

INSPECTION REPORT

DOWNALL GREEN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bryn

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106489

Headteacher: Mrs M Jobling

Reporting inspector: Mr P Edwards
21069

Dates of inspection: 17 – 21 January 2000

Inspection number: 191419

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Infant and Junior |
| School category: | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Downall Green Road Bryn Wigan |
| Postcode: | WN4 0LZ |
| Telephone number: | 01942 727067 |
| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Father A Reynolds |
| Date of previous inspection: | 4 th February 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|----------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Mr P Edwards | Registered inspector | Science Information technology Under-fives Equal opportunities | What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? |
| Mr T Heavey | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Strategic use of resources |
| Mr C Scola | Team inspector | Mathematics Geography History Special educational needs | The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources. How well the school cultivates personal – including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. |
| Ms M Griffiths | Team inspector | English Art Design and technology Music | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils? The effectiveness of the school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance. |

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Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Downall Green Catholic Primary School is a mixed school with 151 pupils, 77 boys and 74 girls, which is smaller than the average sized school. It is situated in Bryn in the borough of Wigan. The overwhelming majority of pupils follow the Catholic faith and are drawn from the immediate vicinity, with a few travelling in from just outside the local area. All pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds and no pupils have English as an additional language, which is below the national average. Fifteen pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There are seven pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties. This is well below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There has been a slight increase since the last inspection in the number of pupils eligible for free school meals but it is still below average. The majority of pupils have experienced Nursery education prior to starting school and attainment on entry, whilst covering a broad span, is average. At the time of the inspection seventeen pupils were under six, eleven of whom were taught in the Reception class. After a number of years during which the roll has declined, the projected admissions for next year have almost doubled.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Downall Green Catholic Primary School is a caring community where the pupils achieve average standards in English and above average standards in science and mathematics throughout the school. The quality of teaching is usually good and often better. The headteacher, staff, governors and parents work in close harmony to promote the Catholic ethos of the school. The school has above-average income but provides good value for money due to the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of teaching provided.

What the school does well

- Almost three-quarters of the teaching is good or better with one fifth that is very good.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in science and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Promotes very high standards of behaviour and helps to develop the pupils' positive attitudes towards their work.
- Creates good links with parents enabling them to be effective partners in their children's learning.
- Provides very good spiritual and social development and excellent moral development.
- Provides a very caring atmosphere that eliminates bullying and oppressive behaviour.

What could be improved

- The curriculum for information technology.
- The pupils' presentation of their work in some classes.
- The quality and effectiveness of the teachers' marking.
- The range of extra-curricular activities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since its last inspection in February 1997 the results achieved by eleven-year-old pupils in the national tests in mathematics and science have risen year on year and although there was a slight downward trend in English last year, the results have remained broadly in line with the national average. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. At the time of the last inspection, it was unsatisfactory in almost 30 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 2 and as a result of improved monitoring, this has reduced to two per cent overall. Schemes of work have been produced or national guidelines implemented to eradicate the imbalance in the curriculum and all subjects are given appropriate coverage. Assessment procedures have improved significantly and the school is better placed to track progress and predict levels of achievement of its pupils. The school development plan has clear targets that are now linked well to the school budget.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 1999 | |
| English | D | A | C | D | well above average A above average B |
| mathematics | E | B | B | B | average C below average D |
| science | C | B | B | B | well below average E |

The 1999 test results show the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in English is similar to that seen nationally although few pupils attain the higher level. Inspection evidence shows more pupils are now attaining at the higher level. The school's above average test results in science and mathematics are substantiated by inspection evidence. Again, a significant minority are attaining at the higher level. The test results show that the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science has kept pace with the national trend over the last four years. The school is on course to achieve the agreed literacy and numeracy targets of 83 per cent and 87 per cent respectively of pupils attaining the average level for the current Year 6 pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. The pupils show considerable enthusiasm for, and interest in, their work. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. They behave very well and there were no instances of bullying or other unacceptable behaviour during the inspection. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. The pupils demonstrate a caring attitude towards their peers. |
| Attendance | Good. An improvement since the last inspection. Lessons start promptly and there is no wasted time between activities. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of English and mathematics teaching is good throughout the school. The literacy and numeracy frameworks are used effectively to further the pupils' skills of reading and mental arithmetic. The school is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils, including gifted pupils and those with special educational needs. Two per cent of the teaching is unsatisfactory, 26 per cent is satisfactory, 52 per cent is good and 20 per cent is very good. Very good questioning, challenging activities and very good subject knowledge exemplify the best teaching. Where teaching is less satisfactory, the teachers are ineffective in managing behaviour. There are instances where marking of work is unsatisfactory. The pupils' learning in information technology is unsatisfactory overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The school complies with statutory requirements and provides a good range of learning opportunities for all pupils. The information technology curriculum is in the early stages of implementation and needs further development. The lack of balance referred to at the time of the last inspection has been addressed and all subjects are given appropriate coverage. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | The school makes good provision for the pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' cultural development, very good provision for their spiritual and social development and excellent provision for their moral development. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school has good procedures for looking after its pupils. It has particularly effective procedures for ensuring there is no bullying or other unacceptable behaviour. |

The school has effective links with parents, including regular meetings and informative reports. There is a limited range of extra-curricular activities and they do not have a significant impact on the pupils' education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides good leadership and has moved the school forward since the last inspection. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum has improved and has been a significant factor in improving the quality of teaching. Subject co-ordinators have improved their expertise and have contributed to the improvement in the quality of the curriculum. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors have become more involved with the school since the last inspection. They are well informed about what is happening in school, make regular visits and report back to meetings of the governing body. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | There is good monitoring of teaching quality and there is a clear analysis of pupil performance. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. Expenditure is linked to priorities on the school development plan. The governors consider future admissions to determine staffing levels and there is good liaison with the local authority's finance department. |

There is an appropriate number of teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Several members of staff have low levels of information technology skills and are currently undertaking training. The accommodation is satisfactory although the lack of

a safe enclosed play area and wheeled vehicles for the under-fives limits their physical development. The range and quality of resources is generally satisfactory although some of the reading material is dated and in need of replacement. The school applies the principles of best value by comparing its academic results with those of other schools and governors seek quotations for any work that is carried out.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The high standards of behaviour and the way the children are taught respect• The caring nature of the school | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of extra-curricular activities• The range and quality of reading books |

The inspection team agrees with the views of the parents in what pleases them and also in what they would like to see improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the baseline tests indicate that the children enter the reception class with a broad range of attainment, but the majority show the skills and abilities typical for their age. The children make good progress in the reception class in their personal and social development and their literacy and mathematical understanding. They make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. By the time they start Year 1, most of the children are likely to exceed the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes in literacy, mathematics and personal and social development and to meet them in the other areas of learning.
2. The results of national tests show that at the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' performance in English is in line with the national average and above the national average in mathematics and science. There is an identical picture when comparing mathematics and science results to those of similar schools but the English results are below the average. This is due to fewer pupils attaining at the higher level in this subject. In both mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level is above the national average.
3. The results for the four years 1996 to 1999 show the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science to be close to the national average and the trend for all three core subjects has been broadly in line with the national average for those same years. The results show that over the same period, the performance of boys in English and science was above the national average whilst the performance of girls was in line.
4. The results of the 1999 national test results show that at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' performance in reading and writing is broadly in line with the national average but their performance in mathematics is well below. In both reading and writing, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was well above the national average. The small number of pupils attaining at the higher level compounds the low results in mathematics. Taking the years 1996 to 1999 together, the results show that the pupils' attainment exceeded the national average in reading and writing and fell below the average in mathematics. Teacher assessment indicates that the pupils' performance in science is broadly in line with the national average.
5. The school is well on course to meet its literacy and numeracy targets for the Year 2000 and beyond.
6. Inspection evidence reveals that reading is well taught. The pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Key Stage 1, they are developing as fluent readers. They use a variety of strategies to help them read and develop an increasing enjoyment of books, reading for both pleasure and to retrieve information to support their work in other topics. Those pupils who have difficulties with reading are given appropriate support to enable them to make progress. The progress is maintained in Key Stage 2. Almost all read independently and have a good understanding of events and characters in a story. The focus on literacy and the additional literacy support is having a positive effect on standards of reading and writing. There has

been an improvement in writing. In Key Stage 2, the pupils are now writing at length with an increased vocabulary and greater attention to detail. Significantly, at the end of the key stage, more pupils are working at the higher level than previously and most are confident in writing letters, reports, accounts and stories. Standards have improved in both key stages since the previous inspection.

7. The standards attained in numeracy at the end of both key stages have improved. Overall, the majority attain standards that are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1, and exceed the standards at the end of Key Stage 2. A significant minority are attaining higher standards at the end of this key stage. At the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have developed sufficient numeracy skills to recall number facts and multiplication tables quickly. These skills are successfully built upon in Key Stage 2, enabling the pupils to develop good mental skills. They are able to utilise these in their investigative work and numeracy activities. The higher attaining pupils make particularly good progress due to the quality of teaching and the challenging activities they are presented with. Particularly gifted pupils are given good support enabling them to make progress commensurate with their prior achievements.
8. The pupils make satisfactory progress in science and attain in line with the national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. In the latter stages of Key Stage 2, however, the high quality of teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress with a significant minority attaining standards that are above what is seen nationally.
9. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Progress is uneven throughout the school but overall it is unsatisfactory. At the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' skills in word processing are basic and they have only recently begun to use CD-ROMs for research. Their experience of control technology is also at a basic level. The school has only recently acquired up to date hardware and staff confidence and expertise is relatively low, resulting in limited progress for the pupils. However, a programme of staff training is underway, the knowledgeable co-ordinator is supporting her colleagues effectively and there are examples of good practice in Key Stage 2.
10. Attainment in art, music, design and technology, geography and physical education is in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age at the end of both key stages and the pupils make satisfactory progress. They make good progress in history and exceed the national expectations by the end of both key stages. There is no significant difference in attainment and progress of pupils in terms of gender or social background. At the ages of seven and eleven, the performance of boys and girls is broadly similar. The pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. In the reception class, the children are consistently well behaved and enthusiastic. They concentrate well and persevere to complete tasks such as handwriting, printing and painting. They share toys and equipment and play alongside one another happily; they have begun to form friendships with other children and develop the skills of working together.
12. The school has continued to build on the good level of achievements in this area of

school life identified in the previous inspection. The inspection team supports the view of parents that the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development are a strength of the school, making a significant contribution to the raising of standards.

13. The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They show high levels of interest and enthusiasm during lessons, and speak with confidence when answering questions or talking to their peers. Pupils of all ages stated that they love coming to school.
14. The very high standards of behaviour in this school reflect the high expectations of the staff, supported by the strong Catholic ethos that permeates all aspects of school life. The school day starts with a prayer exhorting pupils to show care and concern for all members of the school family. The very good behaviour observed during lessons extends to the playground and the dining room where pupils and adults are polite and cheerful. The children in the dining room hold open the door for their peers, and pass dinner trays and cutlery to other pupils behind them in the queue. The pupils stated that they were unaware of any bullying or harassment in the school. Such very good behaviour creates a calm and caring environment that provides a solid platform for learning. In such a welcoming environment there is no record of, or even a memory of exclusion.
15. Relationships among pupils and staff throughout the school are very good, generating an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness. The pupils work, play and pray happily together, applauding one another's efforts and achievements, as when they earn house points for their peers. Encouragement is used to good effect by the teachers, spurring on the children to further efforts, and raising their self-esteem and confidence to promote learning.
16. The pupils' personal and social development is very good. They act responsibly in the classroom, respecting school property and equipment, and returning crayons, scissors and glue tidily to their proper places. They work sensibly and co-operatively in groups, sharing ideas, and assisting those who have not completed their allotted tasks. The older pupils act with great maturity in discharging their duties as prefects, including supervising all pupils in the classroom during wet breaks.
17. Attendance at Our Lady's is good. Though the raw figure is only slightly above the national average, it constitutes an improvement on the previous inspection, and on the last reporting year, as well as reflecting authorised and unauthorised absence rates below the national average.
18. Punctuality is very good with both morning and afternoon lessons starting on time and with minimum loss of time between activities throughout the day. Registration procedures are fully compliant with legal requirements, and a good working partnership has been established with the educational welfare officer. Such good provision for attendance has a significant impact on standards by greatly improving access to the curriculum.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. In 98 per cent of lessons observed the teaching is satisfactory or better. In 50 per cent of lessons, the teaching is good and in 20 per cent of lessons it is very good. It is frequently good or better in the Year 4, 5 and 6 classes. Two per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory and these are in the lower end of Key Stage 2. The

overall quality of teaching is good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and for the children under five. The improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection is significant. Then some 20 per cent was found to be unsatisfactory throughout the school and almost 30 per cent in Key Stage 2. Improved monitoring and clearer planning that addresses the needs of different groups of pupils have helped to raise standards.

20. The teaching of children under the age of five is never less than satisfactory and is frequently good. The teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn and provides a structured environment that helps the children to gain confidence and develop their social skills. She has high expectations of what the children are capable of achieving and of how they should behave. An appropriate range of stimulating learning activities is planned for the children. In particular, the teacher has very good questioning skills; these are used well to extend the development of the children's language and their positive attitudes to learning. The teacher works hard to ensure that children under five and pupils in the reception and Year 1 classes are presented with work that matches the different ability levels.
21. The provision for special educational needs is well integrated into the teacher's planning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The teachers are aware of the procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for pupils with special educational needs. The teachers' planning promotes the learning of pupils with special educational needs by addressing the targets set in the individual education plans. Support staff are appropriately briefed about the pupils' work and give effective support in classes. The pupils' work is assessed carefully and their progress recorded systematically.
22. In the best lessons, the teachers have very good subject knowledge. They have high expectations of pupil behaviour and of what they can achieve, and inspire the pupils by making the lessons interesting and enjoyable. This has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. For example, in several science lessons in Key Stage 2, the teachers demonstrated a clear understanding of the subject, questioned the pupils effectively to determine their level of understanding and set realistically high targets for the pupils. This took place in an atmosphere of good humour and mutual respect and, as a result, the pupils' understanding of circulation, the skeleton and the digestive system is above what might be expected of them. Higher attaining pupils are given encouragement to develop their understanding of the topics even further.
23. Literacy and numeracy are well taught throughout the school. The teaching of literacy is frequently very good. In both key stages the teachers have a good understanding of the subject and promote it across the curriculum. For example, in Key Stage 1, the pupils' understanding of plant growth was enhanced during a literacy lesson. Shared and guided reading and writing activities are used effectively to promote the pupils' understanding of punctuation and vocabulary. The teachers ensure that the pupils' extended writing skills are developed through opportunities to write stories, letters and accounts in history. A good example is the Year 4 'A Day on Duty on Hadrian's Wall'. The teaching of numeracy is good throughout the school. In most lessons there are challenging tasks and the lessons have a good balance of mental arithmetic and written activities. Thoughtful questioning is a strong feature of the teaching in mathematics and the careful assessment of work enables the pupils to make good progress. The pupils learn a range of mathematical strategies to improve their mental skills and these strategies are developed by the teachers as the pupils move through the school. The school makes effective use of the expertise provided

by a teacher from the feeder secondary school who works with a mathematically gifted pupil in Key Stage 2. Teaching in both literacy and numeracy is particularly strong in the middle and latter stages of Key Stage 2 but pupils make good progress throughout the school in both areas.

24. The overall quality of teaching in science is good and frequently very good in Key Stage 2 and this has a positive impact on the attainment of all pupils, particularly the higher attaining. The pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 acquire a good understanding of the skeleton and of the circulatory and digestive systems. In art, design and technology, history, geography and physical education the quality of teaching is judged to be at least satisfactory in both key stages and the pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Teaching is good in music and the pupils make appropriate progress. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement for information technology but until recently progress has been unsatisfactory. The school recognises that teachers lack confidence in teaching information technology and has embarked on a training programme to improve this aspect of the curriculum.
25. There is very little unsatisfactory teaching. Where it does occur, it is related to the teacher's lack of skill in managing the more challenging behaviour of some pupils. As a result, too much time is spent on disciplining them, affecting the pace of the lesson and ultimately the progress they make. The quality of marking is variable throughout the school. There are examples of very good marking where teachers set targets for improvement but there are occasions where it is unsatisfactory. Here the marking tends to be superficial, untidy and does not help the pupils to improve their work.
26. Homework is used effectively to reinforce what is learned in class. All pupils take home reading books and spellings and tables work are a regular feature. In addition, older pupils are asked to carry out research for other subjects. Year 6 pupils are keeping a diary of their food intake to determine how healthy their diet is.

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

27. The previous report was critical of the imbalance in the provision of the National Curriculum subjects, particularly mathematics, music, art and physical education. The implementation of national guidelines and new schemes of work has addressed this issue satisfactorily.
28. The curriculum for children under five is broad and balanced and successfully meets the requirements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes. It includes all of the areas of learning for children under five.
29. At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the school offers a broad and balanced curriculum in which all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal and social education are included. This has a beneficial effect on the pupils' progress and attainment. Health and the use and misuse of medicines are taught as part of science and personal and social education. The school is involved in 'Healthy School Standards' and a Health Education Adviser is working with the school. The provision for physical education, art and music, which was a key issue in the previous inspection, has improved and statutory requirements are met. The governors have decided that sex education is not to be taught explicitly other than whenever relevant. Appropriate policies and schemes of work for the subjects are in place and there is an acceptable amount of time given to each of them. The area of information technology is unsatisfactory but the

subject is developing. The school has introduced the literacy and numeracy strategies effectively.

30. There are very few opportunities for regular extra-curricular activities although during the school year, seasonal activities take place such as athletics, swimming and basketball. A football club is organised by a parent involving the pupils in matches against other local schools. Homework in Key Stage 1 is mainly reading and increases as the pupils move through the school; English and mathematics homework is set weekly and is satisfactory.
31. There are detailed long-, medium- and short-term plans in place which give guidance on all subjects. The school is using national guidelines as a basis for their planning. The school's planning follows an agreed format and provides a good framework for pupils to develop the skills and knowledge appropriate to each age-group and to ensure a better development of learning from year to year. Plans show clearly what is to be covered in the long, medium and the short-term.
32. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Suitable procedures that reflect the Code of Practice for special educational needs are in place. There is equal access to the curriculum for all pupils.
33. Good use is made of the resources in the community of the school and the pupils have been involved with a design garden and also a millennium parish map made from various textiles, which is now on display in Wigan Town Hall. Visits take place throughout the school year to enrich the curriculum, such as to Pennington Flash and to Lyme Park. The school has very good links with its secondary school and the pupils enjoy various activities there throughout the school year such as a 'Fun Afternoon'. The school has entered a number of competitions and one pupil has written a poem that is included in 'Our World 2000'. The school has been awarded an Eco Award for its efforts with recycling and caring for its environment.
34. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.
35. The school makes very good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. A strongly held Catholic belief permeates all aspects of the curriculum and enhances the pupils' spiritual development. All pupils join with prayers and hymns and there are many opportunities for reflection and contemplation. Strong links are maintained with the local church, to celebrate major festivals in the year and through the sacramental programme. Through collective worship and circle time the pupils are provided with knowledge and insight into the religious beliefs of Christians and those of other major religions.
36. The pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils are taught how to distinguish right from wrong and their behaviour in and around the school reflects the very high standard of moral development promoted. The symbolism of the pasta being joined together, used as a system of rewards, is an accurate reflection of the school's ethos and the corporate motivation the filling of this jar creates in each class is very effective. Opportunities are provided at weekly assemblies to celebrate individual pupils' successes.
37. The social development of pupils is very good. The pupils contribute actively to the life of the school. They are taught to take responsibility from an early age and their help and collaboration ensures that classroom and school routines are very smooth.

Older pupils take responsibility for caring for the younger ones during playtimes and breaks. There are good links with the local community. The conservation and environmental projects that the pupils have undertaken has created links with several external agencies and developed the pupils' concept and understanding of citizenship. The school supports several charities.

38. The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. The pupils' appreciation of their own culture is furthered by visits to local art galleries and museums and lessons in art, music, history and geography. There is satisfactory provision to prepare the pupils for a multicultural society. There is a lack, however, of an in-depth appreciation of the diversity and richness of non-European cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The previous inspection was critical of the procedures for assessing the pupils' academic progress. Good progress has been made in addressing this issue and there are now good procedures in place which are used effectively.
40. The school's good quality provision for its pupils' welfare, health and safety has created an atmosphere of security, harmony and wellbeing that improves access to the curriculum and provides a strong foundation for raising standards. The parents report that they and their children feel supported by the school, and nearly all of those responding to the parent questionnaire report stated that they would find it easy to approach the school with any questions or problems to do with their children.
41. Relationships throughout the school are characterised by mutual respect, enshrined in both the school's declared main aims, and in the mission statement produced by the pupils themselves. The school knows its pupils well, aided by the triangular support structure of the parents, the parish and the school itself. The pupils also look out for one another, exemplified in the chorus of 'bye bye, take care' coming from the children as one of their classmates left the room to attend a hospital appointment.
42. The school has gone to considerable lengths to ensure that its children feel secure. Staff and parents sponsored a parachute jump by the headteacher to raise funds for improved security arrangements.
43. The personal safety of pupils is safeguarded via the comprehensive health and safety policy that includes regular risk assessments, fire drills and procedures for identifying and reporting hazards around the school.
44. The staff member with responsibility for child protection has attended appropriate training with the Area Child Protection Committee, and has delivered seminars to pass on the knowledge to the staff. The same member of staff has also attended first aid training and now co-ordinates the school's first aid practices and procedures. She demonstrates an awareness of the importance of proper procedures, including the duty to keep parents fully informed at all times. The school cares for its pupils with special educational needs well by drawing up an individual education plan linked to regular reviews, and involving parents and carers.
45. The effectiveness of the school's measures to monitor personal development is seen in the enthusiasm with which pupils apply themselves to their work without direct supervision, as well as the way in which they happily accept responsibilities and readily share with others. The effectiveness of the school's measures for promoting

and monitoring good attendance and punctuality is amply demonstrated in the good levels of attendance and punctuality.

46. There are very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Rather than imposing sanctions, the school rewards good behaviour and consideration for others. Discreet notices around the school remind pupils about the school's Code of Conduct, and all adults in the school act as good role models. The awards system too focuses on the individual's achievements. Such strategies improve personal discipline and behaviour, and improve access to learning for all.
47. There is a good range of assessment procedures and they are used well to monitor progress and to plan the next stage of learning. The various procedures for assessment are good and show improvement since the previous inspection, when assessment was identified as a key issue. There are effective systems in place for English, mathematics and science.
48. The teachers make use of assessment on admission to the school to plan work and monitor the progress of the children regularly and effectively. The teachers know the pupils well and recognise their needs and respond well to them. The teachers' day-to-day assessment is good although teachers' marking is variable in its information and targets for pupils to improve their work. Individual action plans are used appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and review takes place regularly.
49. The pupils' progress in the core subjects is tracked through the school and each pupil has a record of achievement containing samples of their work from each school year as they move through the school. Formal testing takes place in Key Stage 2 using published national tests in the core subjects in addition to the end of key stage statutory tests. These are well-used in Years 4, 5 and 6 to assess pupils' attainments and areas of weakness in order to help the school to monitor individual pupils' attainment and progress. Analysis of National Curriculum test results has been undertaken and weaknesses highlighted to assist future planning. The implementation of assessment procedures and their effective use, has had a positive impact on the pupils' achievements. When annual school reports are sent home, pupils and parents are asked to consider the report together in order to set targets for improvement.
50. The impact of the assessment and monitoring arrangements is positive. Teachers are skilled in their use of questioning and effective plenary sessions are used to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. In some lessons, pupils are grouped together according to prior attainment and work is set accordingly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The partnership between parents and the school is very good. Parents speak in glowing terms about the school, and as in the previous inspection, they declare their partnership with the school to be one of the school's major strengths. They are very happy with the school's strong Catholic ethos and its provision for their children. They particularly value the welcoming atmosphere of the school, the approachability of the staff, and the security that the school provides for their children. One parent who was planning to move out of the school's catchment area sought assurances from the school that she would be able to keep her children there, and would be able to enlist her youngest child at the same school. Such an example illustrates parents'

views about the effectiveness of the school's provision for their children.

52. The recently introduced home and school agreement has consolidated the partnership by involving parents more directly and formally in their children's education. Parents contribute to their children's learning by listening to them read at home, and by writing their comments about their children's progress in the reading record. Parents also negotiate with their children on what targets they should include in their joint comments on annual reports. The very good level of parental involvement is further enhanced by them registering their skills, as well as the extent of their availability with the school, so that the school can call upon them as required. All parents are enrolled in the Friends of Our Lady's Association, and readily support its fundraising initiatives, resulting in the provision of extra equipment and materials to further their children's learning.
53. The parents remark upon the very good quality of information provided by the school about their children's progress and about school activities. The prospectus, the governors' annual report and the parents' consultation meetings, all fully compliant with legal requirements, are supplemented by meetings and seminars on specific matters such as literacy, numeracy, and curriculum changes. The half-termly newsletter informs them about school events and timetables, while the annual reports, now sent out in time for parents to study them prior to meeting the class teacher to discuss them, provide specific information about their children's progress, and indicate areas for improvement or further effort. This wealth of provision confirms the parents' views about the very good quality of their partnership with the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the staff and governors. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. As a result of better planning and improved monitoring procedures the quality of teaching has improved significantly. Importantly, there has been an improvement in the amount of good and very good teaching. The appraisal process has been effective in setting targets for improvement. The staff have worked hard on the development of schemes of work and planning resulting in an appropriate match and progression of work. The school recognises that the information technology curriculum needs to be improved considerably and this is rightly a priority in the school development plan. The quality of its assessment procedures has improved significantly and the teachers now make effective use of assessments and the detailed tracking of the pupils' progress. The governors regularly receive curriculum updates at their meetings and some governors have observed literacy and numeracy lessons, enabling them to give a first-hand impression to their colleagues. The governors are aware of the literacy and numeracy targets and take a keen interest in the school's success. The ethos is very positive and the learning environment supportive; this is reflected in the high standards of pupil behaviour and the close relationships which prevail throughout the school. The school is very successful in meeting its aims.

55. The majority of teachers have curriculum leadership responsibilities and the work they have undertaken has helped to improve the coverage and balance of the curriculum. They take greater responsibility for their subjects including co-ordinating planning and monitoring and assessing the pupils' work. Where appropriate, they give support to colleagues enabling their subject to be taught more effectively.
56. The school development plan gives clear direction to the school. It gives appropriate priority to the school's areas for development and has relevant time-scales, costings and criteria by which success can be judged. The governors and staff are involved in the preparation and implementation of the plan and progress towards its goals is reviewed regularly. This was a weakness in the last inspection and the school has made good progress in this area.
57. The governors give very good support to the school and the chair of governors meets frequently with the headteacher. During the inspection a number of governors visited the school and they demonstrated a clear understanding of its standards and achievements and what needs to be done to ensure standards continue to improve. The governors hold regular meetings covering all aspects of school life and make many visits to the school. The governing body fulfils all its statutory obligations. Together with the headteacher and staff it has been effective in addressing the weaknesses outlined in the previous report.
58. The school makes good strategic use of its resources overall. Financial planning is good, and the headteacher works with the governors' finance committee each term to ensure clear priorities and the allocation of funds in line with the school development plan. Outline budgets are all prepared for the following two years, and the school has secured the services of the local authority to provide a monthly budget update. The educational resources budget is retained centrally and the co-ordinators submit bids, rather than routinely allocating funds to subject areas. The conscious deployment of a part-time teacher to reinforce the literacy and numeracy provision demonstrates that the school's managers are thinking strategically about the most effective use of limited resources. The school has also exploited opportunities presented by the availability of grants such as Intensive Literacy Support, the National Grid for Learning, New Deal for Schools, Year 6 Booster Classes, and New Opportunities for Learning, to raise teaching and learning standards. The main findings of the most recent auditor's report have all been implemented.
59. The systems for financial administration are responsive to need, and with the help of the peripatetic bursar are proving to be effective. Appropriate information is thus made available to the school's managers to ensure that finances are kept in good order and costs properly determined.
60. The school actively pursues the best value principles by comparing its standards with those of other schools via information provided by the local authority. The school challenges its judgements by discussing various options for further development. It consults appropriately with financial experts and with its staff team, and when commissioning work from contractors, the governors routinely seek tenders from several companies.
61. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. Support staff are involved in the planning and teaching processes and they add significantly to the quality of provision for pupils.

Supervisory staff contribute to an orderly environment. The efficient secretary and part-time bursar ensure that the school runs very smoothly. The school receives good support from voluntary helpers, including parents, friends of the school and governors.

62. All the staff have clearly defined responsibilities. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. Appraisal procedures are carried out effectively using a whole school focus. Training is linked to priorities identified on the school development plan with an emphasis on further improving pupils' attainment. There are appropriate procedures in place to support new or temporary staff.
63. The adequacy of the accommodation for the effective delivery of the curriculum is generally satisfactory although some Key Stage 2 classrooms are rather small and cramped. The passage leading to the classrooms is very narrow and it is only the very high standard of behaviour around the school that allows it to be used effectively and safely. The cleanliness of the school is a credit to the caretaker, cleaning staff, staff and pupils. The large spacious hall is used for assemblies, lunches and physical education. The hard playground is barely adequate for the number of pupils. This was identified in the previous inspection and whilst some improvements have been made its surface is uneven and rough and the lines marked out on it need repainting.
64. There has been a considerable improvement in the number of computers but more training for the teachers is required to enable them to be used more effectively. Some of the reading books in the reading library are old and out of date and need renewing. However the re-siting of the library and the input of a greater range of non-fiction books has considerably increased its effectiveness. Lack of suitable grassed areas and the poor state of the hard surfaces limit outdoor opportunities for physical education. The use of extra funds to target groups of pupils in literacy has resulted in an improvement in their learning and raised standards. Resources for other subjects are good in range and quality and easily accessible to teachers and pupils. The parents contribute generously to the school for resources. The lack of an enclosed outdoor safe play area for the under-fives and suitable wheeled vehicles, restricts their physical development.
65. The school makes satisfactory use of the local community to enhance pupils' learning through educational visits and visitors to the school. The very close links it has with its feeder school ensure a smooth transition between key stages and some excellent initiatives such as mathematics teachers from the secondary phase teaching and providing extra-curricular support for very able pupils. It has good links with local colleges and a number of work experiences and training placements are used to benefit both the school and the students.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to improve standards further and the quality of the education provision, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Raise standards in information technology by:
 - (i) pursuing training initiatives to raise the teachers' skills and confidence;
 - (ii) ensuring computers are used more widely to support other areas of the curriculum.
(paragraphs 9,24,29 and 124)

- Improve the presentation of pupils' work by:
 - (i) ensuring there is a whole-school approach to displaying and presenting work;
 - (ii) demanding higher standards of presentation in the pupils' written work.
(paragraph 25)

- Improve the quality of marking by:
 - (i) implementing a whole-school policy to marking which sets targets for improvement;
 - (ii) ensuring teachers' comments are written neatly and are constructive.
(paragraph 25)

- Develop the range of extra-curricular activities by:
 - (i) enlisting the help of parents, friends and outside bodies to introduce a range of sporting and musical clubs.
(paragraph 30)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 46 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 30 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 20 | 52 | 26 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | |
|--|--------|
| | YR– Y6 |
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 151 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 15 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | |
|---|---------|
| | YR – Y6 |
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 7 |

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 | 4 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 1 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.9 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 1999 | 15 | 19 | 34 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 15 | 13 | 14 |
| | Girls | 18 | 18 | 14 |
| | Total | 33 | 31 | 28 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 97(96) | 91(96) | 82(96) |
| | National | 82(80) | 83(81) | 87(84) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| | Girls | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| | Total | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 94(100) | 94(100) | 94(100) |
| | National | 82(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 | 9 | 12 | 21 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| | Girls | 9 | 9 | 10 |
| | Total | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 76(88) | 81(81) | 86(85) |
| | National | 70(65) | 69(59) | 78(69) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| | Girls | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| | Total | 14 | 14 | 15 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 67(70) | 67(65) | 71(69) |
| | National | 68(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 | |
| Bangladeshi | |
| Chinese | |
| White | 146 |
| 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 | | |
| 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) | 7.6 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 19 |
| Average class size | 21.6 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 16 |

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 1998/99 |
|----------------|---------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 262403 |
| Total expenditure | 266225 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1740 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 34943 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 31121 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 150 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 41 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 58 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 61 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 49 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 41 | 54 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 58 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 34 | 51 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 66 | 29 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 68 | 26 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 41 | 44 | 12 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 54 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 56 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 7 | 24 | 32 | 27 | 10 |

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by the parents.

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

67. There is a single reception class and at the time of the inspection four of the eleven children were under five. Children enter the reception class in September of the year in which they attain their fifth birthday, thus some are not five until the following August. The children are taught as a separate class in the morning but combine with some of the Year 1 children for the afternoon sessions. Most of the children have attended a local nursery or playgroup.
68. On entry to the reception the children show a wide range of attainment, although the assessments carried out when children start school, indicate the majority are in line with that expected for their age in all areas of learning. The children make good progress in their personal and social development, literacy and mathematical understanding and satisfactory progress in creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Those children with special educational needs are supported well to access the curriculum and they too make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Most of the children are on course to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children entering compulsory education in creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Most are likely to exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in their personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. These standards have been maintained from the previous inspection.

Personal and social development

69. All children make good progress in their personal and social development and are likely to attain what is expected of them by the time they are five. They quickly settle into class and learn to work and play with others. For example during role-play they willingly take turns at being the doctor or patient. Their behaviour is very good. They take turns on the computer and share equipment and are beginning to be able to work without close supervision on some activities. They make choices from a range of activities on offer and are responsive to new learning situations. Their social development is enhanced during the afternoon sessions when they work with older pupils on a variety of activities.
70. The teaching of personal and social development is good and this aspect of children's learning permeates all the work in the classrooms. The teacher has high expectations of children's behaviour and work and all staff are good role models to the children. They explain and reinforce routines so that children know what is expected of them and encourage them to develop independent working habits and skills.

Language and literacy

71. By the time they are five, most children achieve above what is expected for their age in language and literacy. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Most children listen well and talk about their experiences. They are learning new words and are developing an increasing vocabulary related to all aspects of their work. The majority of children under five

develop good speaking and listening skills. They listen well to instructions and questions and are keen to contribute to class or group discussions. They are confident when discussing their activities with visitors. They enjoy books and know that words and pictures carry meaning. They handle books appropriately and listen to stories; they enjoy going to the library to select books. The children are beginning to read and write familiar words. They develop appropriate skills of letter formation and by the time they are five they can write simple words using upper and lower case letters. The higher attaining children can spell simple words and write them independently. Children can tell stories using pictures, and most know letters and the sounds they make, using this knowledge to sound out simple words. The higher attaining children are reading books from the school reading scheme with some fluency and a clear understanding of the text.

72. The teaching of language and literacy is good. As the children work, the teacher talks to them and asks questions to promote their language skills. Stories are read well which helps the children to concentrate and enjoy them. Staff urge the children to listen carefully and praise their contributions in discussions and this motivates the children's involvement. Staff provide children with interesting and relevant activities to encourage their early writing skills in group work. Writing materials are always available for children to use in their free choice time. The children in the reception class are introduced to the literacy session and those under five are presented with a range of activities suitable for their age and ability. The teacher's very good use of resources, for example puppets when telling the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood', ensures that their interest and enthusiasm is maintained.

Mathematics

73. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in mathematics, particularly number. By the time they are five-years-old, the level of attainment is above what is expected for their age. The teaching focuses on the development of children's number skills and there is a wide range of displays and activities to develop their awareness of number. Most children can count to ten and beyond and are able to do simple addition and subtraction calculations. They use mathematical language when naming shapes such as square and circle.
74. The teaching of mathematics is good. Much of the work is based on the National Numeracy Strategy Framework for teaching with very effective use of whole class activities that are introduced in an imaginative way to capture children's interest. A good example is the use of games to reinforce their knowledge of numbers and their order. Simple subtraction skills are developed through 'Ted's in the Bed' where they respond with the correct number when one falls out. The teachers make good use of questions to assess the children's understanding and to help them develop appropriate mental strategies when solving simple number problems. Careful consideration is given to what the children can learn in self-chosen activities as well as in directed tasks. Good use is made of the resources and time available. This results in children having many opportunities to learn and reinforce their number skills and understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. The children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and most attain standards in line with expectations for this area of learning. They study and consider changes in themselves and their family over time, and discuss and explore the environment around and beyond the school. They become increasingly confident in working the listening-centre and the computers. By the time they reach five they have explored a limited range of construction materials to build interesting models. They talk about how they make them and how they work. The children can identify and name parts of their bodies. They explore aspects of early science such as recognising the features of living things. The children are developing good work habits as well as increasing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They work with a range of materials including water to explore early scientific and mathematical concepts such as floating, sinking and capacity. They have good cutting skills using scissors with increasing accuracy and safety and can join materials using glue.
76. Teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. Activities are satisfactorily resourced and planned and build on previous learning. These activities extend the children's experiences outside school. The planning links the activities well and gives the children a purpose and helps them make sense of their work. The teachers have appropriate expectations of work and behaviour and make sure children understand what is expected of them. The children are encouraged to work independently but with good intervention when needed by adults.

Physical development

77. In physical development, the children make satisfactory progress and most are likely to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning by the time they are five. The children are aware of space and move around each other carefully when running and skipping in the hall during physical education lessons. They handle tools, such as pencils when writing and scissors when cutting out, carefully and with increasing skill. Most are able to manage buttons and zips when dressing and undressing for physical education and when dressing up.
78. Teaching is satisfactory and staff encourage the children to develop their fine motor skills when writing and drawing. There is no access to outdoor play other than in the playground at playtimes with the rest of the school. The children have regular physical education lessons in the hall to improve their large motor skills, but they have very limited opportunities for planned outdoor activities using wheeled toys or climbing and balancing and this restricts their progress in physical development.

Creative development

79. The children's attainment in creative development is in line with that expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Painting and collage activities provide opportunities for children to work in different colours and textures. For example they made attractive prints on paper and material using cut fruit. They respond well to stories and take on a variety of roles in their imaginative play. The children

enthusiastically join in singing and have opportunities to listen to and play simple percussion instruments. They have opportunities to use modelling dough as when they made a selection of fruit and vegetables.

80. The quality of the teaching is good. The teacher encourages the children to talk about their work and express feelings. When using percussion instruments, children are learning to play loudly or softly and to recognise high and low notes. Many are able to maintain a beat whilst they sing songs and rhymes. The teacher encourages everyone to take part and the work has a lively pace that ensures that children are well motivated. The planning of appropriate activities, along with the use of an appropriate range of resources, results in children being able to achieve the intended learning outcome in this area of learning.
81. The children under five are offered a well-planned, balanced and broad curriculum that covers all areas of learning as recommended by the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority, with the exception of outdoor play. The classroom is well organised and there are sufficient resources to support the children's learning. The children's attainment and progress is monitored through baseline and ongoing assessment and detailed records are kept. These records are used effectively to group the children and the work they will undertake. Parents are kept informed of the work children are doing.

ENGLISH

82. Inspection findings show that overall standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages. The results of the most recent National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that the performance of pupils in reading and writing was close to national averages. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the performance of pupils in these tests was close to the average. In the past four years, attainment has been variable but not below national averages. During these four years the performance of girls and boys in reading was above national averages, the performance of girls in writing was above the national average whilst the boys' performance were well above the national average.
83. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment at the age of eleven are in line with national averages. Attainment is in line with national averages in reading and writing, and also in speaking and listening. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that the performance of pupils was close to the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the performance of pupils in these tests was below. Trends over time show that in the past four years, the performance of pupils was close to the national average. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, the performance of girls was close to the national average while the boys' performance was above.
84. Throughout the school the pupils make satisfactory progress overall in speaking and listening. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to answer questions confidently and can explain clearly what they mean. By the end of the Key Stage 2, the pupils are able to use talk effectively to clarify and sort ideas and can express their views and opinions clearly and succinctly. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively in many different situations and respond well to instructions and questions, showing a good level of understanding.

85. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in reading. Most pupils in Year 2 use more than one strategy to read unfamiliar words. The teachers provide good models for reading aloud during shared reading activities and the pupils make good progress in learning how to read with expression. Most pupils are familiar with the words 'title', 'illustrator' and 'author' and some are beginning to be aware of 'fiction' and 'non-fiction'. Throughout the school most pupils are enthusiastic readers. By the age of eleven, the pupils are fluent, confident readers and are able to talk about significant ideas, themes, events and characters in the books that they are reading. The pupils know how to use an index page well in order to find information and they understand the word 'contents'.
86. Reading and writing are promoted well through the school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Shared and guided reading and writing activities within the literacy hour are well organised throughout the school. At the end of Key Stage 2 time is also given for developing the pupils' writing. Overall, most pupils make satisfactory progress in both reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
87. Attainment in writing is in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1. The pupils have a good understanding of story structure. They use full stops and capital letters in their independent writing and spell simple common words accurately. Most pupils' handwriting is correctly formed and consistent in size. Throughout the school the pupils make good progress in descriptive writing and are able to choose vocabulary carefully for interest and effect. The pupils in Key Stage 2 write imaginatively describing aliens when they imagine that a spaceship has landed on the school field. The pupils in Year 6, enlarging simple sentences to make more complex sentences, choose words effectively to make their sentences lively and interesting. For instance, they write sentences such as 'The nasty dog charged through the door with a helpless rabbit hanging from its jaw' instead of 'The dog came through the door'. By the age of eleven, the pupils have developed a confident and fluent style of handwriting and are writing with pens. Pupils understand a range of punctuation rules and are able to use commas, apostrophes, speech marks and exclamation marks appropriately in their writing. They are able to draft, evaluate and edit their writing and are able to write well in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. For example in history, the pupils in Year 4 write about 'A Day on Duty on Hadrian's Wall' and older pupils write about 'The Progress of Queen Elizabeth 1' when learning about the Tudors. In Year 5 pupils use descriptive vocabulary to write their own myths such as 'How lightning was created'. The teachers provide a lively and stimulating literacy environment through word lists, charts and book displays in their classrooms. This supports learning well.
88. The response of pupils to English lessons is good. They listen attentively throughout lessons and are eager to answer questions and participate in group and whole-class activities. They are keen to discuss text and develop their ideas through talk. Pupils in Year 1 enjoy looking at a modern version of the story of Cinderella and thinking of words that could describe the prince. The pupils in Year 6 enjoy the humour of adding different endings to nursery rhymes when learning about connectives, such as 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall and was knocked off by a giant ball'. Most pupils are able to work with sustained concentration and interest. They are able to organise resources and themselves well and handle books with appropriate care and respect.

89. The quality of teaching of English ranges from satisfactory to very good. Forty-five per cent of lessons are very good, 45 per cent are good and 10 per cent are satisfactory. The teachers have a good understanding of the subject and promote language development consistently well during English lessons and across the curriculum. Teachers use skilful questioning effectively to extend pupils' thinking. Shared and guided reading and writing activities are used effectively to promote pupils' understanding of punctuation, vocabulary and text. Resources are well prepared, and planned tasks are suitably varied for different ability groups. The teachers use good opportunities to introduce and explain new vocabulary. For example in a Year 6 class, when looking at the story 'Tom's Midnight Garden', the teacher talks to the class about the meaning of the word 'threshold' and endeavours to help the pupils work out what it could mean in the context of the story.
90. The teachers give clear explanations and instructions and learning objectives are well communicated to pupils. Previous learning is consolidated well. They use and discuss a range of literature in lessons to develop pupils' appreciation and understanding of texts. These included Aesop's fables, fairy tales, Greek legends and stories. The teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and effective guidance is given throughout lessons. In the best lessons, the teachers encourage the pupils to evaluate their own writing, have high expectations, and guide the pupils well in how to improve their work. The lessons are well structured and organised, with a range of teaching strategies being deployed during lessons. Information technology is used for word-processing when older pupils use computers to write about their Christmas production in school. There are occasions when the marking of pupils' work lacks purpose and is superficial. In these instances, the pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable and there is need for all marking to be improved to the high standards seen in some classes.
91. The library is well used by all classes and the older pupils use it for independent research. Many out dated books have been discarded but the library still has to be catalogued. There is a good number of reading books in the school, including many new books and a new reading scheme but there are still some old, out dated reading books in use. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject and has attended various in-service training, which she has disseminated to the staff. She has clear priorities for the subject such as looking at the higher order reading skills and these are to be included in staff meetings and led by the school's literacy consultant.

MATHEMATICS

92. The results of Key Stage 1 national tests over the past four years have varied from being well above the national average to well below in 1999. Although the number of pupils who attained at Level 2 in 1999 was only just below the national average, only a very small number of pupils attained at the higher level. However, in the present Year 2, inspection findings indicate that attainment for the majority of pupils is in line with national expectations with a quarter attaining at the higher level.

93. In Key Stage 2 national end of key stage tests indicate that attainment is well above the national average. In comparison with the performance of pupils from similar schools, attainment is also well above average. Over the last four years there has been a rising profile of attainment and the figures show a year-on-year improvement. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in the present Year 6 is well above average with four-fifths of the pupils attaining at the expected level and two-fifths at the higher level. Throughout the school the pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their targets.
94. The pupils in Year 2, who are developing a good range of number facts, can use simple strategies to count and order numbers to 20 and beyond. A significant number can recall their multiplication tables and apply their knowledge of number bonds when calculating simple sums. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils subtract nine from any two-digit number by subtracting ten and adding one. The most able pupils quickly spotted the number pattern and came up with their own rule. The pupils in Key Stage 1 know two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. They learn to measure using standard and non-standard units and can tell the time in hours, half and quarter hours. They successfully record and interpret data on block graphs and Venn diagrams.
95. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are able to add and subtract using hundreds and thousands. Their mathematical vocabulary includes a range of words to describe the four number operations. The majority of pupils are secure in their knowledge of multiplication tables to 10, but many know their 15 and 16 times tables. Their mental skills are well above average. They use factors and multiples to solve number problems. For example they understand that 42 multiplied by 16 is the same as 42 multiplied by eight then multiplied by two and are able quickly to give an accurate answer. The pupils can work with decimals to two places and beyond. Many pupils are able to recognise percentages as fractions of a hundred and understand equivalent fractions and decimals. The pupils are able to collect, classify, display and interpret data. The most able can use information technology skills to transfer and manipulate such information on a spreadsheet. However, information technology is not widely or consistently used to support the mathematics curriculum.
96. From the time they are five, the pupils make good progress in their learning so that they reach and many exceed the expected standards for their age at seven and eleven years. Higher attaining pupils, particularly towards the upper end of Key Stage 2, make good progress because they are provided with work that is matched to their capabilities. This is having a positive effect on standards. The pupils who have special educational needs receive appropriate support in lessons and the work set enables them to deal with a range of mathematics that is well suited to their needs and capabilities.
97. Since the previous inspection standards in mathematics have risen. The school was a pilot for the National Strategy for Numeracy and benefited from a great deal of extra training. This has raised teaching skills and improved learning. The school development plan has given an emphasis on improving the teaching of data handling and this has been successful. The curriculum is now more balanced in Key Stage 2 and the pupils are presented with opportunities to use their own initiative. The pupils are generally presented with work that is appropriate for their

level and is sufficiently challenging.

98. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages. In the best lessons teachers provide tasks that are closely matched to the ability range in the class. This enables the higher attaining pupils to take on more challenging problems. Most lessons have a good pace with a balance of mental arithmetic and written investigations. Teachers employ good questioning that results in clear articulation by the pupils of their methods which is shared with the rest of the class and increases learning. The teachers' planning is effective and lessons progress logically, taking the pupils through a step-by-step approach when introducing new concepts and skills. The teachers organise the pupils' learning well by anticipating any difficulties that may occur and giving attention to specific groups. Regular assessments of the pupils' progress are made and recorded so that the teachers can plan appropriate future work. The school makes effective use of the expertise provided by a teacher from the feeder secondary school who works with a mathematically gifted pupil in Key Stage 2. Across the school, mathematics homework is regularly completed by the pupils and enhances the curriculum.
99. The subject is effectively led by the subject co-ordinator. She has worked with the headteacher and other staff to develop good long- and medium-term planning. Curriculum planning and assessment are good features of the mathematics curriculum. Useful analysis of national test results is made, which enables teachers to make accurate predictions when setting attainment targets for their pupils. Extra funding has been well used to provide additional teacher input to target underachievement. Apart from some pupils at the lower end of Key Stage 1, the standard of pupil behaviour and concentration is very high right across the school. The pupils enjoy the quick fire mental arithmetic sessions. Whether working independently or in groups, the pupils sustain concentration and are very motivated. At the upper end of Key Stage 2, work is well presented but a consistent approach to presentation and marking is a weakness across the subject.

SCIENCE

100. The 1999 teacher assessments for pupils at age seven indicate that standards are average. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils show the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 4 is broadly average and that the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils' attainment is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and good by the time they leave the school. Throughout Key Stage 1 and the beginning of Key Stage 2 the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress but they make good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6 due to the good standards of teaching.
101. The pupils in Key Stage 1 know that objects are made from different materials and can classify them according to whether they are wood, metal or plastic. Most of the pupils know that the properties of some materials make them more suitable for some purposes than others. They are developing a sound understanding of the growth of plants and name the major parts such as stem, root, leaves and petals. The pupils study the life cycles of plants and animals and pupils find out how living things are similar and different. They begin to understand that some foods are healthier than others and can indicate what a healthy diet might include.

102. The pupils continue to make satisfactory progress as they enter Key Stage 2. In Year 3, most pupils understand that materials change when heated or cooled and they have a reasonable knowledge of which materials will dissolve when placed in water. The pupils in Year 4 know that some substances can be separated through filtration and those in Year 5 develop a good understanding of solids, liquids and gases. They have a secure understanding of forces and the higher attaining pupils demonstrate the ability to measure in Newtons. They build on earlier work, drawing and constructing electrical circuits and know what happens when resistors are introduced into a circuit. Throughout Key Stage 2, the pupils demonstrate a good understanding of life processes and in Year 6 they have a good knowledge of the human digestive system and the function of the lungs.
103. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 2, standards have improved with significantly more pupils working at a higher level towards the end of the key stage. More opportunities have been provided for the pupils to develop their understanding of fair testing, although more should still be done. The previous report was critical of the work provided for the pupils in the mixed age classes. This has been addressed very effectively through the teachers' improved understanding of the curriculum and the adoption of national science guidelines.
104. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory and frequently good or better in the upper Key Stage 2 classes. In the best lessons, the teachers have secure subject knowledge, plan the activities carefully and question the pupils very effectively to determine what they know and understand. For example, in lessons on the circulatory and digestive systems, the teachers recapped on work previously covered, pushed the pupils to answer revision questions and showed they had a clear knowledge of the subject being taught. As a result of the challenging questions, the pupils made good progress in the lessons and this was particularly evident for the higher attaining pupils who were encouraged to undertake further research to improve their knowledge. Whole-class sessions are well managed and most teachers have appropriately high expectations of the pupils' work and how they should behave. As a result the pupils behave well, achieve standards in line with their capabilities and show enthusiasm for science. A feature of the lessons in Key Stage 2 is the sense of humour which is used effectively to help build relationships between the teachers and the pupils. Homework is used effectively to support the subject. For example, Year 6 pupils are keeping a food diary, noting the contents of the various meals they eat to determine how healthy their diets are.
105. In less effective lessons, the teachers do not have effective strategies for keeping the pupils on task and the lessons lack pace, resulting in the pupils making less progress than they are capable of. In some of the better lessons, the teachers are beginning to make effective use of information technology. For example, in a Year 4/5 lesson, the pupils used the CD-ROM to improve their understanding of blood and circulation. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are particularly well motivated, enjoy the subject and are keen to work with their peers on particular topics. This positive attitude contributes to their good progress.
106. The quality of marking is variable throughout the school. Work is marked regularly and in the best examples, targets are set for the pupils and a high standard of presentation is demanded of them. There are examples of unsatisfactory marking however. In these instances it is superficial and does not show the pupils how

they could improve and untidy handwriting from the teachers does not set a good example for the pupils to improve their presentation.

107. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and conscientious co-ordinator. The careful implementation of national guidelines and the regular monitoring of the pupils' work has helped to raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 2. The pupils' work is assessed regularly at the end of topics, in addition to the end of key stage tests and this too has had a positive impact on standards.

ART

108. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages and attain standards that are similar to those expected of pupils of a similar age. These inspection findings are an improvement on those at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' skills and techniques in art are developed consistently, resources are now adequate and the teaching of art is good overall.
109. The pupils are confident using a range of media and techniques in both two- and three-dimensional work, including drawings using the computer. In Year 1, the pupils observe fruit carefully and produce detailed drawings. Some pupils achieve especially good colour effects in their representations of pears. The pupils in Year 2 explore the potential of coloured paper and fabric to create texture in their collage work. The older pupils use charcoal to good effect when drawing trees in winter and the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 use pastels and various water colours to produce the effect of light and dark in their winter pictures after looking at and discussing 'Winter World' by Beerstraaten. The pupils show a keen awareness of colour, structure and tone and pay careful attention to detail, such as how light strikes part of their drawings.
110. Throughout the school, the pupils learn about the work of various artists and create their own pieces based on some of the techniques seen. For instance, the pupils in a Key Stage 2 class practise short thin brush strokes after looking at paintings by Monet and learn how to apply colour to get the effect that they want.
111. The pupils take pleasure in their art lessons and carry out their work with care, taking pride in what they achieve. They use and share resources sensibly and safely. They persevere with their work and try hard to improve their various skills. They enjoy learning such skills as calligraphy and various types of printing.
112. The teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge and they make good use of demonstration in lessons to show pupils how to improve their artwork. For example, the teacher in a Key Stage 2 class, demonstrated drawing a face so that the pupils learn how to position features correctly. All teachers use plenary sessions well for showing good examples of work for evaluation by the class, helping the pupils to improve their techniques. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.
113. The pupils begin a sketchbook in Key Stage 1. This continues with them through the school and shows progression in their drawing. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 were involved in doing a Parish Map in textiles which is now on show in Wigan Town Hall. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and gives help as needed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in design and technology in both key stages. Little teaching was observed during the inspection due to timetable arrangements. The findings show that there is improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Only one lesson of design and technology was observed during the inspection but analysis of the teachers' plans, discussion with the pupils and scrutiny of their work on display indicates that satisfactory progress is made as the pupils move through the school. The pupils attain standards similar to that expected of pupils of a similar age.
115. The pupils in Year 2 make types of wheeled vehicles using components provided by the teacher. They improve their assembly and joining skills and then design their own model using the strategies and methods from the teacher's demonstration. They then suggest refinements and improvements showing the beginnings of critical awareness of their designs. The pupils in Year 3 have previously made Christmas wreaths and show knowledge of the importance of the planning and evaluation process before producing the finished article. The pupils in Year 6 made models of various habitats such as a pond, grassland, woodland and forest and understand the importance of planning and evaluating before they make the model.
116. The pupils enjoy design and technology and talk enthusiastically about what they have made. The pupils in the Reception class are enthusiastic about making Millennium bugs using various materials and the older pupils visit 'Pennington Flash' and enjoy making bird boxes.
117. The accumulated evidence suggests that teaching is satisfactory. They provide motivating and appropriate activities in the context of subjects such as history. For instance, pupils in Key Stage 2 make gargoyles from card and papier mâché. The teacher's planning is good and the subject is adequately resourced.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

118. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was only possible to observe two history lessons during the inspection. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons. The evidence from these lessons, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their previous work, indicate that standards are in line with national expectations in geography and above national expectations in history at the end of both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
119. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have a good knowledge of the local area and are able to use appropriate vocabulary to make observations of the physical features of their surroundings. They use maps to locate the main features of their local area and produce their own maps showing their routes to school. They make a study of the river Douglas. The school's Eco-status has made all the pupils very aware of environmental issues and the pupils in Years 1 and 2 study, for example, noise pollution locally, because of the proximity of the M6, or how litter pollutes their own environment. History is closely linked to the work in geography, as well as science. In Year 1 toys are used as a focus to distinguish between the past and present. Visits to local places of interest are used to widen and develop the pupils' historical knowledge and understanding. The pupils use appropriate vocabulary to describe people who are older and younger than

themselves. Their factual knowledge of the past beyond living memory is developed through studying famous people such as Gulliver and Beatrix Potter.

120. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils have developed a good understanding of factors that have influenced their local environment. They understand, for example, how land reclaimed from mining is being used to provide leisure facilities through visiting and studying a local leisure park built on reclaimed land. They have made extensive studies of the immediate school environment and found ways in which to improve it. For example they have persuaded the local electricity provider to improve and make secure an adjoining sub-station and have sited nesting boxes that they have made, in suitable locations. Their study of World War 2 has been linked with good mapping work, identifying on large scale maps features that have changed since the Victorian times, such as air raid shelters. This work has been enhanced by a museum visit to study the Battle of the Atlantic. In Year 5 the pupils have made their own Tudor miniatures and written and performed a Tudor play as part of their work on Tudors. The school makes very effective use of the resources offered by the local area. For example the pupils in Year 4 look for evidence of Roman settlement when visiting Ribchester. Generally the pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and historical events is good. They have a good factual knowledge of the ways of life, beliefs and traditions of the Greeks, Romans, Tudors and Victorians. Their understanding of chronology is secure and they are able to use reference materials such as maps, photographs, objects and books to help them answer questions.
121. Since the previous inspection the school has improved the provision of history and geography resources. Over-reliance on photocopied material has been replaced by an emphasis on pursuing enquiry using a range of resources. These include artefacts, pictures and photographs and local people talking about their own past, such as a miner who gave the Year 6 pupils a first-hand account of what mining was like in the Wigan area in the recent past.
122. The pupils show interest and enjoyment in history and geography. They listen attentively while the teacher is talking and offer sensible and considered responses to questions. They work well independently and, when given the opportunity, they co-operate and help one another to seek solutions to tasks.
123. In the two lessons that were observed the teaching was never less than satisfactory. The teachers had a good understanding of history. Whilst both the history and geography schemes have been slimmed down, the curriculum for both is sufficiently broad and balanced. Teachers make good use of the local environment. The use of information technology for research purposes is however underdeveloped. Assessment procedures are good.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

124. At the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school their attainment in information technology is below what is normally expected for pupils of their age. The school has only recently acquired new computers with CD-ROM facilities. In some classes the teachers have begun to teach the pupils the skills needed to use computers and the software that is available. This approach is beginning to have some impact on the pupils' progress in these classes, but has not yet had a significant impact on standards. The teachers are beginning to

introduce a range of software to be used in other curricular areas. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject and there is a need to provide additional in-service training to develop staff skills. The school has planned for this and some training has already been undertaken. The co-ordinator has recently taken up her post but she has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and a clear view of what is required in order to raise standards. The national guidelines for the subject have been implemented and there is recognition amongst the staff of the need to develop the subject throughout the school. The previous report was critical of the lack of modern equipment and this issue has been addressed.

125. By the end of Key Stage 1, most of the pupils have basic control of a computer mouse to select items on screen. They can use simple word and number games appropriately and can use an art program to create drawings of hats on screen and, with help, can print them out. The pupils can write text on screen but few can edit their work; their word processing skills are limited. They are reasonably confident in following instructions on screen but few are able to store and retrieve their work. They are confident and enthusiastic when using the computers. The pupils in the Reception class are given a good introduction to using programmable toys through dressing them up as robots and being directed to move and turn by other pupils. Pupils in Year 2 use a program to help them build up a screen picture of a plant, positioning the stem, leaves, roots and petals correctly.
126. By the time they leave the school, the pupils are developing word processing skills, although this is often related to typing out their work with little editing and re-drafting taking place. Some of the pupils have skills in changing the size and style of fonts but many are in the early stages of word processing skills. Some pupils are beginning to use CD-ROM databases to retrieve information. For example, in a good Year 4/5 lesson the pupils improved their understanding of blood and circulation through use of the computer. However, many pupils do not yet have the skills to transfer the text from information sources and integrate it into their own work. The pupils in Year 6 are beginning to use spread-sheets to analyse information and to produce graphs. However, there is some way to go before they are confident in this aspect of their work.
127. The pupils' progress in the use of information technology to solve problems, to research information, to communicate information or to support their work in other subjects is unsatisfactory. However, there is evidence that, in some classes, where the teachers have the confidence and plan to use the technology on a regular basis, the pupils make satisfactory progress.

MUSIC

128. As they move through the school all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their musical skills in performing, composing, listening and appraising. Since the previous inspection, where music was identified as an area for improvement, the school has developed an appropriate scheme of work to ensure coverage of all aspects of the subject.
129. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in developing their musical skills of performing and composing music. The pupils in Year 2 learn how to use untuned percussion instruments to represent floating clouds and rain and they make progress in being able to clap in time to the music. Older pupils in Key

Stage 2 improve their skills in appraising music when listening to Debussy's 'La Mer'. They explain that the music begins quietly to give the impression of the sun rising and the music becoming louder shows that the sun is rising. They can explain that timpani are used effectively to give the impression of crashing waves. Progress is evident in learning to listen and appraise. Older pupils understand the different sections of the orchestra and know that these are brass, woodwind, strings and percussion. The pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 sing tunefully.

130. Most pupils' response to music is good. They enjoy using the musical instruments and are keen to have a turn at playing. They enjoy singing and all join in enthusiastically when for instance in Key Stage 1, singing a song about coming to school or in Key Stage 2, singing 'The Millennium Prayer'. They behave well in their music lessons and they are keen to play instruments, sing or contribute to discussion after listening to a piece of music.
131. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good in the lessons observed and is good overall. The teachers provide good levels of motivation to encourage the pupils to develop an enjoyment of music. When introducing music by Debussy, the teacher makes good links with their art and the impressionist painters. The teachers' planning is effective in ensuring breadth and balance. Questioning skills are used well to promote the pupils' learning. The lessons are well organised and make good use of time and resources. There is a good range of tuned and untuned musical instruments and these are used effectively by all classes.
132. The school does not have a music co-ordinator but planning for the subject is thorough and covers all aspects of the subject appropriately.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. However the evidence from teachers' plans, along with discussions with pupil, indicates that a sound physical education curriculum is in place and that standards are appropriate for the age of the pupils. Records indicate that almost all the pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2.
134. One of the key issues in the previous inspection was to ensure full coverage of the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum in physical education and raise attainment in both key stages. The school has addressed these issues successfully and now, in both key stages, the standards of physical education are satisfactory. There is a clear policy and a very detailed scheme of work supports the curriculum. The requirement for outdoor and adventure activities is now met in Key Stage 2. The result is that now pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education in both key stages.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils catch and throw a ball with reasonable accuracy over short distances. They move round safely, stopping and changing direction when instructed by the teacher. They make effective use of space on the floor and on the apparatus and show a good level of control and flexibility. They understand the importance of warming up and have a good bank of warm-up exercises. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are able to develop imaginative linking sequences both individually and in matched movement, both as floor and

apparatus work. But pure gymnastic skills are limited. The pupils experience a variety of team and individual games such as netball, football and basketball and improve their skills in these. Orienteering and outdoor activities are provided at a local centre. However, regular after school provision is limited to a football club run by one of the parents.

136. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to take part in physical education activities. They listen carefully to instructions and consider how they can improve their performance. They appreciate the need for safety when carrying equipment or working with others. Pupils are always suitably dressed for physical activity. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into physical education lessons and make good progress.
137. In the lessons observed, the teaching was occasionally good but is satisfactory overall. Lessons are very carefully planned with clear learning objectives and high expectations. Teachers manage lessons very well and a high standard of behaviour is maintained. Care and attention is given to pupils' safety. Effective use is made of pupils' performance to demonstrate good practice.
138. There is a policy and an effective scheme of work, which gives structure and direction to the teaching of this subject. Apart from swimming, it includes all areas within the Programme of Study with a specified time allocation for each theme. The co-ordinator monitors the planning each term and through her lesson observations and the involvement of outside agencies, ensures that teaching is constantly being improved. Indoor resources for the subject are satisfactory. However the hard surface outside is in a very unsatisfactory state and the grassed areas around the school are very small.