

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JAMES' C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

St James' Crescent

Darwen, Lancashire

BB3 OEY

LEA area: Darwen and Blackburn

Unique reference number: 119457

Head teacher: Mrs Susan Garnett

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret J Lewis  
22787

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> –16<sup>th</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 191330

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St James' Crescent Darwen Lancashire
Postcode:	BB3 OEY]
Telephone number:	01254 703260
Fax number:	01254 773989
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend J Faraday
Date of previous inspection:	27-30 January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margaret J Lewis	Registered inspector	English Art Design Technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
David Heath	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gianna Ulyatt	Team inspector	Science, History Music Under-fives	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Michael Bowers	Team inspector	Mathematics Information Technology, Geography Physical Education Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Quality in Focus  
Thresher House  
Lea Hall Park  
Demage Lane  
Lea by Backford  
Chester  
CH1 6LP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St James' school is a smaller than average sized Church of England Primary School with 155 pupils (83 boys and 72 girls). No pupils had English as an additional language and very few come from a minority ethnic background. The school is situated in a residential area of Darwen, on the edge of a local authority housing estate. It is in a designated Educational Action Zone. The number of pupils (56) registered as having special educational needs is well above the national average. Five of these pupils have statements of special educational needs. This is above the average. An above average number of pupils (41 percent) are eligible for free school meals. School numbers have dropped over recent years and there is some mobility with families transferring in and out of the area. As a result of falling numbers there is a smaller than average class at Year 1 and mixed-age classes in Years 4, 5 and 6. When children start in the reception class, their attainment is well below the level expected for their age, especially in language and literacy and mathematical skills.

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

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. It is managed well by the headteacher and governing body. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology are rising by the age of eleven. There is a high proportion of good or better teaching; there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The school cares very well for the intellectual and emotional needs of its pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school provides good value for money.

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

- There is a substantial amount of good and very good teaching.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English and mathematics are better than similar schools; they are very much better in science.
- The teaching of information technology is very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. As a result pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The youngest children make a good start in their education.
- The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities.
- The headteacher and governors lead the school well.

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

- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science, where levels of attainment are below average.
- Teachers' systems for day-to-day checking of pupils' work at Key Stage 1.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has dealt with the key issues raised in the last inspection. Standards of attainment at the age of eleven in English, mathematics, science and information technology have improved. This is due to improvements in the overall quality of teaching throughout the school. The very effective contribution made by the Education Action Zone is improving pupils' standards, particularly in information technology and personal development. The quality of provision for the above average number of pupils with special educational needs has improved. These pupils are well-supported by teachers and staff throughout the school. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development has improved significantly. The school has improved its links with parents and parents are kept well-informed.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	E	D	B
Mathematics	E	D	D	B
Science	E	E	C	A

### Key

<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

When compared to similar schools, the school's 1999 Key Stage 2 results were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. In comparison with schools nationally, results in English and mathematics are below the average and in science close to the average. A smaller than usual percentage achieves at the higher levels in English, mathematics and science than is found nationally. Results have been rising for all these subjects at a rate that is at least in line with the national trend over the past four years. The school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy and information technology is helping to raise standards by the age eleven. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve above the levels typical for their age in information technology. The school has set achievable targets at Key Stage 2. Pupils at the age of five begin the National Curriculum with below average levels of attainment in language and literacy, mathematics, science and information technology. They make satisfactory and some good progress in their learning but still do not achieve the national average for their age at seven in English, mathematics and science. They exceed the expected level in information technology.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are interested in lessons, older pupils show good levels of concentration. Pupils are proud of their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in lessons is always satisfactory and often good or very good. Behaviour in assemblies is very good. Pupils act responsibly when moving around the school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils develop a sense of their own worth. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Relationships between pupils of all ages are good. Older pupils support younger pupils well.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are improving but are slightly below the national average.

Pupils' have good attitudes to their work and behaviour. This is as a result of a positive approach by teachers and staff. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and celebrate pupils' achievements and good behaviour well. Staff are consistent and fair in implementing the school's behaviour policy. Pupils' level of attendance and punctuality is improving.





## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Forty-seven lessons were seen. All lessons were at least satisfactory and a substantial amount of lessons were good, or very good overall. The teaching of English and mathematics is always at least satisfactory. Around three-quarters of all lessons seen in both English and mathematics were good or better. The teaching of pupils under five and in the reception class is consistently good and very good. There is a significant amount of good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2. This is mainly found at and towards the end of the key stage, although teaching in information technology is almost always very good. Although teaching of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, there is insufficient development of pupils' skills for reading and writing and of practical activities in mathematics and science to increase pupils' independent learning. Teachers make insufficient use of assessments to move pupils on in their learning at Key Stage 1. The school meets the needs of pupils with special needs well. They are well-supported and taught effectively according to the targets on their individual education plans.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced but there are some gaps in the planning of some subjects such as geography. There is a wide and very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs which enables them to make good progress. Teachers, classroom support assistants, external specialist teachers and adult helpers work well as a team to support pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	Very good. Development of pupils' personal and social skills is very good throughout the school. The school has developed very good systems to help pupils with difficulties. Provision for pupils' spiritual social and moral development is very good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good support and cares well for its pupils. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.

The school works well in partnership with its parents and keeps them well-informed of their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. This increased involvement contributes well to pupils' learning both at home and school. Staff work in the pupils' best interests and take their pastoral responsibilities seriously. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very good. The day-to-day checking of pupils' academic achievements is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. This is particularly so for reading, writing, mathematics and science.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and manages the school well. She is supported well by other key members of staff. The headteacher contributes very effectively to the teaching of pupils. She and subject co-ordinators closely monitor the quality of teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They take their responsibilities very seriously and fulfil their roles well. They support the head teacher and staff and take an active part in monitoring all the areas of the curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good by the headteacher. Governors evaluate some aspects of the school very well and are becoming more involved with the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Positive management of Education Action Zone specialists has led to effective staff training for mathematics and information technology. Other adults and resources are used well. Accommodation is used efficiently.

Since the previous inspection the headteacher has led school improvements well. She is supported by an able governing body and senior staff who work consistently in the interest of the pupils. The school has welcomed and supported the involvement of the Education Action Zone wholeheartedly. The school has sufficient teachers and support staff. The accommodation is generally adequate, although there is no separate outdoor play area for children under five. The information technology suite and the recently created library space provide a good environment for pupils' learning. Learning resources are adequate overall although the school is short of some resources for history, geography and physical education. The secretary plays an important part in the financial administration of the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good. Children get the right amount of work to do at home.</li> <li>• The school is well-led and managed. Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable to approach the school with questions and problems. The school works closely with them.</li> <li>• The school helps their children become mature and responsible. Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very small number of parents thought pupils with special needs could do better.</li> <li>• A small number of parents thought that pupils did not get the right amount of work to do at home.</li> <li>• A small number of parents thought that behaviour in school was not good.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments and views of the school but disagree with their criticisms. Pupils with special needs are well catered for and make good progress in their learning. Pupils get the right amount of work to do at home and this is recorded accurately by teachers. Behaviour in the school is good and any misbehaviour is dealt with consistently by the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start the reception class with attainment in learning skills which are well below those usually found in children of this age nationally. A significant number of pupils have limited speech and language skills. As a result of very good teaching in the reception class, many children make good progress in their learning. By the age of five, the majority reach the levels of learning recommended for personal and social development, physical and creative development. In language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, the majority do not achieve the recommended levels. A significant number of pupils begin the programmes of study with mathematical skills and skills in language and literacy well below those usually found. This hampers their progress in other areas of the curriculum at Key Stage 1.
2. The previous inspection findings in January 1997 indicated that at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was below the national average in English, mathematics and science. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in English and science was below the expected level (level 2) and in mathematics it was at the expected level. Since then the school has worked hard to raise levels of attainment for pupils in English mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 and has improved the level of pupils' achievements in these subjects by the age of eleven. Standards of achievement in English, mathematics and science tests results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been rising in line with the national trend over the past four years. This upward trend has been most apparent in mathematics and science since 1997 and in English from 1998 to 1999. The school takes effective action to meet its targets and good progress is made.
3. The school's 1999 national test results show that in comparison with standards achieved nationally, the number of pupils reaching the expected level (level 4) and above in English and mathematics was below the national average. Science results were close to the national average although the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in science was well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance in tests for English and mathematics was above the average and in science it was well above the average.
4. The results for 1999 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show that pupils' overall attainment in reading and writing and mathematics was well below the nationally expected level (level 2). Teachers' assessment of pupils' work in science was well below those expected nationally at this age. When compared with the results of pupils at similar schools, attainment was below the average in reading and well below the average in writing and mathematics. There has been no discernible pattern to the school's results at the end of Key Stage 1 over the past four years. Results in English, mathematics and science dropped significantly in 1997 and 1999. The reasons for this are that attainment on entry for these groups of pupils were consistently low.
5. Current inspection findings show that pupils achieve well by the age of eleven and their attainment in English and mathematics and science is close to the nationally expected level. Although fewer pupils attain at the higher levels than expected nationally in English and mathematics, a substantial number attain at the higher levels in science. Children in the reception class make good progress. Progress in learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. For a substantial proportion of pupils the levels of reading and writing are well below those expected for their age. Although the school implements the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, these have not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' attainment. At the age of seven, pupils' knowledge of letters and blends of letters to form sounds and words that contributes to improving their literacy skills, is below that

usually found. In mathematics, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their number work and all groups of pupils spend too much time on consolidation of what they already know rather than developing new mathematical concepts. Attainment in science is below expectations for this age.

6. In information technology, standards at the ages of seven and eleven are above those usually found and the rate of learning across both key stages is good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection at the end of Key Stage 2 when attainment was judged to be below that found nationally. Standards of attainment by the age of seven have also shown an improvement. These improvements at both key stages are due to the very good teaching in information technology. The specialist teacher from the Education Action Zone gives very good support to teachers. Very good achievement in information technology is also due to a well-structured teaching programme. This provides frequent and regular access for all classes to the very well-equipped information technology suite and to the very good attitudes of pupils in this subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in information technology.
7. Pupils' achievements in physical education are good. Pupils do particularly well as they progress through the school in developing their co-ordination, for instance, in dance lessons and ball control skills in games lessons. They enjoy and practise their athletics skills and sustain physical activities well. Almost all pupils achieve a swimming certificate for swimming 25 metres unaided by the age of eleven. Pupils' attainment at the age of eleven is in line with those usually found for their age in history and art. It is below those usually found in music and geography; in both these subjects there is a lack of challenge of materials and expectations in lessons. In geography, unsatisfactory leadership and monitoring by the coordinator results in pupils repeating work at a similar level. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards of achievement in design technology at the age of eleven, although planning indicates that pupils learn and develop their skills at a steady rate.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. Their overall attainment remains below that expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Good progress for these pupils is due to the good teaching and support they receive from their teachers and the support staff who work with them both in classes and in withdrawn groups. Pupils gain confidence, consolidate what they have learnt and build well on their previous learning.

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

9. Pupils have good attitudes to school. Pupils of all ages move around the school with confidence and act responsibly. They play together well and enjoy coming to school. Good relationships are evident. Relationships between pupils of all ages are good and pupils have very positive attitudes towards teachers. During lessons pupils concentrate well and stay on task completing their work effectively.
10. Pupils are interested in lessons and this is especially so during the question and answer sessions when a good number contribute with enthusiasm. A good example of pupils' level of interest was seen in Key Stage 1 where the youngest pupils in the school listened attentively to the story and inter-acted well with the teacher and with each other. Older pupils also show good levels of concentration. For instance, in a science investigation on sounds, pupils listened carefully to the teacher, persevered with their group task and made good gains in their learning.
11. Behaviour in all lessons is always at least satisfactory and mostly good or very good. This makes an important contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils are well-mannered showing respect for adults. They are polite and courteous to visitors.

12. Pupils behave very well in assemblies and in the dining hall at lunch times and they enjoy their time in the fresh air at break times. There have been two fixed-period exclusions in the current year. There were no incidents of name calling or bullying during the inspection. Older pupils support distressed younger pupils until a member of staff takes over. Inspectors agree with those parents who said that behaviour was good in the school.
13. Pupils' attendance levels at the school are improving but holidays taken during term time and the usual lost days through sickness result in the total attendance being less than the national average. The majority of pupils arrive at school in good time for the start of the day but there is a small number of pupils who are late on a regular basis.

### **How well are pupils taught?**

14. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Teaching is good overall with some good features. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons, good or better in 66 percent of lessons and very good or excellent in almost 30 percent of lessons. There is some good and very good teaching for pupils in the under-fives, at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. Good and very good teaching is found consistently in the reception class and towards and at the end of Key Stage 2. This raises pupils' attainment.
15. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall. The school uses the talents well of both the headteacher for teaching extended writing to the older pupils and of the specialist teacher from the Education Action Zone to support teachers in information technology lessons.
16. Teachers plan their lessons effectively. From the reception class onwards, they ensure that pupils know what they are to learn during lessons and check at the end of lessons that they have understood their learning. This good practice is evident in almost every lesson and leads to good attitudes and learning by pupils. Teachers provide particularly good strategies for the youngest pupils to understand their own learning. For instance, they use a variety of finger puppets and communicate to them very well through the puppets to ensure understanding of what they are to learn and how well they have learnt. A further good feature of teachers' planning is the links made between some subjects. This motivates pupils well and makes the work interesting. Pupils are given opportunities, for instance, at Key Stage 1 to link their work in design and technology to their work in history and geography on transport and weather. At Key Stage 2, work on history is linked well to writing in English and for developing their skills in information technology. For example, pupils at Years 5 and 6 write letters and diaries as evacuees and effectively compile a fact file on the Second World War with the combination of sounds and images in their information technology lessons. Sometimes, however, English lessons in the information technology suite lose the balance between clear subject objectives and the development of pupils' information technology skills. In these lessons the information technology content outweighs that of English. Links with mathematics are not developed effectively throughout the school and factual writing is not developed sufficiently well in geography.
17. Teachers make good use of support staff. They give clear instructions of their role in lessons and with pupils with whom they work. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school.
18. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively. The support teachers and assistants are well-informed and skilled. They form positive relationships with pupils and work effectively to develop pupils' skills and give them confidence.

19. Teachers develop good relationships with pupils. They are generally sensitive and caring and this encourages the respect that pupils show to their teachers and to the other adults who support them.
20. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good overall. Teachers have a sound understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. For instance, in literacy lessons at Key Stage 1, teachers choose interesting stories and extracts to promote pupils' knowledge of authors and different kinds of stories. In guided writing lessons at Key Stage 2, teachers provide stimulating resources and well-structured frameworks to enable pupils to write letters and poetry. In an impressive lesson at the end of Key Stage 2, the teacher responded sensitively to pupils' feelings and emotions through the use of music and films relating to the destruction of the environment. The lesson developed vocabulary well and enabled all pupils including those with special needs to write their own successful poems. A weakness of the teaching in literacy in some classes at Key Stage 1 is the lack of careful monitoring and systematic teaching of sounds and letters and blends of sounds for building words. For instance, teachers' class records of individual pupils' reading skills and knowledge of sounds and blends of sounds are not all well-kept. This slows down pupils' development in their skills of reading and writing. In mathematics, a strength of the teaching is the good quality of mental arithmetic lessons which is improving pupils' numerical agility. At Key Stage 2, particularly towards and at the end of the key stage, mathematics lessons move at a fast pace and higher attaining pupils are given challenging work. Work for pupils with special needs is well-matched to their ability and their previous learning. However, in lessons at Key Stage 1, and in some lessons at the beginning of Key Stage 2, mathematical activities for pupils have less challenge. Teachers spend too much time consolidating what pupils already know and do not move pupils on sufficiently well and introduce them to harder work quickly enough.
21. Teachers give detailed explanations at the beginning of lessons of what is to be done. They use their skills of questioning well to direct pupils' thinking. Teachers' enthusiasm for the subject is often conveyed well, particularly to the youngest and the oldest pupils in the school. Teachers' enthusiasm for science was evident during a very well-organised and prepared science lesson for pupils at Years 5 and 6 on investigations of sound vibration. In a very good dance lesson for reception pupils the teacher used props and music well to enable pupils to be in an imaginary world of the circus and to move like clowns.
22. Teachers are good at using time and other resources well. Resources are nearly always prepared. However, in some lessons, such as science and music, resources are not always to hand and when this occurs it slows the pace of lessons.
23. Teachers give good opportunities to pupils to work together and to co-operate in their learning. This is a feature of lessons in art, design and technology and science. Short regular sessions for pupils' personal and social development are good features of teaching and make the beginning and end of lessons interesting. They are also used successfully to settle pupils after breaks and lunchtimes.
24. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall. Marking encourages pupils to do their best. Teachers use the school reward system effectively to encourage pupils to practice good work and behaviour. There is little checking of pupils' progress in subjects other than in mathematics, English and science. Teachers make better use of their assessments at Key Stage 2. In science, for instance, although teachers' day to day assessments of pupils' learning is used well at Key Stage 2, this is not so at Key Stage 1. Pupils' understanding remains insecure as a result. Careful assessment at Key Stage 1 is not consistently recorded in all classes for all pupils in English and mathematics. Throughout the school, assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding in science is not developed as well as it is for English and mathematics.

25. Teachers in both key stages give homework on a regular and frequent basis although not all pupils carry out or return their homework to school. This is recorded carefully by most teachers. The inspection does not agree with parents who say that pupils receive insufficient homework.
26. Teachers and support staff manage pupils very well. They promote the school behaviour policy and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. This results in pupils having good attitudes to their work.

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

27. The school meets the statutory requirements and teaches all subjects including religious education. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection when the balance of attention given to subjects varied between classes. Although there are still weaknesses to be addressed within subjects such as music, history and geography, the quality of the curriculum is sound overall. All groups of pupils have their needs met. Support staff give well-planned and directed help to special needs pupils and this is better than at the time of the previous inspection.
28. There is an appropriate emphasis given to English, mathematics and science; the rest of the curriculum is given adequate attention. The school's provision for information technology has improved since the last inspection with more computers and a wider range of work. This has been successfully promoted through the Education Action Zone initiative. The school has successfully adopted the nationally recommended strategies for literacy and numeracy and provides an effective programme of activities to develop key skills in reading, writing and number work. This is particularly rich in the range of writing experiences offered to pupils during additional extended writing lessons at Key Stage 2 and the use of time set aside daily for pupils' guided and silent reading is a strength of the English curriculum. This makes a good contribution to raising pupils' attainment by the end of the key stage. Another good feature of the curriculum, is the way in which some subjects are linked through the same activity as, for example, when pupils use information technology to produce multi-media presentations relating to the events of The Second World War. The excellent links between the school and the Education Action Zone are effective in raising standards in information technology and successfully incorporating the subject across the whole curriculum. The school is beginning to make use of nationally recommended schemes of work to further develop subjects such as art, design technology, music and geography. This has not yet had sufficient time to impact on standards in geography and music.
29. An annual residential fieldwork excursion for the older pupils and frequent educational visits are organised which enrich aspects of the curriculum such as physical education, history and geography.
30. The curriculum for children under five meets the requirements of the national guidelines for these pupils and takes account of the recommendations for reception class children in the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.
31. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development through its regular programme of personal, social and health education. Staff make good use of time to encourage pupils to express their thoughts and feelings and to make them more aware of issues concerning their personal safety. Adult volunteers work in the school regularly meeting individual pupils, helping them to develop positive friendly relationships with adults. There are good links with the community and a number of visitors contribute to the programme including the police and personnel from the other emergency services. The school has opted to teach a formal sex education programme. The school nurse makes a good contribution to this initiative. Further very good links are

forged with the community by the publishing and circulation of news and events sheets to a thousand local homes.



32. Satisfactory relationships exist with secondary schools and with the local nursery school. Constructive links have been established with the local college. This has led to the provision of training courses for parents to become classroom support assistants. The additional support from these parents working in classrooms helps pupils develop their skills and achieve more.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is organised efficiently. The register for pupils with special educational needs is a sound working document that is reviewed regularly and kept up-to-date. Individual education plans for pupils are matched accurately to their needs and their progress is measured regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are given equal access to all learning and extra-curricular activities provided by the school.
34. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this enables them to become mature and sensitive individuals with a better understanding of their place in society. These findings are a good improvement on those contained in the previous report; this has been due through the use of a good policy to direct provision.
35. The very good provision made for pupils' spiritual development is apparent during the oldest children's' literacy lessons where, through the use of video clips and taped music, they are given clear insights into the beauty and fragility of the environment. Many write poems of high quality where they express their thoughts and ideas about the protection of endangered species and conservation. There are very good moments of reflection during assemblies where pupils are able to ponder silently on difficult times in their lives and places and on people who are special to them. Very good spiritual moments are created in lessons and assemblies through the use of lighted candles and by the inclusion of music and drama. Pupils are taught to empathise with famous people and gain insights into their life experiences and the taking of difficult decisions. For example, they learn of the sacrifices made by Florence Nightingale and her work to improve the medical care for wounded soldiers. This links smoothly with the moral development of pupils.
36. All staff create a very strong moral culture for pupils which centres around very high expectations and a sense of justice and fair play. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. They understand how to behave and they learn to listen carefully to each other. Much of this is achieved through the personal, social and health education programme and also assemblies. During personal, social and health education, younger pupils tell their concerns to a finger puppet - Norman the Ostrich. Older pupils are taught effectively to help others who have worries. The school's rules support the values identified in its mission statement. All staff deal skilfully with pupils who occasionally exhibit inappropriate behaviour, in a conciliatory and fair manner. The pupil-support mentor plays a constructive role in this key aspect of school life and helps some children to make decisions to change their behaviour. There are good and effective reward systems to celebrate good behaviour, achievement and hard work. Pupils are taught responsibility for others less fortunate than themselves through the support of local charities.
37. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. There is a wide range of school clubs. These provide a variety of sports and other interests such as art and craft and a computer club. The school council, composed of elected pupils representing all classes, meets regularly. It takes account of pupils' suggestions and, for example, promotes initiatives to raise money to renew the supply of children's magazines for the library and identifies other opportunities for charitable fund raising. A recent suggestion is the introduction of a proposed non-uniform day. The residential visit provides pupils with a very useful opportunity to work and play together in a different environment. Teachers encourage pupils to work collaboratively on tasks and this helps them to learn to value the opinions of others and listen to different points of view. The

older pupils enthusiastically carry out tasks and duties to help the daily school routine. Sports teams compete against other schools. There are regular concerts and the choir sings to elderly people living in the local residential home.

38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils study the local community from both a geographical and historical perspective. They gain good introductions into the wider world cultures through their studies of Judaism and Islam and introductory work about Japan and India. They listen to African music and they meet people who represent other cultures. In art, pupils learn about famous Western and living artists. The school takes part in the celebration of *Children Around the World Week*.

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

39. The caring aspects of the school have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school is committed to working in the pupils' best interests to safeguard their welfare and promote their development. The team of committed teachers, who know their pupils well, takes its pastoral responsibility very seriously. It takes good care of all the pupils, for example, by keeping a close eye on those pupils with asthma. The school nurse is a regular visitor in order to give children health checks and to support the teaching of health education. The governing body is involved with the headteacher and staff in ensuring that the school provides a safe environment. Equipment is checked by professionals on a regular basis. The school has a child protection policy that follows local authority guidelines. The headteacher is the named teacher with responsibility for Child Protection, all teachers are vigilant and any concerns are passed to the appropriate agency.
40. There are good procedures for the induction of pupils new to the school and these enable them to settle easily into school life. Parents agree that the school helps children to become mature and responsible.
41. The school has very good procedures to promote good behaviour. These are very successful and the behaviour of pupils throughout the school day is a strength of the school. The school supervises pupils closely, but allows them to take initiative and responsibility. Reports of bullying are taken seriously and the school takes effective action to prevent any re-occurrence. In cases where pupils misbehave, the school carefully monitors the situation and if necessary seeks the support of parents.
42. The school attendance registers are kept up-to-date and the procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are satisfactory. However, overall attendance is below the national average and the school reward system does not include recognition of good attendance and punctuality.
43. Procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in their learning have recently been established in the school. They have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. Pupils in the reception class are assessed through the Manchester Baseline Assessment and the outcomes are used in curricular planning. Assessment arrangements for pupils at the end of both key stages conform to national requirements. Pupils in Key Stage 2 take optional tests at the end of each academic year and the information is recorded on class tracking and individual sheets which help teachers to have an overview of attainment of all pupils. This effective tracking system is used by teachers to analyse their planning and teaching. Tests have recently begun each half term for literacy, science and mathematics. Assessment of other subjects is limited. Personal achievement records show pupils' individual progress in mathematics and English. Target setting for pupils in mathematics and English is newly-instituted and enables pupils to become clearer about their own learning. All pupils maintain their own record of achievement by collecting three pieces of work each year, as well as certificates and rewards. This is presented to pupils before they leave the school.

44. Good use is made of ongoing assessment in Key Stage 2 to guide curricular planning. However, the use of assessment is inconsistent in the school. In Key Stage 1, assessment does not have a direct impact upon day-to-day teaching. Teachers' systems are insufficiently developed and are not used to help them devise tasks and activities that challenge pupils to achieve further.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and personal development are very good. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the school has good procedures to ensure that pupils in both key stages are supported. There are effective systems in place for identifying pupils with special needs and outside support services work closely with the school. Individual education programmes are devised for all pupils and teaching support staff monitor pupils' progress each day. Additional use is made of extra support from a pupil-support mentor through the Education Action Zone project. 'Booster classes' have also had a good impact on pupils' achievements.

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

46. The school has good links with parents. This is confirmed by the positive responses to the parental survey. A high percentage of parents feel comfortable to approach the school with concerns and questions. They feel they are kept informed about how their children are getting on. The school has continued to maintain and build on the satisfactory partnership with parents reported in the last inspection. This has a positive impact on many aspects of school life and makes an important contribution to pupils' progress.
47. Parents are given a good range of information from the school prospectus, the annual governors' report and frequent newsletters from the school throughout the year. The annual pupils' written reports are good. They give details of progress in every subject and pupils' levels of achievement at the end of each key stage are shown on a separate sheet. Parents are invited into school twice each year to discuss their children's progress with the class teacher. The school operates an *open door* policy and the parents know that they can approach the school if they have a concern or problem. There is a weekly clinic for the parents of pupils in Year 6 where they are given the opportunity to discuss their children's future with the class teacher.
48. The school encourages parents to be fully involved in their children's learning. The majority of parents have welcomed and contributed to the new home/school agreement. This helps them understand the importance of assisting their children at home with reading and spelling or specific homework. Pupils are encouraged to take their reading books home every night from the reception class onwards. Parents are requested to record their views on progress in their children's homework diaries.
49. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are invited to attend their children's reviews and are kept informed of their progress. Parents with pupils on the special educational needs register, from the second stage onwards, are also kept informed of their children's targets and progress.
50. Since the school became part of the Education Action Zone, more parents have joined the scheme for *Parents as Educators*. Parents are encouraged to join the scheme and it has increased the number of parents working alongside the pupils in the school. One parent has progressed to become a non-teaching assistant on the staff of the school. The school welcomes any help from parents or friends of the school in the community. One lady, who has no previous connection with the school, works with pupils on several days each week. She provides valuable support which the school appreciates. Parents are also involved with pupils and teachers, in the after-school club and in the school

craft club where they contribute to making attractive face masks and well-designed lamp shades. These links make a good contribution to pupils' personal development and to their learning.

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

51. There is good leadership and management of the school. Strong and positive features are the vision and sense of purpose towards which the headteacher, governors and senior management team work. As a voluntary aided Church of England school, the school fulfils its mission statement well and succeeds in providing a place which supports and stimulates pupils to learn. The school promotes effective relationships amongst children and adults. It also encourages good levels of achievement and high levels of behaviour. The governing body meets all its statutory requirements. Since the last inspection the school has improved its provision for pupils with special educational needs and meets the needs of all pupils equally.
52. The headteacher provides strong leadership. She is well-supported by the governors and the senior management team. The school has dealt with the issues raised in the previous inspection. Significant improvements have been made; for example, in the quality of teaching. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching and this has been replaced by a substantial amount of good and very good teaching. This reflects the examples of good and very good teaching set by the headteacher and members of the senior management team as well as the reorganisation of staff and successful new and temporary appointments. The headteacher, subject co-ordinators and governors, undertake extensive monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning. The focus of classroom monitoring has been sharpened through co-operation and joint observations with officers of the local education authority. Members of the senior management team have release from lessons to assist them to carry out monitoring. This is helpful to teachers who are given oral and written feedback on their lessons to enable them to improve.
53. There are excellent links between the school and the Education Action Zone. The school has welcomed and supported this initiative with a strong level of commitment. The headteacher works closely with the project and liaises with the other primary schools involved. The school makes very good use of the wide range of expertise made available to it. In addition to the recent national literacy and numeracy training, teachers and support staff have received additional training and in-class support from the Education Action Zone specialist consultants for numeracy and information technology. This has resulted in raising the standard of attainment for pupils in information technology at both key stages and of mathematics at Key Stage 2. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection. A good feature is the contribution made to these pupils' learning by the systematic use of well-organised and well-deployed support assistants. This includes the valuable support-mentor system.
54. The governors are committed to their role in the school. They fulfil their responsibilities. As a stable governing body since before the last inspection, they have worked hard towards supporting the improvements identified at that time. They have assumed new roles readily and are now taking an increasing part in the management of the school. They have a sound understanding of the areas where the school needs to improve and how this is to be achieved. In addition to the established committees for finance, staffing, building and premises and admissions, the governing body now has an active curriculum committee. Each subject is supported by governors. They are fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching in the school. This enables them to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the school and identify areas for further development. The nominated governors for Numeracy, Literacy and the designated governor for special education needs, work closely with teachers and co-ordinators of their subjects.

55. Governors play a very supportive management role in leading the school and for the school's development. Although not yet fully involved in the drafting of the school's development plan and setting targets for 1999 and 2000, they understand the aspects that affect target setting such as the differences in size and make up of groups of different pupils. They are involved in checking how well the school has done. They take a full part in the training provided for them by the local education authority and are in the process of setting targets for the headteacher.
56. The current development plan is sound and promotes the school's vision. It clearly identifies the responsibilities of individuals, tasks, how these are to be achieved, the target dates and how these will be measured. Educational priorities are well-supported by careful financial planning. The finance committee meets regularly to review spending. Day-to-day financial administration is efficient. The school uses additional funds through specific grants well and for their designated purposes.
57. The additional Education Action Zone development plan for the current year is thorough and shows clearly how it supports the school.
58. The school has sufficient teachers and support staff. The school receives a good level of support from the headteacher who has a regular teaching commitment for literacy at Key Stage 2. Specialist teachers from the Education Action Zone for mathematics and information technology also make a good contribution to teaching at both key stages. This has had a good impact on pupils' performance in information technology at both key stages and in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. There has been disruption to all classes during the past year at Key Stage 1. This has been due to the unavoidable illness of two members of staff. The frequent use of different short-term temporary teachers, and pupils being taught in classes other than their own, has hampered pupils' progress at the end of the key stage and hindered planned work in some other classes. Staffing has been carefully restructured for the coming school year and new appointments have now been made. Teachers have appropriate qualifications and they have a good range of experience. This enables all subjects of the National Curriculum to be taught and co-ordinated. The nursery nurse and qualified support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They are particularly effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs get an equal opportunity for their learning. Regular assistance from adult volunteers gives many pupils further opportunities to develop personal relationships and exercise their conversational skills. This makes a sound contribution to pupils' personal development and to their skills in speaking and listening.
59. Induction procedures for newly qualified and newly appointed teachers are good. New teachers are given good levels of support and mentoring both within the school and through attending courses. This helps them settle readily into the school. Experienced and newly qualified teachers are encouraged to visit and support lessons prior to taking up their appointment so familiarising themselves with the day-to-day working of the school. Systems of appraisal are in place.
60. The accommodation is adequate and good use is made of an extra classroom to accommodate the technology suite. However, in Key Stage 2, pupils often have to walk through other classrooms to reach their own which can cause a disturbance to lessons. Classrooms are generous in size and good use is made of the corridor space at both key stages. The library space is a good feature in the school. It is used extensively. The indoor accommodation is kept clean and tidy by the caretaker. Throughout the school, there are attractive displays linked to pupils' work and to the school's aims. These help to stimulate interest and to celebrate achievements. There is a good-sized hard play area and grassed play area which helps pupils develop their physical skills. However, there is no designated enclosed play area for the children who are under five. Learning resources are of satisfactory quality and sufficient overall. The amount of practical resources for subjects such as science and mathematics are better than at the time of the last inspection. There is a very good range of modern machines and software in

information technology. The new equipment in the information technology suite is impressive. There are shortfalls of some resources for geography, objects to support pupils' learning in history and insufficient mats for physical education lessons. There are no ramps for disabled pupils although there are many steps and staircases in parts of the school.

61. This is a smaller than average primary school and expenditure per pupil is above average. However, taking into account the good teaching that pupils receive, the good level of progress made during their time in school, the very good provision for their spiritual, moral and social development and pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- **Improve pupils' attainment in English at the age of seven by:**
  - developing their knowledge of letters, sound and blends of sounds further, by providing a well planned and assessed programme of phonic skills
  - 
  - developing technical skills and confidence in writing with the use of focussed practical activities and well matched resources
  - increasing activities to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening; for instance, in role play and drama  
*(paragraphs 4, 5, 20, 64, & 84 refer)*
- **Improve pupils' attainment in mathematics at the age of seven by:**
  - providing interesting and challenging activities that encourage pupils to develop new mathematical concepts in their use of number, to work independently and to solve problems for themselves
  - ensuring that pupils record data with the use of a variety of charts and graphs
  - developing understanding of simple fractions and use this knowledge to solve problems  
*(paragraphs 4, 5, 20, 65, 91, 96, 97, & 98 refer)*
- **Improve pupils' attainment in science at the age of seven by:**
  - provision of more practical activities to develop pupils' independent learning and skills of recording using graphs and tables  
*(paragraphs 4, 5, 101, 102, & 105 refer)*
- **Improve the systems and use of day-to- day assessment of pupils' progress at Key Stage 1, in reading, writing, mathematics and science by:**
  - devising recording systems to gain a more accurate picture of an individual pupil's levels of attainment
  - providing activities that are matched to each pupil's learning needs and give an increasing challenge to those at the higher levels of attainment  
*(paragraphs, 20, 44, 85, & 106 refer)*

**In addition to the key issues identified above, two less important weaknesses should be considered by the school for inclusion in the Action Plan.**

- Further developing the outdoor play area for use by children under five.  
*(paragraphs 60, 67, & 69 refer)*
- Establish additional procedures which will improve the rates of attendance and punctuality.  
*(paragraph 13 refers)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2.2	25.5	34.3	38.3	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		155
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		63

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y R – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		56

#### 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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	47

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	percent
School data	92.88
National comparative data	94.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	percent
School data	0.55
National comparative data	0.8

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	[17]	[12]	[29]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	[10]	[ 7]	[11]
	Girls	[ 9]	[10]	[10]
	Total	[19]	[17]	21]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	[65] ([55])	[52] ([82])	[71] ([80])
	National	[53] ([54])	[83] ([81])	[86] ([84])

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	[10]	[11]	[10]
	Girls	[ 8]	[11]	[10]
	Total	[18]	[22]	[20]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	[62] ([76])	[76] ([83])	[69] ([83])
	National	[86] ([81])	[86] ([85])	[87] ([86])

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	[16]	[110]	[27]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	[10]	[10]	[12]
	Girls	[ 8]	[ 8]	[10]
	Total	[18]	[18]	[22]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[67] ([50])	[66] ([40])	[82] ([56])
	National	[70] ([65])	[69] ([59])	[78] ([69])

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	[ 8]	[ 8]	[10]
	Girls	[ 8]	[ 7]	[ 8]
	Total	[16]	[15]	[18]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[59] ([53])	[56] ([47])	[66] ([56])
	National	[67] ([65])	[69] ([65])	[75] ([71])

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	124
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

*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)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	26

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999
----------------	------

	£
Total income	343635
Total expenditure	334731
Expenditure per pupil	1892
Balance brought forward from previous year	23995
Balance carried forward to next year	32899

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	158
Number of questionnaires returned:	51 (32 percent)

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 My child likes school	49	41	6	2	2
2 My child is making good progress in school	51	41	4	4	0
3 Behaviour in the school is good	41	35	22	2	0
4 My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	41	43	14	2	0
5 The teaching is good	53	41	4	2	0
6 I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	45	43	10	2	0
7 I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	49	45	2	2	2
8 The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	63	27	10	0	0
9 The school works closely with parents	43	39	16	2	0
10 The school is well led and managed	47	27	14	10	2
11 The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	51	43	6	0	0
12 The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	49	37	8	2	4

NB: figures are rounded to nearest integer; sum may not = 100 percent  
 Nil responses (i.e. blank boxes) are included in category 5

### 5 (16 percent) parents made additional comments

#### Strongest points in order:

- Children are given good individual attention to do their best.

## 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

62. Since the previous inspection the good standard of provision identified for the under-fives has been maintained. Staff work very hard to secure a stimulating, caring and welcoming environment for all children. The school admits children to full-time places into the reception class in September in the year in which they will be five years of age. At the time of the inspection, five of the twenty-four children in the reception class were four years of age and the remaining 19 were already five. The provision for under-fives is, therefore, focused in the reception class.
63. Attainment on entry into the reception class, for the majority of children, is well below that which is expected nationally in all areas of learning, with a significant number of children having limited speech and language skills. Children make good progress towards achieving the recommended levels of learning. In personal and social development, children make good progress and the standards they reach are in line with those expected of children of this age. They speak confidently in front of the whole class and easily make themselves known to visitors, proudly discussing their work. Children's behaviour is good and they respond well to directions and requests. They are familiar with the school's routines and respond positively to the school's behaviour management programme. Teachers and support staff make their expectations very clear and this helps children to understand right and wrong. Children are quick to establish good relationships and friendships with others. They are well mannered at all times. They share resources with each other and wait patiently for individual adult attention. They play during self-chosen activities and are given many good opportunities to work in a group or as the whole class for increasing periods of time. This is particularly evident during literacy and numeracy sessions where children make good headway in their learning. Children have good opportunities to respond to religious and cultural events; they attend school assemblies, say prayers and learn about many Christian based festivals throughout the year. They also have planned activities where they are helped to understand different cultures and beliefs. They have recently been involved in an interesting topic on Africa. Cultural events are planned throughout the year and children participate in many creative activities such as Guy Fawkes and fireworks. Planned discussions and carefully chosen stories help children to consider their feelings and share their experiences with others. This aspect within the programme is strong and is linked to the school's personal and social education programme. Skills for developing personal independence such as undressing and dressing for physical activities are taught consistently. By the age of five, most children can attend to their own needs. However, initiative and self-selection are insufficiently developed. As a consequence, children have too few opportunities to engage in their own selected activity and develop independence in their learning.
64. The programme for language and literacy is given strong priority and the majority of children make good progress in their learning. However, standards overall are below those expected for children of this age by the age of five years. A significant number have standards of speech and language that are well below those usually found. Children learn to listen attentively in small groups and learn to follow instructions. Planned discussions and various play-acting opportunities encourage children to increase their vocabulary. Many children have difficulty talking at length about their personal experiences. Vocabulary is generally limited, although staff work hard to promote this through stories and careful planning. All children show genuine interest in stories, have good access to a range of books, and know how to handle them correctly. Teachers make effective use of puppets and toys, such as *Mrs Honey* when reading to children. This is effective in improving their understanding and helps to develop their vocabulary. By the age of five, most children recognise and write their name from

memory. The daily literacy lessons ensure that, by the age of five, the majority of children recognise several letters by shape and sound and identify objects with similar initial letter sounds. The majority of children recognise a few familiar words and a small minority in reception class can read. Children are familiar with many songs and rhymes, but they do not readily recognise patterns and syllables in words. Children have opportunities to write as they play. For example, when playing at the *travel agents*, a minority of children write their name, numbers and the day of the week as they play. This is good provision. Although the majority of children use symbols or familiar letters to communicate meaning, very few are able to write simple words without adult support. Standards in all aspects of writing are well below that which is expected nationally by the age of five years.

65. In mathematics, children make good progress, although standards of attainment are below that which is expected of children of this age. Children become aware of equipment of various shapes and sizes. They learn to name, sort and match shapes. They begin to understand positional vocabulary and teachers plan practical activities which encourage them to use it for themselves. Children use commercial resources and printing activities to make and repeat mathematical patterns. Number stories and rhymes are used effectively to help children learn how numbers work. For example, they learn how one can be added on or taken away when they sing, *Five Little Ducks* or when they read the story *Five Green Monsters*. Children learn to count using number lines and very good use is made of displays to help children recognise numbers. The majority of children identify numbers to ten by the age of five and, through worksheet activities, they learn to use numbers in their work. There are some planned activities where children learn to use mathematics to solve problems in a practical way by, for example, when weighing objects and when standing in lines to illustrate the order of numbers. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on practical activities to solve problems; many activities rely too heavily on worksheets. The majority of children record numbers, but only a minority have an understanding of the language associated with practical number operations, such as taking one away or adding two groups together.
66. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children make good progress. However, standards of attainment are below that which is expected of children of this age group. Children have opportunities to discuss their news on a regular basis in both the class and small groups; they discuss and record differences between themselves as babies and the way they are now. These sessions help children develop a sense of time past in their lives. However, the limited vocabulary of many children hinders deeper discussion of past and present events in their lives. They learn about some famous people in the past and this is effective in helping children become aware of long, long ago. Effective use is made of topic work on transport. For example, they become aware of their own environment and visits made within the locality make them aware of its special features. They devise plans of how they would like their playground to look. Children have opportunities to explore features of living and man-made things; they handle artefacts displayed for their attention, including interesting natural items. They plant seeds and nurture them as they grow. They are beginning to identify features of living things. They observe differences in the seasons and changes in weather and plant life. Children learn to observe closely, discuss and record their observations, although too much emphasis is given to recording and it is not always clear how much children have understood. Children are encouraged to question in a scientific way. They learn about day and night and know that street lights and car lights use electricity. They know that ice melts when placed in a warm area. Evaluations of the teacher's planning show that children enjoy practical work. Most children make very good progress in their technology skills and provision for this aspect within the programme is very good. They cut, fold and join materials and make sensible choices in the resources they use when making models with re-useable materials, for example. All children have regular access to computers within the classroom and in the technology suite. The software

used supports a wide range of learning and includes painting and word processing. They use the *Roamer* to support their understanding of mathematical ideas.

67. Children make sound progress in their physical development and achieve a standard of attainment which is in line with children of similar age. They have planned sessions in the school hall where they learn to develop good co-ordination, control and an awareness of their space and the space of others. They learn to run, stride, hop and jump. Music is used effectively to promote imagination in movement. Children use small apparatus for practising their skills and develop good hand-to-eye co-ordination. They learn to throw and retrieve balls accurately and use bats, hoops and quoits to develop their skills further. There is a selection of wheeled apparatus available, but these are insufficiently used to ensure that children increasingly develop their skills. Access to the school equipment helps children to develop climbing and balancing skills. A range of tools and equipment is available and children develop their manipulative skills. They learn to push and pull to join two components together when using commercial constructional equipment. Most children learn to handle paintbrushes, glue spreaders, scissors, staplers and hole punches. However, pencil control is difficult for a minority of children. They learn to thread beads and manipulate malleable materials, such as dough or plasticine.
68. Children make good progress in creative development and, by the age of five, they reach standards that are in line with those of similar age. Children have good opportunities to explore sound. Instruments are available and there are planned musical activities in which they learn to beat in rhythm, clap and sing. Children explore colour as they paint. They work with a variety of media and learn to experiment with texture, shape, space and form. As they work, they use different textures and an extensive variety of colours. They work in three dimensions with clay. There are activities planned to encourage imaginative play, such as the *travel agents* and children also learn to make up stories as they play. Children respond to music and movement. They respond to music from Africa, and to robot music, for example. They develop an awareness of their senses and they are encouraged to explore various natural and made items that are displayed for discovery. Children are inspired by music, which is played for them, as they work in art lessons, and by the visually stimulating environment in which they work. They use a widening range of materials, tools and resources, but limited vocabulary prohibits their expression of feelings and ideas.
69. The quality of teaching is very good. Support staff and teachers work effectively as a team to promote learning for all children. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the recommended curriculum for children of this age. They plan together giving appropriate priority to the key areas of personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. The nursery nurse and support assistant working with the under-fives are effectively deployed. All staff are very good role models for the children, providing a caring and secure working environment. They praise children frequently and this helps them to build up their self-esteem. Staff explain rules carefully and have high expectations for behaviour. They provide planned activities to help children develop concentration and understanding of their learning. They question children effectively and encourage them to think. This helps children with their language development. Staff are organised; they group children appropriately, sometimes according to their stage of development. They provide a good range of learning opportunities, many of which are directed by the teacher and assistants themselves. However, they provide too few activities from which children can choose and develop their initiative and independence in learning. Effective assessment systems are in place and cover the main areas of learning. All staff evaluate their plans clearly and thoroughly and use the information to improve teaching and plan future learning for the children. They make effective use of indoor accommodation to promote learning. However, insufficient use is made of the outdoor area to promote the learning programmes and aspects of physical development in particular.



## ENGLISH

79. Standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving and are close to the level expected for eleven-year-olds. The previous inspection judged that pupils' attainment in English at eleven was below that expected nationally. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' level of attainment has not changed since the previous inspection and remains below that expected for seven-year-olds. There has been a rise in line with the national trend over the past four years for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. In test results for 1999, in comparison with similar schools standards at the age of eleven were above the average, although the number of pupils reaching the higher level was about the same.
80. In 1999, pupils' performance in the Key Stage 1 tests was well below the national average at the age of seven for both reading and writing. The number of pupils achieving at the higher level was below in writing and well below the average in reading. In comparison with similar schools reading levels were below the expected level and writing results were well below. Over the past four years results in reading and writing have been erratic and have shown no discernible trend. Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 rose in 1998 but dropped significantly in 1999. The pupils in the group tested in 1999 had arrived in the school with very low levels of attainment in language and literacy compared with other schools in the local education authority.
81. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, pupils learn at a steady rate. They learn more quickly towards and at the end of the key stage. By Year 6 pupils develop wider vocabulary skills and many talk confidently and politely to visitors. Pupils of all abilities discuss their reading and favourite authors confidently. They ask sensible questions and express their feelings on matters that are important to them, such as in an impressive poetry writing lesson at the end of the key stage on the environment. Pupils enjoy reading and read at the expected level for their age with a good level of comprehension. They discuss the plot and characters in their books and offer their own opinions on books and different authors. They enjoy a wide range of books and discuss the different categories such as fantasy and adventure with assurance. Pupils have favourite authors such as Roald Dahl, J M Barrie and J K Rowlands. They use the classification system in the school library to find non-fiction books, understanding and demonstrating accurately the use of contents and index pages and glossaries. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their reading. They read regularly at home as well as in school and achieve well in relation to their previous attainment although they are still a level behind that expected for their age. A good feature of the reading programme in Key Stage 2 is the regular daily guided and silent reading time.
82. Information technology makes a good contribution to pupils' achievements in writing at Key Stage 2. Pupils use word processing programmes confidently to write and edit their work. They present it in different ways, making good use of different fonts and lay outs, for instance, in their poetry writing at Years 5 and 6.
83. Pupils have good standards of presentation in their hand-written work by the end of the key stage. They title, date and underline their work and write legibly and fluently. A strength of pupils' writing development in Key Stage 2 is due to good teaching in specific times outside the literacy hour given to extended writing. Pupils learn to write in a wide range of styles and for a variety of audiences. For instance, they structure, plan and write stories, letters of complaint, poems and play scripts. Writing is satisfactory across other subjects of the curriculum such as science and religious education but less satisfactory in geography where there is an over-reliance on work sheets. This limits the opportunities for pupils to write factually. By the end Year 6, the majority of pupils are confident writers who use secure sentence construction with accurate commas and speech marks. They paragraph their work well to separate their ideas.



84. By the age of five a significant proportion of children start the National Curriculum programmes of study for English with language and literacy skills well below those usually found for this age. This is confirmed by the assessments made at the beginning of the reception year class. Pupils make satisfactory steps in their learning overall in English at Key Stage 1 and make an improvement to bring them to an overall level which is below rather than well below in speaking and listening and writing. In Key Stage 1, pupils make the best progress in their learning in the reception class. A good feature of pupils' learning is their learning of rhymes and songs. This contributes to raising their skills in vocabulary and speaking and listening. However, by the end of Key Stage 1, a significant number of pupils do not achieve highly enough in both reading and writing. Few pupils achieve at the higher levels. The overall achievement for reading is below that expected for seven-year-olds. Almost a half of pupils either do not read at the expected level or only read at the lowest end of the expected level. Many have a limited sight vocabulary and are insecure on building words with the use of letters, sounds and blends of sounds to help them to read independently. They have not yet developed a fluency and expression in their reading. Pupils enjoy reading stories together with their teachers in the literacy hour. By the end of the key stage they are developing an interest in the books and work of the authors they are introduced to in the literacy hour, such as Colin Mc Naughton. The pupils who read to adults regularly at home achieve the best in reading. A third of pupils have similar, below average standards in writing. These pupils do not yet write independently, on a line or form their letters correctly. Other pupils are developing as independent writers and attempt to retell a range of stories such as *The Snow Queen* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*. They are beginning to join groups of letters but do not form their sentences correctly with consistent use of full stops and capital letters. In their study of patterns in words, some pupils are beginning to recognise words with double letters but many pupils work slowly and take longer than expected to complete their lists. For most pupils in Year 2, skills in speaking are limited. Many pupils give short answers and comments and they are unable to express their views and preferences readily, for instance, when discussing reading. Pupils generally listen attentively to their teachers and make sound contributions to short sessions in matters which arise in personal and social education, for instance, when discussing the need to wash their hands before a meal.
85. The quality of teaching in English is good overall. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and in a substantial number of lessons it is good or very good. There is good and very good teaching at both key stages but it is better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. In some classes at Key Stage 1, teachers do not keep satisfactory records of pupils' progress and the skills that they know for sounds and blends of words. Reading records at the end of the key stage do not sufficiently detail the skills that pupils have achieved in their reading and what they need to learn next. Records are merely a list of the books that pupils have read and do not have useful comments to move pupils on in their reading. The best teaching in Key Stage 1 is in the reception class and a strength is the emphasis that teachers at the beginning of the key stage give to learning and practising rhymes and songs. In Key Stage 2, teachers use resources appropriately to stimulate pupils' learning. For instance, teachers give good demonstrations of writing letters and poetry. A strength of the teaching at Key Stage 2 are the well-focused lessons for developing pupils' writing at length. For instance, teachers use carefully chosen films and music about the destruction of the environment to draw out pupils' feelings and enable them to write strongly and with empathy. One outstanding lesson of extended writing was seen at the end of Key Stage 2. In the lower part of the key stage, teachers provide few useful ways for pupils to learn to spell correctly when writing.
86. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally sound and for some teachers it is very good. They plan their lessons well in accordance with the national literacy strategy and use time efficiently in the literacy hour. Teachers generally plan work for to suit the abilities of all pupils in their classes. They use support staff effectively. Teachers' plan to involve

support staff fully in lessons and this enables them to direct their work towards those pupils with the most needs. During the inspection, the pupils in the Year 2 class were taught well by a short-term temporary teacher. She was assisted ably by the support assistant who knew the children very well. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage pupils well, showing firm control and discipline when necessary. In the best lessons, teachers have very good pace and use good questioning and answering techniques to maintain pupils' concentration and interest. In some cross-curricular lessons, when using information technology for writing on screen, there is sometimes a loss of a clear English focus by teachers as pupils concentrate on developing their skills in information technology.

87. The English curriculum covers all areas of English, although in Key Stage 1 there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to develop their speaking and listening. The teaching of literacy is monitored throughout the school and pupils' test results have been analysed. This analysis has been used to raise pupils' standards at Key Stage 2. Resources are adequate and the library is well-organised to encourage pupils' independent learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Since the previous inspection, standards have fallen at the end of Key Stage 1. There has been improvement at the end of Key Stage 2 because pupils attain the expectation across a broader range of activities. Standards achieved by pupils, aged seven are below the national expectation for both the expected and the higher level.
89. Inspection findings show that standards achieved by the oldest pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are close to the national expectation. The proportion of pupils on course to achieve the higher level is higher than last year. This is an improvement. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn best towards and at the end of the key stage.
90. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils work confidently. They estimate the answers to long multiplication sums before completing the mechanical operation. Some pupils understand the value of fractions and accurately convert them into decimal and percentage form. Pupils' mathematical vocabulary is developing and they explain median, mode and square roots. They apply mathematics to solving problems. For instance, they construct line graphs to convert currency from German into English. They collect information about their favourite animals and television programmes. They reorganise the information through the use of bar charts.
91. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have unsatisfactory skills in numeracy. Although the average and more able children count on to 29 and further and calculate  $8+4=12$ , they cannot deduce  $12-8=4$ . They have unsatisfactory knowledge of fractions. For instance, they do not recognise halves or use them to solve simple problems. They are insecure when calculating money using decimal notation. They have difficulty in recording mathematical information in a graph and have little understanding of three-dimensional shapes. This is due to insufficient teaching in these areas of the curriculum. They recognise and repeat multiplication number patterns particularly in respect of the 2 and 10 times and recognise patterns of odd and even numbers. Many pupils can recognise the *o'clock* time but have unsatisfactory knowledge of two-dimensional shapes. Standards in mental arithmetic are beginning to rise. Some pupils recall addition facts to 100 using a 100 square to calculate their answers. They can accurately round up and round down to calculate the answer to  $21+19$ . Pupils double 70 to make 140 and accurately halve 80 and 100. Some pupils are beginning to work at the higher level. However, there is an over-use of printed worksheets. This has prevented pupils from gaining practical experiences or experimenting in setting out their work.

96. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good overall at Key Stage 2. A strength of the teaching is the quality of mental arithmetic sessions throughout the school through which pupils improve in their numeracy skills. Very good teaching is found towards and at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers give clear directions to pupils and effective plenary sessions deepen their understanding. Throughout the school, children with special needs are supported by both their class teachers and by skilled learning support staff. As a result, they make good progress in developing their basic skills. During the inspection in Year 2, the effective questioning by the temporary teacher, alongside the use of a number square, helped pupils understand the process of adding 20 by moving vertically down the columns as they identified patterns. These question and answer sessions continue to challenge the pupils as the chosen examples become increasingly more complex and many begin to work at the higher levels. In Key Stage 1, teachers do not systematically develop money calculations over time when introducing decimal notation. Three-dimensional shapes are not introduced and pupils do not record any mathematical information in graphical form. Not all pupils are challenged to work at the higher levels of attainment.
97. The teaching of the oldest pupils is very good. The teacher has good subject knowledge and lessons move at a fast pace with challenging work to stretch the higher attaining pupils. Activities are planned to ensure that the average attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make the progress they are capable of. Good questioning techniques assist pupils to organise their thoughts. Good teaching also includes carefully planned examples used by the teacher to help them understand rounding-up procedures. This assists them estimate, for example, how many boxes for 10 cakes will be required to package 26 items and how many cars to seat 5 will be required to carry 37 passengers. However, in some lessons, the examples prepared by the teacher do not fully challenge the pupils and, consequently, their learning is mostly consolidation of previous skills and operations. In some lessons at Key Stage 2, there are good links between mathematics and information technology, particularly in data handling where the application is used regularly to analyse and record information using graphs and bar charts. However, links between mathematics and other subjects are not effectively developed throughout the school.
98. The subject is well-led by the recently appointed co-ordinator. Teaching has been monitored and resulting issues have been identified and raised. The school has benefited from the contribution of the Education Action Zone teacher who has assisted teachers in their planning and lesson preparation, helping them to raise their expectations. Further planning needs to be completed to ensure that the mathematics curriculum in Key Stage 1 extends to challenge those pupils who learn more quickly.

## **SCIENCE**

99. Standards of attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving and are close to the level expected for eleven-year-olds. Around a quarter of pupils achieve at the higher level.
100. Test results show that pupils' attainment is well above the average for similar schools and trends over the past four years show a steady improvement in attainment. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the targets set for them. At the end of the key stage, the approach to the work for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is structured and is clearly recorded in a scientific way. The majority of pupils handle more complex experiments, for example, when estimating forces in Newtons, for example. They discuss and record their findings using tables and charts.

101. In Key Stage 1, inspection findings indicate that attainment is below the national average. These findings are an improvement on the teacher assessments for 1999 when pupils' attainment in science was well below that of similar schools. Findings are similar to those of the previous inspection except that pupils' attainment in the area of investigative and experimental science, which was recognised as a weakness last time, has improved. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the processes of investigation and experimentation to find out how the world around them works. By the use of everyday familiar objects they find out, for instance, that an electrical device will not work if there is no battery. However, they do not always record their findings using different methods such as graphs and charts.
102. Learning has improved since the previous inspection. Taking into account that pupils begin the National Curriculum for science with levels of understanding and knowledge about the world well below those expected at age five, progress in learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is sometimes based on first-hand experience. However, pupils' knowledge of scientific vocabulary and confidence to work independently on practical activities is below expectations at the end of the key stage. At the beginning of the key stage pupils experiment with a variety of toys to learn how simple forces work. In the reception class, for instance, pupils use a variety of wheeled apparatus, bats and balls, and discuss whether they have to push or pull to make them move. By growing plants from seeds in Year 1, pupils learn the terms to apply to plants such as stem, leaf, flower and root. They also develop the idea of a fair test. They experiment with plants by depriving some of light and some of water. In this way they learn about features of living things, including what plants need in order to thrive.
103. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress in their learning is satisfactory and accelerates as a result of good and well-organised teaching towards and at the end of the key stage. Pupils sort materials into groups according to their properties. They discover which materials will be attracted by magnets and why. They learn about the properties of materials by describing differences and classifying them into solids and liquids. They learn through filtration to extract solids that do not dissolve. Through structured investigation, they make generalisations about motion affected by forces such as gravity and friction. Towards and at the end of the key stage, pupils strengthen their knowledge of electrical circuits, conductors, insulators and switches. They experiment with light and learn how it travels. A minority of pupils working at the higher level make changes to light using filters and magnifying lenses.
104. Pupils develop an increasingly mature and responsible approach to investigative work and this has a positive impact on the good progress made. Pupils work together, discuss their work sensibly and confidently explain what they are doing. All pupils treat equipment with care and replace it after use.
105. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teaching in science at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 it is very good, particularly towards the middle and end of the key stage. There are good improvements to planning and clear planning supports teaching. This enables pupils to understand the content and intent of the lessons. All teachers make clear what is to be learned at the beginning of each lesson and summarise the learning achieved at the end of lessons. This is very effective in ensuring that pupils' knowledge and understanding are extended. In Key Stage 1, where teaching is satisfactory, resources are not always readily accessible to pupils and lessons generally lack pace. Teachers do not give sufficient opportunities to record work using different methods such as graphs and charts. In the very good lessons in Key Stage 2, the pace is brisk which pushes learning along in a positive and exciting way. Teachers convey their enthusiasm to pupils well, for instance, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 on the investigation of sound. Pupils enjoy learning and retain knowledge with thorough understanding. In lessons for Years 4 and 5, resources and

class support are used effectively to give pupils good opportunities to investigate and discuss their findings about gravity and friction.

106. The scheme of work ensures that the National Curriculum is covered and a good balance is achieved between the programmes of study. The management of the subject is sound. Day-to-day assessment of learning is used well in Key Stage 2, so that when a lesson has not achieved its objective, the topic is repeated in a different, more effective way. In Key Stage 1, the use of assessment in short-term planning is insufficiently developed; consequently, pupils' understanding is not always secure. Throughout the school, the longer-term assessment of attainment is less well-developed in science than in other subjects. This prevents an accurate tracking of individual progress and a change of approach so that topics can be sufficiently evaluated to ensure maximum benefit for all pupils. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 1. Over recent years, more rigour has been applied to scientific terminology and methods of work. Resources have improved since the previous inspection. They are stored in an organised and accessible way. Good use is made of information technology to promote scientific knowledge. The school has recently acquired a range of appropriate CD ROMS which pupils use to search for information.

## ART

107. Only a few art lessons were seen but there was sufficient evidence available to indicate that standards in art are satisfactory and have been maintained overall since the previous inspection. At the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations in painting and collage and modelling in clay. Pupils learn at a steady rate through both key stages. They work in a variety of media as they move through the school and experience different skills and techniques such as printing, painting, and collage. They learn to apply texture to their work. They learn to draw from first-hand observations using a variety of pencils and charcoal, for instance, in their drawings of bicycles. Pupils produce *Sunset* pictures in the style of famous artists such as William Turner and paint to music in the style of living artists such as Anthony Frost.
108. During the week of the inspection the whole school was making a study of Anthony Frost's work. His work was interpreted in different media, such as paint and collage by pupils of different ages. Pupils of all ages acquired a good understanding of the use of primary colours and of mixing them. They explored texture and shape in their work and the use of bold and careful brush strokes to give different effects to their work. Pupils of all ages explained how they achieved the different effects and showed a good understanding of what they needed to do next to improve their work. They use a variety of different brushes and tools to gain their results, taking care in the presentation of their finished work. One class of Year 4 and 5 pupils completed their individual collage work to a good standard. They took a pride in preparing it for display by carefully covering it with protective transparent sheets.
109. Pupils enjoy their art lessons. They work very well together and share tools and materials with each other readily. Pupils support each other's efforts and all pupils respect the work of others. The oldest have a mature attitude to their work and to the work of others. This is evident in their closing discussions at the end of their lesson.
110. The quality of teaching in art is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers are confident and give encouragement and suggestions to pupils to help them improve their work. They have developed their own knowledge and interest further in a planned programme of training and more is planned. From the beginning of Key Stage 1, pupils are made aware of the context of their work. Teachers give clear explanations and instructions. They relate pupils' learning to what they already know. Teachers expect pupils to do their best and value the efforts that they make. Work is displayed attractively and in an informative way. For instance, a detailed display shows the stages

that pupils undertook in preparation for making clay heads and faces. Teachers plan, prepare and organise their lessons well. They provide a variety of suitable tools and resources for their lessons. They plan for and use the help of classroom support assistants effectively in lessons.

111. The subject is managed well. The curriculum for art has been reviewed this year. The school is now beginning to use the government's recommendations for art in order to ensure that all art skills are taught sequentially. Pupils choose their best art work to retain in their individual records of progress but there is no consistent record of pupils' work, for instance drawing in a sketchbook.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. At the time of the last inspection attainment in design technology was below expected levels at both key stages. Few lessons were seen during the current inspection. There was insufficient evidence available to allow judgements to be made on standards at the age of eleven or the overall quality of teaching. However, the planning overview for design and technology indicates that the breadth and balance of the design and technology curriculum has improved since the previous inspection.
113. Teaching was satisfactory during the week of inspection. Lessons were planned with clear learning objectives and resources were always to hand. Pupils are given choices of materials at Key Stage 1, for instance for making wheeled transport models from recyclable materials. They explore and choose different methods to join materials together using paper clips, glue sticks, double sided sticky tape and paper fasteners. Pupils show perseverance and patience and succeed in completing their work. They are proud of their finished models and are pleased when it is displayed in the classroom. They are also given the opportunity to use a wide range of construction kits for making models from plans. Pupils consider their designs well when making simple mechanisms and explore new vocabulary with interest. They understand the need for safety when using tools. They are able to follow directions carefully for joining wood by reinforcing the corners with paper or card triangles. They practise this skill carefully before applying it to a model chariot which they have designed and plan to make. Teachers' planning and lessons in both key stages indicate that pupils experience a range of activities that systematically introduce them to new materials and techniques in design technology.
114. The co-ordinator is new to the management of the subject. She is enthusiastic and has devised an action plan for the forthcoming year as part of the school development plan. The design and technology curriculum is planned to be reviewed and will be based on the nationally recommended scheme of work from next term.
115. The school organises its resources for design technology thoughtfully. These are readily available to all teachers. There is a broad range of tools and equipment to support pupils' work. The designated teaching area for design technology is used well by groups to work under supervision. It is appropriately stocked with electric plugs, surfaces and a cooker. The school holds two craft clubs. One for older pupils and one run with the help of parents who link their work with assisting in classes.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Standards in geography are below those usually found for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Standards have not been maintained since the previous inspection. Since then, the areas of study in the subject have been reduced to provide sufficient time for the literacy and numeracy initiatives. Whilst there is a broad and balanced curriculum, planning and teaching do not identify a sequential and systematic development of

geographical skills and knowledge. There is weak subject leadership and no systematic evaluation of what is being taught has been undertaken by the co-ordinator.

117. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use computer programmes to create imaginary maps of city centres which include specific landmarks such as a road system, junctions, traffic lights, churches, hotels, housing and shops. This work is of high quality with almost all the pupils completing their tasks. However, no obvious link is made between this activity and the geography curriculum. Other studies in the subject are unsatisfactory; for example, the development of mapping skills indicates very little progress. Pupils do not draw maps of increasing complexity and detail. Their tasks are limited to labelling the names of towns on an outline map of the locality. Pupils are not challenged to extend their skills and gain further knowledge. The lack of careful monitoring of teachers' lesson plans results in the same knowledge being revisited by different year groups.
118. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop an appropriate knowledge of how the local climate changes. They keep daily weather records and input information on a database to produce pictograms to identify the local weather patterns. They understand the meaning of weather symbols and successfully take on the role of weather forecaster to present a prediction for the British Isles. By the end of the key stage, pupils draw imaginary maps and record the constituent countries and areas of the United Kingdom. They draw plans of their bedrooms. However, they do not understand the idea of a plan and they do not draw sketch maps, for instance, to record their route to school or journeys from home to the shops.
119. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a secure judgement on teaching. The individual lessons in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were sound overall. The examination of pupils' work throughout the school indicates an over-reliance on printed worksheets which are not always finished. Generally there is too much emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge at the expense of pupils' skill development. Pupils' work is effectively displayed in some classes. These are good examples of effective teaching. For instance, where pupils have studied photographs to identify physical features of the locality and linked them with information contained on a map of the area.

## **HISTORY**

120. Since the previous inspection there have been improvements in the teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 and pupils achieve standards similar to those of others by the end of the key stage. However, in Key Stage 1 achievement is below that usually found for seven-year-olds.
121. The quantity of work and the level of detail increases as pupils get older and all pupils, including those with special educational needs learn at a steady rate. Pupils acquire knowledge and develop a sound understanding of past periods from books, videos, computer programs and historical objects.
122. Pupils develop a sound understanding of their own past and that of their family. They learn about how we used to live and about famous historical people including Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. They record their findings in other subjects such as art and through drawing and writing on worksheets. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to learn to place events in chronological order. They learn about ships through the ages and discuss how oars were used before sails and steam power.
123. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop an understanding of chronology. The oldest pupils are familiar with many facts about the Second World War, such as evacuees and the land army. They know about Hitler, Chamberlain and Churchill. They show interest and are well-motivated in lessons. They apply what they have learnt to their writing lessons in English. For instance, they write imaginative letters from the viewpoint of an

evacuee in the Second World War. They learn about the passage of time through themes about settlers and invaders, including Romans, Anglo Saxons and Vikings. For instance, they make comparisons between home life today and life in Celtic homes. Pupils learn about life in the times of Elizabeth 1 and Elizabeth 11. They make comparisons between the lives of the first Elizabethans and their own. A good feature of the curriculum is how pupils use first-hand evidence, such as posters and objects, to enable them to understand the meaning of propaganda. Information technology is used effectively to enhance pupils' historical knowledge.

124. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages, although at the end of Key Stage 2, the teaching of history is good. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of different historical periods and this helps to develop pupils' knowledge and historical research skills. Good use is made of attractive wall displays, books, videos, historical objects and computer programs to promote interest and help pupils develop research skills. Literacy skills are sometimes used to enhance history. For instance, when pupils read about Anne Frank they also write as if they were reporters when discussing facts. However, there are too few links with other subjects to fully develop pupils' knowledge. Where the teaching is good, historical objects such as those from World War 2, are used effectively to encourage pupils' interest.
125. The subject is well-managed. There is a detailed scheme of work to ensure a logical sequence in the teaching of knowledge and skills and detailed curriculum guidelines to support teachers' planning. The co-ordinator monitors what is taught by looking at teachers' planning and pupils' books. Resources in school are satisfactory, although there are too few historical objects to support the curriculum.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

126. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' standards in information technology are good. Almost all pupils make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. This achievement reflects the good attainment by the end of Key Stage 1, which is above the level expected.
127. The school has made significant progress in the subject since the previous inspection. At that time, although standards were in line with those found nationally at Key Stage 1, by the end of Key Stage 2 standards were below those expected nationally.
128. The recent involvement of the school with the Education Action Zone, the new computer suite complete with the latest equipment and software have been instrumental in raising standards. Whole classes use the computer suite on a regular weekly basis ensuring that all pupils benefit from a good allocation of computer time. Teachers have had effective training and have gained more confidence and expertise. The subject is closely connected with the general curriculum, being based on the nationally recommended scheme of work.
129. By Year 6, pupils have good skills in word processing being able to select font styles, sizes and colours and manipulate text. They edit their work and show good awareness of how to use a wide range of operations in word processing. Many pupils produce text of very good quality covering a full range of writing styles. These documents often include their own illustrations. They select and use a good range of layouts to make the document more attractive. In the current project for using a multi-media program, pupils learn to combine sound and images to compile a historical document and include a question and answer fact file. Pupils show a good level of competence in their work. Younger pupils accurately programme the cursor to follow a predetermined route on the monitor screen. The youngest pupils use computer programs expertly for devising imaginary maps of the centres of towns. They use skills with the mouse to lift, drag and



place symbols representing roads, traffic lights and buildings onto diagrams. The standard of this work is good. However, the link with geography is not recognised.

130. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop skills in word processing successfully. The oldest pupils know how to operate computer software to select font size, style and colour which they apply to their writing. They type direct to the screen and edit and correct using arrow, delete keys and the space bar.
131. Teaching is very good throughout the school. Whole-class lessons always commence with a brief discussion of what has been learned during previous lessons. This helps pupils to reinforce their knowledge of programs and keyboard functions. A skilled specialist teacher from the Education Action Zone initiative actively supports pupils regularly in lessons. This gives pupils confidence and reinforces their skills. Teachers make excellent use of the interactive white board to demonstrate the procedures being introduced. Very good use is made of the range of networked computers to enable pupils to practise new learning immediately. Pupils have opportunities to work together in pairs. This raises confidence and they help each other to learn. The availability of the computer suite ensures that new skills are sufficiently practised so that they are consolidated. There are some good examples of accurate assessment of pupils' previous achievement. Teachers take this into account in following lessons to select software programs with different levels of difficulty and challenge. In many lessons, teachers call the class together to ensure that everyone understands the task. One very good example of this was the explanation by the teacher of what is a *multi-media* presentation. Careful questioning of pupils in Years 5 and 6 enabled them to identify that such a presentation includes the use of text, graphics and sound. Teachers carefully choose software, including a selection of *control* programs to move pupils on in their learning. These programs support the less confident pupils and also challenge the more able.
132. A further improvement since the previous inspection is the way in which information technology is used to develop pupils' understanding across other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 input information about the local weather onto a pictogram to identify the local weather patterns. The building up of the information in graphical form helps the pupils to gain an early understanding of how information can be analysed. The recent very good improvement in the subject reflects the outstanding success of the Education Action Zone initiative, which, together with the headteacher, has led and supported the use of the computer suite. This has enabled teachers to develop their skills and confidence and to use the latest information technology systems to improve their teaching.

## MUSIC

133. Since the previous inspection, pupils' achievements in music have declined at both key stages. Lesson observations, assemblies, discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, do not achieve the standards in music expected for their age. The current curriculum lacks breadth and balance. It is currently being reviewed and programmes of study are being developed to reflect recent government recommended guidelines. The co-ordinator is currently reviewing the structure of music lessons.
134. Pupils listen to pre-recorded music from different cultures. They learn to sing a variety of songs. They play instruments to create sound effects by following pictures of rain and thunder. At the end Key Stage 1, pupils sing tunefully demonstrating some knowledge of rhythm. They develop a wide repertoire of songs from memory and add actions. However, pupils' diction is not very clear. They are beginning to learn how different kinds of music affects their own moods and feelings, particularly during art lessons where they listen to music as they work.

135. By the end of Key Stage 2, the quality of pupils' singing has improved. They sing tunefully and learn to control breathing. They generally sing from memory although they sing mostly together in unison and not in two parts or in rounds. They use a variety of percussion instruments and learn to use them correctly. They know whether to shake, scrape, clap or beat the instrument to produce the required sound. Pupils learn to perform as a class, by keeping time and following a conductor. They learn to read symbols matched to the way the instrument is played. Pupils listen to music from different times and places and music is sometimes used to inspire pupils' work in art. Pupils recognise how musical elements are used to convey a mood or effect. During hymn practice, pupils throughout the school learn to sing a variety of hymns.
136. The pupils show consideration and co-operation towards each other and are very supportive when their classmates are performing. They concentrate and strive to improve their performance, especially when learning to play together.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' knowledge of the subject varies, with some being able to play instruments well and others generally lacking confidence. Teachers aim to make lessons enjoyable but they do not provide pupils with sufficiently challenging songs and music for listening and appraising. There are missed opportunities during assemblies to identify the music played. Teachers praise and encourage pupils, but they do not always challenge them to improve and develop their skills. Hymn practice contributes to pupils' musical development.
138. Teachers use the resources and the range of instruments available. However, these are not stored in a way that is easily accessible to pupils and too much time is allocated to their distribution during lesson time. Some lessons consequently lack pace. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post and has plans to raise standards in music. Resources are generally limited in the school, but good use is made of the local authority loan service to make sure that sufficient instruments are available.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. Achievement is good by the end of both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
140. All pupils are keen and enthusiastic and take part confidently in lessons. Many older pupils regularly attend a good range of sports clubs provided by the school and compete for places in teams to represent the school in competitions. The school emphasises the importance of swimming early in the pupils' career and they are taught to swim in Year 3 with swimming programmes provided, where necessary, in Year 4 and 5. Consequently, almost all pupils achieve the 25-metre certificate.
141. Pupils with better co-ordination and who learn quickly do not achieve at their higher levels of competence. They are not involved in any small-sided games where they could practise and apply their skills. At Years 4 and 5, pupils practise their fitness training routines and their athletic skills associated with the field events of long jump and hop, step and jump. All pupils sustain their physical activities over time to raise and maintain a high heart rate.
142. Many pupils have good ball control skills by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils travel round the hall, varying their speed and direction. They bounce large balls in a regular rhythm and work with a partner often catching confidently and throwing accurately. They collaborate to organise a co-operative game and complete a series of catches and throws without dropping the ball. At Year 3, pupils demonstrate many ball control skills associated with football. They run with the ball, receive a pass, accurately controlling the ball before they send it to a classmate.

143. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers ensure that pupils warm up and cool down before and after lessons. This helps them to understand how activity affects the body. Pupils are clearly told what the lesson is setting out to achieve so they know what is expected of them. In many lessons, good use is made of teacher-demonstration but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their own skills. When they do, many pupils gain confidence to try the techniques for themselves. Opportunities to encourage pupils to assess their own performance are not always given regularly enough; for instance, the challenge provided by football skills activities does not stretch the more skilled pupils and they do not increase their skills. They are not always given the opportunity to practise and apply their skills in small-sided competitive games. There is generally good development in lessons to involve the pupils in more complex activities and encourage them to work in pairs or small groups.