150. Pupils are excited by their studies in information technology. Because they receive a broad and balanced curriculum that systematically develops their knowledge and skills, and because teaching is so well focused, pupils of all attainment levels make very good progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. The careful pairing of more skilful, confident pupils with classmates who are less confident aids pupils' progress.

151. All pupils are enthusiastic about the subject, indeed some in Key Stage 1 show real awe and wonder at the results that their efforts produce. They work well individually and in small groups, use computers and other equipment responsibly, and concentrate well on their tasks. Attitudes to learning are usually very good.

152. The quality of teaching is very good. The information and communication technology

co-ordinator is very knowledgeable about the subject, and is ably supported by a colleague with responsibility for the subject. The co-ordinator teaches all classes throughout the school, planning carefully to ensure skill-building, cross-curricular application, and good continuity and progression of learning. Less confident class teachers are given a clear understanding of the hardware and software used in each lesson and are able to provide good teaching support of pupils during lessons.

153. Resources are at a very good level and are carefully and efficiently used. Planning for the subject is ongoing. Hardware is stored in the school to replace the present network with an upgraded system. Planning is in place to introduce information and communication technology to children in the school's nursery. This will further raise standards throughout the school. Information technology is a strength of the school.

154. During the inspection, it was not possible to see enough lessons taught in all subjects to be able to make valid judgements about all aspects. In some subjects, for example, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching, although some conclusions are drawn from the few lessons and the scrutiny of previously completed work.

Art

155. Standards are similar to those found nationally by Year 2, and they are above average by Year 6. Little evidence of drawing was available during the inspection, although the limited number of drawings on display and in topic books showed good detail of shape and proportion. For example, some very striking symmetry drawings were displayed by pupils in Years 3 and 4. By Year 2, pupils gain a limited understanding of the work of specific artists, including Picasso. By Year 6, pupils show further understanding of artists' work. For example, pupils in Year 3 use collage to portray successfully the styles of Renoir, Bellini and Picasso. Pupils use a wide range of media, including papier mache, pastels, water colours and oils. Pupils discuss and evaluate their work and are justifiably proud of their achievements. Throughout the school, pupils develop a sound understanding of the processes involved in preparing and modelling clay, although the use of textiles is very limited.

156. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1, but good progress in Key Stage 2, where schemes of work are used well to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are developed systematically. Pupils observe the techniques of famous artists, including brush strokes, shade, tone and texture. Pupils enjoy art and they concentrate well in lessons. They work well together to share ideas and resources. Pupils clear away willingly and efficiently at the end of each session.

157. The teaching of art is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils are managed well in all lessons, but they benefit most where the teacher has a very good subject knowledge, particularly in Key Stage 2. In these lessons, pupils are encouraged to

discuss how they might improve their work and interesting introductions are used effectively to review the previous work and build upon learned skills. The absence of a planned programme of work in Key Stage 1 inhibits the study of artists, and art in non-Western cultures is insufficiently emphasised.

165. Design and technology

158.Evidence from photographs and from work on display indicates that standards are similar to those found in other schools, with examples of good work. In Key Stage 1, pupils have made musical instruments and paper bag puppets. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 designed and made pop-up Valentine cards. Pupils in Year 6 designed and built wheeled vehicles with pulleys and gears, using construction kits and junk.

159.Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, although the systematic development of skills is inhibited by the absence of a scheme of work. Pupils were seen to co-operate well and share resources successfully. The new co-ordinator is aware that resources are not fully used and that the subject lacks sufficient detailed guidance, including information on assessment procedures.

167. Geography

160.Pupils develop a sound understanding of geography. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages, although they make good progress in some classes. For example, pupils in Year 1 made good progress in the study of the local area and the majority have well- developed mapping skills. They can draw a plan of their classroom, trace their journey to school and name main features of a street. By Year 2, pupils are able to name the features of the local area and some general physical features such as mountains, rivers and seas. They are aware of attractive and unattractive features of their environment and how some aspects could be improved. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 5 made particularly good progress because they experience a broad variety of work which showed a balanced variety of skills, content and concepts. The school journey to the Isle of Wight makes a significant contribution to the pupils' geographical development as they study a locality which is in contrast to their own.

161.Pupils respond well in lessons. In a lesson observed in Year 2, pupils were keen to discuss their work. In a music lesson, pupils showed their global awareness by identifying the country of origin of the music being played and eagerly locating the country on a world map. At Key Stage 2, pupils enjoy learning about different places such as Jamaica, and are looking forward to learning about the Isle of Wight. However, pupils are not raising enough questions for investigation, although they are skilled in answering teachers' questions

162.A scrutiny of the teachers' planning indicates that it lacks detail. The draft scheme of work does not give teachers sufficient guidance to teach the curriculum systematically. The variable nature of pupils' progress is due to the lack of consistency in the types of activities set for parallel classes.

170. **History**

163. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils identify differences between the past and the present by looking at different artefacts from the Victorian period and comparing them with today. They have a sound concept of chronology through sequencing photographs showing personal histories and sequencing their families. By Year 6, pupils make satisfactory progress, although it varies in lessons. For example, they develop a sound understanding of chronology. Pupils are able to order periods of history they have studied on a timeline as well as draw their own family trees. They quickly spot similarities and differences from photographs and compare life before the war and today giving plausible explanations based on the learning. Pupils are beginning to use a range of sources to research information and extend their learning. However, pupils are not raising enough questions for investigation, although they are skilled in answering teachers' questions.

164. Pupils show a lively interest in the subject and answer questions confidently. They are generally attentive, concentrate well and work effectively with others as well as individually. Pupils handle resources and materials appropriately.

165. In the two lessons observed in Key Stage 1, the quality of the teaching was judged to be satisfactory in one and good in the other. Teachers are well prepared, and secure in their subject knowledge and in ways to motivate pupils, although their plans lack sufficient detail. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory, although it included examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching. In the good lessons, the learning points were clear; teachers had high expectations of the pupils' behaviour, and effective use was made of resources. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, whole-class sessions were overlong; pupils were not fully involved, and they became restless and lost concentration.

173. **Music**

166. Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities to listen to and develop an appreciation of music in assemblies and class lessons. Singing is a strength of the school; pupils sing well and in tune. In the lessons observed, pupils enjoyed singing and listening to music. Pupils especially enjoy performing the accompanying actions to songs and being chosen to play an instrument. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 were observed singing a good repertoire of hymns. When pupils have the opportunity to play an instrument, as seen in a lesson in Year 1, they treat the instruments carefully and with respect.

167. In the lessons seen, pupils made at least satisfactory, and often good or very good progress in both key stages. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils made very sensible suggestions about the origins of a piece of music they listened to, and accurately identified the instruments being played. Most pupils could distinguish between high and low sounds. Pupils are attentive in lessons, listen carefully and respond well to effective teaching.

168. The teaching of music was judged to be least satisfactory, and was particularly good when taught by teachers with expertise in music. Some teachers lack confidence in the subject, although pupils are well managed and resources are well chosen. In some year groups, teachers are using recorded programmes as a basis for their lessons and this is developing teachers' confidence. Some of the tasks do not stretch the higher attaining pupils.

169. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and clear aims for the future in developing work in music across the school. Some in-service training, including working alongside teachers in the classroom, has already been provided. Resources are satisfactory in number and of good quality. There is a range of music from different cultures which makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Physical education

170. By the end of both key stages, standards in physical education, including swimming, gymnastics and game skills, are similar to those in other schools. By Year 2, the large majority of pupils can successfully link movements in gymnastics, although they have difficulty moving their body weight from one body part to another. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in some aspects of dance are higher than average. Pupils in Year 6, responded imaginatively to the theme of 'Britain at War', and successfully developed co-ordinated movements whilst expressing their feelings. In swimming, pupils are successfully developing their techniques with the help of different strokes. In games skills, higher attaining pupils can pass the ball with accuracy and appropriate pace. Evidence from extra-curricular activities indicates that pupils have a good range of skills related to dance, and young pupils are given exceptional opportunities to develop their self-defence skills during Karate club.

171. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time. The large majority of pupils have a mature approach to physical education and, throughout the school, they are beginning to develop a sound awareness of the importance of exercise and an understanding of the principles of health-related fitness. Pupils made good progress in some lessons, for example in dance and swimming, when the objectives were clear and pupils were encouraged to evaluate their performances. Progress was unsatisfactory in lessons which provided pupils with few opportunities to practise, refine, and improve their skills.

172. The quality of teaching varied considerably. Of the six lessons seen, they were good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory in equal proportions. Strengths of the most effective teaching are good knowledge of the subject and a brisk pace to the activities. Significant weaknesses in teaching include a lack of pace and not enough teaching points. In satisfactory and good lessons, teachers' planning and sound knowledge led to an effective use of demonstrations to explain what they wanted pupils to achieve. Teachers are very supportive and encouraging, though they do not always use opportunities to evaluate

pupils' performances and identify ways in which they can improve the quality. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are challenged by most of the practical activities, though higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched.

173. The enthusiastic co-ordinator provides her colleagues with advice and support. A policy has yet to be introduced, although subject guidance gives teachers good guidance. The school makes good use of outside agencies to enrich the curriculum further.

English as an additional language and ethnic minority action (EMA)

174. There is a significant proportion of pupils, almost 25 per cent, who come from homes where English is not the first language. The majority of pupils have a sufficient understanding of English to enable them to participate fully within the classroom in all subjects, although some require additional support. These pupils are identified early and benefit from additional support provided by one part-time teacher engaged by the local education authority. Currently 15 pupils are at different stages of English acquisition, mainly based at Key Stage 1. They make rapid progress in English and all staff are sensitive to and aware of the pupils' needs. However, short-term planning does not sufficiently identify the needs of these pupils. Carefully planned individual assessment sheets with targets for achievement have yet to be linked successfully to the class teacher's planning to develop pupils' language skills. Resources are adequate and effective use is made of dual language books.

182. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

182. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

175. The team consisted of six inspectors attending for a total of 24 days over a four-day period. During the inspection, 85 lessons or parts of lessons were observed, together with assemblies and a sample of registration times, and a range of other information was scrutinised. The team spent a total of 67 hours observing lessons, attending assemblies and hearing pupils read. Inspectors interviewed the chairman of governors during the course of the inspection. Subject co-ordinators were interviewed. Some members of the non-teaching staff were also interviewed about their work. Considerable documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection. The inspectors scrutinised the written work of many pupils. Discussions took place with many pupils during the course of the inspection. Prior to the inspection, 38 parents attended an evening meeting held by the registered inspector to seek their views. There were 84 responses to a questionnaire sent to parents, seeking their views on specific school issues.

184. DATA AND INDICATORS

184. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	400	3	100	121
Nursery Classes	51	1	2	11

184. Teachers and classes

184. Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	21

184. Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	13
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	248

184. Qualified teachers (Nursery classes)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	28

184. Education support staff (Nursery classes)

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	108

Average class size:	29
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184. Financial data

Financial year:	1998/9
	£
Total Income	891875.00
Total Expenditure	1009789.00
Expenditure per pupil	2158.00

Balance brought forward from previous year	0.00
Balance carried forward to next year	33000.00

184. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	404
Number of questionnaires returned:	84

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	55	45	0	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	55	42	2	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	34	56	10	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	40	53	5	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	50	39	8	1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48	50	1	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	53	44	2	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	46	42	9	1	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	57	41	3	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	58	41	0	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	70	27	1	1	0