

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANTHONY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105522

Headteacher: Mr John Gretton

Reporting inspector: Mr Rod Spinks
2783

Dates of inspection: 18 – 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 191225

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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:	Dunkery Road Woodhouse Park Manchester
Postcode:	M22 0NT
Telephone number:	0161 437 3029
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Father John Daly
Date of previous inspection:	25 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2783	Rod Spinks	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
12277 9714	Kingsley Halden David Blanchflower	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
20007	Trevor Neat	Team inspector	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>
20368	Sue MacIntosh	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>History</p>	
15127	Bill Goodall	Team inspector	<p>Art</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>Physical education</p>	
23080	Robert Isaac	Team inspector	<p>Information technology</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Foundation Stage</p>	
22823	Joy Hill	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Design and technology</p> <p>Special educational needs</p>	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Anthony's RC Primary School is situated some ten miles south of Manchester. There are 606 pupils on roll, which is very much larger than average for primary schools nationally. There is a large Nursery with 60 full-time children and 45 part-time. The school admits children into the Reception classes twice each year. There are currently 76 children in three Reception classes. Some pupils have pre-school experience in the toddler group run in the school before they enter the Nursery. The early assessment of children on entry to the school shows that the full ability range is present, and overall they are now of average ability. However, data indicates that older children were of below average ability overall on entry to the school. The majority of pupils come from the local area where there is mainly public housing. Pupils are from the full range of backgrounds but on average more pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are 45 pupils on the register of pupils with special educational needs and a statement of need is held for three pupils, both of which are well below the national average. There are fewer than average pupils from minority ethnic groups or for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals at 43 percent is well above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with some significant strengths but some weaknesses. The school has very good strong links with its Catholic community. Children have a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are well above those of similar schools but progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is below the national average. Teaching is satisfactory overall with about half good or better. Teachers generally have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach, however, there are weaknesses in the effectiveness of teachers' marking and their assessment of pupils' work to identify what pupils need to learn next to improve. The overall management of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher provides the school with direction and has overseen significant improvements in provision. Management is very good with regard to the caring support of pupils and the enrichment of their learning experiences outside the National Curriculum. There are weaknesses in ensuring that all pupils have a balanced programme of work and that the full requirements of all of the National Curriculum subjects are met. The school has raised significant funds over recent years and these have been used wisely to provide good resources for teaching and learning. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards attained by pupils in comparison with similar schools.
- The care and welfare of pupils, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Behaviour and relationships are very good within the positive caring ethos.
- The provision of resources for teaching and learning and in particular the recently acquired information and communication technology equipment.
- The provision for pupils under six.
- The accommodation provides a clean and stimulating learning environment.
- The relationships with and the positive support of parents and the community.
- The provision of a wide range of opportunities for learning beyond the normal school curriculum.

What could be improved

- The effectiveness of monitoring standards, the quality of teaching and what is taught.
- The balance of time allocated to the subjects of the curriculum to meet statutory National Curriculum requirements especially in geography and music.
- The quality of marking and assessment to identify what pupils know and what they need to do to improve.

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 November 1996. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2, are higher. Results in the national assessments for eleven year olds have improved at a similar rate to that found nationally. Standards have generally improved. Although musical performances are of a high standard, standards in National Curriculum music have fallen because of limited curriculum time. The quality of teaching has improved with more very good and outstanding teaching seen in this inspection. Curriculum planning and assessment processes remain underdeveloped.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	C	D	B
mathematics	C	D	D	A
science	D	D	D	B

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

By the age of five, pupils have made sound progress, and are attaining standards, which are generally close to average. By the age of seven, pupils continue to make progress to attain standards close to those found nationally. In the year 2000 tests and assessments for seven year olds, pupils attained standards in reading and mathematics which were close to the national average, whilst standards in writing were above average. Standards in science were below the average. When compared with schools having a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average.

In the year 2000 national tests and assessments for eleven year olds, pupils attained results in English, mathematics and science, which were below the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards in English and science were above average and standards in mathematics were well above the average. Standards have been improving over the last four years at a rate similar to the national trend.

From a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work over the last year, direct observations of their work in lessons, hearing children read and discussing their work with them, inspectors judge that overall pupils are currently attaining standards similar to those expected nationally in most subjects. They attain higher standards in reading than normally found. Higher-attaining pupils in particular are beginning to attain the higher levels in the national assessments of which they are capable. Both boys and girls are making satisfactory progress to achieve these standards. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress through the effective support they receive. Standards at Key Stage 2 over the last three years show some variation, mainly due to changes in the pupil population. The school has set appropriate overall targets for improving pupils' attainment based upon a range of assessment information. The standards of work seen in information and communication technology were below those expected but are beginning to show improvement due to the recently improved facilities. Standards are below those expected in geography and some elements of the music curriculum by the age of eleven. In all other subjects standards are more typical of those expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils come to school to work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good. Pupils' personal development is good but they are not given enough opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Slightly below national averages but unauthorised absence is also below the national figure.

Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and as they move around the school. They play well together at playtime and lunchtime. Relationships are very good and in particular adults present good role models for pupils. Pupils are able to take responsibility when given the opportunity. Most pupils attend school regularly and there is minimal unauthorised absence. Authorised absence is higher than average as a result of some parents taking their annual holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 all, 87 full or part lessons were observed by inspectors during the inspection. 98 percent of lessons seen were judged to be satisfactory or better with 32 percent judged good and a further 20 percent judged very good and outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons to enable pupils to make progress. Where teaching is very good, teachers provide stimulating activities to extend pupils' learning and lessons are delivered at a very brisk pace. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers are effectively delivering the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory across the school. The teaching of science is mostly good and pupils are consistently encouraged to develop their investigative skills. The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory and the effective use of the new resources is resulting in improved progress and higher standards. Teachers are not yet using these resources fully to support learning in the other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers do not always plan sufficiently to extend higher-attaining pupils or to meet the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties and so they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. The key weakness observed in the teaching was the insufficient use of assessment information to guide what teachers plan for pupils to learn next. The quality of teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. The curriculum is broad but time allocations for subjects are unbalanced which results in insufficient depth of learning in some foundation subjects of the National Curriculum particularly in geography, music and physical education. The curriculum is significantly enhanced through visits, visitors and links with Italy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. The procedures for identifying pupils' specific learning difficulties are not well developed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Moral and social development are good. Spiritual development is very good and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Most aspects of safety and welfare are very good but the school's systems for recording and using assessment information to set challenging targets for each pupil's learning are underdeveloped.

The curriculum provided for pupils is broad and covers all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. However, the large amount of time allocated to English and

mathematics, which also varies from year to year, is limiting the time available for the other subjects of the curriculum and, as a result, pupils have an unbalanced range of experiences. Pupils in the juniors do not have a timetabled music lesson and they only have one 30-minute physical education lesson each week. Pupils do have swimming lessons in Years 3 and 4 which increases the time for physical education. Overall, teachers' planning is satisfactory but their lesson planning does not always meet the needs of higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' spiritual development is very good with some good assemblies and there are many opportunities for further development in the subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' social and moral development are good. Cultural development is good with some very good work on European cultures through the school's links with a school in Italy. More could be done to prepare pupils for the multi-cultural society in which they live.

Pupils are well cared for and safe in the school. The school works closely with parents and they are provided with clear information in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report. They receive appropriate annual reports on the progress that their children are making but teachers make insufficient use of assessment information to raise pupils' attainment or to enable them to know how well they are doing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has provided clear leadership to ensure the school delivers its mission statement and is an integral part of the local Catholic community. Senior managers and subject co-ordinators have insufficient impact on the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They are fully involved in the work of the school. They are aware of the strengths of the school. They are not yet fully applying the principles of best value.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Good assessment information is collected but it is not used sufficiently to evaluate how well the school is doing.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. All funds are used appropriately to support teaching and learning with good levels of staffing and the provision of resources.

The day-to-day administration of the school is good. The headteacher works closely with the governors to ensure the effective management of the school. They have ensured that the school meets its stated aims and is an integral part of its local community. There are very strong links with the church and the local Catholic community. The monitoring of the work of the school by key stage and subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped, particularly the balance and consistency of what is taught. There are sufficient well-qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the school curriculum. Teaching and non-teaching staff are generally well deployed. The accommodation is very good and is well maintained to provide a clean and welcoming learning environment. The levels of resources are good and the recently improved

buildings and ICT resources reflect the hard work of the school in raising funds and utilising them most effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils like school and are expected to work hard.• Pupils make good progress and attain good standards.• Behaviour is good.• The school is well led and managed.• The spiritual values the school promotes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The work pupils get to do at home.• The information parents receive about how their child is getting on.• The identification and support for pupils with special educational needs.

Inspectors agree with parents that pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard. They behave well and their personal development, particularly their spiritual development, is very good. The school is effectively managed and has significantly improved the accommodation and levels of resources in recent years. Inspectors judge that homework is used effectively most of the time but it is not always set consistently throughout the school. There are some shortcomings in the identification and support for pupils with special educational needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The inspection was carried out in June 2001 just after the pupils had taken the tests and assessment for this year. As a result, the data used for comparative purposes refers to the year 2000 results. Inspectors based their judgements on an analysis of test and assessment results, direct observations of pupils in lessons, hearing pupils read and a detailed scrutiny of pupils' present and past work. Where other evidence was limited, discussions were held with pupils to establish what they knew and could do.
2. The early assessment of children on entry to the Reception class indicates that children's attainment on entry covers the full range but overall attainment is average. Many have had access to pre-school experiences in the Nursery and show good social awareness. The school admits children into the Reception classes at the start of the autumn and spring terms.
3. By the end of their Reception Year current children are attaining standards which are broadly average in all areas of learning. However, evidence for previous years indicates that attainment covered the full ability range but the proportion of lower-attaining children was greater than in the current year group.
4. By the age of seven, current pupils are on course to attain standards, which are at least in line with the year 2000 standards. In the year 2000 tests and assessments for seven year olds, overall results in reading and mathematics were close to the average and results in writing were above average. The proportions of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was above the national average in reading and below the national average in writing but the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 was below average in reading but well above average in writing. In mathematics the proportion attaining the expected Level 2 was well below average and the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 was close to the average. In science the proportions attaining the expected Level 2 and higher Level 3 were below the national average.
5. Against national benchmarks for seven year olds standards in reading and mathematics were close to the national averages and standards in writing were above average. In comparison with similar schools using national benchmark information standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the average. The results indicate that these pupils were making at least satisfactory progress.
6. From a review of pupils' current work they are attaining standards which are at least similar those attained last year with indications that the attainment of higher-attaining pupils is above the standard attained last year in the national tests and assessments.
7. By the age of eleven, pupils are attaining standards which are close to the national average. In the year 2000 tests and assessments for eleven year olds, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was close to the national average for English, mathematics and science. The percentage attaining the higher Level 5 was well below

average for English and below average for mathematics and science. Using national benchmark information, standards overall were below the national average for English mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4 was well above the average for English mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above average for mathematics and close to the average for English and science. Over the last four years standards have been rising at a similar rate to standards nationally. Generally girls attain slightly higher standards than boys do nationally and the school's results show a similar pattern.

8. When compared with similar schools for progress in test results from age seven to eleven, the school's performance in English was well below average and in mathematics and science was below average.
9. From a scrutiny of pupils' work and their work in lessons inspectors judge that current pupils are attaining standards in English, mathematics and science at least similar to those attained last year and higher-attaining pupils are doing particularly well in English.
10. Pupils with identified special educational needs make satisfactory and sometimes good progress through effective in-class support. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language make appropriate progress and attain standards which are similar to their peers.
11. The school sets realistic and challenging targets for pupils' test results at age eleven based upon a range of assessment information. The school does not always achieve the targets set.
12. Pupils are attaining standards below those expected in information and communication technology in both key stages. Standards are beginning to rise as a result of the improved resources and teaching in the recently installed computer room. For example, pupils in Year 2 are able to produce simple pictures using drawing software and are beginning to word-process some of their work. Pupils in Year 5 can program a turtle to move in a pre-determined shape on the screen. They also have access to the Internet and are beginning to gather information in support of their learning in the other subjects of the curriculum. This aspect of information and communication technology work is at an early stage of development and is not yet contributing to improved standards.
13. Standards in art and design, design and technology and history are similar to those typically found. In geography and physical education, standards are lower than normally found as there is limited coverage of the national programmes for these subjects. In music, although standards of performance are high, overall standards in all aspects of the National Curriculum music programme are below average.
14. Standards in literacy and numeracy are average by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils have opportunities to use and extend their skills across the curriculum. The introduction of opportunities for extended writing are improving writing standards.

15. Overall, pupils are achieving appropriately. Current juniors entered the school with lower levels of attainment than average and have made satisfactory progress in most subjects.
16. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. When they are supported in class, and receive work which motivates and appeals to their intellectual abilities they make good progress. However, when they receive work that does not stimulate or interest them, they make more limited progress. These pupils make better progress when they are set tasks which challenge their abilities, for example, in a small group literacy session in Year 5, where the support assistant, under the guidance of the teacher, encouraged the group to think hard about reading multi-syllabic words, breaking the word down into separate beats, looking closely at the prefix and finally the use of the word in a sentence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The evidence from the inspection of St Anthony's school shows that the pupils' attitudes to school are very good and, as such, are one of the strengths of the school. Three factors contribute to these attitudes. First, the strong commitment and loyalty to the school by parents ensures that pupils have positive attitudes. Secondly, the ethos and social environment provided by the school provide an extension of the home background and, finally, the pupils themselves from the Nursery to the end of Key Stage 2 show genuine keenness to learn. The introduction to school and education given to pupils in the Foundation Stage, being exceptionally good, also contributes effectively to the formation of those attitudes to school which were evident. Since the last inspection reported that attitudes were good, it can be concluded that this is an area where consistency has been maintained and some improvement achieved.
18. Pupils settle quickly in the classroom, ready for registration and the start of lessons. In whole-class sessions when, for example, they are engaged in mental exercises or recalling previous lessons by way of introduction to the new session, they show alertness and a high degree of accuracy in their answers. Even when teachers' introductions and input were lengthy, pupils' concentration and interest remained intact. Pupils often volunteered to show their work to inspectors and to explain the work they did.
19. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work. They try hard in lessons even when tasks are difficult or when they do not fully understand what is expected of them.
20. Behaviour in the school is also very good which supports learning. The pupils bring a sense of discipline and respect for one another to the school. No cases of bad behaviour requiring sanctions were observed during the inspection. On the large playground where bad behaviour could easily escape the attention of the supervisors, rough or aggressive behaviour was only rarely noticed. Although teachers kept control over behaviour, the quality of behaviour was also due to pupils' awareness of the value of good behaviour to learning and relationships. Consequently, pupils mix well, show courtesy and good manners and subscribe generally to the high standards and values set by the school. Their response and welcome to the presence of inspectors in their

school were impressive.

21. Personal development is generally good and so are personal relationships. In the early years, the teachers and pupils develop personal relationships of high quality. The strong and distinctive Christian ethos which is sustained throughout the school contributes to the high quality of behaviour, relationships and sense of values which are normal to the day-to-day life of the school. Opportunities for pupils to develop personal responsibility within their learning are limited. However, pupils take responsibility for running the programme led by the road safety officer in the school. More opportunities of this nature would enhance their personal development further.
22. Attendance at the school is satisfactory. The system operated in the school requires that attendance after 10.00 am should be recorded as absence but this is not always observed. A book recording lateness is kept by class teachers but some cases of lateness escape attention in this system. The attendance rate at the school is 94 percent. The incidence of authorised absence is higher than normal because of withdrawal of pupils from classes during term-time for family holidays. This withdrawal sometimes exceeds the statutory period.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Pupils are taught in their age group classes by their class teacher for most subjects. A specialist teacher teaches each class for information and communication technology in the newly opened information and communication technology room.
24. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory with just over half of that seen being good or better. Pupils respond well to their teaching and make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages to attain broadly average standards by the age of eleven in English, mathematics and science.
25. During the inspection, 87 whole or part lessons were observed. All classes were observed for their literacy and numeracy lessons. The teaching observed was at least satisfactory in 98 percent of lessons; 52 percent of teaching was judged to be good or better with 20 percent judged to be very good or outstanding. Only two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.
26. The teaching observed of children aged under five was always good and often very good. Teachers have a good understanding of how children in this age group learn and plan appropriate experiences to enable them to make good progress. There are always good opportunities for children to develop their language skills and social development is very good. Children are given many opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills.
27. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. In total, 21 lessons were observed of which one was outstanding, five very good, five good and ten satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They plan lessons effectively and use a range of different approaches to deliver brisk and lively lessons which motivate pupils to work hard and make progress. They organise their classrooms well and manage pupils very well so that behaviour is always at least good.

For example, in a science lesson in Year 2, pupils, in response to a well planned and organised lesson, became very interested and eager to investigate whether a sunflower needed light to grow. Where teaching has weaknesses, it is because teachers do not expect enough of their pupils and the pace of lessons is slower than it should be.

28. The teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. In total 52 lessons were seen of which one was outstanding, five very good, 15 good and 29 satisfactory. Two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan lessons that generally challenge pupils to achieve. Pupils consequently concentrate and work hard and briskly to complete the tasks they are set so ensuring that they make progress. Where teaching is very good and outstanding, teachers enthuse and motivate their pupils to achieve very high standards. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, the teacher's good planning and preparation of materials enabled pupils to identify common punctuation marks such as commas and to learn to use them properly. Where teaching is weaker, teachers make limited use of their assessments to guide what they plan for pupils to learn next. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are too low.
29. Teachers in all years plan reasonably effectively and mark pupils' work regularly. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent. Some teachers clearly identify what pupils know and can do and then set clear targets for further development whilst others use effective praise but do not indicate what pupils need to do to improve. Few teachers use the information they gain from marking pupils' work to plan what they should teach next.
30. The teaching of English in the infants is satisfactory and the teaching of mathematics and science is good. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory in the juniors.
31. The teaching of literacy is good overall and some teachers make very good links between the literacy programme and the other subjects of the curriculum. They frequently identify the strategies being used in literacy lessons and apply them in other subjects. For example, in a Year 6 class, extended writing activities were linked well to learning about World War 2 in history with pupils writing about what it was like to be an evacuee. Teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas and pupils listen and learn from their peers and teachers in informal and formal situations. The strong focus on literacy throughout the school has had an impact on raising the standards pupils attain by the end of Year 6.
32. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. Teachers use pupils' numeracy skills to enhance their learning in other subjects, such as when weighing out ingredients in design and technology or presenting data collected in their science lessons as bar charts and line graphs.
33. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall with some aspects that are good. Pupils identified as having special educational needs have clear targets set by support teachers to improve their work. The majority of targets focus on literacy and numeracy and these are shared with class teachers appropriately. However, class teachers are not rigorous in their planning for special educational needs, which often does not relate pupils' individual learning targets to the subject that is being taught. This omission impedes pupils' learning, as teachers do not

focus on what pupils understand, can do well or find difficulty within a particular subject. The identification of which pupils have special educational needs is not sufficiently clear and this leads to confusion amongst class teachers. When pupils with special educational needs are taught in small group activities, and teachers guide support assistants appropriately within the classroom, pupils' learning improves. The teaching of literacy and numeracy also enhances these pupils' learning as pupils are often taught in small ability related groups and tasks are more closely matched to what pupils can do, know and understand and take more account of pupils' individual learning targets. The use of visiting teachers is very effective as they set clear learning goals and challenge pupils intellectually to achieve higher standards as in a literacy session in Year 6, where the teacher used very effective questioning encouraging pupils to think and challenge each other's opinions.

34. In the subjects of the curriculum other than English, mathematics and science it was not possible to observe lessons in every class, but a representative sample for most subjects in all age groups was seen. Religious education was the subject of a separate inspection with a separate inspection report. The quality of teaching in these subjects of the National Curriculum was satisfactory. There was a balance of strengths and weaknesses in most lessons. The key weakness inspectors observed was that the work presented to pupils was not always well matched to their needs. This allowed the pace of learning to slow down so reducing further the progress pupils make which has been limited by the curriculum time available for some subjects.

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

35. The school provides a broad range of learning experiences to infant and junior pupils. However, the statutory requirements to teach the programmes of work set out in the National Curriculum are not met fully. Pupils do not have all the teaching they should in music and geography to cover the full National Curriculum programme. Teachers are not yet using the new information and communication technology equipment to support learning in the other subjects of the curriculum.
36. Pupils with special educational needs have access to all subjects and activities and take a full part in school life. However, the school has not yet fully established the role of inclusion to its full extent, in that there is still an over-emphasis on withdrawal small group work for these pupils, rather than including all pupils within an activity. Occasionally, the practical tasks asked of pupils with special educational needs are below their capability or do not meet the objectives set in the lesson.
37. The school rightly places great emphasis on raising standards in English and mathematics, but the amount of time given to teaching different subjects is not appropriately balanced. Some classes have much more teaching of some parts of the curriculum than others. For example, infant pupils may have as much as nine hours of English or as little as six hours and 30 minutes. The time spent by junior pupils in science lessons varies from one hour to two hours and 40 minutes. Also, most pupils get only 30 minutes of physical education a week, and juniors do not have National Curriculum music timetabled each week.
38. The national planning guidance given by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has

been used as the basis for ensuring that new learning is sequenced effectively and based appropriately on what has already been taught. The school has adapted this guidance for some subjects, but is aware of current weaknesses in tailoring it to the needs of all pupils.

39. The medium and short-term planning of the curriculum is not effective in ensuring that the learning needs of different groups and individuals are catered for. Teachers within the same year group produce long-term plans together, but no agreement has been made as to how short-term planning will be done. This leads to inconsistent practice and variation in its quality. For example, some teachers use the form of weekly planning recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy and others do not. This often results in higher-attaining pupils unnecessarily doing the same work as those of average attainment. Senior managers do not check well enough that teachers' planning is effective. Consequently they are not aware that the progress of higher and lower-attaining pupils is sometimes unsatisfactory.
40. Provision for Foundation Stage children is a strength of the school. The curriculum is well planned and delivered to ensure full coverage of the Early Years curriculum. By the end of their Reception year, children are attaining average standards in all of the national early learning goals.
41. The school has established the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is an effective strategy for teaching literacy skills. The strategy for teaching numeracy skills at this time does not meet the needs of all pupils. Although the school uses a core scheme, the use of a variety of commercial materials results in classes having different experiences and pupils do not enjoy equal opportunities to make progress.
42. The very rich and varied provision for learning outside lessons enhances pupils' curricular experiences very well and supports their personal development greatly; for example, visits from theatre groups, musicians, artists and poets; visits to the planetarium for Year 5 and 6 pupils; and taking part in Junior Science Week. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to the standards that pupils attain although there is some inconsistency in its use to support learning across the school.
43. Satisfactory arrangements are made to educate pupils about personal, social, health and citizenship matters. The social and personal aspects of this work are the strongest, due in part to the implementation of the 'Here I Am' programme for Catholic schools. Suitable measures are in place to provide pupils with sex and drugs education. The teaching of citizenship is not yet properly structured throughout the school.
44. The school's many, very effective links with its community and beyond, make a major contribution to pupils' personal and academic development. The most significant of these is the very close relationship the school enjoys with St Anthony's church, which gives a huge boost to pupils' spiritual development. The arrangements made with a number of Italian schools over the last few years, and the exchange visits that have been carried out, are of great importance too. The benefits of the Italian connection stretch across many areas, but include academic gains in geography and in learning Italian - now a timetabled subject for older pupils. The school's links with the wider world through the Internet are developing now with the recent completion of the computer network.
45. Pupils also benefit from the work St Anthony's does with its partner schools especially those supported through the Education Action Zone. The activities undertaken with

the local cluster of Catholic primary schools are particularly well developed. There are good links with the local Catholic high school. The school also gains greatly from the very good contribution it makes to the initial training of teachers. It provides places every year for a good number of students who wish to become teachers or nursery nurses to gain experience.

46. The provision made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school's work. Spiritual awareness is fostered very well through acts of collective worship, assemblies and regular opportunities for reflection throughout the day. Frequently, families are invited to join assemblies, reinforcing the great sense of community that the school engenders in many of its activities. This was the case in an assembly about journeys, led by Nursery children during the inspection. The high expectations of members of staff and their ability to act as very good role models for children, backed up by very effective systems for promoting good behaviour, result in the very effective promotion of pupils' social and moral development. There are many, very good opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultural heritage, particularly in the arts. However, the school could do more, through its curriculum, its links with the wider community and the range of its learning resources to raise pupils' awareness and appreciation of the multi-cultural society in which they live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. On the whole, the school offers a high quality of care through the environment it sustains, the moral standards it sets and the values it inculcates in pupils through the Christian education it upholds. All staff subscribe to these standards and their positive impact on pupils and their learning is both apparent and real. In answering the question "What does the school do well?" inspectors found conclusive evidence that the provision for the care and the welfare of pupils is given high priority. The school allocates a significant part of its staffing budget for Early Years and classroom support staff. There are six nursery nurses and 12 classroom assistants. Provision for the education of children under five years is of high quality. There are a few pupils from ethnic minorities in this very large school and they are fully integrated.
48. The procedures for monitoring good behaviour are very good, as are child protection procedures. Health and safety provision is good. For child protection, as well as health and safety, statutory and local education authority standards are upheld. Fire drills are held regularly but evacuation times are not recorded as should be the case. First aid provision is satisfactory and the pupils who have school meals are generally satisfied with the menus and catering.
49. The school has worked hard at improving the rate of attendance and its procedures in this respect are good. The marginal increase of two percent since the last inspection does not reflect the efforts and initiatives taken to encourage better attendance. These include awarding prizes, stickers and continual reminders to parents and children of the link between good attendance and good educational achievement. The education welfare officer is highly supportive of the school's procedures for monitoring attendance. The school is still committed to the target of 95 percent attendance.
50. The procedures implemented by the school for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, for monitoring and supporting their academic progress and for guiding

curricular planning are unsatisfactory overall. There is provision for assessment co-ordination but this is not consistent. There is a marking policy but this is not being used consistently. The information from marking is not being used by teachers to plan what pupils learn next.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The partnership between St Anthony's school and the parents of its pupils is very good. School and family work together to provide an appropriate context for children's education. The partnership is rooted in the Catholic tradition by which the family is recognised as an extension of the church and through which the values and moral codes of the church are communicated and cultivated. Parents recognise their responsibility to help their children to make the best use of their education and the school's task is facilitated by their influence. This contributes to the high quality of behaviour in school as well as to the mutual respect and good interpersonal relationships that are evident. School and parents, therefore, co-operate towards the education of all pupils. Parents are very positive about the school and this was confirmed both by the pre-inspection parents' meeting and conversations with parents in the school grounds. For example, a majority of parents expressed satisfaction with the teaching, the leadership and management, access to staff and the expectations teachers have of pupils.
52. The effectiveness of links with parents is very good. Consequently the impact of parental involvement in the school is excellent. These results are achieved through, for instance, the contribution to education through the loyalty of the parents' group and the in-school support of parents from week-to-week. Tangible evidence of parental support is to be seen in the new school building housing the school office and the information and communication technology wing for which parents voluntarily raised about £120,000.
53. The quality of information sent to parents varies and, on the whole, it is satisfactory. This information is communicated through the usual media - letters, the annual report by the governing body, the school's prospectus and the annual school reports to each pupil's parents. Detailed information about provision for special educational needs is absent from the governing body's annual report. The annual academic report for each child is detailed in respect of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but unnecessarily compressed, often to one-line comments, for other subjects. Written comments are not always legible.
54. Parents of children with special educational needs are notified appropriately of their children's progress and are encouraged to help them with homework. The majority of parents who replied to the parents' questionnaire were pleased with the help and support the school offers their children, but would like more information on the progress their children make.
55. The school gives valuable help to parents about secondary school arrangements at local high schools. In summary, the partnership between the school and parents, being very good in most aspects, is a major strength which enriches pupils' education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Overall, management of the school is satisfactory. The day-to-day administration is good and the recent building works have been well managed. The raising of significant funds over the last few years has been an essential and impressive part of the improvements. The school has become a central part of its Catholic community. The headteacher has worked very hard and very effectively to ensure that the school is meeting the aims identified in the school's Catholic mission statement. He has encouraged the development of a wide range of extra-curricular experiences for pupils. The headteacher, along with the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, has monitored the quality of teaching in the school. This has led to discussions and training which have led to some improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
57. He provides the school with direction but there is insufficient focus on the monitoring of the curriculum. The senior managers and those with subject leadership responsibility do not have sufficiently clear roles for monitoring the work of the school in order to raise standards further. They do not monitor teachers' planning or the balance of the curriculum enough. This has resulted in pupils having different learning experiences in different classes.
58. Management of special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator for special educational needs oversees provision in this aspect but is not actively involved with lesson planning or teaching of special educational needs. This is a weakness. The co-ordinator works hard to attract extra provision and funding to the school and this has enabled pupils on the register of special educational needs to receive additional help. However, the approach to special educational needs breaks down at times, where the quality of provision offered is not of a consistent quality and where there is not enough liaison between additional teaching staff, class teachers and the co-ordinator. There is limited understanding of which pupils have or do not have special educational needs, as opposed to being lower-attaining pupils; and to the approach to new legislation, such as inclusion and the soon-to-be-adopted national code of practice.
59. There is a good atmosphere in the school that enables all pupils to learn in a positive and caring school society. Many teachers have management roles in addition to class teaching, including co-ordinators for key stages and subjects. However, in practice their work in these roles is insufficiently focused and they are having insufficient impact on the quality of the curriculum and raising standards. A programme for monitoring teaching by the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators has been established. Managers are beginning to monitor pupils' work to ensure high quality learning experiences for pupils in all subjects.
60. The school has a detailed development plan based upon an analysis of the impact of earlier plans and an analysis of the performance of the school in the national assessments. This plan identifies some appropriate areas for the future development of the school. The plan does not sufficiently address the monitoring of the work of the school. The plan has clear costs identified. The planned programme meets the aim of continuing to improve the general quality of teaching and learning.
61. The school is committed to continued development and improvement as shown by the improved quality of teaching. Those with management responsibility have yet to

become fully involved in monitoring the work of the school and so further improve the standards pupils attain.

62. The governing body fully supports the school and carries out most of its responsibilities well. However, they have not ensured that statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. They share a common purpose with the staff and the local community, particularly in ensuring the personal and spiritual development of pupils. They do have a clear understanding of the general strengths and weaknesses of the school and recognise the high standards of behaviour and the positive contribution the school makes to the local community.
63. The school managers collect a range of data on the performance of the school. This includes national test and assessment data and comparison of its work with similar schools. This performance information is used to measure the effectiveness of the school but not sufficiently to inform its future development. For example, managers have identified the need to raise the attainment of higher-attaining pupils. The key issues identified in the previous inspection report have been addressed. However, some have been addressed only recently, such as the adoption of the QCA schemes of work for foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. The use of assessment information to inform and guide teachers' planning remains under-developed.
64. The school has established effective systems for the induction of new staff. They have access to training to meet their personal needs as well as areas identified within the school's development plan. This procedure extends to the non-teaching staff in the school. The school is an effective partner in the initial training of teachers.
65. The governors have established a policy and procedures for the pay and performance management of staff. They set performance targets for the headteacher.
66. The school has efficient systems for financial control and administration. The school effectively uses information and communication technology to support its financial administration and to enable detailed financial information to be provided to managers and governors. The most recent auditors' report found overall financial management to be effective. The recent management of a major building project reflects this good financial management. Governors set the budget against the school's development plan and then monitor regularly and effectively to ensure that spending targets are met.
67. The school is not yet effectively applying all the principles of best value. It compares its performance with those of other schools; targets spending to meet identified priorities in the development plan and identifies a range of additional educational activities which enhance pupils' learning. However, it does not yet consult widely on future developments.
68. There are adequate, well-qualified and experienced staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to meet the demands of teaching the curriculum and supporting pupils. Teachers are committed to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. Support staff make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

69. The school is housed in very clean, well-maintained buildings, which provide a stimulating and welcoming learning environment with the many well-presented displays of pupils' work. The classrooms are of a good size. There are two halls available for whole-school meetings as well as indoor physical education. The newly established computer room is a very good resource that enables whole classes to access the equipment at the same time. However, the computer room has not been in full operation for very long and so the full impact of these resources could not be assessed at the time of this inspection. There is ample space available for Foundation Stage children both indoors and outside, which gives them opportunities to work with large equipment to develop a range of skills and knowledge. The school has access to extensive hard playground areas and good playing field areas, enhanced by good leisure areas for pupils to use at playtime and lunchtime.
70. The school makes very effective use of the financial resources available to it. The school raises significant funds from outside sources to augment its basic income. There are good levels of high quality resources for most subjects of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to continue the development of the school and to raise standards still further governors and managers should:
- (1) Improve the effectiveness of senior managers and subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards, the quality of teaching and what is taught by:
 - further developing the programme for monitoring the quality of teaching in all subjects;
 - monitoring the work pupils do to ensure that they make sufficient progress especially in information and communication technology, geography and music;
 - further developing the procedures for monitoring teachers' planning to ensure the needs of all pupils are met.
 - (2) Ensure that the curriculum programme for all classes enables all subjects of the National Curriculum to receive an appropriate allocation of time for the delivery of their programmes of study.
 - (3) Improve the quality of marking and assessment to identify what pupils know and what they need to do to improve.

In addition, the governors may wish to include the following minor issue within their action plan:

- Improve existing systems for the identification of pupils with special educational needs and what they need to do to improve so that support can be targeted more effectively.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	87
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	18	32	45	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	72	534
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	219

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	44

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	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	37	22	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	31	30
	Girls	21	19	18
	Total	54	50	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	85 (85)	81 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	31	32
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	52	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (84)	83 (89)	88 (73)
	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	37	40	77

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	31	35
	Girls	30	28	34
	Total	57	59	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (74)	77 (70)	90 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	32	36
	Girls	30	29	34
	Total	57	61	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (76)	79 (76)	91 (83)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (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	1
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	532
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	303

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	36

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	1,341,300
Total expenditure	1,429,300
Expenditure per pupil	2,410
Balance brought forward from previous year	143,000
Balance carried forward to next year	55,000

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	606
Number of questionnaires returned	204

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65.0	32.0	2.0	0	1.0
My child is making good progress in school.	65.0	30.0	3.0	1.0	1.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63.0	33.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46.0	40.0	10.0	4.0	0
The teaching is good.	74.0	23.0	1.0	0	1.0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46.0	39.0	12.0	2.0	1.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76.0	21.0	3.0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80.0	17.0	0	0	2.0
The school works closely with parents.	62.0	31.0	4.0	0	2.0
The school is well led and managed.	79.0	19.0	1.0	0	1.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69.0	26.0	2.0	0	2.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51.0	34.0	5.0	1.0	8.0

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

72. Children start school either in the September or the January of the year of their third birthday. Entry to the Nursery is part-time at first. They then start in Reception in the September or January closest to their fifth birthday. Currently 60 children attend the Nursery full-time and 45 part-time. There are 76 children in the three Reception classes. The number of staff and other adult helpers is sufficient to support children effectively, particularly those with special educational needs. As a result, many children, including those with special educational needs, learn rapidly and make very good progress. The curriculum is broad and rich and teachers organise and manage activities well.
73. The provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good and is a strength of the school. The school has improved provision since the last inspection. Parents are appreciative of the good start given to their children. Attainment on entry to the Nursery for most children, particularly in relation to their personal, communication and language development, is below the average for their age. A significant minority has speech and language difficulties. Children receive very good teaching and most catch up in all the learning areas to reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception year. Most children achieve the early learning goals set nationally for personal, social and emotional, physical and creative development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development as well as in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. Many children enter the Nursery with immature social and personal skills. By the time they leave the Reception classes most attain the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching and support that children receive. They feel secure, respond well and quickly settle into the welcoming atmosphere of the Nursery and Reception classes. Each morning, children have a good start to the day because parents and carers are made welcome in class before learning starts. Children happily join in all activities with staff giving time and encouragement to the less confident to explore new situations. Adults organise resources carefully and make sure they are easily accessible. This helps children to make independent choices. They concentrate for sustained periods, show interest in what they are doing and try hard to do their best. Children help each other to read independently or to use *talking books* on the computers.
75. Adults provide good role models for children, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect, such as by encouraging children to say 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. This leads to trusting relationships and children co-operate well with each other in class and small group activities. Adults help the children to understand one another's point of view and to be tolerant. They are developing an awareness of the feelings of others. The school includes all children fully, including those with special educational needs. Their behaviour is very good. They look after equipment carefully, take turns and share fairly. Teachers give older children

increasing responsibilities. They show independence in dressing and personal hygiene, offering to help each other dress after physical education. Most children eat their lunches quietly, using cutlery carefully.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Many children start in Nursery with levels assessed as below those expected for their age in language and literacy. Good teaching enables them to make good progress in the basic skills of reading and writing. Fewer children than typically found are on course to achieve average standards by the end of the Nursery year. This is mainly because a significant minority starts with under-developed skills in spoken language at the age of three. Teachers have identified this and so provide additional opportunities for children to develop their language skills. They show children that they value their efforts in communicating. They ask children to repeat new words and develop their talking in sentences well. Children take home single words printed on card to learn. This helps them to progress and to talk about what they know, understand and can do in other areas such as in their ideas about the world. They also gain a better understanding of the need to look after their teeth and the advantages of a healthy diet from entertaining visits by dental health educators.
77. Children enjoy listening to stories and looking at the pictures. Teachers promote positive attitudes to reading effectively by lively readings. They successfully encourage children to join in reading familiar parts and guess what will happen next. Children respond enthusiastically and understand that print and pictures carry meaning and goes from right to left. They handle books carefully. Children take books home and this develops reading skills satisfactorily.
78. Children link sounds and initial letters successfully, and the high attainers in Reception are able to write not just simple words but compound sentences. They understand what phonemes are, can identify them in monosyllabic words, and know that writing is used for different purposes, for example, when writing letters to friends in other classes. They write confidently, using the supplies of paper, boards, pens and pencils, readily available for them. Teachers develop children's handwriting through a carefully structured approach.

Mathematical development

79. Children make good progress in developing mathematical skills usually from a low starting point. Due to their lower-than-average attainment on entry, most children do not achieve the nationally expected standards for their age by the end of their Nursery year. Most, however, go on to attain average levels by the end of Reception. By then, most can count to 50 and a few to 100, matching and ordering objects with increasing accuracy. They receive good teaching with a well planned, stimulating range of activities and resources to develop their skills. Teachers ask questions skilfully. They help children to discover that uncovering the underlying pattern can reveal the missing number from a string of numbers.
80. Teachers build very effectively on children's knowledge and provide good opportunities to discover new knowledge through practical experience. They help children recognise and create simple repeating patterns and state what will come next,

by assembling coloured blocks or by printing repeating patterns using circles, triangles or leaves. Younger children find it difficult to explain their thinking using correct mathematical terms. A few identify the patterns on home-made parcels easily, and use mathematical language such as *heavier* and *lighter*, to weigh objects on the weighing scales. They compare quantities appropriately, such as *bigger* and *smaller*, *full* and *empty*. Staff promote numeracy well throughout the day, for example, by asking questions such as *how many more?* and *how many less?* when using resources.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Many children enter Nursery with a very basic general knowledge. Teachers build on this knowledge effectively by planning a very good range of learning experiences. For instance, to develop children's language in describing what they touched adults provided very good quality support as they provide different tactile experiences. Small groups of children moved round the different activities. They described objects such as cotton wool, paper, and metal, using a good range of words. Teachers focus on assessing thoroughly and they record individual children's progress in detail. A consistent team approach to asking effective questions means children make good progress in their language development. It also highlights when children's language is underdeveloped for their age and enables teachers to take account of that in what they then teach.
82. Children confidently use equipment such as a computer to support their learning. They recognise letters on a keyboard and use the mouse to select suitable clothes to dress a teddy on the computer's screen. They independently play audio-tapes in listening centres. All children select carefully from a range of resources to construct, build and join materials together.

Physical development

83. Children make good progress in their physical development. They achieve the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. Teachers have developed a good understanding in children's awareness of moving safely and the use of space. For instance, children can negotiate an obstacle course for wheeled trucks. The school has correctly identified the need to develop children's learning in the Reception outdoor play area, for example, by providing opportunities for pedalling and steering wheeled toys. Staff already ensure that children regularly use the outdoor environment. Children use a range of tools, objects and construction toys with increasing skill and control. They cut and stick materials reasonably accurately, for example, when making a post box or when cutting out and decorating butterfly shapes from card.

Creative development

84. Children's creative development is in line with standards expected by the age of six and a few children attain high standards. They make sound progress in art and design, music, role-play, design and technology and imaginative play. They develop a satisfactory sense of rhythm; enjoying singing and putting appropriate actions to songs. Teachers provide good opportunities for them to explore a range of media and materials. Children also benefit from good opportunities to present their learning in school assemblies. They are supported well by their teachers and parents and this helps to include them in the larger school community. The effective use of additional adults

to help children in small groups means they achieve success in learning new skills. Children draw, paint and print to create a desired effect in a lively and colourful way. They model using a range of construction materials and experiment with rolling out and shaping playdough. They freely explore pattern-making in wet paint and on clay tablets and experiment with the properties of different materials in water. They show great pride in their designs, for example, in making playdough 'hair' using a garlic press and the results are impressive. They also enjoy designing and making colourful, patterned aprons, which the school's lunchtime assistants then wear.

85. Children confidently take part in imaginative play, such as dressing up in the home corners and acting as police or fire officers, parents or nurses. Additional adult interventions in their imaginative play help encourage children to develop their speech more and to practise adapting it for different purposes. Overall, classroom assistants make a good contribution to children's learning, and teachers use a good mix of direct and free-choice activities to develop specific skills and allow children to enjoy their learning.

ENGLISH

86. Overall, standards in English are average.
87. In the year 2000 tests for seven year olds, the school's results in reading were in line with the national average and above in writing. Compared to similar schools, they were well above the national average in both reading and writing. Since the last inspection, the school's average points score for English has remained broadly similar, with improved scores in boys' writing over the last two years. As with older pupils, the school has targeted the underachievement of above average pupils, and the development of writing overall, to improve test results. The findings of the inspection are that current standards are in line with the national average, with an increased percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels.
88. In the 2000 tests for eleven year olds, the school's results in English were below the national average, though near enough the average to be above those found in similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels, however, was well below the national average, and, based on these pupils' attainment when they were seven year olds, the figures suggest slower than expected progress by the time they were eleven. To improve pupils' progress in the present Year 6, higher attaining pupils have been targeted to ensure they reach the higher levels of which they are capable. They have had additional well planned and implemented support to improve their writing with the result that an increased percentage are now expected to achieve the higher levels, in similar proportions to the national average. To improve all pupils' writing has been a particular focus for teaching this year, as pupils achieve less well in this than reading and all classes have additional time outside of the literacy hour for this. From the evidence of this inspection, pupils are now reaching overall standards close to the national average and are on course to meet the school's increased target for this year.
89. The results of the national tests show no significant difference overall in the attainment of girls and boys.

90. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well, so that by the age of seven they achieve at least average standards. They listen attentively to their teachers and are very involved, putting their hands up eagerly to answer questions, with many confident enough to point out what is missing when the teacher makes a deliberate mistake in her writing. They enjoy reading tongue-twisters together and sharing their work with the class at the end of the lesson, such as questions they have written themselves. In the younger juniors, below-average pupils and those with special educational needs also read out their work to the class and gain in confidence as a result. A particularly effective example of speaking and listening was seen when older juniors, working in small groups, listened to each other's use of adjectives when describing Lady Macbeth and suggested additional ones. They recount well the sequence of events in *Macbeth*, including the below-average pupils in the class. Most pupils talk and listen confidently, many using varied expression, such as when identifying the key features in each paragraph in a text about World War 2. Pupils have too few opportunities to extend their skills in speaking and listening through working in pairs or small groups in addition to class discussions with the teacher.
91. In reading, most pupils achieve well, attaining at least average standards. Younger pupils enjoy reading the text together in class with the teacher so that by the age of seven, many average and higher-attaining pupils read with expression, taking note of the punctuation. They use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. They predict what will happen from the pictures and the repetition of the language in the story. Most pupils know the purpose of a contents and an index page and know that an index page is arranged alphabetically. Higher-attaining pupils draw on their own background knowledge to understand information books, such as one on dinosaurs. One pupil said, of dinosaurs' bones, '*You can't get them now*'. '*I know*,' said another, '*because they're all extinct*'. Below-average readers read word for word, using their finger for guidance, but generally accurately. They can usually retell the stories they read. Pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy, and by the age of eleven, higher-attaining pupils read confidently, fluently and with very good expression, taking careful note of the punctuation. They express preference for particular authors and different types of books. Average readers can explain the meanings of unfamiliar words such as *inefficient* and *insanitary* from how the words are used in the book. Below-average readers read hesitantly but with enthusiasm, in spite of finding it difficult, and read at home as well as at school. They use dictionaries regularly and efficiently, for example, when looking up the origins of words and checking spelling patterns. Other research skills are less well developed as there are fewer opportunities to develop these through other subjects.
92. Pupils throughout the school follow a reading scheme, with a variety of books such as story, information books, poems, until Year 5 or 6. They change their books frequently, read them at school and at home, so read a good amount. There are follow-up activities, such as comprehension exercises, which pupils do as homework. They also have access to class library books, but in the older juniors, while there are some new books, some of the stock is old and not in very good condition, and what was for two classes is now shared between three. This, allied to the fact that the library is not yet in operation, means that pupils have not had opportunities in school to develop library skills such as locating fiction and non-fiction books, and information.

The consistency of the opportunities for guided reading is not monitored sufficiently so additional opportunities are missed to widen the range of pupils' reading and knowledge of authors, as well as the focused teaching of reading skills in some classes.

93. With the concentration on developing writing this year, with extra time allocated, and additional specialist teaching for older juniors, standards are now close to the national average. By the age of seven pupils show their competence at writing stories, telling the teacher the structure they need. They suggest many appropriate beginnings for their stories, such as *Long, long ago, Far, far away* and *In a field on a farm*. They write postcards from different countries, using an appropriate style, starting *I am ...* and ending *Love from* Above-average writers use punctuation consistently in their writing with accurate spelling. They write in a variety of styles, using appropriate language and sentence structure to suit the purpose. Average writers know how to write a story, starting, *Once there lived two penguins*, for example. Their sentence structures, however, have less variety, many starting with *Then....* Below-average writers write in sentences, with basic punctuation in place.
94. By the end of the infants, pupils are starting to join their writing in their handwriting books, but are not using it yet in their own writing. By middle juniors, the majority of pupils are writing in a clear, cursive script with neat presentation.
95. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils are writing in a range of styles for a range of purposes, such as imaginative writing, factual reports, persuasive adverts, poems, book reviews. Higher-attaining pupils write a good amount, with their stories showing imagination and good development to an exciting conclusion. They use expressions such as *Before I knew it,...* and *with that he vanished*, which add to the interest of the reader. Spelling and punctuation are all in place with a variety of sentence structures which help to create interest. Average writers create excitement by their use of language, for example, the use of questions to build up suspense at the beginning, such as, *Where were they going? What was in the bag?* They improve their consistency in using punctuation over the year, but the language is not always appropriate for the purpose, often being too informal, with changes from present to past tense. This shows little awareness of writing for an audience. Below-average writers create interest and use humour in writing about the school holidays, but the structure becomes rambling in parts, with little punctuation. Their work is neatly presented and their handwriting joined increasingly over the year. Marking in pupils' books is inconsistent throughout the school, with some teachers providing pointers for improvement in their comments in the books which help pupils in knowing how to improve their writing. Others have ticks with a brief, usually positive, comment.
96. Teaching overall is satisfactory with many good features. Teaching is particularly good in the older infants so pupils learn very well. In the most effective lessons, teachers engender a sense of enthusiasm for learning in pupils by their manner and expression and good use of resources. There is a lively pace in such lessons and a high level of activity and hence achievement, with the activities well matched to the different abilities in the class. As a result, pupils' behaviour is very good largely because they are involved at each stage of the lesson. In most lessons, teachers explain the activities clearly to pupils so they settle to their work quickly, and know what to do. Teachers use shared writing or model writing very effectively, so pupils know how to carry out

their work. When doing this, teachers make deliberate mistakes which the pupils love to spot, such as in the use of commas, which encourages pupils to think and watch carefully. Learning objectives for lessons are displayed in most classrooms and shared with pupils. Most teachers return to them at the end of the lesson to see if they have been achieved, and some do so during the lesson which reminds pupils of the focus for their learning. Pupils enjoy sharing their group work with the class at the end of the lesson. Teachers make good use of writing frames which provide pupils with effective support for different kinds of writing.

97. In some lessons, teachers miss opportunities to use assessment information to help plan appropriate work for the pupils. For example, in some lessons average and higher-attaining pupils have the same work. Thus, for higher-attaining pupils the work is insufficiently challenging and they do not achieve as well as they could in these lessons. In a few instances work provided for below-average pupils did not stretch them or enable them to achieve well. In the lower infants there is some inconsistency in the teaching of basic skills, such as spelling patterns, where teachers use different strategies, which leads to confusion for some pupils. Although pupils often share their work with the class, there is little discussion of how pupils could develop or improve their work, or commenting on each other's work, which would help pupils become more aware of their own learning.
98. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are well supported in literacy lessons. Classroom support assistants, working mainly in the classroom, focus closely on those pupils' specific needs, as contained in their individual education plans. They work effectively towards achieving them, as well as the general lesson objectives. At the end of the lesson, teachers often ask the pupils in receipt of this support, to tell the class what they have achieved, as they ask other groups of pupils, so these pupils are included and achieve well with this support. Some below-average pupils receive additional literacy support outside of the class, which is not closely monitored for effectiveness. Consequently, in one year group, these groups of pupils share no part of the literacy lesson with their peers, nor do they cover similar work in their groups. This is not satisfactory entitlement of the English curriculum for those pupils. There is good support for below-average pupils in Year 5 to develop their literacy skills. The pupils are sufficiently confident to speak before the group and read quite difficult words, such as *misunderstood* successfully.
99. The use of computers to support learning in English is underdeveloped. There was a good example in one lesson, however, where pupils were using a spelling program which they set up and worked independently. However, in another lesson pupils were typing up a pre-written story, rather than using the computer to write and edit the story directly, so the activity contributed little to the development of their story writing.
100. At the time of the last inspection there was no school library. This was judged to limit the development of pupils' reference skills. A library is now being set up in the new information and communication technology suite, but is not fully stocked nor operational yet. Hence, pupils' reference skills show limited development.
101. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, but the co-ordinator's lack of involvement in what happens in the juniors and the lack of systems for monitoring

what is taught and how effectively it is taught in different classes restrict her effectiveness. Teachers have met together to assess pupils' work to improve the consistency and their confidence in assessing to National Curriculum levels, and they now assess a piece of all pupils' writing regularly to monitor their progress. The co-ordinator has seen all teachers teach at the lower end of the school and given feedback to them, including ways to improve. She monitors teachers' half-termly and weekly planning when observing them, to ensure coverage and continuity. She has not had the opportunity to observe other teachers yet, so has no overview of teaching throughout the school. As there are no agreed systems for teachers to record what they have done and plan to do in literacy lessons, this makes it difficult for the co-ordinator to monitor the planning of literacy lessons across the school. Optional tests taken by pupils are now being analysed so that the results can be used to target particular skills to improve pupils' reading and writing. A system of target setting is just starting to be implemented by a few teachers and is working well, with some targets for individuals and groups helping pupils to know how to improve and work towards achieving it.

MATHEMATICS

102. Overall, standards in mathematics are average.
103. Compared with the results gained in all schools, the standards of pupils aged seven and eleven, as shown by the national tests in the year 2000, were below average. However, in comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the standards achieved at the end of both the infants and juniors were well above average. The proportion of pupils aged seven achieving at a level above that expected of their age group, was close to the average for all schools, and well above average compared with similar schools. The proportion of eleven year olds performing at the higher level was below the average for all schools, but above the average for similar schools. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. Inspection findings for the current standards of work of seven and eleven year olds broadly reflect these recent test results.
104. Given that when they joined the school most pupils' mathematical skills were below the levels normally found, pupils achieve appropriately and many achieve well. However, evidence gained from both lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' past work indicates that they could do better. This is because the planning for mathematics is unsatisfactory. Teachers' medium-term plans do not set out separate expectations for different attainment groups, and because there is no agreed form of short-term planning, the extent to which provision is made to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in lessons varies. This results in teachers asking higher-attaining pupils to work needlessly through the same task as those of average attainment, before they undertake an extension activity. This was seen in a number of lessons for both infants and juniors. This reduces the progress that higher-attaining pupils make. There is evidence too, of inappropriate tasks being set for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. This results in significant amounts of work being done incorrectly, and progress being inhibited.
105. Pupils do better at number work. For example, most pupils in Year 6 can add and subtract mixed fractions and divide decimals to two places. The weakest aspect of

pupils' performance is using and applying mathematical skills. Throughout the school they are not as good as they should be at explaining how they work and in finding ways to check that their answers are correct. This is borne out in the formal assessments made by teachers. The work done on telling the time is strongly developed in many infant and junior classes, with pupils in Year 2 able to interpret both analogue and digital clocks.

106. Since the last inspection, standards have risen at broadly the same rate as that found nationally. However, the progress made by the pupils who left last year as they passed through the junior classes is below that seen in most similar schools. The progress noted by inspectors when they looked at pupils' past work slowed in Year 3. The school is aware of this and has very recently decided to extend the use of the commercially produced scheme of work used in the infant classes to Year 3 in order to improve this situation.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory, and examples of very good teaching were seen in both the infant and junior classes. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning mathematics. They behave very well in response to the good skills of managing and controlling pupils shown by most teachers. They usually work busily and settle to their tasks quickly. Teachers explain things clearly and use questioning well. As a result, pupils understand what they are doing and pick things up effectively. This is made easier for them because of the good methods used by teachers, such as telling pupils before the lesson, what they are intended to learn. Overall, basic skills are taught effectively and often well. But there is evidence also, that some teachers do not expect enough of pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, and that too often the marking of pupils' work does not help them to understand what is wrong or to consider ways of improving their work. There is not enough variety in the activities given to the pupils. There is too much repetition of work for higher-attaining pupils, and lower-attaining pupils are sometimes moved on before they have time to grasp the idea being taught. Pupils in the infant classes do not always get the practical experience of weighing and measuring that they need.
108. Since the last inspection, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily, in that the three-part lesson is now clearly established in most classes. However, with the shortcomings in teachers' planning, not enough progress has been made in improving the range of investigative work.
109. The able and conscientious subject co-ordinator works well, within the constraints laid down by senior managers. The potential she has for raising standards further is not being used effectively. Her role in monitoring attainment, the quality of planning and the quality of teaching and learning, is underdeveloped.

SCIENCE

110. Standards are average at the end of both key stages for the pupils currently in the school.
111. Although there was a slight fall in national test results in 1998, the results since 1997 show a gradual improvement in standards. Over the past four years, the number of

pupils attaining the expected Level 4 has increased, but there is still room for improvement in that the number of pupils who attain the higher Level 5 has increased but is still below the national average. The school has recognised this in its subject development plan for science. The good management and the attention paid to ensuring that pupils develop their investigative skills, together with teachers' clearer knowledge, has contributed to the satisfactory progress in raising standards and improvement in the subject. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but those pupils showing high or low attainment do not make as much progress as their peers because teachers' planning does not always take account of their differing needs within lessons.

112. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a thorough understanding of plant life, use the correct term cyclical diagram to describe a growing cycle, know that a plant needs certain conditions to live and make good choices as to the probable outcome of the investigations they carry out with competence under guidance from the class teachers. The pupils are eager to participate and are interested that although their answers may differ from each other's, all are valued within science. The pupils' recorded work showed how they understood how to make simple circuits, know how materials are better suited for different tasks and how to record their investigative work. A weakness in Key Stage 1 is the recording of information, which is often the same worksheet for all groups of pupils, and does not convey how much the pupils actually know or can do.
113. By Year 6, most pupils are able to explain different types of forces such as friction or wind resistance and have a good understanding of light and sound sources, mirrors and reflection. Pupils have explored living things, understand the terms invertebrates and vertebrates, they understand how to make a circuit and what may cause the circuit to be broken. They use equipment such as thermometers competently to record temperature changes in their experiments on insulation.
114. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in both the infants and juniors. Pupils gain in scientific knowledge as they move from class to class. However, these gains are particularly evident in Year 2, where the quality of teaching is strongest. Here, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are very high indeed. Pupils are expected to use the correct terminology, and teachers often preface difficult words with a simpler explanation so that pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils understand the meaning of the difficult words. The emphasis on investigation is very high. Pupils are expected to behave and to organise themselves in a mature manner and to take control of their own learning, for example, when a sense of competitiveness against time is incorporated into the lesson, so that pupils finish off written work, but also manage to take equal part, (by ticking their name off a class list) in an investigation in another area of the classroom. This contrasts with the slower rate of learning in a number of lessons which were mostly teacher controlled and directed as occurred in Year 1. Teachers encourage a practical approach to investigations throughout Key Stage 2 and this has contributed to a rise in standards. Pupils record their results in a number of ways, including tables, bar charts and occasionally graphs. A weakness in Key Stage 2 is the lack of objectives set by teachers for the different groups of ability within the class.
115. The school has worked hard to improve the provision in the subject since the last

inspection. Effective staff development led by the co-ordinator has assisted greatly in raising the profile of the subject and many pupils talk positively about their studies and the enjoyment they get from the investigation work they undertake. Day trips to places of scientific interest and Science Weeks further complement provision. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work and assessment procedure to provide for a more consistent delivery of the science curriculum. However, the monitoring of progress, planning and teaching is not rigorous. This makes the task of the co-ordinator in improving standards further and developing the subject difficult.

ART AND DESIGN

116. Standards of attainment in art and design are average. Standards are high for the practical work that most pupils produce. There are many examples of very good completed work on display and in folders, and all pupils use sketchbooks well. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and design is, by contrast, weak. For example, few could name or identify many artists, designers, or craftspeople when asked. Standards are limited by the lack of adequate opportunities to develop their ideas, and to compare and comment on their own and others' work as required in the National Curriculum for art and design. This means that, despite the high quality of their paintings, drawings and prints, not all pupils are able to produce work that meets all the requirements of Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2.
117. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, for seven year olds, are average overall, which is similar to what was reported in the last inspection. Pupils are sketching and painting confidently in a wide range of media, mainly two-dimensional. In many lessons, when art and design and design and technology are taught together, teachers confuse the planning and delivery of lessons so that the National Curriculum requirements of neither subject are met clearly. For example, observational drawings of shells and holiday items by Year 1 pupils were completed quickly and enthusiastically after a detailed discussion of colour and shape. The finished work could have been reviewed and refined and compared to the work of other pupils, but the children moved on to other work straight away and an opportunity for developing their understanding of how artists work was lost.
118. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2, at the age of eleven, are average overall; in the last inspection they were reported as good. Pupils study the practical aspects of art and design, mainly in painting and drawing, to some depth, producing work of a high standard. There is, however, little evidence of a wider appreciation of art and design as specified by the National Curriculum. An example of appropriate planning occurs when Year 6 pupils have visited the Lowry Centre and looked at the work of Lowry closely. They are able to draw portraits and landscapes which reflect his style and attention to detail. In these studies the standards of drawing are good, despite the small scale and limited media, and all four strands of the National Curriculum are addressed. In other lessons, the focus is on practical skills and producing finished work.
119. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good when the pupils are given the opportunity to experience different media and are exposed to stimulating challenges, such as when they create monochromatic pastel drawings based on Victor Pasmore's work. Then

they can experiment and produce bold images within the context of an appreciation of British Art of the 20th Century. The teaching is reinforced by the school's involvement in regional and national initiatives. The deployment of artists in residence enriches pupils' learning and provides valuable experience of the work of professional artists, craftspeople and designers for both teachers and pupils.

120. The co-ordinator for art and design organises the curriculum around the recently introduced schemes of work from the QCA. However, the teaching of art and design with design and technology limits the time available for both subjects. Teachers do not, in practice, follow these schemes closely and show some confusion and uncertainty about how much to follow or adapt them. In some cases, the use of major projects obscures the need to address the National Curriculum strands directly and to assess pupils' attainment on an appropriate level. At the moment teachers are not sure what level of attainment in the subject each pupil has attained, and therefore have little confidence in planning work that moves pupils' learning forward.
121. Teaching is not monitored. Pupils' finished work is reviewed informally, with some support from the co-ordinator. As a result assessment processes are weak. The portfolios of art work provided by the co-ordinator are a valuable aid to planning and provide examples of good practice for all teachers. The portfolios of work would be more useful if the work included was assessed accurately to define levels of attainment for the pupils' work and staff had an opportunity to discuss them.
122. Resources for art and design are very good although the lack of sinks in some rooms limits the work some teachers can attempt. Display is very good. In most classrooms and around the school there are well presented examples of pupils' work, original prints, and reproductions. Art and design has a high profile in the school, and the co-ordinator's enthusiasm is infectious.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Only two lessons of design and technology were seen during the inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on the overall quality of teaching and learning in the subject. However, a survey of the samples of work on display throughout the school, discussions with teachers and with pupils indicate that pupils undertake an appropriate range of activities in which they make products across both key stages. However, very little design and evaluation of products was seen and this is a weakness in the curriculum.
124. Teachers give good opportunities for pupils to make products. These are structured so that pupils gain in knowledge about structures, joints and hinges as they progress through the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 make musical instruments at home having first decided what type of instrument and what materials they need to use, whilst Year 2 pupils design a healthy filling for a sandwich. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 were seen to be using folder paper to make 'finger chance' objects, whilst Year 5 use food technology to good effect when making cakes and biscuits. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of how to make a structure stable, by applying reinforcement to corners. However, they are not given the opportunity to design in detail or to evaluate thoroughly what they have made or to give appropriate responses as to how they could

improve their structure. Often pupils are given too narrow a range of materials to consider using for the task in hand, allowing for an over-direction by teachers as to what form their products will take.

125. Design and technology currently has limited curriculum time and this results in the design and evaluation element of the subject not being covered sufficiently in Key Stage 2. As such, the school is not fully meeting its statutory requirements. The lack of opportunities to monitor teaching and learning makes it difficult for the co-ordinator to improve the provision further.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Standards of attainment in geography are below average. Many of the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection report are still evident, especially in Key Stage 2. The newly appointed co-ordinator is aware of the need to improve teachers' planning and that assessment needs to be improved, but has not yet been able to implement appropriate strategies.
127. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, at the age of seven, are low. Pupils do not have a continuous experience of geography. There is very little geographical study evident in books or folders. Some geographical skills are studied during visits, literacy work, and other lessons, but they are not planned or assessed to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum for geography in any depth. When pupils compare the seaside to their locality there are opportunities to enquire about environmental change and patterns and processes, but the work is over-controlled by teachers and similar worksheets are filled in by the whole class. This limits those who could achieve better, and some pupils cannot cope with the worksheets and so do not complete much work.
128. At the end of Key Stage 2, by the age of eleven, standards are still below average. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught geography as a separate subject, but for much of the key stage they have not been studying it in any depth. Progress has been slow, and so they have a lot of catching up to do. Some of the work in Years 3 and 4 is very limiting, as teachers direct what pupils do too closely. Some work is repeated in successive years which further limits progress. The local area study in Year 3, with annotated fieldwork sketches, is a good example that could be followed by other teachers. The links with a school in Italy provide an excellent opportunity to compare and contrast environments but the pupils, in practice, are given little opportunity to ask questions, collect and analyse evidence for themselves. The emphasis of the work they do is on filling in undemanding worksheets and learning simple facts supplied by the teacher.
129. Teaching overall is satisfactory but with too narrow a range of activity. Teachers are delivering individual lessons where pupils learn appropriately, but much of the lesson planning is about the acquisition of facts that the pupils should already know. The breaks in the study of geography, while other subjects are taught, means that teaching is less effective than it could be. This is made worse because assessment is still under-developed, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, teachers are unsure of the level at which individual pupils are capable of working when they start a

new geographical topic. The new QCA schemes of work have been introduced by the co-ordinator to address this problem. However, there has been no opportunity for staff to meet or for the co-ordinator to monitor and support the rest of the staff.

130. Most pupils learn quickly and enthusiastically when given the opportunity to study the subject consistently and in depth. They concentrate and co-operate very well. Year 6 pupils are able to develop an understanding of the mountain environment using some of the very good resources the school has bought. Their teaching is well managed and keeps pupils working busily. Their lack of basic geographical knowledge makes this experience all the more frustrating as they cannot answer simple questions and the teacher has to provide most of the information and direct the learning very closely. By this age, pupils ought to be able to investigate and suggest answers for themselves. The higher attainers are therefore limited by this lack of experience in geographical knowledge and skills, and the less able are not completing all the work set for them.
131. The resources for learning are very good, text books, atlases, maps and globes have been provided for pupils. There has been insufficient staff training on planning and assessment to enable all pupils to achieve appropriate levels.

HISTORY

132. The lessons seen, pupils' work and talking to pupils, indicate that by the ages of seven and eleven, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards typical for their age. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
133. By the age of seven, pupils attain average standards. Most pupils develop an understanding of the past and how things change over time. For example, they look at holidays at the seaside in the past. They write postcards as if on holiday then, and a contrasting postcard written now from a huge variety of holiday destinations, which emphasises the changes and also develops their literacy skills. They have some knowledge of important people in history, such as Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. An illustration of the passing of time that is very real to the pupils is a display of photos of themselves as babies and a recent photo. Photos of staff are also included for an even greater contrast. Their understanding of Remembrance Day and the significance of poppies is greatly enhanced by a visiting speaker, a World War 2 veteran. They compare the diary account of Samuel Pepys with the facts about the Great Fire of London and discuss the sequence of events with assurance.
134. Throughout the juniors pupils increase their historical understanding through exploring all the required topics in the history curriculum and attain broadly average standards. In Year 3, pupils undertake a study of their own local community and research the changes that have taken place over time which develops their sense of chronology further. Through understanding that their own written accounts of their visit to Chester, when learning about the Romans, is a primary source of information, pupils begin to understand the difference between primary and secondary sources of information. From the evidence they have found out about, pupils recall life in Tudor times for children, and similarities between games played then and now. They contrast life in those times for the court and the rich with life for the poor, for example, by looking at the favourite pastimes of the King and the court. By the age of eleven,

pupils' letters to their parents, as if an evacuee in World War 2, show a high degree of empathy and knowledge of the times. They listen attentively to the experiences of a World War 2 veteran, taking notes of the events in his life in the war, for example, his different postings, and asking prepared questions reflecting their high level of interest and their wish to find out more.

135. The teaching is effective throughout the school, and very good in Year 2. In the juniors, teaching was satisfactory in half the lessons seen and good in the other lessons. In the lessons where teaching is most effective, teachers have high expectations of pupils' concentration and achievement. In these lessons, the work is appropriate for the different abilities of the pupils in the class, so all achieve well and increase their understanding. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and enthusiasm. Pupils are involved and keen to contribute in discussions and settle to their work well. Through literature and accounts from the time, artefacts, visits and visitors, pupils learn to respond with empathy to the lives of people living in the past, such as World War 2. Teachers make good links with what pupils already know and their own experiences to help them understand and learn. In a few lessons, there was insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils in the activities, with no time limits, so pupils achieved and learned less.
136. Pupils' experience of historical enquiry is underdeveloped as they do not have access to a wide range of information sources, including computers. They have too few opportunities to undertake their own historical research and too few resources available to help them develop this aspect. For example, some pupils found information about kings and queens from the history site on the Internet in the school computer club, but have not yet had the opportunity to use the Internet or access to CD-ROMs for research purposes in history lessons. The school library is not operational yet and there is no system of loans from a local educational library service to supplement the stock of appropriate information books for pupils to use for research. There is some use of appropriate videos, and good use of visits, to enhance the provision in most years, as well as visitors from the local community, and a visiting workshop.
137. This year teachers are incorporating the new national guidelines into their previous scheme of work. The effectiveness of this is due to be evaluated at the end of the year by the staff and the recently appointed co-ordinator, who has written a new policy for the subject. There are no formal procedures for assessment. No monitoring of teachers' half-termly planning or observation of teaching has taken place, so the co-ordinator does not know clearly the key strengths and areas for development in the school's history curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards that are below average by the end of both key stages. A few higher-attaining pupils have made satisfactory progress in the recent past. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection because although standards have not improved for a long time, they are rising now. This is due to the development of better resources and accommodation for information and communication technology (ICT) and the increase

in the time it is taught regularly. Until this year, pupils had not been given enough opportunities to learn the required skills and knowledge in using ICT in the other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils have now begun to achieve well and make good progress when they are taught ICT skills in separate lessons in the ICT suite. They are still not taught sufficiently how to use ICT in other subjects in their classrooms.

139. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to use a computer to write and draw pictures and they can print out their work or save it to work on in another lesson. They are developing the ability to input the commands to make programmable toys move forward and back predefined distances. Many have used paint programs to create digital artwork and have experienced a sense of wonder at the mysteries of the machine. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 can add graphics to their written work to create a newsletter. They have begun to learn how to build sequences of commands in the LOGO programming language and can run the finished programs. Some pupils are able to select a style, size and colour of print and add *clip art* pictures to enhance the appearance of their work. Pupils have had some opportunity to use data handling programs for database and spreadsheet work and some can add formulae to cells in a spreadsheet. They have used the computer to display data about themselves and, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils developed the results of their journalistic investigations in desktop publishing templates. There has been insufficient time for pupils at either key stage to acquire average levels of skill in other aspects of ICT, such as using computers to e-mail, to develop multimedia presentations, to use the Internet or CD-ROMs for research or to control machines.
140. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Some of the teaching observed was good or better and none was unsatisfactory. Lessons are usually planned soundly and the learning teachers want pupils to acquire is clearly identified. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' current attainments to plan the next lessons to some extent, but assessment of ICT work is not yet conducted rigorously. Pupils are managed well and they respond very well. This creates an atmosphere in which they can learn effectively. In the best lessons, the teachers provide clear instructions and sensitive and imaginative support. Pupils learn very quickly when they are involved in innovatory projects such as the Newspapers-in-the-Community project involving the Manchester Evening News and the Wythenshawe Education Action Zone. Here they improve their standards not only in ICT but also in their ability to conduct interviews and write newspaper stories. This is a direct result of sharply focused, knowledgeable and briskly delivered teaching. It adds urgency and excitement to both teaching and learning.
141. When teaching is less effective, teachers do not allow pupils to work independently to discover what computers can help them to do. Class-teachers' overall knowledge is insufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school has identified this and a comprehensive programme of in-service training has been begun to assist teachers to have the knowledge and confidence in all aspects of ICT. This programme, however, has been started relatively late and will not finish until Summer 2002. Many class-teachers, as a result, provide little help for pupils to link their work in ICT to their work in other subjects. Teachers do not group pupils well enough to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.
142. Most pupils are actively engaged in lessons and their confidence is good. Their

attitudes to ICT are very good. They are interested in working with computers and are aware that computers are important in life outside school. Those pupils who have greater skill, acquired because they have computers at home or because they attend the school's small computer club, are willing to help others. All this assists pupils to gain skills more quickly and helps raise standards.

143. Because many teachers did not teach ICT regularly before January 2001, the curriculum did not meet statutory requirements. That is slowly being changed and it now meets statutory requirements. The timetable is organised sensibly, so that each class receives regular teaching in ICT as a separate subject every week.
144. Recently subject leadership has improved and is now sound. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision of the way in which the subject needs to be developed and is setting about that task with vigour. Teachers have not had a system with which to monitor or evaluate standards of work in their classes but the ICT co-ordinator has started to collate the work completed by pupils in his lessons. The school has taken a number of steps to address the need to improve standards. In January 2001, a new and well-equipped computer room was opened. This room has been funded from a four-year fundraising effort by the school and many parents. The ICT room - and the Glendinning Suite - are a living testimonial to this remarkable achievement by both school and community. The accommodation for ICT is now very good and resources are ample. The new impetus for ICT development is evident in reorganised timetables, new training for teachers and the creation of the new ICT suite. This places the subject in a good position to move forward.

MUSIC

145. Most pupils attain standards that are below national expectations in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 because music is not taught regularly throughout the year. The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection when standards were judged to be high. The provision for music does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
146. Standards of musical performance are high. Provision for music in extra-curricular sessions is good. There are nine pupils, for example, who are taught to play the violin by the music co-ordinator in lunchtime sessions, and 22 pupils who receive violin tuition from a peripatetic specialist provided by the Manchester Music Service. Many pupils are involved in the musical productions arranged at the end of the autumn and summer terms. A few pupils have received good coaching and attained distinction in national examinations such as those set by the Trinity Board.
147. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils sang with enjoyment, following the pitch of the song, but without a good sense of timing. They were able to click their fingers to the beat. They were not able to appraise their performances because the opportunities were not given them. In another Year 1 lesson on English country dancing using accordion music, pupils were able to use a range of untuned percussion instruments to beat a pulse in time. They kept time mostly with accuracy. Most pupils had a turn in using various instruments but none knew the names of the instruments they played. They have made

musical instruments at home previously.

148. Pupils in Year 3 mainly sing or listen in music lessons. Most enjoy participating but about a quarter do not. Pupils understand that tempo relates to the speed of music. Higher-attaining pupils recognise the playing of a flute in a piece they listen to. Most sing in tune, showing a sense of the melody's shape. They use some expression as they learn the lyrics but this is inconsistent. They appear unused to practical music activities. In Year 4, of the 22 pupils receiving violin tuition, their attainments range from those of the beginner to those who are accomplished performers. When these pupils play in lunchtime rehearsals their music sometimes achieves a haunting quality. They can all play tunes such as *He's got the whole world in his hands* and *Kum Baya, My Lord*. They can all start and finish on time. They can read music and can recognise when a piece is in D Major. These few are on track to attain highly by the end of Key Stage 2. However, they learn more slowly because they receive conflicting tuition from their teachers. There is no linkage between the separate schemes of work used for instrumental tuition and for class lessons in National Curriculum music and this impedes their attainment.
149. There was no evidence to suggest that pupils have any knowledge about famous composers of music such as Chopin, Beethoven or Mozart.
150. When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy music. They listen intently. They take care of the instruments, even though these are often in a poor condition. They work well with each other.
151. Due to the low number of lessons seen, it is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching. The teaching was excellent in voluntary lunchtime rehearsals for violin players; it was satisfactory in Key Stage 1; and no teaching was on the timetable in upper Key Stage 2. The school has adopted the QCA music curriculum in principle but not in practice. Assessment procedures, for example, are not rigorous and do not provide any solid basis for monitoring pupils' progress and achievement, or for planning work to move pupils' learning forward.
152. The music co-ordinator, a skilled musician and accomplished music teacher, is deployed to provide pupils with additional support for literacy and is not deployed to teach music at all. This has a significant negative impact on pupils' learning about music in many classes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. There was not enough direct evidence gathered to judge the standards of attainment in physical education. Four lessons were observed, all of them games activities. One of these in Key Stage 1 and the rest in Key Stage 2. Each of these lessons was for less than half an hour. Most classes have only half an hour of physical education a week, which is very little time to study the subject and gain an appropriate level of attainment. Within this severe constraint, physical education co-ordinator plans the programme of activities well to cover all the areas of the curriculum, but because of the lack of time, dance is not studied in Years 3 and 5, and swimming is covered only in three terms in Years 3 and 4.

154. Most of the pupils observed in the games lessons did not have a high level of skills, some higher attainers had to wait for the others to catch up. They did this patiently and the pupils co-operated and worked well together.
155. Some teachers, but not all, have taken on the National Curriculum requirements for pupils to plan and evaluate their performance. The very short physical education lessons limit opportunities for this, and getting changed and dressed takes up a large proportion of the time available. As a result, much work is teacher-directed to get the lesson started and to complete the planned activity. Pupils do get involved in monitoring their warm up and cooling down exercises, but then follow the teacher's instructions for the remaining time. They do this safely and confidently, listening for signals and instructions conscientiously. Assessment is weak. Teachers do not have detailed records of their pupils' attainment in physical education, and identifying the correct level for each pupil at the end of the key stage will be difficult.
156. The extensive number of clubs and teams which the staff organise form a large part of the physical education experience for those pupils who can attend or are selected. These are well run and are successful. The physical education co-ordinator has skilfully adapted the QCA schemes of work to provide teachers with a logical structure to deliver the five activities in Key Stage 2, and appropriate experiences in Key Stage 1. It is, however, difficult to see how these can be taught in any depth in half an hour a week. The lessons seen in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 were very similar, and there is little systematic development of pupils' skills in games as they move through the school.
157. Resources for physical education are very good. There are extensive playing fields and hard surfaced areas, although these are not marked out for physical education activities. There are two halls, one for each key stage, which have good floors and suitable large apparatus, and these are separate from the dining room. There is a good range of small apparatus which is stored safely in the large hall.