

INSPECTION REPORT

**SAINTS PETER AND PAUL RC (VA) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Kirkby

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104479

Headteacher: Mr J M White

Reporting inspector: Dr B Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th June 2001

Inspection number: 191150

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Moorfield Tower Hill Kirkby Merseyside
Postcode:	L33 1DZ
Telephone number:	(0151) 548 6890
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Mackenzie
Date of previous inspection:	13 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23868	Dr B Blundell	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Information and communication technology	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9710	Mrs E Burgess	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3191	Mr J Curley	Team inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language	
11528	Mr M Wainwright	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education	
10144	Mrs M Marriott	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Music The Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Primary school is a good school for girls and boys, aged 3 to 11, situated in Kirkby, Merseyside. There are 300 pupils on roll, including 39 children in the Nursery. The school has recently been involved in a merger with another local primary school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. No pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average and the percentage of pupils with statements of special needs matches national averages. The nature of pupils' special educational needs includes specific learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry to Reception is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards for pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics match national standards. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics currently meet national standards, but in English and science, they are below standards expected nationally. On average, pupils who joined Saints Peter and Paul from the school with which it merged have not performed as well as other pupils; standards reached by pupils who have been at Saints Peter and Paul throughout their education are close to national averages. The overall quality of teaching is good and leadership and management by the headteacher are very good.

The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership and management by the headteacher are very good; he and all the staff have created a school with an inspirational and friendly learning environment.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, with a high proportion being very good; examples of good teaching were seen in every class in the school.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; relationships are excellent.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, science and information and communication technology, whilst improving, are not yet high enough by the time pupils leave the school.
- Assessment and its use to track pupils' progress, whilst improving, is unsatisfactory overall.
- The degree of challenge in a minority of lessons could be greater.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January, 1997. The overall quality of teaching has improved; there is now a much higher percentage of very good or better teaching than was seen previously. The key issue, to improve the way that the National Curriculum is monitored and planned, has been addressed appropriately. Information and communication technology and music now comply with statutory requirements. Assessment procedures have been improved, but are still unsatisfactory. The issue to ensure that higher attainers make more progress has been largely addressed. The key issue to address health and safety requirements has been met appropriately.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	E	B	well above A average above B average average C below average D well below E average
mathematics	E	E	E*	D	
science	A	E	E	C	

In the national tests in 2000 for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment was well below national averages in English and science and very low in mathematics, being in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. Compared with schools having a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, standards in the 2000 tests were above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics. Over the three years from 1998 to 2000 averaged together, pupils have left Saints Peter and Paul's school one and a half terms behind pupils nationally in English, two and a half terms behind in mathematics and one term behind in science. The performance of those pupils who have remained at Saints Peter and Paul has been markedly better than that of those who have joined from the school with which it was merged. Nonetheless, the school has appropriately integrated those new pupils into the school.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 for pupils aged seven in the 2000 national tests were above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Compared with schools of a similar type, standards were very high in reading, being in the top five per cent of schools, above average in writing and average in mathematics.

The school's results have risen at a lower rate than schools nationally.

The school's targets are appropriate.

In the work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. They meet national expectations in history, geography, music, art, physical education, design and technology and information and communication technology, but are below average in science. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 broadly meet national standards in mathematics but are below average in English and science. The improvement in standards from the previous year is largely due to the current cohort having a much lower proportion of pupils having special educational needs, coupled with the

sustained positive impact of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Standards in history, music, physical education and design and technology meet national expectations. Standards in art are above national expectations, but they are below in geography and information and communication technology.

Pupils' achievement is now good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is below average, but improving in response to the support of the learning mentor.

A strength in pupils' attitudes is their enthusiasm, which is abundant; pupils really enjoy school. There is an absence of bullying, racism and sexism. Relationships between pupils and with adults are excellent throughout the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the lessons seen during the inspection, 12 per cent were excellent, 21 per cent were very good, 46 per cent were good, 20 per cent were satisfactory and one per cent unsatisfactory. Strengths in teaching include class management, which is very good throughout the school and teachers' planning, which is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in the rest of the school. Strengths in pupils' learning include their effort, which is very good throughout and their interest, concentration and independence, which are very good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and good in the Foundation Stage.

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school. The school meets the needs of all its pupils appropriately.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
Provision for pupils	Not applicable.

with English as an additional language	
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good; provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well overall.

The school works well in partnership with parents.

All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Child protection procedures are good overall. Assessment and its use to track pupils' academic progress, whilst improving, are not yet satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff are very good. The senior management team is strong and its members cooperate very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' fulfilment of their responsibilities is good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is good.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is good.

The overall level of staffing is satisfactory; the accommodation is satisfactory and well maintained by the site manager and cleaners. The new classrooms, built to accommodate the influx of pupils from a neighbouring school following the merger, are bright but at times crowded. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school's two administrative officers work well together and are very effective. Non-teaching support is effective.

Strengths in leadership and management include the clear educational vision of the headteacher. His commitment to the school is exemplary.

The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • The school has high expectations. • The school is well led and managed. • Children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more information about their child's progress. • Some parents would like the school to offer a greater range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views; it finds that information about pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, as is the range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Owing to the fact that Saints Peter and Paul's school has been subject to a merger with a neighbouring school that closed, the school's results overall do not reflect the standards that those pupils have achieved who have been at Saints Peter and Paul's for longer periods. The greatest impact of this on results has been at Key Stage 2 where a very significant proportion of the pupils who were admitted were on the special educational needs register. This means that the school's average performance cannot always be measured reliably against national averages. This needs to be borne in mind when reading about the school's overall results.
2. **Shortly after children enter the Foundation Stage in the Nursery**, they are assessed to see what they know, understand and can do; recent intakes have had standards that are well below average. The intake in 1999 was judged to be well below average and those entering in 2000 were also well below average overall. They were again assessed on entry to the Reception class and were found to have reached below average standards.
3. **By the age of five, near to the end of their time in Reception**, children are again assessed against national standards known as the Early Learning Goals. Whilst some of the children currently in Reception at least meet this standard, the majority do not reach all the Early Learning Goals.
4. **At the age of seven, close to the end of their time in Year 2**, pupils take the end of Key Stage 1 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils who sat these tests in 2000 and who are now in the current Year 3, obtained levels that were above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Their attainment when compared to schools of a similar type was very high in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. Those who took the tests in 1999 and are now in Year 4, attained standards that were well above national averages in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Taking the results over the last three years from 1998 to 2000, averaged together, pupils' performance has been approximately one term ahead of pupils nationally in reading and writing and one term behind in mathematics. Over this same period nationally, girls have performed just over one term ahead of boys in writing; at Saints Peter and Paul, the boys were ahead of the girls by the same amount. In mathematics, boys and girls perform at similar levels nationally; at this school, girls have been half a term behind boys. In reading, boys outperform girls by about one term.
5. **Inspection findings are that pupils currently in Year 2, who have just taken their national tests in May, 2001, are reaching average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and below average in science.** This

cohort of pupils have benefited from the sustained impact of the numeracy strategy. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. Standards in music, geography, history, physical education and design and technology meet national expectations. In art, standards are above national expectations.

6. **By the age of eleven, near to the end of Year 6**, pupils take the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in English, science and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 2000 tests in terms of national curriculum points scores was well below average in English and science and very low in mathematics, compared with schools nationally. (*Note: very low means that these results were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally*). It was above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics when compared with that of pupils in schools of a similar type. Taking the three years from 1998 to 2000 averaged together, pupils have left Key Stage 2 six months behind pupils nationally in English, ten months behind in mathematics and four months behind in science. This does not mean that pupils' performance has gone backwards whilst they are in Key Stage 2. If we look at how the same group of pupils has performed in each key stage, we find that those pupils who were at Saints Peter and Paul throughout the whole of Key Stage 2 made broadly satisfactory progress.
7. **Inspection findings are that pupils currently in Year 6** are at average standards in mathematics and below average in science and English overall. The improvement in standards from previous years is due to the fact that a much lower proportion of pupils has special educational needs coupled with the sustained positive impact of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Again, on separating out the performance of those pupils who joined the school during Key Stage 2, as opposed to those who started their education at Saints Peter and Paul in Key Stage 1, there is a difference in average performance. Pupils who have been at the school from Key Stage 1 have made satisfactory progress. The school has successfully included the pupils who joined from the neighbouring school following the merger, but many of these pupils were on the special needs register and they did not attain national standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The quality and quantity of work in their books show that all pupils have made good progress over the last 12 months in English and mathematics; progress in science has been less good. As with pupils lower down the school, their attainment in information and communications technology, whilst improving, is below national expectations. Standards in music, physical education, art, history and design and technology meet national expectations. Standards in geography are below national expectations. Pupils' literacy skills are not sufficiently developed across the curriculum areas of geography and history.
8. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual education targets, which are reviewed at least once a term. This is similar to the degree of progress recorded in the previous inspection. Pupils maintain a positive attitude and the majority are able to concentrate on their work. The behaviour of the pupils is very good and those who have specific

behavioural difficulties are well managed by the teachers and the support staff.

9. **Since the last inspection**, standards have been broadly maintained overall, when allowance is made for the school merger. Pupils are generally achieving appropriately, considering their prior attainments, except in information and communication technology (I.C.T.) and geography at Key Stage 2. In absolute terms, National Curriculum test results, particularly at Key Stage 2, are not as good as they previously were. The school now complies with statutory requirements in music and information and communication technology. Higher attaining pupils are generally making better progress, although in a minority of lessons, the degree of challenge for them could be greater. The school's targets are appropriate.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Personal development is good. Relationships in the school are excellent. Attendance is unsatisfactory, although improving.
11. Pupils show great enthusiasm for school. They are interested in their lessons and are keen to be involved in activities offered. They are proud to represent the school in sports matches and would welcome a greater range of extra-curricular clubs. Pupils start their compulsory schooling with the excellent attitudes and behaviour that are seen in the Nursery. In a science lesson, Year 1 and 2 pupils were fully engaged in learning about sound. They watched a video in silence and were very keen to answer questions about what they had seen afterwards. In an art lesson, Year 1 pupils persevered to incorporate detail in their drawings of elephants. In a literacy hour lesson, pupils in Years 4 and 5 showed very good attitudes to poetry, snapping their fingers and counting the syllables in lines of regular verse; they were keen to discuss with a partner their ideas as to what could happen next in the poem's story-line. Pupils show particularly positive attitudes to working with computers; pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed great enjoyment in an information and communication technology session, working hard and concentrating very well, whilst Year 6 pupils worked very hard in response to the high expectations of their teacher.
12. The behaviour of pupils of all ages and abilities is very good, often exemplary. Exclusion is rare, but used appropriately. Pupils move around the school in a sensible, considerate way, and behaviour in the dining hall and on the playgrounds is always satisfactory. Pupils of all ages are respectful in assemblies; they are interested in the ideas presented and value the efforts of others who receive praise in the celebration assemblies on Fridays. In lessons, behaviour is consistently good and often better. In mathematics, pupils in Years 5 and 6 gave their total attention to their teacher's introduction of concepts of data handling, whilst those in Years 4 and 5 were exceptionally well behaved and hard working in meeting the challenge to complete number games, which reinforced their knowledge of the times tables. In a very small

number of lessons seen, pupils were unsure of what they were supposed to be learning and the pace of the lesson was slow; then, attitudes to learning and behaviour were less good, although still satisfactory. In a Year 3 science lesson, pupils were interested to contribute their ideas about plant life, but several needed reminding to curb their enthusiasm, so as not to disrupt the learning of other, lower attaining pupils. In a Year 4 geography lesson, pupils were given too little time to examine the globes at the start of the lesson, so that they did not give the teacher their full attention during her exposition of what they would be doing.

13. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour and parents and pupils report that, if there is any bullying, it is very quickly and effectively dealt with.
14. Pupils show a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and show respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs. As examples, in a Key Stage 2 hymn practice, pupils sang "Be still for the presence of the Lord" quietly and gently, showing respect for the words of the hymn; pupils in Years 3 and 4, who were undertaking a project on life in India, thoughtfully evaluated each other's decorative work in an Indian style.
15. Personal development is good. Pupils are capable of showing initiative and exercise personal responsibility well when the occasion arises. Younger children offered help to put away the class's lunch boxes at the start of the day. Pupils readily turn to reference books to extend their learning. In Year 6, pupils act as House captains, taking responsibility for the tally of points each week. Pupils in Year 6 have learnt to talk confidently about their work and their likes and dislikes and are well prepared to move on to their next schools.
16. Relationships are excellent, both between pupils of all ages and between pupils and staff. All staff set excellent examples and work very well together as a team. Excellent relationships in a mathematics lesson for Years 5 and 6 facilitated learning on data handling. Pupils work well in groups and pairs. This is especially evident in physical education, where pupils from Years 5 and 6 competed in a friendly manner to learn the skills needed to play tag rugby and pupils in Years 4 and 5 displayed some well-developed pair-work in dance, creating Charlie Chaplin characters in response to music.
17. Attendance is unsatisfactory and too many children do not arrive punctually for school in the mornings. Attendance in the last complete academic year was well below the national average for primary schools and unauthorised absences, those for which the school has received no satisfactory explanation, were above average. However, preliminary figures available during the inspection indicate that the number of both authorised and unauthorised absences has decreased since the appointment of a learning mentor, to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality. A significant number of boys and girls have poor attendance records. Whilst nearly all pupils incur unavoidable absence through illness, about 20 per cent of children are taken on holiday, sometimes for periods exceeding ten days, during term time.

About five pupils achieve 100 per cent attendance records in a full school year.

18. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development have been maintained as strengths of the school since the last inspection. Relationships are now excellent. Attendance has not improved in line with that seen nationally and late arrivals in the morning are still apparent.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. In all except one lesson observed, teaching was at least satisfactory. Overall, it was satisfactory in 20 per cent of lessons, good in 46 per cent, very good in 21 per cent and excellent in 12 per cent. Excellent lessons were seen in all three stages of the school and there was one unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 1. Examples of good lessons were seen in every class in the school. The greatest concentration of very good or excellent teaching was for the pupils in the two classes containing Year 1 and in the Nursery.
20. The biggest strengths in teaching include the sharing of the learning objectives for lessons with their pupils, the class management, which is very good throughout the school and the teachers' planning which is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and very good in the Foundation Stage.
21. Teachers generally work very hard for their pupils; they treat their pupils well and speak to them in a kind and encouraging manner, as, for example, in a Key Stage 1 physical education lesson. Pupils are aware of what is expected from them in terms of behaviour and respond very well. In an excellent Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 5 / 6, the teacher explained exactly what she wanted her pupils to do, used correct mathematical vocabulary throughout and had very high expectations. In lessons such as this one, pupils' learning was also excellent. In another excellent lesson in the Nursery, children made very good progress in their personal development. The teacher's use of a tambourine at key points promoted excellent class management. Support assistants in this class, as throughout the school, made a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
22. The pace of lessons is generally good through the school. Pupils are sometimes reminded of the time limits on an exercise, as, for example in an excellent Year 1 numeracy lesson. Because pupils were given relatively short time spans to complete a piece of work and reminded of this, it ensured that they focused on the work to be completed.
23. In the one lesson that was unsatisfactory, there was a lack of sufficient challenge. When pupils were asked to record their science work, this was just a matter of ticking or circling boxes. Some pupils completed this work very quickly and were then asked to "colour their pictures". In some other science lessons, the recording of pupils' work was also unsatisfactory. For example, in one otherwise satisfactory science lesson, the recording of pupils' experimental work lacked sufficient scientific rigour.

24. A lack of sufficient challenge, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, also pertained in a minority of lessons. This was seen particularly in geography at Key Stage 2 and science in both key stages, and was evident in an analysis of pupils' previous work in these subjects. In other lessons, for example Year 4 / 5 numeracy, extension sheets were available that provided real challenge for the "early finishers".
25. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are well taught. Lessons usually start with very productive question and answer sessions to remind pupils of previous work and to start them thinking about what is to come. The skills of literacy are not sufficiently well developed in geography at Key Stage 2. The over-reliance on commercial worksheets in a minority of lessons is not helping to develop literacy skills.
26. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good in all subject areas. Both the headteacher and the teacher of Year 6 have great expertise in information and communication technology and this is starting to make impact on pupils' learning in this subject throughout the school.
27. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work and other assessment procedures are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils' work is generally well marked, with appropriate comments to praise pupils' efforts, but this is not done to the same degree in each class. There are, however, rarely challenges to stretch pupils who have obtained full marks for a particular exercise.
28. Lessons generally have clear learning objectives, but these are not always looked at again at the end of lessons, to see how far they have been met. There were, nonetheless, shining examples of good practice in Year 1, Year 5 and Year 6. Many lessons end with a worthwhile oral question and answer session, for example, in literacy and numeracy.
29. The use of homework is satisfactory through the school and it supports pupils' learning appropriately.
30. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the teachers in the classroom. Additional help is provided by 11 support staff, some full-time and others part-time, but pupils make better progress when this support is available. The Northern Support Centre of the local education authority gives additional help to the pupils and also advice and guidance to the staff.
31. All pupils on the special needs register have effective individual education plans, with clear targets and suitable criteria for achievement. Copies of these are kept in the classrooms so that they are always available to be included in the teachers' planning and are reviewed thoroughly each term. Classroom support is efficiently used and provides a valuable benefit for the pupils. All the teachers set the pupils in groups according to their prior attainment and additional help is given to those who need it.

32. Standards of teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. At that time, only one lesson in every ten was judged to be very good or better; that has improved to over three lessons in ten. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has also declined.

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

33. Overall, the curriculum provided by the school is broad and balanced. The Foundation Stage for the under fives provides for all areas of children's learning and meets their needs well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school follows a policy of inclusion.
34. The school provides a stimulating curriculum that meets the needs and interests of all of its pupils. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. The staff have worked hard to strengthen the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and satisfactory improvements have been made in these areas. Statutory requirements are now met in information and communication technology and music. Schemes of work are in place, reflecting the hard work undertaken by the co-ordinators. These schemes successfully support the step-by-step development of what pupils should know, be able to do and understand. Planning is effective and consistently implemented throughout the school; it builds steadily from term to term and year to year and is well matched to the age range in each class.
35. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies are well established and have been implemented successfully throughout the school. The teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good.
36. The school fully responds to the Code of Practice for pupils who have special educational needs and provision is good. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. The school follows a policy of inclusion and integrates pupils with differing needs very successfully. Classroom assistants are very well organised and managed and give high quality support to pupils.
37. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, such as football, cross country running, athletics, rounders, cricket, rugby, netball, baseball and tennis and activities are well supported by pupils. The school encourages all pupils to have a positive attitude towards physical activity and pupils' willingness and commitment to practice are emphasised rather than sporting excellence. All pupils are considered for all sports and competitions and an emphasis is placed on representing the school to a high standard. All pupils representing the school in a sporting competition receive a certificate and praise in assembly for their efforts.

38. Policies for equal opportunities are well understood by adults and pupils and appropriately implemented throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive structured support and individual education plans are of a good quality. The school continues to be fully committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, in every aspect of school life.
39. The programme for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Assemblies and 'circle time' are used well, giving pupils the opportunity to explore a variety of issues about personal development and about dealing with a variety of situations which might occur in their lives. Sex education and family life form part of the cross-curricular themes of the National Curriculum and are dealt with within the broader themes of science, personal health and social education and religious education. The school's approach comes from within the curriculum and the insights of pupils. The school has a policy for drugs education.
40. The school has satisfactory links with the community, particularly through its web site. The local church plays an important part in the religious education curriculum and the parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. The school assists the parish with certain functions, such as the summer fayre and has held coffee mornings to which parents and members of the community are invited. The school has plans for a breakfast and after school club and holds 'drop-in' sessions for parents who want to help pupils with their homework. Helpers from the community come into school to work with groups of pupils and members of the parish are occasionally invited to the Nursery assembly.
41. Provision for spiritual, moral and social and cultural education is very good overall. The school provides for very good spiritual, moral and social development and for satisfactory cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
42. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Pupils are given time and opportunities to reflect on aspects of their lives in assemblies and in lessons. Pupils have a range of activities that give time for quiet reflection; for example, the very good artefacts used in a Year 1 art and design lesson created an atmosphere of quiet reflection. 'Circle time' gives pupils time to reflect upon the consequences of their actions upon others. Spirituality is particularly well developed throughout the school. Assemblies give clear messages and appropriately related songs are used to reinforce the ethos of the school. There is a strong sense of purpose in the school which encourages pupils to value themselves and each other.
43. The provision for moral development is very good. The school has clear systems which ensure that all pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. Rules are positive and encourage pupils to adopt appropriate behaviour within the school community. Pupils are encouraged to show self-restraint and to contribute to the welfare of others. Pupils are confident and happy and show respect to visitors, to the school staff and to each other.

Adults set very good examples, which helps to emphasise the moral provision within the school.

44. The provision for social development is very good. Adults are very good role models. Pupils are encouraged, through praise, to adopt appropriate social skills. All pupils are made welcome and the caring attitude demonstrated by all the adults reinforces the ethos and routines of the school. Pupils' self-esteem is sensitively developed and pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility. All pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively in lessons; for example, in a very good design and technology lesson, pupils worked co-operatively, investigating and building working models.
45. The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. This is a developing element within the curriculum and some progress has been made since the last inspection. The curriculum now offers a range of activities which develop pupils' knowledge and understanding; for example, in art and design, pupils study a wide range of different artists and learn about other cultures. In a Year 3/4 lesson on India, pupils learned about the Hindu religion as part of the wider topic. A wider cultural awareness is developed through other curriculum areas, such as history and geography. However, pupils have limited opportunities to study the diversity of today's multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The assessment of pupils' work and its use to plan future work is unsatisfactory. Whilst progress in this area has been made since the last inspection, and some tracking is now taking place, assessment is not consistently implemented through the school. In most subjects, assessment is very general and work in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and information and communication technology is not assessed using sufficiently precise National Curriculum levels. For example, rather than pupils being identified as at a Level 4a, 4b or 4c, they are generally assessed as being at Level 4. Since pupils nationally are only expected to go up by one full level every two years, two years could go past before it is realised that a pupil is not making sufficient progress. Now that the school has started to use the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, these pupils will be assessed once per year. Nonetheless, the tracking of pupils' academic progress is not yet satisfactory.
47. Overall, the school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Teaching and non-teaching staff take great care of the children under their care. There are well-established procedures to deal with issues of child protection, although further training of key staff is needed in this area. The school has improved its procedures for health and safety, and policies are now in place with which all staff are familiar. Appropriate provision is made for medical emergencies and first aid, although written records of first aid incidents and the action taken should be made clearer and formal requests to dispense prescription drugs should be obtained from parents or carers. Security arrangements are very good. All children have a number of adults in whom they can confide, including teachers, assistants and non-teaching staff.
48. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The appointment of a learning mentor, with Excellence in Cities funding, has had a

significant effect on the attendance and punctuality records of around 40 pupils with previously unsatisfactory records. However, these efforts now need to be extended to improve the attendance of other groups of pupils, particularly those who participate in family holidays during term time and in improving punctuality. External educational and welfare specialists are appropriately consulted.

49. The school has very good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour, with a consistently applied discipline policy and a hierarchy of sanctions to deal with unacceptable behaviour, including any of a bullying nature. There is a very effective parallel system of rewards for good behaviour, which pupils of all ages appreciate.
50. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers and other members of staff know the pupils in their care and support their personal development well, although this is not yet fully supported by personal tracking records.
51. Since the last inspection, the school has put appropriate health and safety policies and procedures in place. A very safe and secure working environment has been maintained.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parents view the school as a good one and support its work. Just over half of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and 25 attended a meeting with the Registered Inspector. Three quarters of parents agreed strongly with the statements that their child likes school, that teaching is good, that the school has high expectations for children to work hard and achieve their best and that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. A few parents were unhappy or unsure about the provision of activities outside lessons and a small number disagreed that they were kept well informed about progress, or that the right amount of homework is set. Parents at the meeting represented pupils from all age groups. They were positive about the school's provision, although a few felt that extra-curricular activities were insufficient.
53. The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. They found the teaching to be good, that children are making good progress overall, in line with the school's expectations of them and that the school is willing to deal with questions or problems. Pupils enjoy school. They found that the areas which concerned some parents, whilst not being strengths of the school, are satisfactory. Homework is set to enhance learning, including the provision of a reading book for younger pupils to share at home. Parents are given appropriate opportunities to read and talk about their child's progress. They found the provision of extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory, although many tend to be as preparation for sporting competitions or, as in the case of the choir, to enhance the celebration of pupils' first communion. At present there are no clubs which run throughout the year.

54. Overall the school has good links with parents. The quality of information provided is satisfactory and parents are welcome to approach the school if there are concerns or problems. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning and have a satisfactory impact on the work of the school.
55. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. There is an informative prospectus and governors produce an annual report, as required by law. The decision to move the annual meeting has resulted in a gap of well over a year since the last report was published, but the report for the current school year was in preparation at the time of the inspection. Parents receive regular letters providing information about events in school. A lively web-site is maintained, which parents can access over the internet, although the full range of planned information is not yet available, such as pages on class topics and suggestions about how to help your child. However, full details of school policies are provided, including an easy to understand guide on the provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
56. Annual progress reports are satisfactory; they give a good insight into gains in knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and science, but only brief comments are given in the other areas of the curriculum. Results of tests and assessments at the end of each key stage are reported, but National Curriculum levels are not included in the written reports, although details of tracking data are available verbally. Recommendations about ways to improve are included. Consultation evenings are offered and parents who do not attend are contacted. Home-school agreements have been established, which provide formal recognition of the established principles of partnership in line with the school's mission statement.
57. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. They support sports events and help with transport when necessary. The Parent and Teacher Association plays a significant part in raising funds for extra learning resources and has been instrumental over the past year in facilitating the setting up of before and after-school clubs, due to open in September, 2001. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning, at school and at home. They help in the Nursery and a few help regularly in the main school. When work to do at home is set, they are supportive and many share books or listen to their children read at home, although these efforts are not shared with class teachers in the reading records.
58. Since the last inspection, an effective partnership with parents has been maintained.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The leadership and management by the headteacher are very good, on both academic and pastoral sides; his commitment to the school is exemplary. He knows just where the school should go academically and is steering it in that direction. The headteacher is an excellent role model for staff and pupils, as

well as being an excellent teacher. His leadership ensures clear educational direction for the school and he is fully backed by a strong senior management team and the governing body. During the merger with a neighbouring school and the ensuing building work, the headteacher, the senior management team and the governing body worked effectively together to minimise the disruption to pupils' education.

60. The school's aims and values are easily seen in the daily routines of the school; the school's appropriate mission statement is prominently displayed in all classrooms. The deputy headteacher, Key Stage 1 coordinator, Key Stage 2 coordinator and nursery teacher make up the management team. They meet regularly, work well together and are all extremely competent teachers. Subject coordinators manage their subjects appropriately, but have not yet monitored the teaching of their subjects. They analyse the results of national tests appropriately, particularly in English and mathematics.
61. The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is good. The governors want the best for the school and are determined that it should succeed. Governors do not currently monitor the implementation of the curriculum sufficiently, although there are, appropriately, named governors for literacy and numeracy. The governing body has a good understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. Between them, the governors bring a range of experience to the running of this Catholic school.
62. The headteacher has thoroughly monitored the teaching of literacy throughout the school. He has provided all staff with detailed and effective written feedback. The next focus for monitoring is the teaching of numeracy. Monitoring is then set to spread to specific monitoring of subject teaching by curriculum coordinators; a change in staffing for the next academic year will free the deputy headteacher from being class based, to provide release time for curriculum coordinators to embark on their monitoring. Coordinators currently monitor the planning of their subjects across the school.
63. The school's targets are appropriate and sufficiently ambitious. Inspection evidence is that the targets for 2001 in English, mathematics and science will be met. The targets for 2002 are appropriately higher. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. Appropriate plans are in place to carry out performance management.
64. The knowledgeable special educational needs co-ordinator is an experienced senior member of staff, who provides admirable leadership and both effective and efficient organisation of the provision for special educational needs. She ensures that school policy meets the latest requirements of the Code of Practice. The progress of the pupils on the register is effectively monitored and well documented, so that individual education plans can be accurately reviewed. This good management contributes significantly to the good progress that the pupils make towards the targets on their individual education plans.

65. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is currently good. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The influx of pupils following the merger has been accommodated in recently completed new classrooms. Some of the classrooms are small for the number of pupils that they have to house and they are not well ventilated. The site manager and cleaners maintain the school very well indeed. The school hall is large and has been extended, making it very useful for indoor physical education. Classrooms have attractive displays that enhance pupils' learning. The school benefits from large playing fields, although their use in wet weather is restricted. Resources are generally satisfactory in quality and quantity and are well used to support learning. Facilities for information and communication technology have greatly improved since the last inspection.
66. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is very good. The school's secretaries, who are most efficient and competent, are appropriately experienced in the use of information and communications technology. The school development plan is a useful working document that clearly prioritises the way ahead for the school. Specific grants are used for their rightful purposes.
67. Since the last inspection, the requirement to develop the role of the curriculum coordinators has been carried out successfully. The school has started to adopt whole-school approaches to teaching and learning. Appropriate health and safety policies are in place.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To improve standards, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- i. raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (paragraphs 83, 94, 116);
- ii. improve assessment procedures and the tracking of pupils' progress (paragraph 46); and
- iii. raise the level of challenge in lessons (paragraph 24).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
12	21	46	20	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	34	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	143

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	85

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	19	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	32	31	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (94)	82 (92)	89 (86)
	National	94 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	16
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	32	33	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (97)	87 (94)	84 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	22	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	4	7
	Girls	18	11	15
	Total	25	15	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (53)	43 (58)	63 (71)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	5	8
	Girls	14	12	15
	Total	18	17	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	51 (42)	49 (45)	66 (71)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	264
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.4
Average class size	23.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	34

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	498,974
Total expenditure	542,387
Expenditure per pupil	1,802
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,390
Balance carried forward to next year	11,212

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	180
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	21	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	33	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	36	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	35	11	2	1
The teaching is good.	75	24	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	36	14	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	21	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	39	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	30	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	28	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	40	12	5	15

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

68. The provision for children aged five and below is very good. The nursery and reception classes provide a safe and secure environment in which young children learn. Children begin Nursery in the term after their third birthday and attend on a part-time basis. The Nursery staff make home visits, where they discuss life in the Nursery with parents and carers and introduce themselves to the children. Children enter the Nursery over a period of three weeks. During the first six weeks, staff administer the base line assessment tasks, which give teachers a starting point for children's learning experiences. Analysis of assessments confirms inspection findings that the majority of children enter Nursery with skills in social development, language and vocabulary skills and mathematical development, which are well below those seen nationally. By the time children enter the reception class, they have made good progress and often very good progress, in their learning. Children make a smooth transition to the reception class in the autumn term, when they are four years old. After six weeks in the reception class, children's learning needs are re-assessed. These assessments are analysed and children are grouped by prior attainment in the key areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematics. By the time they leave the reception class, higher attaining children are beginning to work within the early stages of the national curriculum; other pupils work within the early learning goals as appropriate to their learning needs. All children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and sometimes good progress is made.
69. Thirty nine places are available in the morning sessions and 40 places in the afternoon sessions. At the time of inspection, all places were full. In the reception class, there were 30 full time children. The Foundation Stage has 3 nursery nurses and a general learning assistant. The classes are very well equipped. All areas of learning are covered and the curriculum provides learning opportunities which are firmly rooted in the early learning goals, which children aim to achieve by the time they leave the reception class. The quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching seen. The quality of support is very high and enhances the learning experiences of all children. In the Nursery, team-teaching to support collaborative learning is often of an excellent quality. The balance between teacher-directed activity and child-centred activity is well maintained; focused tasks develop skills, knowledge and understanding. All areas of children's learning and progress are assessed on a continuous basis and the assessments are used to plan the next steps in learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. An appropriate priority is given to the personal and emotional needs of young children and they achieve well. Most children will exceed the early learning goals in this area by the time they leave the reception class. This shows very

good achievement, reflecting skilful teaching and provision, where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve, to form good relationships, to look after themselves responsibly and to behave well. For example, children learn to share the bicycles in the playground and play co-operatively when building with the large construction blocks. Children in the reception class work well together and take turns when playing skittles. They learn to relate to adults and to each other and to know right from wrong. By the time they leave the reception class, children understand classroom rules and routines and listen carefully to their teachers and to other adults. They know the importance of sharing and taking turns and demonstrate care for each other when taking turns at 'snack time.' Behaviour is good. Teachers' assistants and nursery nurses promote personal and social education through all learning experiences. Classroom routines are well established and resources suitably placed to give the children the opportunities to make their own choices.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Good progress is made in the development of language and literacy and teaching is good. By the time children leave the reception class, the majority of children will still be working within the early learning goals and the higher attaining children will have reached the nationally expected standards. Speaking and listening skills are becoming well developed and most children can speak in sentences and phrases. They are developing the ability to communicate with each other and to express their thoughts and feelings. They listen to stories; for example, in the Nursery, children listen attentively to rhymes such as 'Dr. Foster'. In the reception class, children listen to favourite stories, such as 'On the Sand'. They begin to re-tell the story and to sequence events in the narrative correctly. Staff focus on this area of learning effectively and children join in discussion during their activities with sand, water, paint and glue. Listening skills are taught throughout the day in all activities in which children participate. Children in the nursery are given many opportunities to look at and appreciate books. They are beginning to recognise the structure of a book. They begin, through nursery rhymes, to learn initial sounds and many are becoming confident in this area of their learning. A few children are at the very early stages of reading. In the reception class, children build on the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the Nursery. They appreciate that print carries meaning and most can start at the beginning of a book and turn the pages correctly. Higher attaining children begin to develop their reading skills and by the time they leave the reception class, they are working within the early stages of the national curriculum and have made very good progress. They begin to use strategies to help them read unknown words and learn letter sounds. Nursery children develop their writing skills well. They learn early mark making skills, they trace and write over the teachers' writing and some begin to write their name. Children in the reception class develop their writing skills well. All can write their name, some over-write teachers' words and higher attaining children write a simple sentence with help. Many opportunities are provided for children to write; for example, in the 'Travel

Agent's Office', children find brochures for others and write down details of their holidays.

Mathematical development

72. By the time they leave the reception class, most children will not have achieved the early learning goals expected for children of this age. In relation to their level of attainment on entry to the Nursery, children make good progress in developing mathematical understanding and teaching is very good. Children develop mathematical skills through effective use of practical activities, number rhymes and songs. Number games are used to give the children an understanding of the properties of number. Children in the Nursery use their counting skills well and many can count to five; for example, in a physical development lesson, children counted how many times they had tapped a balloon. They listen to number stories, such as 'Ten Bears in a Bed' and count the 'teddies' as they fall. They sing counting songs, such as 'Five Currant Buns' and are beginning to recognise numerals well. When investigating in sand, children count the number of dinosaurs they find. In the reception class, children learn to count in sequence and can count to 20 securely; some can count to 100 and are beginning to acquire a sense of the size of a number and its position in number, through number songs and games such as sequencing a number line. When playing a dice game, children learn to estimate the number of objects they have collected and to check this by counting. They investigate the properties and vocabulary of number and add numbers such as two and three mentally to make five. Children identify basic shapes and sort and match objects into small, large and medium sizes. They develop their understanding of capacity when investigating sand and water. Teaching supports learning and is often very good. The teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of young children's learning. Their planning is good and allows children to progress well in their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics, all of which are developed through topics, stories, games and imaginative play. For example, a washing line was used effectively to reinforce the children's awareness of the place of a number. The pace of lessons is appropriate and children join in enthusiastically. Teachers have high expectations and ensure that children are given many opportunities to learn. All staff encourage children to learn and praise is frequently used to raise children's self esteem. The nursery nurses and assistant are well deployed and contribute to the good progress made in lessons. Very effective use is made of puppets, such as 'Kanga', to support and consolidate learning. Computers are used satisfactorily to enhance mathematical skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. By the time they leave the reception class, children's knowledge and understanding of the world is below that expected in the Early Learning Goals. Children enter the Nursery with a very limited understanding of the world outside their immediate locality. Progress is good. In the Nursery, children build with different sized blocks. In the workshop area, they use different tools and techniques to make for example, a card and a shaker for a child in class

who had broken his arm. In Reception, children learn to distinguish between past and present events in their lives, when they discuss the book, 'Holidays'. They use the role play areas, such as the 'Travel agent's' shop, to develop and extend their learning. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers encourage children to investigate and to explore both their immediate environment and that of the wider world. Topics have appropriate objectives and interesting and purposeful activities are devised which relate clearly to the early learning goals. Adults ensure that children remain interested through the pace of the lessons and change the activity when appropriate. Equipment and resources are easily accessible and support and develop children's independence.

Physical development

74. By the time they leave Reception, children are on course to achieve the standards expected for this area of learning. They begin to develop an awareness of space and move carefully during lessons in the hall. For example, in a very good lesson, children used space responsibly when warming up to the rhyme, 'I walked to school one morning and I walked like this' and moved with confidence. In the reception class, children understand the rules and routines which apply when using the hall and all children respect each other's space and move sensibly and carefully. Teaching focuses on care and consideration for others and reinforces safety. Planning is good and shows the many opportunities given to children to develop their physical skills. The children in the reception class visit the secure nursery playground in rotation; here they learn to ride on the wheeled toys carefully. They use the toys with a developing sense of confidence and show good control and co-ordination as they travel. Children show sound control and skill when using scissors, for example, when cutting out card in the workshop. They show increasing dexterity as they work with pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. The quality of teaching is good and supports this area of learning well. Children have positive attitudes towards physical education and are keen and eager to demonstrate their skills. Good resources and support staff contribute effectively to this area of development.

Creative development

75. By the time they leave the reception class, children's attainment is on course to meet the standards required in this area of learning. Children use a wide range of media and materials with which they explore and express their feelings. In the Nursery, children have many opportunities to use paint, collage, crayon, coloured beads and glitter, making attractive collages such as the number display. In the reception class, children drew shells, during their lesson about holidays and created some very good patterns, which they coloured carefully, using pastels. They made different creatures from the sea, using plasticine. This developed both their imagination and their discussion skills very well. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers encourage pupils to think and to use their imagination to create art forms. Children have very good attitudes to their lessons; they concentrate well, work co-operatively and share

resources with each other. Nursery and reception children recognise nursery rhymes and songs and sing them enthusiastically. Teachers' planning is good. It gives children many opportunities to develop their creative skills. Effective use of resources motivates the children, who are managed very well. Tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments are well used to explore and investigate musical sounds.

ENGLISH

76. In the national tests for seven year olds in the year 2000, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age in reading was above average when compared to all schools and very high when compared to schools with a similar background. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level three was also above average. The results in writing were below average, when compared to all schools, but above average when compared to schools with a similar intake. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level three was below average compared to all schools, but above average when compared to schools with a similar background. Over the past four years, the results in reading and writing have generally been above average, although last year's results in writing fell below average. There was no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.
77. Pupils' results in the national tests for English in the year 2000 for eleven year olds were well below average when compared to all schools, but above average when compared to schools with a similar background. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher grade five was well below average. Between 1996 and 1998, the results were average but declined in 1999, with an upward improvement in the year 2000. There was no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.
78. Observation of lessons, examination of work and discussions with the teachers and pupils indicate that, currently, the standard of attainment for seven year olds is what is expected of pupils of this age in writing, but above average in reading. This is similar to the standards recorded at the last inspection, but shows an improvement in writing compared to the national tests results in the year 2000. This is because of the good teaching in the school and the fact that the literacy hour is becoming firmly established and is having a marked effect on standards. The teachers ensure that the special needs pupils in the group know how to write simple sentences correctly, in order to be able to put down their thoughts on paper accurately. They are given ample opportunities to practise their writing skills, which are improving in consequence. However, despite the fact that the majority of pupils aged eleven reach the national standards, the attainment of the group overall is below average. This is because a number of pupils in the year group are on the special needs register and these pupils have not yet reached national standards. Most of these pupils came into the school as a result of the merger in 1998, but it is clear that over three quarters of the pupils who were already at Saints Peter and Paul at that time and who began their education at the school, have reached the national level. The standard of reading overall for

eleven year olds is at a level expected of their age, although the higher attaining pupils reach above average standards. This is because the teachers motivate the pupils to be interested in books and give the pupils the opportunity to read in school each day and all pupils are encouraged to take books home. Overall, the standards in writing are below average, but many pupils produce work that is at least at a level expected of pupils of their age. The effective use of the literacy hour in school is having a beneficial effect on reading but especially on writing; the teachers ensure that time is allocated each week for extended writing. The pupils' very good behaviour and the teachers' encouragement make for a positive attitude to learning and this makes a vital contribution to the improving standards. The standards in English are below those found at the last inspection, but this is largely due to the influx of pupils with special educational needs and also the disruption caused by extensive building work undertaken in the school, to provide accommodation for the increase in numbers.

79. Although pupils enter school with below average standards of speaking and listening, by the age of seven, these standards have improved and are at the level expected of pupils of this age. Consequently, the pupils are able to concentrate on stories, questions and instructions given by the teacher. The pupils' vocabulary is often limited, but the teachers focus on this, particularly in shared reading time, with the aim of improving linguistic skill so that the pupils can express their thoughts more clearly and accurately. As a result, the pupils become more confident in answering questions and joining in discussions. In a class for Year 2 pupils, for example, a group of pupils listened to the story of the "Ginger Bread Man" on a tape recorder and then independently practised a dramatisation of the story, using puppets, before making a presentation to the rest of the class. Higher attaining pupils are able to take part in simple discussions and to state their views when talking to adults. By the time the pupils are eleven, their speaking and listening skills are at a level expected at this age. They are able to think about questions posed by the teacher, give a reasoned answer and join in discussions with confidence. In another Year 2 class, for example, the pupils were reading poetry and could give valid reasons why they liked or disliked aspects of the poems. Teachers aim to ensure that the pupils acquire the technical vocabulary used in specific subjects. For example, in one history lesson, the pupils were familiar with words like "evidence" and "archaeologist."
80. By the age of seven the attainment of the pupils in reading is above that expected of pupils of this age. This is because the teachers place strong emphasis on pupils' learning of phonics and other important reading skills and ensure that the pupils know a wide range of common words like "was" and "again". Pupils have ample time to practise their reading skills, both in the literacy hour and at other times during the day. The school has a good home reading scheme, which also makes an important contribution to the standards in reading. When parents come to the welcome meeting before the pupils start in Key Stage 1, a senior teacher explains the reading scheme and gives advice about the most effective way to hear their children read and this introduction is backed up with a reading pack. Parents can obtain a 'reading

bag' from the school, so that books are well looked after. The higher attaining pupils can read fluently, with confidence and good expression. They are able to talk about the story and the characters in the book. Many of the pupils are able to say which parts of the story they like best and compare it with other books they have read. On the other hand, the lower attaining pupils sometimes lack confidence, hesitate and are not independent in their reading. However, all the pupils have good information retrieval skills and can use a dictionary and the contents and index of a book to find out information.

81. The overall attainment of eleven year olds in reading is at the level expected of pupils of this age. Most pupils have a wide sight vocabulary and read fluently and with reasonable confidence. They are also able to discuss the story and the characters and say which part of the book they prefer. The higher attaining pupils, whose reading level is above average, have a favourite author and can compare the books they have read. One pupil was reading a 'Harry Potter' book and compared it to the books she liked by Jacqueline Wilson. Some of these pupils have learnt to make deductions and inferences, which add to their reading skills and enjoyment. The lower attaining pupils read with less confidence, hesitate when reading and are less willing to talk about their books. These pupils are given additional support by two knowledgeable classroom assistants, in order to improve their ability in phonics and other language skills. This makes a valuable contribution to the standards in reading. In Key Stage 2, there are many good readers who read expressively and who enjoy books. Pupils are familiar with the glossary, the index and the contents of a book and use these skills to search for information; most classrooms contain topic books for this purpose.
82. Writing by the age of seven is at a standard expected of pupils of this age. Most pupils are able to write fluent sentences with a capital letter and a full stop and the teachers encourage them to use interesting and exciting vocabulary rather than dull words like "nice". The lower attaining pupils are more tentative writers, but often have classroom support to help them. Pupils produce a wide variety of different types of writing, including poetry. One pupil wrote a creative story about a dragon and including the description, " a cosy straw house". Pupils re-wrote the main points of an interesting story about a giant, to learn the importance of sequence in a narrative. Pupils were also encouraged to create atmosphere in their writing and one girl, writing about Griselda the Witch, included spiders, cobwebs and "eating mice". Pupils also practise writing for more practical purposes; for instance, some pupils wrote instructions on how to make a sandwich. Spelling is satisfactory and the pupils take home lists of words to learn, which are tested each week. Presentation of work is good, because the pupils benefit from handwriting practice each week.
83. Overall, the attainment in writing for eleven year olds is below average, although the majority of pupils do reach the national standard. This is because of the pupils in the group with special educational needs, who have not yet reached the level expected nationally. The pupils write sentences fluently, but in many cases, their choice of words to enhance their writing is limited. The higher attaining pupils paragraph their work accurately and use lively words

and phrases to make their writing more interesting. For example, one pupil wrote in a poem of an "owl quietly creeping on its prey", and another of " a colourful butterfly flying swiftly". Some pupils can use interesting adverbs; one pupil wrote, "They ran around frantically". Most pieces of extended writing are usually planned and drafted, before a final copy is produced in pen or pencil. The pupils experience a wide range of writing. For example, some pupils wrote a simple story about a blind Chinese boy, called Lo-Sun, and read it to the infant pupils. Another group of pupils made an anthology of report writings called "A Book of Pop". In one class, the pupils were reading poems and wrote down the reasons why they liked or disliked them. Some pupils wrote interesting pieces about mythological creatures that they had created and other pupils wrote about legends of the North American Indians. Pupils regularly write reviews of the books they have read and some pupils wrote a short play. Other pupils produced letters, voicing concern about the local environment. Literacy skills are also used to support other subjects of the curriculum, as was seen in art, design and technology, music and religious education. However, not enough use is made of extended writing in history, geography and science, to practise and consolidate literacy skills and this is an area for development. Spelling is satisfactory, because the pupils are given regular spelling tests and because much of the work is drafted and revised before the final version is written. The classroom staff who give extra support for literacy sometimes use computer programs to motivate pupils to learn spellings, and this is effective. Handwriting is practised regularly and is usually satisfactory and often good. Homework is set frequently, which gives valuable support to the subject.

84. Whilst there is a range of ability, a large number of pupils enter the school with poorly developed language skills. Many have immature speech, limited vocabulary and underdeveloped auditory skills. Given this low starting point, the pupils at both key stages make good progress as they move up the school and they achieve well. This compares favourably with the previous inspection finding, which was that progress was satisfactory. Pupils aged six to seven learn to write sentences, with legible handwriting and accurate spelling, a foundation which is built upon by the teachers in Key Stage 2. Similarly, in reading, younger pupils learn to read with confidence and the older pupils are introduced to a wide range of different texts. Learning was good or very good in all the English lessons seen. The many pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress; their achievement in relation to their individual education targets is also good. Because the school promotes inclusive education both in policy and practice, there is full access for all the pupils to the curriculum.
85. In Key Stage 1, 50 per cent of the teaching was good and the other 50 per cent was very good. In Key Stage 2, 85 per cent of the teaching was good, and 15 per cent was excellent. The literacy hour is well established and successfully taught and makes a valuable contribution to learning. The teachers have a warm relationship with their pupils and organisation of lessons is good, including the teaching of mixed age groups. As a result, the teachers are able to create an effective learning atmosphere in the classroom

where pupils behave very well, co-operate with the teachers and concentrate on their work and this has a strong impact on pupils' learning. Basic skills in literacy are well taught and consolidated in the wide range of writing activities that the teachers provide for the pupils. However, not enough use is made of the opportunities for writing in some subjects like history, geography and science. Too few examples of high quality writing are displayed in the classrooms, to give pupils a standard to aim for. However, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and are able to motivate them well so that they enjoy reading and writing. Although the pupils are tested regularly to gauge their progress, assessment procedures are underdeveloped and are not yet used efficiently to set targets to enhance progress within levels of attainment. All teachers have a good knowledge of literacy and how to teach it and are increasingly using information and communication technology to support the subject. The school library is not used for independent research, but information books are kept in the classroom for research into subjects like history.

86. The knowledgeable co-ordinator scrutinises the teachers' planning and examines the pupils' books and the headteacher has monitored the teaching of the literacy hour. These measures have contributed to the improving standards in the school. The school has an adequate supply of both fiction and non-fiction books, which are located in and around the classrooms so that they are accessible to the pupils. English makes a worthwhile contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils.

MATHEMATICS

87. In the 2000 national test results based on average national curriculum points scores, attainment in mathematics was well below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Whilst the percentage of pupils obtaining Level 2, the expected level, was average, the proportion obtaining the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 was well below the national average. Pupils' performance in the Key Stage 1 mathematics test was average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The average attainment of pupils in the three years 1998 to 2000 was below the national average in the Key Stage 1 tests. On average, pupils leave Key Stage 1 just over one term behind pupils nationally. The attainment of girls was lower than that of boys in the end of Key Stage 1 tests; on average, they were half a term behind.
88. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in terms of points scores was very low compared to the national average, being in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. The proportion of pupils obtaining Level 4, the expected level nationally, was average, but the proportion obtaining Level 5 was very low. The attainment of this group of pupils was below average when compared with schools of a similar type. Although this paints a bleak picture, it needs to be borne in mind that these results include those of pupils who had been at Saints Peter and Paul for a relatively short time. When the results of those pupils who had been at the

school from the end of Key Stage 1 were analysed, they showed satisfactory progress and broadly matched national averages.

89. For the pupils currently at the school, attainment, as indicated by the lessons observed and by a scrutiny of pupils' work, matches national averages at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The main reasons for the difference at Key Stage 2 between previous test results and inspection findings are that the numeracy strategy has had more time to make its impact and there are fewer pupils who are very new to the school. In the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, nearly all pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show satisfactory levels of attainment related to both investigative mathematics and number. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are also quite adept in investigative work, but generally do not have sufficient instant recall of their multiplication tables. This hinders their attainment in other areas of mathematics. Pupils at the top of the key stage develop their own strategies when solving problems in their heads, can recognise, estimate, order and calculate obtuse and acute angles appropriately and are familiar with different ways of presenting data accurately. Pupils carry out work on fractional parts of whole numbers appropriately and realise that two thirds of 90 degrees is 60 degrees. When carrying out work on data handling, they use key mathematical vocabulary accurately and appropriately. There was no overall difference in the performance of girls and boys in the lessons seen. Standards in mathematics are currently similar to those at the time of the last inspection for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key stage 2. To raise standards of attainment in both key stages, there is a need to continue to build up a consistent mathematical vocabulary in all classes, following the best practice of teachers in Year 1, Year 1/2, Year 4/5 and Year 5/6, and to ensure that pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables.
90. Overall progress of pupils in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Factors aiding progress include the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and the overall good standard of teaching. The teaching was excellent in three of the ten lessons seen, very good in two lessons, good in four lessons and satisfactory in one. The features that made the three best lessons excellent and which contributed to excellent learning, were explicit learning objectives that pupils understood, plenty of challenge for all, very enthusiastic teaching and very good planning with plenty of work for all pupils. Such lessons re-visit the learning objectives at the end with vibrant question and answer sessions, to see how far the objectives have been achieved. Teachers in most numeracy lessons start off with appropriate question and answer sessions, to get pupils thinking. In numeracy lessons, the likeliest time for pupils to lessen their rate of working is during the "independent learning" sessions. In the best lessons, however, teachers are aware of this and set appropriate time targets, as, for example, in an excellent Year 1 lesson on recognising and extending number sequences. Factors hindering greater progress are a lack of even higher challenge in some classes, some lack of pupils' instant recall of multiplication tables and an over-reliance in some classes on commercial worksheets. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress in mathematics.

91. Pupils' response in lessons seen is very good in both Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Pupils behave very well indeed, are most enthusiastic and concentrate; they show greatest awareness of their learning in those lessons in which teachers share and explain the learning objectives for the lesson. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are extremely positive and they show clear enjoyment for the subject. Relationships between pupils and with their teachers, learning support assistants and other adults are excellent and a credit to all; this has a most positive impact on learning.
92. Assessment procedures are generally unsatisfactory overall, particularly in the long term. Teachers are not yet evaluating pupils' work with appropriate accuracy and tracking pupils' progress sufficiently well as they go through the school. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work is generally good and helps pupils to learn. In some cases it is detailed, with diagnostic comments to help the pupils to improve.
93. The school has generally satisfactory resources for mathematics. Use of these resources to support the work in hand is satisfactory and supports learning. The co-ordinator for mathematics is very committed and has carried out appropriate monitoring of teachers' planning. She has run demonstration lessons for colleagues, is a most competent classroom practitioner and has carried out a detailed analysis of national test results. This latter has been fed back to all staff, so that the school can "home in" on problem areas. In the coming academic year, time has been appropriately set aside for her to monitor teaching. The effectiveness of the strategy to teach numeracy is good overall.

SCIENCE

94. Standards in science are below those expected of the majority of pupils at the ages of 7 and 11. The test results for the year 2000 show that pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average. Their attainment was below the average level of similar schools. The trend over recent years has followed a downward pattern. However, the considerable upheaval resulting from the integration of pupils from another school and the subsequent building alterations caused disruption to pupils' learning. Those pupils who have attended the school constantly from the age of five are learning successfully and achieving well. The school has already listed the subject as having a high priority for development.
95. Teaching is good. The teachers plan and prepare well for the pupils to carry out investigations. Consequently, the pupils show excitement and enthusiasm for learning. In a very good lesson for Year 1, the teacher presented the pupils with a range of activities, which ensured their full attention throughout a lengthy lesson. The pupils' awareness of sound and the range of sources of sound was heightened considerably. Pupils were introduced to scientific methods, by recording what they heard in different ways. Throughout the lesson, there was a buzz of excitement and a very keen response to the final

challenge. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and other adults, so that their learning is similar to that of the majority of pupils. Good discussions take place in many lessons and the teachers are clear what they want the pupils to learn. Year 6 pupils gave clear explanations of how they had previously tested pulse rates and recorded them. They produced graphical data and analysed it. Interesting practical activities are devised, which hold the pupils' attention well and facilitate understanding. Year 2 pupils used role-play to understand how mains electricity is supplied to electrical devices. However, the recording tasks set in lessons are not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Too often there is only a requirement to make marks on prepared sheets and occasionally colouring activities. There is insufficient requirement for them to set down their predictions, activities and conclusions, thus obliging them to think and express their conclusions clearly. Pupils are not being expected to make use of and reinforce their literacy skills. Similarly, numeracy skills are used insufficiently and there is a scarcity of data and diagrams in recordings. The pupils' recording of their investigations is not developing progressively through the school.

96. In most lessons seen, the practical tasks were interesting and almost all of the pupils behaved very well and give their full attention to the task. A lesson for pupils in Year 5, investigating electrical circuits, was very well organised and the expectations of the teacher regarding behaviour and application resulted in very good work habits. The pupils collaborated very well with their partners. The lesson successfully encouraged their thinking skills and some good 'shared learning' took place. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they prepare very thoroughly for the science lessons. Attention is paid to scientific vocabulary. The Year 5 teacher insisted that the pupils used words such as 'conducts' and 'insulator' in the correct context. This does not always apply in the pupils' written work. Errors such as a Year 3 pupil's writing about a 'crocodile wire' and a Year 6 pupil's misspelling of the word 'predator' were ignored. Some good examples of marking were noted in Year 3, in which pupils' thinking was challenged and in Year 1, when attainment was assessed well. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress in science.
97. Action taken to improve standards in the subject has been appropriate. Attention has been paid to the effective planning and organisation of the curriculum. Best use is made of the teachers, time and the limited space available. Good use is made of the resources, so that the pupils enjoy their work. The school is well aware of the need to monitor work in the subject, in order to ensure the best progression in learning for all pupils. Plans are already in place for this with the coordinator being given appropriate release time from September. Through the interesting teaching and the emphasis on shared learning, the subject makes a strong contribution to the very good ethos of the school.

ART AND DESIGN

98. During the week of inspection a limited number of lessons were observed, involving pupils in Years 1, 2, Year 3 / 4 and 6. Judgements on attainment are based on these lessons, on pupils' previous work and on speaking to pupils and teachers. These indicate that attainment is above the expected level for pupils at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in lessons and make good progress as they move through the school. This is an improvement on standards identified in the last report. The school has adopted national initiatives in the subject, which are reflected in teachers' planning. The school has a policy and scheme of work, which ensure continuity and progress in teaching and learning. Resources for the subject are good.
99. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, use a range of media and materials to develop their skills and techniques in the subject, which are acquired and built on as they move through the school. Pupils are introduced to the work of well-known artists such as Kandinsky, and to sculptors such as Henry Moore. In Year 1, pupils investigated the processes used in making a sculpture. They experimented with tools and successfully produced sculptures of a tower of elephants, which closely resembled the Indian elephant artefacts they had observed. They learn about the life of the sculptor, Henry Moore. In Year 2, pupils explore texture, through the use of artefacts from the sea, such as coral, shells, and sponge. They use non-fiction books to help them discover what a coral reef is and where it is situated. In Year 3 / 4, pupils learn about Indian art. They investigate pattern through the examination of several different art objects from India, which include carvings, textiles and wood block prints. Pupils successfully produced a large print using the wood block and significantly developed their manipulative skills. Pupils in Year 5/6 learned about William Morris and had made some beautiful fabric prints in the same style. In Year 6, pupils further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists and begin to develop pattern in the style of Kandinsky.
100. The overall quality of teaching is good, with some examples of excellence. Teachers have a good subject knowledge, which provides pupils with good learning opportunities. Lessons are well planned and prepared, with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils. Teachers' give clear guidance to help pupils to improve their artistic skills and this was clearly demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson. All pupils have very good attitudes to their work and listen carefully to their teachers. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson, when pupils were experimenting with paint, pencils and pastels, to make their own version of Kandinsky circles. Pupils in the art club made stained glass window decorations of peace and love for the chapel. They used glass paint and liquid lead to seal the individual designs, which are beautiful to see. The school is trying to incorporate the use of information and communication technology more fully into the subject.
101. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has plans to extend and develop the subject to include visiting artists and the monitoring of teaching, learning and planning which will further enhance the

quality of provision. Resources are stored centrally and are accessible to all staff. Standards, overall, have improved since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. During the week of the inspection, only one lesson was observed. Inspection evidence is drawn from discussions with teachers and pupils and scrutiny of work available in the school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and meet national expectations. The school has produced a scheme of work and this is an improvement.
103. Pupils make sound progress in design and technology in Key Stage 1. By the time they are seven, they have reached standards of the expected level. They learn an appropriate range of skills and techniques; for example, how to cut and join fabric for 'Joseph's Coat'. Pupils are expected to draw and label diagrams of their work. In Year 1, pupils visited the Foundation Stage playground and designed and made equipment suitable for their own playground. Pupils could explain what they had done clearly; for example, one pupil explained that he had strengthened his model of a roundabout using tape. Pupils in Year 2 designed and made Joseph's Coat. They experimented with designing different patterns and transferred these to the coat. They explained the process they had used and showed excitement when recalling the pattern being transferred onto the coat with a hot iron. They understood the safety issues involved. Some pupils used information technology to create their pattern. The theme was developed when pupils created their own 'little coats'. Literacy is developed through the subject; pupils use non-fiction books to research suitable patterns and develop their speaking and listening skills through discussion
104. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their skills as they move through the school. In Year 3 / 4, pupils develop their technological and design skills through art. They investigate pattern through Indian art. They made a picture frame, which they were decorating to their own design, using a range of coloured glass beads. Pupils understood the making process, and explained the process they had used clearly. In Year 5/6, pupils investigated how to make a moving toy, using a range of construction kits. Pupils successfully made a variety of moving toys for a fairground, and explained how they moved and how they had modified the models as they made them. The lesson stimulated speaking, listening and thinking skills, which were well developed by pupils. The use of technical language was very good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress. A strength in this subject is the confident way in which pupils work together in groups, sharing ideas and reaching sensible decisions about how to overcome difficulties. Pupils in Year 6 had designed and made a slipper. They recalled the process involved and were confident in their skills and understanding.
105. The quality of teaching was very good in the one lesson seen. Expectations are high, inspiring pupils to learn. Pupils work enthusiastically on tasks and enjoy investigation. They could explain how they had constructed a model

confidently and demonstrated understanding of the subject. Pupils are given opportunities to examine the design of objects such as playground equipment or a range of model objects that move before making their own. Teachers are not over-directive, problems are discussed and pupils are encouraged to find their own solutions.

106. The co-ordinator has worked very hard and produced a policy and scheme of work. This is having a positive effect on teachers' planning and the standards achieved. Resources are good, well managed and organised and easily accessible.

GEOGRAPHY

107. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, they are below expectations. This reflects good improvement at Key Stage 1 since the previous report, but not at Key Stage 2.
108. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, but samples of the pupils' work reflect some good teaching and learning. This is well supported by some fine and extensive displays of the travels of Barnaby Bear. The pupils follow some of his journeys by noting them on maps, to Tenby and to New York. They begin to write about these travels, showing an awareness of the wider world. They also study their immediate locality, considering buildings and jobs in the area.
109. The teaching seen in Key Stage 2 lessons was satisfactory overall. Most lessons seen were introducing the pupils to life in an Indian village. The teachers prepared well for the lessons and were generally confident in their knowledge. This made for good discussions. There is good provision of resources, with all pupils having access to globes and atlases. On occasions, the pupils' enthusiasm and interest in these has to be curtailed in order for the lesson to proceed. Some good teaching in Year 3 addressed the pupils' misconceptions of India. Pupils voiced their ideas, which then prompted the opportunity for them to learn about some of the realities. They had access to a number of different maps, so that they could mark their own maps more accurately. Not all teachers were secure in their subject knowledge, as illustrated when one referred to countries 'above' or 'below' another.
110. The main areas contributing to the low standards in Key Stage 2 are insufficient recording of activities and insufficient challenge in the tasks set. Although, in lessons, the pupils share in fruitful discussion, this is not reinforced by the individual recording of activities. The scrutiny of pupils' work found very little in some classes. Tasks set are often unchallenging, with the same task for all, such as Year 5 pupils' colouring of worksheets. Insufficient use is made of the pupils' literacy skills. A Year 6 lesson about the environment and the co-existence of man and animals had a number of good features. The pupils showed an awareness of the problems involved and gave thought to solutions. However the recording task, set for all abilities, involved mainly artistic skills and not geographical ones. Some pupils, in Year 5, have

researched their own projects about the environment. These show some thoughtful marking by the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress in geography.

111. The subject co-ordinator has written the policy and has a very clear action plan. Steps have also been taken to enhance resources with aerial photographs and their associated maps. Resources are satisfactory, but are not used fully, so that atlases are in store rather than in classrooms and newly provided Ordnance Survey maps remain unopened. The high profile of the subject provided by Barnaby Bear is not maintained further up the school. The Year 4/5 class has a good display of their local news studies, but otherwise, the subject has a low profile. Some worthwhile cross-curricular links are made, as in the pupils' study of India. This also widens their cultural experience. There are few visits or visitors to enhance the geography curriculum.

HISTORY

112. Standards at the end of both key stages match national expectations. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. Pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the subject, but this progress could be consolidated by more challenging writing tasks for the older pupils.
113. The overall quality of teaching is good. The teachers prepare thoroughly for lessons and use resources effectively. At the beginning of topics, the teachers make sensible assessments of what the pupils already know, about the Victorians, for example. Pupils in Year 5 use research skills appropriately. They consider what historical information can be obtained from portraits and photographs. Good discussion results from good teacher knowledge and pupils' willingness to participate. They enjoy their history lessons and behave well. Pupils in Year 3 study the Vikings. Evidence sheets provide opportunity for them to see favourable points about both the Vikings and the Anglo-Saxons. This helps them to understand that there are two sides to the question. Some good opportunities for writing are presented, as when a higher attaining pupil in Year 3 'wrote to the Bishop', to explain how he escaped from the monastery when the Vikings attacked. Opportunities of this type bring the subject to life and should be extended. On occasions, there is over-use of worksheets so that pupils cannot use their developing literacy skills.
114. Pupils in Key Stage 1 compare modern everyday items with older versions. A higher attaining pupil wrote a good account of the life of Florence Nightingale and compared hospitals then with hospitals now. The history of the local area is studied and links with geography are made. Some visits are made to enhance pupils' learning, which have great impact; Year 6 pupils remember a visit made in an earlier class. Year 4 pupils interviewed some visitors to the school about their experiences during World War 2, which provided further opportunities for using their writing skills. More visits and visitors would

provide additional stimulus to the pupils' learning. Good thought is given to curriculum planning. A very good display draws together a range of information and pupils' work.

115. The subject co-ordinator has a clear plan for action to raise standards. This includes ways of increasing the number and range of artefacts to support other resources. Monitoring of the subject is not sufficiently in place to have any impact.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations and at the end of Key Stage 2 it is below them. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use information and communications technology (I.C.T.) to assemble straightforward text. They use software packages with appropriate accuracy. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in monitoring and modelling is unsatisfactory. They are not being given the opportunity to develop these key skills. Their standard of work overall, whilst improving, is about two years behind the nationally expected standards. Nonetheless, overall standards have improved satisfactorily since the last inspection, due to the greatly improved facilities.
117. Pupils' learning is satisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Owing to timetable constraints, it was only possible to see two lessons in this subject. One of these was well taught and the other was satisfactory. Assessment is not yet used consistently throughout the school to monitor pupils' progress in this subject. Nonetheless, the coordinator does level Year 6 pupils appropriately and tracks their progress. Information and communication technology is now given its rightful place on the timetable as a subject that is taught to all pupils each week. Currently only the pupils in Key Stage 2 have access to the information and communication technology suite on a regular basis; pupils in Key Stage 1 use the computers in their classrooms. This does not represent the most efficient use of the I.C.T. suite.
118. Pupils' attitudes are very good; they work hard and concentrate. They show eagerness for, and interest in, this subject. Relationships are excellent and pupils work very well together, when paired at the same computer.
119. Both the co-ordinator for this subject and the headteacher are very knowledgeable. The profile of information and communication technology has been raised in the school and it is used, for example, in assemblies, to good effect. The coordinator has not yet had release time to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues in this subject. There are appropriate computers in every classroom in Key Stage 1, which are networked together and to those in the ICT suite. The school is linked to the internet and has its own website, designed by staff at the school.

MUSIC

120. The previous inspection found that the provision for music was failing to meet legal requirements and that attainment at both Key Stages was unsatisfactory. Inspection findings are that music has improved since the last inspection and now matches national standards at the end of both key stages and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in gaining the key knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate very good vocal skills and their singing is very good.
121. Pupils make good use of their singing in many areas of the curriculum. Literacy skills are developed well through the acquisition of good listening skills. For example, in a year 5/6 lesson, pupils listened to 'Music from Ladysmith Black Mambo'; through careful, focused listening, pupils developed their appraisal skills and were introduced to different textures of sound and to un-tuned instruments. They developed their literacy skills through effective explanation of the culture of South Africa, in particular stories and poetry. Effective use is made of songs and rhymes to improve younger pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils control sounds through singing and playing, they pitch notes accurately and sing with a developing clear tone, for example, in a Key Stage 2 hymn practice. Pupils in Year 1 learn to distinguish between pulse and rhythm, when singing 'Three blind mice.'
122. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes excellent. Where teaching is excellent, pupils make very good gains in their knowledge and skills. The teachers' extensive musical knowledge, expertise, and expressive use of voice inspired all pupils to learn. Lessons were well sequenced and tasks reinforced to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress. As a result pupils' attitudes to music are very good. All pupils are keen to join in lessons, listen attentively and work hard. All pupils are very well behaved.
123. Music in assemblies introduces pupils to different musicians and to different types of music, played for different purposes, such as music from Ubi Caritas Taize, a chant from France, to represent a calming feeling at the beginning of the day. Prokofiev's 'Romeo and Juliet' was used very effectively to produce a sense of drama through variations in sound, pitch and volume.
124. The school has plans to build up its own staff's professional expertise and confidence by way of a nationally approved scheme, which clearly defines the skills, knowledge and understanding required to teach music effectively. Pupils do not have music notebooks and no recording of pupils' musical compositions was seen. Pupils perform with others and are developing a satisfactory sense of audience; for example, in an excellent assembly, pupils sang, 'Be still for the presence of the Lord' in different groups, listening and appraising each others' effort carefully and with sensitivity. Music is incorporated into seasonal performances, such as Christmas activities. Resources are adequate, well managed and easily accessible.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Standards broadly match national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are a positive feature and in this respect standards are above those usually seen. The subject makes a very strong contribution to the pupils' personal development.
126. The wide and full curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to enjoy the subject and to develop their skills. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included. Teaching is good overall, with some variation between the different elements of the subject. Expectations of standards are high and are soon evident when a lesson is observed. The pupils arrive in an orderly and smart manner, with the vast majority dressed appropriately. This reflects the standards set by the teachers, both in their dress and their lively approach. A very active Year 1 teacher was noted moving promptly from group to group, ensuring that all were on task, encouraging effort and correct technique. The pupils gain full benefit from the teaching and show great enjoyment of the subject.
127. Standards in swimming are similar to those seen in the majority of schools, although a high proportion of the lower attainers are those who have not been in the school long enough to benefit from the full programme provided in Key Stage 2. Around 25 per cent of the current Year 6 swim well in excess of the basic National Curriculum requirement.
128. Dance is an area for development. The pupils have a limited experience of this and do not experience dances of other cultures. However, Year 4/5 pupils participated successfully in a first dance lesson. This was because the teacher was well prepared and maintained a good pace to the lesson. Her good relationship with the pupils and active example was reflected in their excellent response. They worked very hard trying to move in accordance with the lesson theme and their behaviour was excellent. Teacher and pupils shared in learning.
129. Very good teaching of athletics resulted in Year 6 pupils measuring and assessing their own performances whilst pursuing some vigorous activity. They worked co-operatively in groups, sharing resources and activity very fairly. By the end of the lesson, they could explain their knowledge of correct techniques in aspects of running, jumping and throwing, as a result of the teacher's very good subject knowledge, good organisation and management and high levels of expectation.
130. Teaching of games is never less than satisfactory and often good. Teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and the key skills that they need to acquire and improve. Pupils know that they need to 'watch the ball', for example. The ultimate quality of games teaching is evident from the high rate of success gained by the school in various sporting competitions.
131. The subject benefits from a skilled co-ordinator, who is a fine role model in his teaching and also has a very good grasp of his role. Displays, illustrating

gymnastic sequences and publicising sporting activities help to raise the profile and quality of the subject. The established link with a national initiative appears to be well managed and of benefit to the school. A good range of additional activities is available, both after school and in lessons, with support from external agencies, in tennis, for example. The curriculum includes a residential visit to Shropshire for outdoor adventurous activities. This not only enhances the physical education curriculum but also provides very well for pupils' social development. Year 6 pupils describe the experience as 'brill'!