

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **St. Peter's Catholic Primary School**

Newchurch, Rossendale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119664

Headteacher: Mr P. Stec

Reporting inspector: Mr R. W. Burgess  
OIN 20950

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 191465

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St. Peter's Road  
Newchurch  
Rossendale  
Lancashire  
Postcode: BB4 9EZ

Telephone number: 01706 229972

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Father Duffy

Date of previous inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20950	Roger Burgess	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19335	Susan Dixon	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?
21858	John Pryor	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and Design Design and technology Music Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18148	Alice Soper	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Foundation stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Peter's Catholic Primary School is situated in the village of Newchurch in the Rossendale valley. The school serves both the village of Newchurch and surrounding areas, where the housing is both privately owned and rented. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. It has 87 pupils aged between four and 11 years. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average with a wide range of attainment and some variation from year to year. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Nineteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above average. There is one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most children attend pre-school provision. The school admits pupils into the school at the beginning of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. Ten per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals, which is broadly average. The headteacher had been appointed to the permanent position shortly before the inspection, having previously been acting headteacher for less than a term.

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

The school is successfully overcoming a period of instability resulting from staff changes and the necessity for temporary staff appointments. Teaching is good in most lessons. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactory standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, reflecting the good teaching in these subjects. The headteacher, staff and governors share a commitment to continued improvement. There has been careful analysis and monitoring of pupils' performance by the headteacher, since his appointment in November 2000, to inform planning and set clear targets with the intention of raising standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- ◆ The headteacher provides good leadership and is setting a clear educational direction for the school.
- ◆ The quality of teaching is good in most lessons.
- ◆ Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- ◆ The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, ensure the school's aims for pupils' personal development are well met.

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

- ◆ The quality of teaching in lessons where it is less than good.
- ◆ Standards in information and communication technology.
- ◆ The curriculum in the Foundation Stage to ensure good progression in the development of skills.
- ◆ Procedures for assessment and its use to inform planning of the curriculum and pupils' work.
- ◆ The quality and range of resources, particularly for the development of literacy skills.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in 1996 has varied between good and unsatisfactory. There was good improvement until early 2000, since when, due primarily to staff movement and periods of extended absence of staff due to ill health, improvement was unsatisfactory until the appointment of the acting headteacher in November 2000. Since his appointment he has shown commitment to the school and has begun to address many of the outstanding issues identified in the previous report of 1996 and in the report by Her Majesty's Inspectors in 1998. For example, in developing procedures and practice for the routine assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress within the school. As part of the government's initiative to raise national standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy, the school has set targets with the local education authority as well as identifying targets for individual pupils. The school has good potential to continue to make improvements.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	A	D	D
Mathematics	D	D	D	D
Science	D	E	E	E

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

The table shows that standards were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science when compared with all schools and when compared with pupils in similar schools. Results in 2000 were affected by several temporary staff appointments to cover staff movement. The small number of pupils in each year group means the results of national testing and assessment are too variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school. Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. Evidence during the inspection indicated that the number of temporary appointments in the last two years have had a detrimental impact on the pupils levels of achievement.

By the end of the Foundation Stage children reach levels of attainment in line with those expected for their age. During the inspection standards for the majority of pupils were satisfactory and in line with national expectations for pupils aged 7 and 11 in English and mathematics. In science it is unsatisfactory and below national expectations for pupils aged 7 and satisfactory for pupils aged 11. Attainment in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and below national expectations for the majority of pupils. Due to staff changes, extended periods of staff absence and the lack of adequate records of attainment to enable effective planning, particularly by the temporary teacher at the Foundation Stage, progress for pupils has only been satisfactory over the past year in most subjects.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	There is a positive ethos in the school with good relationships and positive attitudes to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. The school is an orderly community in which pupils show good respect for adults and each other. Pupils work hard and want to do well. They enjoy lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They are sometimes slow to settle at the beginning of lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Relationships between the pupils are good and readily show their appreciation of each other's efforts
Attendance	Attendance is very good and pupils arrive punctually. The majority of parents are very supportive in sending their children to school regularly.

The care for the personal development of each individual child is a reflection of the ethos of the school and is fundamental to its aims and objectives. Positive attitudes and good behaviour are encouraged. Pupils listen attentively and respond well in lessons. Pupils willingly take responsibility for tasks.

## 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 teaching was good or better in 71 per cent of lessons seen, satisfactory in 25 per cent and unsatisfactory in only one lesson observed. Teaching was particularly good in lessons for older Key Stage 2 pupils. The strengths in the teaching include good explanations and effective sessions at the beginning and end of lessons. These have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. During the inspection the Reception and Year 1 class was taught by a very experienced teacher employed on a temporary basis. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. There is insufficient provision for pupils' different levels of ability in some lessons, particularly for younger pupils at Key Stage 2. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Support is not always effectively targeted to support these pupils. Teachers do not always make effective use of assessment to inform their planning. The quality of learning is good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 1 and 2. The school places appropriate emphasis on the teaching of language and number skills.
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Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is a satisfactory provision for pupils. There are good plans to increase the involvement of parents in planning to meet individual pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop and express their feelings, particularly in the development of moral and social values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has satisfactory procedures for the welfare of its pupils. The procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal progress to inform planning for future learning and to identify the learning needs of individual pupils are unsatisfactory.

The school benefits from good parental support. Inspection evidence supports parents' views that their partnership with the school has suffered during the period of instability in staffing. There is a good range of activities outside the classroom both at lunchtime and after school. The staff are hardworking and committed to the care and personal development of the pupils.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership by the headteacher is good. The development of staff roles has been affected by long term absences and temporary staff appointments.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive and developing their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Since his appointment in November 2000 the headteacher has used monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance well to develop targets.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school has recently used its resources well to support initiatives and areas of development. For example, in raising standards in numeracy and in developing the level of library provision.

The school has an adequate number of teaching staff but has suffered from several changes of staff and a number of temporary appointments. The accommodation is good and has recently been improved. Financial resources are managed prudently and the school is beginning to apply the principles of best value, for example, in improving library provision.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Their children like school.</li><li>◆ Behaviour is good.</li><li>◆ Pupils' personal development.</li><li>◆ The school's values and attitudes.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Some parents were concerned over the effect of staff absences on their children's attainment and progress</li><li>◆ The consistency in provision of homework through the school.</li><li>◆ Information on developments and changes in provision.</li></ul>

Inspectors' judgements support the views expressed by the majority of parents. Inspectors' judgements are that staff and governors, with support from the local education authority, have acted appropriately to provide stability within the school following staff movement and absence. There is some inconsistency and lack of clarity in the provision of homework throughout the school. Clearer information on the staffing situation would have been helpful in keeping parents informed and supportive of the initiatives being taken.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with national expectations. Children's progress in the Foundation Stage has been variable having been affected by the number of temporary teachers and inadequate planning of the curriculum. They are on course to meet expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children's personal and social development is satisfactory overall. They begin school with positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Children's literacy skills are satisfactory overall. They learn to hold writing tools with appropriate control. Children's mathematical development is satisfactory in most aspects. Children have limited opportunities to explore and investigate and to learn about the world around them. Their current knowledge and understanding is heavily dependent on what children know from their own experiences. There are limited opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Children's creative development is limited by the lack of opportunities provided for them to explore and investigate.

2. The 2000 national tests show that at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 2 and above was above the national average and in writing it was below the national average. In mathematics the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 2 and above was below the national average. In science, teacher assessments indicated standards of attainment were close to the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was close to the national average in reading, above in writing, below in mathematics and above in science. Compared with similar schools attainment was above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics.

3. The 2000 national tests show that at the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 4 and above was below the national average in English and mathematics and was well below the national average in science. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was below the national average in English, close to the national average in mathematics and very high in science. Compared with similar schools attainment was below average in English and mathematics and well below low in science. Due to the small number of pupils in each year group, standards do vary from year to year.

4. These results reflect the effect of disruption to staffing on the continuity of teaching and learning. Staff changes and limited support for temporary teachers have affected pupils' attainments during the past two school years. The number of pupils in each class differs considerably and year groups vary between 10 and 18. This has a significant impact on the attainment each year and makes trends from year to year an unreliable measure.

5. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection for pupils at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are satisfactory in English and mathematics. In literacy there are some aspects that have yet to be effectively developed, particularly in the aspects of handwriting, punctuation and spelling. In addition, the development of reading and writing skills in the early parts of the school is inconsistent. In numeracy, planning and the recent adoption of advice provided by the local education authority small schools' unit has improved the linking of the work in mathematics to the levels of attainment of different groups of pupils in mixed age classes. In science they are unsatisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 1, mainly due to extended periods of staff absence, and satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 2. In information and communication technology standards are unsatisfactory at both key stages.

6. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, inspection evidence shows pupils' attainments to be in line with national averages in reading and writing. Pupils' speaking skills are sound and their listening skills are generally satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident when speaking to others and they listen attentively.

7. In their reading, pupils in Key Stage 1 read satisfactorily but some use limited expression when reading aloud from their books. Pupils enjoy shared reading activities in the literacy hour and have secure understanding of the main ideas in a story. Pupils with higher prior attainment read confidently. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils with higher prior attainment read with accuracy, fluency and expression. Most others read accurately though some are hesitant and others read aloud with little expression. Pupils' progress in reading at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. They extend their knowledge of letter sounds to help them build words. They improve the accuracy and fluency of their reading through regular practice at school and at home. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in their reading. Accuracy and fluency improves and pupils begin to use reading to support their work in other subjects. They are able to locate information from increasingly complex texts.

8. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 make slow progress in developing writing skills. The scrutiny of work indicates that they have insufficient varied and structured opportunities to develop these skills. They learn to shape letters correctly and to write in sentences but do not use this knowledge consistently in other work to produce well presented writing. They learn about punctuation but their use of capital letters and full stops is sometimes inappropriate. At Key Stage 2, progress in the development of writing skills is satisfactory. Pupils develop story writing well. They can write for different purposes and are beginning to write stories and poems. They begin to develop joined script, although presentation of their work is not consistently good. Spelling is satisfactory overall.

9. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory. The younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 successfully develop their understanding of numbers and how they work, such as matching numbers to groups of objects, or the different ways a larger number can be made from two smaller numbers. By the end of Year 2 the pupils reach an average level of attainment in all aspects of mathematics. Pupils at Key Stage 2 work with increasingly larger numbers and make more complex calculations. They successfully develop their own ways of handling problems as well as using methods demonstrated to them. The older pupils confidently tackle more complex sums and harder problems. They develop their own ways of recording information and use it to predict results. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a good understanding of arithmetic which is developed well during numeracy sessions. They have a good knowledge of aspects such as area and shape and develop good problem solving skills.

10. Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress in their development of mathematical skills and understanding. Pupils at Key Stage 1 begin by learning the value of numbers up to 10 and most progress to understanding how to represent larger amounts. They use their growing knowledge of addition and subtraction to help them solve problems mentally. At Key Stage 2, most pupils progress to perform the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with increasing accuracy. They are able to explain the way they reach an answer to a problem. Pupils have good opportunities available to them to practise their numeracy skills, for example, in science and geography work when handling data.

11. In science at Key Stage 1 pupils develop a sound knowledge of living things, materials and how to be healthy. They begin to conduct simple experiments and draw appropriate

conclusions from what they have seen. Higher attainment is limited by the lack of breadth with which some topics are studied and the limitations placed on planning which are a result of insufficiently detailed assessment information. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand the need to make a test fair. They have a sound knowledge of the different organs and systems of the body and relate this to their work in health education on keeping their bodies healthy. They know that heat or cold can change materials and that some of these changes can be reversed. The majority of pupils can confidently explain their experiments, using appropriate scientific vocabulary. Many can predict and hypothesise. They carry out a wide range of investigations, predict, observe and measure with appropriate precision. Progress in learning at Key Stage 1 has been affected by extended periods of staff absence. It is good at Key Stage 2 where improvements to the curriculum have had a positive impact on learning.

12. In information and communication technology pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall. They make satisfactory progress in those aspects covered but do not have sufficient opportunities to search for and retrieve information, to handle data or to control a range of equipment. They operate a keyboard and a mouse satisfactorily. At Key Stage 2, they develop their skills in word processing. Higher attaining pupils usefully develop these skills at home.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their individual learning targets. Progress is better where there are good levels of support and targets are clearly understood by teachers and support assistants. There is insufficient challenge for more able pupils in most lessons.

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

14. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They enjoy coming to school and approach their lessons and activities with enthusiasm. In lessons where stimulating and challenging questions are given pupils respond well with well considered and confident replies. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson where pupils compared their descriptions of the characters in a book to their own experiences of life. For the most part pupils listen well to their teachers and each other and instructions are followed quickly and quietly. In lessons where the teachers have high expectations pupils settle to work quickly and maintain concentration throughout lessons. Some inattention and restlessness occurs in a small number of lessons where insufficient challenge is offered or the work is not well matched to the needs of all pupils. Pupils are able to work well alone or in groups when required. This was seen in a Year 5 and 6 literacy lesson where pupils worked in groups to compose and then retell stories about life in Victorian times. As pupils move through the school they develop the skills needed to become independent learners. They are able to make good use of reference books and benefit from the newly opened library but at present the use of computers and CD-ROMs to support research is limited.

15. The behaviour of the pupils is good. This has a positive effect upon their learning and upon the school community as a whole. Behaviour in lessons and assemblies is consistently good and pupils respond well to praise for good work and behaviour. Behaviour at lunchtimes is for the most part sociable and pleasant although there are a small number of occasions when some pupils do not meet the school's high expectations. There have been no exclusions in the past year but appropriate procedures are in place.

16. Relationships amongst the whole school community are good. Adults in school present good role models and pupils are treated with care and respect. Pupils are friendly and polite and conflict is rare. Pupils' personal development is also good. Pupils are offered many

opportunities to take responsibility, for example, by preparing the hall for assembly or by tidying away after lessons. They are encouraged to express their opinions and feelings in lessons but in the school as a whole the opportunities to express and share ideas with others are underdeveloped. The beliefs and values of others are well respected and pupils learn to consider the needs of the less fortunate.

17. Attendance rates are well above the national average and are very good. Pupils are eager to come to school and usually arrive on time. Absences are due to normal childhood illnesses and to a small amount of holiday taking in term time both for short and extended periods. Registration time is brief and efficient.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. Teaching during the inspection was mostly good. The quality of teaching in the school was very good in nine per cent of lessons seen, good in 62 per cent, satisfactory in a further 25 per cent and unsatisfactory in only one lesson observed. During the inspection the Reception and Year 1 class was taught by a very experienced teacher employed on a temporary basis. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Class teaching is often used effectively at the start of lessons and many lessons end with discussion of what has been learned.

19. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage during the inspection was good reflecting the skills and expertise of the temporary teacher. Her short term planning, organisation and methods ensured a good balance between free choice and directed activities. The teacher provided opportunities for the children to work as a class, in small groups and individually. Children in this class have had several temporary teachers since the beginning of term. The long and medium term planning for the curriculum offered to children is not based on the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, as introduced nationally in September 2000. The absence of records, plans and other information about children's achievements severely restricts future planning in all areas of learning. There is insufficient guidance and support for the temporary teachers who teach this class.

20. Where teaching is good, teachers have a good understanding of the subject being taught. This is used to good effect in modifying planning, in order to provide appropriate activities for pupils. For example, for a mathematics lesson at Key Stage 2, lesson plans were altered following the outcome of an earlier lesson. This ensured that pupils gained a more secure understanding of division. Questions are used effectively to ascertain pupils' understanding and to challenge and extend their thinking; the pace of the lessons sustains pupils' interests. All pupils are involved, including those with special educational needs, in discussion and activities. A variety of strategies are used to match the demands of the subject to the needs of the pupils. Pupils are given a suitable length of time to complete their work and this encourages them to organise their work so that they finish it within the allotted time.

21. In the good and very good lessons, teachers' planning shows suitable learning objectives. Lessons proceed at a good pace and a range of teaching strategies is used to good effect. Skilled questioning techniques ensure that all pupils are challenged and teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully during the lesson. For example, older pupils in the Key Stage 2 class enthusiastically respond to a science session to develop their understanding of how materials change when studying the water cycle and the processes of evaporation and condensation. This followed good planning, clear explanation and encouragement from the teacher.



22. Where teaching is less successful, planning indicates that consideration has been given to the range of ages being taught, whilst the work set does not always take account of what pupils of differing abilities need to learn next in order to achieve the levels of which they are capable. The lack of assessment records for individual pupils means that this information is not readily available. Sometimes, insufficient time is spent working with different groups and the pupils who receive the least support make little progress and achieve little within the lesson. This was evident within a literacy lesson at Key Stage 1, where the teacher spent too much time explaining the chosen task limiting the time available to interact with smaller groups of pupils.

23. Teachers plan following National Curriculum programmes of study. They give clear explanations, instructions and demonstrations and provide careful support for all pupils. Most lessons have an appropriate structure, with a clear introduction, sufficient time for pupils to work on tasks and a useful discussion at the end to consolidate pupils' learning. Good use is made of questions to revise what pupils have learned previously and to develop the theme of the lesson. When lesson objectives are not clearly identified, tasks do not always accurately reflect pupils' needs and they insufficiently challenge pupils, particularly those of high prior attainment. This is particularly difficult for temporary teachers due to the lack of records of pupils' prior attainment and progress to effectively inform short term planning in classes with a wide range of ages and attainment. Effective use is made of classroom assistants and parent helpers to support pupils with special educational needs and to extend the skills and techniques of small groups of pupils within subjects such as art and design and design and technology.

24. The teachers provide good support through verbal comments which include guidance on how the pupils might improve. The teachers' mark the pupils' work regularly. The teachers use praise effectively to motivate the pupils. In lessons, discipline is good. Teachers have good control and relationships between them and their pupils are good. At times too little attention is paid to the presentation of work within exercise books and there is little use of comment to promote work of a higher standard. Pupils with special educational needs have good individual records with clearly identified targets. Other pupils do not benefit from such well-targeted work, due to the lack of suitable procedures for the assessment of their abilities. Parents are asked to hear their children read and to comment on their child's reading in a home-school book. This encourages regular dialogue between home and school.

25. The staff have begun to use the approaches in the National Literacy Strategy and make good use of resources to interest the pupils. They make good teaching points about rhythm and the sounds of language in their study of poetry and link this to the sharing of well chosen texts as a class. They provide appropriate challenge for the pupils and give clear guidance on the teaching of skills such as grammar and spelling. Handwriting is taught in each class. The teaching of reading includes appropriate opportunities for the pupils to build words from letter sounds. The teaching of mathematics is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. There is good teaching of mental arithmetic. The teachers correctly emphasise the quick and accurate recall of number facts. In useful sessions at the end of lessons, the teachers make good use of skilful questioning to ensure that the pupils have understood what is taught.

26. In the other subjects the teaching is at least satisfactory and often good, with some very good features, particularly art and design. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on the teaching of information and communication technology. The school recognises the need to develop the use of information and communication technology.

27. Curriculum planning is mainly limited to the adoption of national and local guidance materials. There is no supplementary documentation to provide guidelines for the use of these

materials in the school to enable effective medium and short term planning and ensure appropriate provision for the range of ages and attainment within each class. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers generally make good provision through literacy lessons for the development of language skills. In the Foundation Stage the lack of adequate resources within the class makes unrealistic demands of the temporary teacher.

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

28. The positive developments in the planning and delivery of the curriculum, noted by Her Majesty's Inspectors in the re-inspection of the school in 1998 following the results of the 1996 inspection, have been maintained. The learning opportunities provided by the school satisfactorily cover most requirements of the National Curriculum. There is some continuing weakness in provision for children in the Foundation Stage and in information and communication technology. There is not yet a full implementation of the requirements of the National Curriculum orders for this subject.

29. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage introduced nationally in September 2000 has not yet been implemented. This has been recognised by the headteacher and governors who are currently taking steps to address this effectively through a new permanent appointment.

30. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 has been improved, by the adoption of national initiatives, in the case of literacy and numeracy, and the use of national and local guidance materials for other subject areas. The curriculum is now satisfactory in its breadth, there is a good balance between the areas of study and it generally meets the needs of the pupils. The next stage, that of adapting it to the particular needs of this school, has yet to be undertaken.

31. There has been a review of the register of pupils with special educational needs and a small, but significant, proportion of them have been removed as no longer being in need of that level of special support. This has meant that the support that is available can be more clearly focussed where the needs are greatest or where most good can be done. Apart from the support offered those pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, which is good, provision is satisfactory. Improvements in the development of individual education plans by utilising parental involvement is at an early stage of development.

32. The school uses the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well and these are firmly established in the school. They have begun to have an impact on the standards the pupils attain. They have also been welcomed by the pupils who find that the new structure and pace of the lessons makes learning more exciting and enjoyable.

33. The school provides a good range of out of school clubs and activities. This includes, music through the choir, major games (football and netball), chess and skiing. Most parents approve of the range of activities. It adds a good voluntary dimension to the life of the school and in the way in which staff and interested parents give up their time for these activities it provides good models of social service.

34. All the activities provided in the school are open to both boys and girls. The staff are at pains to ensure that participation in one activity does not reduce the opportunity for engaging in another, and that, for example, pupils with special educational needs who are withdrawn from class for special tuition, do not regularly miss the same curriculum opportunities.

35. The programme of religious education, which uses the Salford diocesan scheme, which is inspected independently by a diocesan appointed inspector, is the major element in the provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. The programme of study in science provides other elements in the provision of health education. The personal and social development of the pupils is a central factor in the aims of the school. The organisation of the school, the good relationships encouraged between pupils and with the staff are also major contributors to the good quality provision for this aspect of the curriculum of the school.

36. The links with the parish are strong and provide, with the Friends of the School, the major community contribution to the pupils' learning through the provision of resources and interested people to help in the school. Additionally the local business partnership supports events in the school, such as the visit by the 'Roman Soldier' in full regalia. This contributed greatly to the historical awareness of the pupils.

37. The school is a member of the local Catholic Small Schools group which provides mutual support for its members drawn from the group of similar schools in the area. It also has satisfactory links with the Catholic secondary school to which many of the pupils move when they are 11.

38. The provision for the pupils' personal development is good. They are successfully encouraged to become caring and helpful individuals. The overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

39. The good quality provision for the pupils' spiritual development is mainly provided by the specifically Catholic elements in the curriculum and life of the school. School worship, religious education and the links with the parish church provide a religious basis for their spiritual development. In addition to this, elements in the provision of subjects such as art and design, music and literature as well as some parts of the science programme give the pupils good opportunities to reflect on their life and experience and to find ways of expressing their personal feelings, anxieties and wonder.

40. The quality of provision for the pupils' moral development is also good and provides a framework for their understanding of what is right and what is wrong and of how they ought to behave. The school's behaviour policy and successful methods of encouraging good behaviour provide the pupils with clear guidelines and an encouragement to follow them. Opportunities are also provided within these structures for the pupils to consider why some actions are acceptable and others are not.

41. The school successfully encourages the pupils to develop socially, they are taught to be polite to people they meet and to one another. Pupils are given responsibilities about the school and in classrooms to support the easy running of the school. The older pupils are encouraged to look after the needs of younger ones, especially during playtimes in the playground. The pupils also provide entertainment for members of the community, especially the older ones through the concerts and shows that are put on for them. This gives the pupils good models of social responsibility to copy outside the school. The recently introduced systems of house point awards and the Book of Excellence provide pupils with incentives to behave well both as individuals and also as members of Houses within the school.

42. The provision for the cultural development of the pupils is satisfactory. That part of the provision concerned with their own cultural heritage is good. They meet a wide range of good quality music, art from a range of painters and a good range of literature drawn from the European heritage. There are some examples of literature from other cultures, and studies in

geography introduce the older pupils to countries outside Europe. There are fewer opportunities provided for the pupils to become familiar with the culture, beliefs and practices of the major non-Christian groups of people within the wider community than would be expected. This was noted in the previous inspections and has not yet been successfully addressed.

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

43. The school provides a caring environment where all are well known and well supported by the good relationships that exist. There are satisfactory arrangements for the care and protection of the pupils. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory and the school provides a safe and well maintained environment for its pupils. The health and safety issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and efficient procedures have been put in place for the regular monitoring of the school building and the site. The school has identified the need to review the health and safety policy that presently exists. The arrangements for the care of sick and injured pupils are good. The procedures for child protection are unsatisfactory at present. Whilst there are some members of staff with appropriate knowledge and training this is not consistent with all members of the teaching and ancillary staff. The school lacks a suitable policy and written guidance for all adults in the school.

44. The procedures for monitoring the academic and personal progress of pupils are unsatisfactory overall. The school has recently introduced a system for tracking individual progress and for setting individual targets to provide encouragement and motivation but this is not at present linked to the planning and provision of pupils' work.

45. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and planning the curriculum are also unsatisfactory. There is no whole school system for recording the results of tests and assessments made by class teachers. The quality of information available to inform the teaching of future work or to provide continuity from year to year is inconsistent and often sparse.

46. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. The school's behaviour policy and systems are currently under review. There is a suitable and well understood system of rewards to recognise good work and behaviour. A sanctions system has yet to be developed. Whilst the pupils show good levels of self-discipline in lessons this is occasionally not so at lunchtimes. At present pupils and midday staff do not have the support needed to ensure that the school's high expectations are always met. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils learn to respect and care for their fellows but again the lack of a suitable sanctions policy at present provides insufficient support should it be needed.

47. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school meets statutory requirements and the administrative arrangements are generally efficient. There are some occasions when absences are not always clearly identified and holidays taken over the permitted ten days are incorrectly authorised.

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

48. The parents' views of the school are satisfactory. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciative of recent improvements. They are particularly pleased with the happiness of their children at school and the way in which the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Some parents are unhappy with the amount of homework provided, the

information about how their child is getting on and the way in which the school works in partnership with parents. The inspection findings generally support the views of parents.

49. The effectiveness of the schools links with parents is unsatisfactory at present. Parents feel that they are not well informed about the management and organisation of the school. Instability in the school has led to feelings of insecurity and lost confidence. Inspection findings support these views but find that much improvement has taken place recently and parents are appreciative of this. Parents are confident in approaching the school should they have any concerns and the headteacher and teaching staff are readily available at the start and finish of the day. Parents are invited to seasonal events and to weekly celebration assemblies. Opportunities to gain insight into the life of the school and the work that their children do are otherwise limited. The recently appointed headteacher has many plans to involve parents more in the education of their children and the life of the school, for example, through workshops about literacy and numeracy and by providing information about the curriculum and the topics that pupils study.

50. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. A number of parents are able to provide regular help in school and to support the after school library facility and other extra-curricular clubs. There is a strong Friends' Association that raises welcome extra funds. These have provided new resources to support the curriculum and books for the new school library.

51. The quality of the information provided for parents is at present unsatisfactory. The school brochure, governors' report and newsletters do provide useful information about every day issues and school events. Parents do not receive sufficient up to date information about the organisation of the school and its policies, especially with regard to behaviour and homework. The school has identified a need to improve the level of communication with parents and the school brochure is under review as are other aspects of the information provided for parents. Reporting on pupils' work and progress is conveyed in written reports and with regular consultation events. The quality of the written reports is inconsistent across the school. Some reports identify pupils' successes and areas of difficulty well and provide clear targets for improvement whilst others are less useful. The school has already identified the need to improve the reporting arrangements and changes have been made to the timing of consultation events for this purpose.

52. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is satisfactory. Homework is generally well supported but its provision is inconsistent and irregular. Parents have expressed a wish for a greater understanding of homework requirements and for more consistent provision in order to give better support at home. Parents are committed to the education of their children as can be seen by the very good levels of attendance and in the support received for the home-school agreement.

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

53. There are several areas which need to be developed and, overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The teaching staff and governing body are working together successfully to create a caring, family atmosphere in which people are valued. Aims and values are clearly expressed and the management of the school is developing good strategies to successfully promote them, both in the school and the local community. The school's aims, values and policies influence the work of all staff. The school has a caring ethos and there are clear expectations about standards of work and behaviour which develops a

positive ethos. The school is successful in achieving its aims. Parents fully support the school's aims.

54. The governing body has developed its role in formulating the school development plan. Attention has been given to establishing appropriate priorities and identifying key personnel or measurable success criteria. Due to staffing changes over the past two years, there has been very little progress in addressing the outstanding issues identified in the inspection of November 1998. There has been very little monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school to assess the impact of initiatives on the quality of learning.

55. The headteacher has made a substantial contribution to the leadership of the school since taking up post in November 2000, bringing stability at a time of staff changes, which will enable future developments to further improve the quality of education provided. The school has the capacity for significant improvement. During a period of staff changes and during periods of staff absence, which have resulted in a number of temporary appointments, there has been unsatisfactory progress in the development of curriculum planning and appropriate procedures for the use of assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress to inform lesson planning. This has had an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and learning. The governing body, with the support of the local education authority, has taken appropriate action through the appointment of the acting headteacher and at the time of the inspection was proceeding with arrangements for the appointment of a permanent teacher for the Foundation Stage.

56. The school has a good capacity for improvement given clear and effective leadership. The current level of staffing requires the headteacher to undertake a significant class teaching commitment. It is not realistic within these constraints for him to undertake the effective development of curriculum planning and assessment without the provision of appropriate non-contact time.

57. The governing body are supportive and are taking positive steps to enable the school to move forward. They are becoming fully involved in producing targets in the school's development plan. Their role as a critical friend to the school is still in the early stages of development. The school is meeting statutory requirements, including those for sex education. The governors take an active part in school life in areas such as health and safety, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and financial decision making. They meet regularly and have been involved appropriately in supporting the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

58. The school recognises that the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation of subjects is underdeveloped. There are few procedures for the formal monitoring of the work of the school. Procedures for staff development and appraisal have been disrupted by the staff changes and extended periods of absence. Staff needs are being identified and suitable provision is being made for their professional development. Staff support each other well, relationships and communication between teachers are good. There are sufficient opportunities to share information and this has a beneficial effect on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Staff have appropriate job descriptions which clearly define their roles. Staff are becoming increasingly involved in the management of the curriculum.

59. The school's provision for equality of opportunity is satisfactory. There is a nominated member of the governing body for special educational needs who liaises with the co-ordinator and has taken an active role to maintain provision during the absence of the co-ordinator. Governors report to parents about the success of the special educational needs policy and give

details of the allocation of funding to support pupils. The governors' annual report to parents contains the information required to meet statutory requirements. The school fully meets statutory requirements for the recording and publication of National Curriculum assessments.

60. The day-to-day administration is good. The school is well organised for routine administration and communications. The school runs in a smooth and orderly way and this contributes to the overall quality of education. The caretaker ensures that the school is well maintained and clean.

61. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and the school improvement plan suitably plans for its development. The headteacher and governors have recognised this and are currently taking steps to address this effectively through a new permanent appointment. The co-ordinator has yet to influence work in this area by establishing an appropriate curriculum, planning, assessment and recording procedures and ensuring the provision of suitable resources and equipment. Voluntary helpers and non-teaching staff make a valuable contribution.

62. The accommodation is good. There have been several improvements since the last inspection. The most recent being the development of a very good library area. The building is well maintained and attractive. The classrooms are of a good size. The hall provides good space to allow for whole school assemblies. Indoor physical education lessons are well provided for. Outside there is sufficient hard playground space and pleasant grassed areas. The accommodation is used well; some good quality and interesting displays of pupils' work and information in a range of forms enhances the environment and provides stimulation and interest for pupils and parents. The accommodation is used effectively for teaching and good use is made of visits into the community and visitors to the school and these enhance and enrich the curriculum. Most lessons start and finish punctually and little time is wasted in getting down to work.

63. The resources available to support the curriculum are satisfactory overall. They are well maintained and stored to allow easy access by staff and pupils. The resources for the teaching of reading are unsatisfactory. There are satisfactory computer facilities available in each classroom. The school makes good use of funds raised to supplement resources, which are used well to support pupils' learning. Good use is made of visiting specialists and visits to places of interest to enhance the curriculum.

64. The school is managed efficiently. Finances are managed well and this gives satisfactory support to the school's central purpose of teaching and learning. The school benefits from the advice of the local education authority; financial planning for the school is good and the budget is used effectively. Regular meetings of the governing body review the current budget and consider priorities for the future. Each year the budget is used as the basis for the following year's budget. The governing body keeps good control over the school's budgeting and spending. The budget is appropriately linked to the school development plan. A report is made at each governors' meeting.

65. Day-to-day financial management and administration are good. Routine administrative procedures operate efficiently and unobtrusively. This was reflected in the most recent auditor's report. The administrative assistant works effectively, has a clear role and gives good, positive support to pupils, staff and governors. She confidently maintains all appropriate records and carries out necessary procedures effectively. This enables the headteacher to concentrate on teaching and to use limited administrative time effectively. Private school funds are efficiently

managed and correctly audited. Good use is made of information and communication technology to maintain tight financial control and accountability. The school seeks best value when placing orders.

66. Taking into account the size of the school, its budget and costs, the overall satisfactory quality of the education offered, the standards of attainment on admission, standards achieved, the positive leadership and management by the governors and newly appointed headteacher, good teaching, the efficient use of resources and the cost per pupil, the school is giving satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

◆ Improve the quality of teaching where it is less than good by:

- *ensuring that work for all pupils is matched to the different standards attained in their previous work;*
- *developing planned provision for the monitoring of teaching to identify improvement targets and areas for professional development;*

(paragraphs 13, 22, 23, 25, 88 and 100)

◆ Improve standards in information and communication technology by:

- *raising staff skills;*
- *planning its use across the curriculum;*
- *developing the assessment of pupils' skills to inform planning for future learning and ensure continuity and progression in learning;*

(paragraphs 5, 12, 28, 94, 110-116, 122 and 135)

◆ Improve provision for children in the Foundation Stage by:

- *planning a curriculum based upon the curriculum for the Foundation Stage introduced nationally in September 2000;*
- *improving the quality and range of resources;*

(paragraphs 19, 27, 28, 29, 61 and 67-78)

◆ Improve the quality and use of assessment procedures by:

- *developing whole school procedures to record pupils' attainment;*
- *analysing assessment information to inform medium term planning and ensure curriculum coverage meets the requirements of the National Curriculum;*



(paragraphs 19, 22, 24, 44, 45, 55, 92 and 101)

- ◆ Improve the quality and range of resources, in particular:
  - *the quality and range of book provision to ensure continuity, progression and breadth in reading;*
  - *the range of resources to enable the effective development of the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum;*
  - *adequate and appropriate reference books for use by staff.*

(paragraphs 27, 63, 78, 92 and 141)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important area for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. This is indicated in paragraphs 49 and 57:

- ◆ Continue to improve parental confidence and involvement.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	62	25	4	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)	87
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

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	17

English as an additional language	Number of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	Number of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	82 (100)	91 (89)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	91 (89)	91 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

As the number of boys and girls being assessed at Key Stage 1 are both less than 10 then only the overall school percentage results are shown.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	7	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (73)	67 (60)	87 (60)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (60)	73 (60)	87 (60)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

As the number of boys and girls being assessed at Key Stage 2 are both less than 10 then only the overall school percentage results are shown.

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	73
Any other minority ethnic group	0

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.6 : 1
Average class size	19

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27

### Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	188,896
Total expenditure	186,372
Expenditure per pupil	2,049
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,408
Balance carried forward to next year	24,932

### Results of the survey of parents and carers

#### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	87
Number of questionnaires returned	40

#### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	38	10	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	42	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	12	48	28	10	2
The teaching is good.	22	70	5	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	52	18	12	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	52	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	38	55	0	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	18	60	20	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	32	48	10	5	5

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

40	55	2	0	3
28	65	5	0	2

## **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. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the reception class. There are also three Year 1 pupils in this class. Children in this class have had several temporary teachers since the beginning of term. During the inspection there was a new temporary teacher who worked with the class for one week. The curriculum offered to children is not based on the six areas of learning, which are personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Children begin the Foundation Stage with varying prior experiences. A few children have above average prior attainment, though most children's attainment on entry is average.

#### ***Personal, social and emotional development***

68. Children's development in this area of learning is satisfactory overall. They begin school with positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Children make friends quickly and they relate well to each other. They become increasingly independent in their personal skills, such as dressing and changing for physical activities. Most develop a sense of community, supported by the caring approach they receive from all adults in the school. There is insufficient provision for children to make choices, initiate activities or move spontaneously from indoor to outdoor activities, limiting their ability to become increasingly independent and develop their social skills.

#### ***Communication, language and literacy***

69. Children have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. They communicate their ideas and opinions when, for example, answering questions about rhymes such as "Eensy Weensy Spider" and "Little Miss Muffet". The temporary teacher encourages children to recognise rhyme and rhythm, such as in using their fingers to either "tap" or "snap" in time to the beat. Children talk about their work when drawing pictures, talking to adults and undertaking fieldwork outdoors. During whole class discussions children have yet to learn to take turns to listen to each other. A few children lack confidence in talking and in joining in when working with others. Similarly, a few have yet to develop attentive listening skills.

70. In their reading development, children recognise that print conveys meaning. Younger children use the illustrations to gain meaning from a book and a few of these children have already begun to recognise some words. Most children turn pages and talk about the story, using illustrations to help them to gain meaning. A few with higher prior attainment read well for their age. They do not always read books appropriate to their capability. Several children have books that they are unable to read and they memorise these without recognising individual words. Most children recognise several letters of the alphabet and read and write their own names. Attainment in reading is satisfactory for most children in relation to their age.

71. Children's writing development is satisfactory overall. They learn to hold writing tools with appropriate control. A few children with higher prior attainment have begun to write independently, though most trace and copy write. Most write their own name. A few require further support in learning to control writing tools and in pre-writing skills. Several children are

adopting an inappropriate method of holding pencils, which is also evident in the later stages of the school.

72. The temporary teacher planned work in communication, language and literacy based on Foundation Stage national guidance. As with other activities planned for the week of the inspection, work ensured that children developed skills appropriately in relation to the stepping stones shown in this guidance. No other guidance was available from the school to help the teacher plan work that was appropriate to children's differing prior attainment and experience. Limited resources are available for this area of learning. There are insufficient resources and designated areas for such activities as role-play, writing, reading and interactive play using a range of equipment. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to support skills in this area of learning.

### ***Mathematical development***

73. Children's mathematical development is satisfactory in most aspects. They recognise numbers from one to eight and count up to 10. They learn to form numbers through well planned activities such as drawing spiders with eight legs and making sets of eight beads with play dough. The teacher's own resources are used effectively to reinforce learning. For example, children make necklaces with eight rings, using play dough brought by the teacher. In play with water and sand, children learn to fill and pour quantities through funnels and tubes of different sizes, but they make little use of mathematical language as they play. Some talk about "more" and "less" and estimate but most do not. Children recognise and name a circle and square but do not name other simple two-dimensional shapes. Most sort and match objects according to colour and size.

74. The temporary teacher planned carefully in an attempt to meet the needs of all children and quickly adapted work where necessary when children's understanding required further support. Resources were provided by the teacher to compensate for the limited amount available in the school. This ensured that most children made good progress in the lessons observed, but does not ensure that future work will be appropriately resourced. The absence of records, plans and other information about children's achievements severely restricts future planning for all children in not only mathematics but in all other areas of learning.

### ***Knowledge and understanding of the world***

75. Children have limited opportunities to explore and investigate and to learn about the world around them. Their current knowledge and understanding is heavily dependent on what children know from their own experiences. In the activity provided by the temporary teacher children showed eagerness to investigate the immediate area around the school. They learned to look closely at features such as the wooden fence and stone wall. They recognised similarities and differences between houses and discussed topical issues with varying degrees of understanding. The teacher worked hard to guide their ideas and to encourage discussion. There is a lack of opportunity for children to explore and develop their knowledge and understanding, through, for example, using the computers and other technology to learn about control. There are limited materials for investigative and exploratory work. The classroom contains little equipment to support children's learning. For example, children have no facilities to develop role-play through using a "telephone", "writing" notes, developing imaginary situations in a home corner, hospital or similar. These limitations and the overall lack of curricular provision restrict effective learning in this area.

### ***Physical development***

76. Only one activity was seen where children had the opportunity to undertake physical exercise. This involved developing the theme of "lines" as part of the week's plans provided by the temporary teacher. In this activity, children successfully learned to listen to instructions, follow the leader and work together as part of a team. Children showed appropriate stamina and awareness of others as they performed their actions and moved around the playground. There was insufficient evidence available to determine children's achievement in music and movement, or their gymnastic ability using apparatus in the school hall. There is no designated outdoor play area and large outdoor play equipment for children of this age. Children lack opportunities for spontaneous movement between indoor and outdoor activities. In the classroom, there are limited opportunities for children to develop their physical skills such as in cutting and sticking, manipulating small equipment, using construction materials, painting and placing small objects into limited spaces. Though most children show appropriate dexterity they have insufficient practice using a variety of materials. Those whose manipulative skills are less secure have insufficient extra support.

### ***Creative development***

77. Children's creative development is limited by the lack of opportunities provided for them to explore and investigate. This affects their ability to develop creative situations through role-play, where they might dress up and simulate real life experiences. Similarly, they lack regular opportunities in many creative activities such as painting, printing, making collages, investigating fabrics, textures and other materials. In the example of work displayed, children produced satisfactory paintings of a spider but the classroom lacks displays of children's creative work that might enhance children's knowledge and understanding in this area of learning. When listening and responding to stories, children show good creative skills, such as in imagining what a character might say next. They sing songs well, showing good understanding of rhythm. These provide only limited opportunity for their creative development.

78. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and the school improvement plan suitably plans for its development. The co-ordinator has yet to influence work in this area by establishing an appropriate curriculum, planning, assessment and recording procedures and ensuring the provision of suitable resources and equipment. There is insufficient guidance and support for the temporary teachers who teach this class.

## **ENGLISH**

79. The 2000 national tests show that at the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 4 and above, was below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was below the national average. Compared with similar schools attainment was below average. Small numbers of pupils undertake national tests each year, which makes comparisons with the national average unreliable. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, pupils' performance in the subject was good by the end of both key stages. There have been variations in performance over time that partly reflect the variations caused by small cohorts and the effect of pupils' differing prior attainment that distort statistics. There are also the additional adverse effects of the movement and illness of teachers in recent years, which has caused upheaval and has led to restricted progress in developing a whole school policy and approach to delivering English.

80. Evidence from the current inspection shows that pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of both key stages, though there are some aspects that have yet to be effectively developed



in some areas of the school, particularly in the aspects of handwriting, punctuation and spelling. In addition, the development of reading and writing skills in the early parts of the school is inconsistent.

81. At Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory, reflecting the judgement at the time of the last inspection. In the reception and Year 1 class, Year 1 pupils have yet to develop confidence in taking turns to speak. They listen but do not always concentrate for sustained periods of time. Their understanding of vocabulary used in reading activities is limited. For example, they have yet to understand terms such as author and illustrator when talking about a book. They have difficulty in following some simple instructions. In the combined Year 1 and 2 class, pupils listen well to instructions, such as in their work on "The Three Wishes" and "The Raja's Big Ears". Pupils are encouraged to predict what might happen next in the story though a few are reluctant to do so.

82. At Key Stage 2, pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class listen and respond well when encouraged to use their imagination and letter-writing skills to write a letter of apology from the wolf to "grandma". The headteacher's lively presentation and skilful development of this aspect of writing included very good opportunities for pupils to express their ideas and to appreciate others' views. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident when speaking to others and they listen attentively. This was seen in a lesson involving story composition where pupils responded expressively when telling stories, many of which were imaginatively constructed and developed. Pupils with special educational needs were equally enthusiastic and listened well.

83. In reading, the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 have variable competency in recognising common words and in using the book appropriately to predict and anticipate. Some read books that do not match their prior attainment in reading and their understanding is limited. They do not know the difference between "letter" and "word" and their reading is often hesitant. Older pupils in the key stage read satisfactorily, but some use limited expression when reading aloud from their books. Pupils enjoy shared reading activities in the literacy hour and have secure understanding of the main ideas in a story. Pupils with higher prior attainment read confidently. Others sometimes read haltingly, focusing on accuracy, which sometimes lessens their understanding and ability to anticipate subsequent words or phrases.

84. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop sound reading skills across the curriculum, supported by the good range of reading opportunities provided for them. An increased range of good quality books for guided reading successfully promotes pupils' awareness of the variety of print and reading for different purposes. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils with higher prior attainment read with accuracy, fluency and expression. Most others read accurately though some are hesitant and others read aloud with little expression. In their study of literature, Year 5 and 6 pupils show good understanding of authors' style, particularly through their use of the Victorian theme, where they look at the work of Charles Dickens. At both key stages, insufficient use is made of the computer to provide an additional source for reading for different purposes.

85. Writing is sound overall by the end of both key stages. Pupils learn to write stories with a clear beginning, middle and ending. As they progress through the school stories are often imaginative and show good awareness of techniques to engage the reader. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 make slow progress in developing writing skills. They trace over scribed writing but have yet to develop independent writing. The scrutiny of work indicates that they have insufficient varied and structured opportunities to develop these skills. Older pupils in the key stage write for different purposes. Many pupils, including those with higher prior attainment, have to refer to word lists to spell common words such as "because". Most have yet to

consistently punctuate sentences correctly and none have learned to use a joined handwriting script. Several pupils hold their pencils awkwardly and their work is insufficiently well presented.

86. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop story writing well. The scrutiny of past work shows that pupils' story writing is improving. Pupils are more aware than previously of tenses, sequence and methods by which the writer can promote interest. The younger pupils learn to present their work neatly and several begin to develop a cursive style of handwriting. Most recognise more complex spelling patterns and they punctuate work satisfactorily. Those with special educational needs make sound progress in their handwriting, though their knowledge of spelling patterns is weak. They rely heavily on adults for support in writing and have insufficient strategies for making realistic attempts to spell words.

87. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write for a range of purposes. Their topic work includes descriptive writing, accounts, diagrams and instructions, for example. In design and technology, pupils have undertaken good analyses of types of bread, using a wide range of descriptive vocabulary. They have linked their work well in literacy and history, such as when they designed a mask based on a Greek drama. Pupils understand the use of paragraphs and enjoy challenges such as avoiding use of the word "said" to make their writing more interesting! Punctuation and spelling are satisfactory.

88. Progress varies across the school. It is best in Key Stage 2, where a concerted approach is being developed towards teaching skills systematically and where expectations are high. Progress is less satisfactory in the early part of Key Stage 1 where there is less coherent development. There is insufficient use made of assessment to inform planning and teaching. This results in pupils often undertaking the same work, regardless of their differing prior attainment. The lack of appropriate provision for and assessment of the youngest children in the school means that many aspects of English have to be introduced and reinforced in the next class. The absence of a regular teacher has also had an adverse effect on some pupils' progress. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is not always sufficient challenge for talented pupils.

89. Pupils generally respond well to English lessons. They enjoy stories and using a range of books for different purposes. The recent establishment of a school lending library is having a positive influence on pupils' personal reading. Older pupils expressed their satisfaction with the quality and range of fiction available. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes. Where pupils show less enthusiasm, work is insufficiently well matched to their capabilities and they lose concentration and interest. In a few instances, lesson introductions that are too long create unrest. A few pupils with special educational needs sometimes lack confidence when expected to work independently.

90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good at Key Stage 1. It is good at Key Stage 2. There were examples of very good teaching in Key Stage 2. In the best teaching, planning was relevant to the needs of all pupils, with tasks being adapted carefully for those with higher prior attainment and for those with special educational needs. Imaginative introductions captured pupils' interest and enabled them to concentrate for sustained periods. The pace was brisk and pupils knew what was expected of them. Pupils worked hard to improve their work, which was very well presented. They were encouraged to take responsibility and to evaluate their performance. In the other lessons, teachers were well organised, resources were prepared and pupils were given clear instructions. In some cases, introductions were too long, leaving insufficient time for subsequent work. In others, work took insufficient account of pupils' prior attainment, sometimes leaving those with higher prior attainment to waste valuable learning time.

91. Marking is satisfactory overall. At its best, it provides helpful comments for pupils to improve their performance. In a few instances, there are inaccuracies in some marking. For example, "couldn't" is marked as "could'nt" and "lying" is shown as "liying". These do not provide good models for pupils.

92. The subject co-ordinator has not been able to lead the subject effectively in recent times due to various factors, including absence. Plans for development are good and the co-ordinator is now ready to put these into practice as shown in the school development plan. Areas highlighted for improvement include providing more structured planning, the inclusion of specific time for speaking and listening skills and developing targets. In conjunction with target setting, assessment and its use to inform teaching is to be further developed. In the longer term, the policy for English is to be rewritten, including appropriate emphasis on improving pupils' handwriting and spelling. Resources, which are not yet adequate for all aspects of English, are to be increased. At present, the co-ordinator has an insufficient role in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. She is not yet involved in analysing pupils' performance in national tests across both key stages. The accommodation is good for teaching English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. The 2000 national tests show that at the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 4 and above, was below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was close to the national average. Compared with similar schools attainment was below average. Due to the small number of pupils in each year group, standards do vary from year to year. The school has recently recognised the need to improve standards in mathematics under the energetic leadership of the newly appointed headteacher. Improvements in teaching methods and in the planning of work have begun to have a good impact on standards. Further plans, following on the audit of resources in the subject, which await the governors' approval, are designed to improve standards further.

94. Criticisms of the teaching of mathematics made in the 1996 inspection have largely been addressed. The use of the National Numeracy Strategy and the recent adoption of advice provided by the local education authority small schools' unit has improved the linking of the work in mathematics to the levels of attainment of different groups of pupils in mixed age classes. The pace of teaching is better and the pupils are given opportunities for independent work in all classes. These improvements have been maintained since the 1998 inspection. Other areas of concern have not been addressed adequately until recent months and have yet to make an impact on standards. These include the need for improved methods of marking and the better use of the assessment of pupils' work to make the work set match more closely the pupils' needs throughout the school. The use of computers for mathematics is still underdeveloped.

95. The standards in mathematics attained by pupils aged 7 in the 2000 National Curriculum assessments indicate that the proportion attaining the expected level 2 is below the average for all schools and well below that for similar schools. Since the number of pupils of that age in the school is low the decline from 1999 when the school's performance was average is not statistically significant. The pattern of results over the past four years shows that the school's standards in mathematics are broadly in line with national trends.

96. Standards attained in mathematics of the pupils aged 11 in their 2000 National Curriculum assessments show that the proportion achieving the expected level 4 is below the average for all schools as well as below the average for similar schools. This situation has been

steady over the past four years during which time the school's performance has followed the pattern of all schools. It has been consistently slightly below the national average. Boys have generally done somewhat better than the girls and the proportion of pupils gaining higher than average levels of attainment in all areas of mathematics is lower than expected. A closer analysis shows that the proportion of pupils attaining the higher grades in the tests is lower than that in other schools. This has been realised by the school and recent initiatives in teaching, planning and resourcing the subject have been put in place to improve the situation.

97. Evidence from the current inspection shows that pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of both key stages. The school has initiated a series of tests for pupils in each year so that the strengths and weaknesses in their learning can be readily identified and work to improve standards can be planned effectively. The beneficial results of this and other innovations, such as increases in teachers' in-service training opportunities and monitoring teaching, have only just begun to be apparent. In particular, improvements in marking and measures enabling the pupils to become aware of their progress have improved their motivation to work hard and to take a pride in what they do. This has happened especially among the younger pupils in Key Stage 2 where there was a particular need for improvement. Developments in Key Stage 1, where there has been a period of prolonged teacher absence through illness, have been slower.

98. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 successfully develop their understanding of numbers and how they work, such as matching numbers to groups of objects, or the different ways a larger number can be made from two smaller numbers. By the end of Year 2 the pupils reach the expected level of attainment in all aspects of mathematics. The pupils recognise odd and even numbers well. They quickly put numbers in order of size and recognise number patterns working easily in two's and ten's. They develop the accurate use of the proper terms to describe shapes. They recognise regular two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties, such as the number of sides in a triangle. They sort objects into particular categories in science and then readily use their mathematical knowledge to compare the numbers of different types of object.

99. Pupils enter Key Stage 2 with an average level of attainment and make generally satisfactory progress during Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 work with increasingly larger numbers and make more complex calculations. They successfully develop their own ways of handling problems as well as using methods demonstrated to them. For example, they work out the perimeter of regular shapes given the length of one side. They also work out the relationship between two's, five's and ten's in number patterns successfully using them for both multiplication and division sums. The older pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently tackle more complex sums and harder problems. They develop their own ways of recording information and use it to predict results. For example, in order to show the number of cubes needed to surround one or more objects of the same size, the higher attaining pupils constructed their own graph and devised their own formulae. They use their understanding of the properties of regular three-dimensional figures to draw nets from which they construct shapes such as houses in design and technology. There is less use than would be expected of the computer in mathematics in all parts of the school.

100. Pupils with identified special educational needs are well supported in mathematics by designated support staff and make satisfactory progress, the planning of work and support for those with less demanding needs is less secure and they make satisfactory progress. Planned developments in the production of individual education plans for these pupils to include mathematics, where necessary, are designed to improve their progress and the standards they achieve. There is not always sufficient challenge for more able pupils.

101. Pupils as a rule work hard and the older ones work at problems until they solve them, enjoying the feeling of success when they do so. The lessons in mathematics are often conducted at a good pace and the pupils respond well to this and most produce at least a satisfactory, and often a good, quantity of work. Occasionally when the time allocated for numeracy exceeds an hour the urgency goes out of the lesson and the pace of work drops. Pupils throughout the school enjoy the work in numeracy and the older pupils commented favourably on the changes that have been introduced especially in this subject, making it more enjoyable. In all classes, but particularly from Year 3 onwards, the standards achieved by the pupils are enhanced by the growing degree of independence in their learning that they are encouraged to use.

102. The teaching of mathematics is good. The weakness in teachers' knowledge and understanding identified in the previous report has been overcome and overall is now good. The teachers' planning and their heightened expectations of pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, have contributed to recent improvements in the subject. The use of a wider range of teaching methods, as a result of advice and training has also had a good effect on results. Support staff, especially those with special educational needs responsibilities, are used effectively. The teachers' marking has become more informative recently following a new model introduced by the headteacher; this has increased the motivation of the pupils to succeed. The leadership in the subject afforded by the headteacher is bringing about improvements in standards after a period when the co-ordination of the subject had faltered. A recent audit of resources has identified areas for development and the process of purchasing new and more appropriate resources for the subject has already begun as part of the identification of the subject as an area for development in the school plans.

103. Homework, which was seen as an area of concern by the parents, is better organised and, for the older pupils especially, is more regular and demanding and includes mathematics. The weaknesses in the subject that the analysis of test results identified have been recognised and are being enthusiastically and energetically addressed.

## **SCIENCE**

104. The attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. National Curriculum assessments in 2000 indicated pupils at Key Stage 1 attained standards close to the national average and at the end of Key Stage 2 attained standards well below the national average. Inspection findings show that by the end of Key Stage 1 standards are unsatisfactory and below national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils attain standards which are average in science, mainly due to the good learning in Years 5 and 6. At the time of the inspection in November 1998 standards were found to be satisfactory. Available evidence suggests that progress in learning at Key Stage 1 has been affected by extended periods of staff absence and improvements to the curriculum at Key Stage 2 have had a positive impact on learning. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and more able pupils.

105. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to name important parts of the body, such as head, arms, legs, eyes and mouth. They identify the location of some of these on a diagram of a skeleton. They study the five senses and how they are used in daily life. They learn about healthy eating and what keeps us healthy. Pupils classify different materials, describing them as hard, soft or rough. Pupils are able to make simple predictions and test the properties of different materials.

They can make suggestions about how they would go about finding things out. They can use simple equipment and explain their observations about the simple investigations which they undertake.

106. At Key Stage 2, pupils combine their work in science with other subjects such as English and design and technology and literacy skills are developing within the subject through the use of subject specific language. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that many have a good understanding of fair tests and of how to use variables in their investigations. Pupils have a sound understanding of the characteristics of human beings. They identify the main organs of the body, such as the heart, lungs and brain and understand that the skeleton acts as a protection for these organs. When studying materials, pupils can suggest which change when added to water and that some of these changes cannot be reversed. By the end of Year 6 pupils have adequately covered all aspects of the subject.

107. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and enjoy science lessons. They show interest in the topics and are eager to share information. They organise themselves quickly and co-operate well in pairs or small groups. Older pupils provide information in lessons willingly and respond well to praise. They are pleased when their experiments work successfully. Pupils listen attentively and concentrate well. Most pupils are enthusiastic, motivated and they respond well to a challenge. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and they have a desire to do well. Older pupils in particular co-operate effectively in investigative work. Pupils enjoy lessons in science and like to work independently on tasks for extended periods of time. They respond well to opportunities for getting out and putting away equipment safely and carefully.

108. The quality of science teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, particularly for older pupils. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is good and they have high expectations of their pupils. They are well organised and make good use of resources and time. Lesson planning uses the science programmes of study well and shows realistic targets to be achieved and involving the National Literacy Strategy to extend pupils' literacy skills where appropriate. Work for pupils of different ages and attainment is carefully planned. There is ongoing assessment of work with the pupils in the classroom to inform future learning.

109. The school has introduced a balanced programme of science based on national and local guidance material, which covers and regularly reinforces all the required areas. It meets the needs of all the pupils with differing levels of attainment effectively, including those with special educational needs. The school has not yet developed additional documentation to give appropriate guidance to inform teachers' medium and short term planning and ensure comprehensive coverage of the programmes of study. Procedures for assessment are limited and this restricts teachers' ability to plan activities at an appropriate level for classes with a wide range of ages and attainment. The monitoring of science throughout the school is underdeveloped. The quantity and quality of resources for the teaching of science throughout the school is satisfactory and they are easily accessible. The accommodation, and its use for the teaching of science, is satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

110. Standards in information and communication technology are below average overall. These findings are similar to those of the inspection in 1996. Too few opportunities are taken to involve pupils with the subject and this has resulted in weak information and communication

technology skills. Older pupils are underachieving and do not feel confident in their own abilities. Progress for the majority of pupils is unsatisfactory overall at both key stages. There are weaknesses in pupils' abilities to analyse and interpret data and in controlling and modelling events. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection.

111. At Key Stage 1, pupils use computers to help them communicate ideas. They are familiar with the keyboard and use a mouse effectively to select programs. They edit text using the mouse and delete key appropriately and higher attaining pupils change the font size confidently. Pupils have limited knowledge of how information and communication technology is used in everyday life. They do not have sufficient experience of using programs to help classify and sort information, nor do they have sufficient experience of controlling models by giving them simple commands.

112. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are skilled at word processing, being able to edit, amend and print their text. When using word processing they edit and amend text, select an appropriate font choosing a suitable size for the purpose of the writing. Pupils have limited experience of using the computer to record information they have collected and entering and using information on a database or of using spreadsheets to control data. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils have basic control of a computer mouse to move the cursor and to highlight words. Pupils can write text on screen and edit their work; their word processing skills are good. They are confident in following instructions and have a good understanding of the retrieving and storing of work.

113. Pupils' learning is unsatisfactory overall. They make satisfactory progress in those aspects covered but do not have sufficient opportunities to search for and retrieve information, to handle data or to control a range of equipment, at both key stages. They develop skills in word processing. Pupils have too few opportunities to use information and communication technology in other subjects. Pupils co-operate sensibly when using the computer and they take turns to operate the keyboard or mouse. Older pupils work independently to save and print their work. More able older pupils know how to access the Internet but are unfamiliar with how spreadsheets can be used to help with answering questions or testing predictions.

114. The pupils' overall attitude to learning in information and communication technology, their behaviour and the quality of their relationships throughout the school are good. Whenever they are given the opportunity, pupils enjoy working on the computer. The pupils take pride in work, which is completed well, and are proud to talk about what they have done. Their behaviour while working on the computer is good and they handle equipment properly and carefully. The pupils enjoy their work in information and communication technology. Pupils enjoy using computers and exploring how different functions can be used. They work well in pairs or small groups to try new ideas and practice new skills. Pupils are eager to use the computers.

115. During the inspection it was not possible to observe the teaching of information and communication technology. The limited evidence available indicates that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use information and communication technology as part of their everyday work. Teachers' lesson plans do not clearly identify the skills involved when information and communication technology is used to support learning. Planning does not clearly identify the progression of the skills pupils need to learn. The level of work provided for the oldest pupils is an indication of the limited experience pupils have had in the past.

116. The school is making good use of national guidance material to plan for the development of its provision and the use of information and communication technology throughout the school.

Work on adapting national guidance as a scheme for the school is in the very early stages of development. There has been no effective monitoring of planning or evaluation of the curriculum or levels of pupils' attainment.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

117. The criticisms made about the narrowness of the range of opportunities in teaching of art and design, except in upper Key Stage 2, the weakness of teaching except in that class and the lack of a scheme of work for the subject have all been successfully addressed. The subject is now taught effectively throughout the school. The range of skills developed is good and the opportunities for individual imaginative work have been broadened.

118. The standards in art and design achieved by pupils at the end of both key stages are in line with what is expected of pupils aged 7 and 11. This improvement has been achieved largely as a result of adopting the national guidance materials and recommended units of study. This has increased the teachers' confidence and skill in teaching the subject. It has also provided a coherent and progressive programme of study and skill development. Art and design now plays a full and significant part in achieving the schools aims for its pupils.

119. By the time they are 7 most of the pupils draw with confidence, translating their ideas onto paper with pencils, pens and brushes. They have a good idea of colour mixing and are beginning to draw and paint what they observe, rather than what they expect to see. They create objects in three dimensions using salt dough and other commercial media. They explore different textures and a variety of shapes, making sculptures out of a variety of found objects such as twigs, moss and seashells. They talk with pride about what they have made or drawn. Good use is made of the school's immediate environment in, for example, the vigorous paintings of the four seasons.

120. The same good use of the school's surroundings is made in Key Stage 2. The older pupils make on the spot sketches of the surrounding hills, or of the older houses in the village. The pupils develop their drawing skills well as they move through the key stage, learning and developing pencil techniques such as shading and cross hatching using pencils with leads of varying softness. They use a card frame to select a picture to draw or paint from a wider view effectively and use a similar technique when taking digital pictures of small details as a basis for drawings. The good range of media used by the pupils includes cut card techniques to create designs with textures as well as three-dimensional work using salt dough and low-firing clay. They make complex black and white repeat patterns. Sensitive and carefully made observational drawings include natural objects such as their own hands, or flowers in a vase. The same techniques are also successfully used to record manufactured objects such as the weapons demonstrated by the visiting 'Roman Soldier'. The general level of competence by the time the pupils are 11 is in line with what is expected of pupils of that age. There are few pupils with a markedly lower level of attainment and equally few with a significantly higher one. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of the rest of the class.

121. The pupils live up to the expectations of the staff that they will produce good work that is in line with their ability. They use the good quality resources effectively and take a pride in their work. The sketchbooks they keep are a good record of their progress. During lessons they work hard and with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment. They are sensitive in giving and receiving criticism. This is used to improve the standards of what they are producing. The teachers ensure that the pupils also develop and use the appropriate vocabulary for art and design in their discussions about their work.



122. The teaching of art and design is good. The enthusiasm of the staff for exploring the environment in drawing and the sharing of techniques gained from personal experiment leads to enhanced standards in the subject. The work is planned with reference to the national guidance material. The enthusiasm of the staff sometimes runs away with the time so those lessons lack the structure that is found in other subjects. This disadvantage is outweighed by the benefits provided by that enthusiasm. Some progress in the use of information and communication technology has been made recently particularly in the use of a digital camera for picture making. The use of software programs for work in art and design has not been developed effectively in the school. Art and design activities are also used to support geography and history but the art and design element is not subordinated to the needs of the other subjects.

123. Art and design plays a good role in the provision for the pupils' spiritual development, providing them with a good means of expressing their inner feeling when words are difficult to use. It contributes to their cultural development with respect to their own heritage but is underdeveloped in its contribution to their understanding of the range of world cultures with which they are likely to come into contact. Throughout the school the pupils are introduced to the work of significant artists in the European tradition, though there is less evidence of familiarity with art forms from other cultures and traditions.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

124. The school has overcome the weaknesses in design and technology identified in the 1996 inspection report. Standards in the subject at the end of both key stages are now satisfactory, as the quality of teaching has improved. The subject as taught in the school now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, mainly as a result of the school's recent adoption of national guidance materials as the basis of its planning. This scheme of work, with its support material, has been instrumental in improving teaching in the subject by increasing the teachers' understanding and confidence in what they do.

125. While no direct teaching of the subject was observed, a scrutiny of the pupils' work and planning in sketchbooks, interviews with teachers and pupils enabled secure judgements to be made.

126. During Key Stage 1 the pupils make satisfactory progress. They develop skills in planning what they will do when making objects related to topics they are studying in other subjects. They also work with topics specifically related to design and technology such as making greetings cards with parts moved by levers. There is a progression in making and designing skills as they learn to handle tools for cutting, joining and shaping materials with increased assurance. They also discuss what they have done using clear descriptions and demonstrating a pride in what they have done and an enjoyment with the work. As the scheme of work develops through the school the breadth of experiences enjoyed by the pupils in designing and making will be extended, currently it is satisfactory and national requirements are met.

127. Satisfactory progress in design and technology is maintained throughout Key Stage 2 from Year 3 to Year 6. The pupils working to a brief, such as design a bridge strong enough to carry a model car and to span 30 centimetres, successfully design and make effective models or structures. They modify their designs and write critically about how they would improve on the finished piece of work. The standards of both designing and making when the pupils are 11 are in line with what is expected of pupils of that age. They develop and use mechanical knowledge in their effective designs of vehicles in which the rotary action of the wheels is linked to an up and down movement through the use of cams. They then make up

functioning models to test out their designs. In doing so they demonstrate the sound level of skills with tools and a variety of media which they have achieved. The highest attaining pupils demonstrate a good level of understanding of the principles of designing as well as appropriate skills of making. Most pupils achieve a satisfactory level of competence in both activities.

128. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff have been able to develop their own understanding of the nature and demands of design and technology largely as a result of the use of national guidance materials for the subject. These units describe the processes well and enable teachers to grow in confidence and to convey that confidence and the ensuing enthusiasm to the pupils. Most pupils derive a high level of enjoyment and satisfaction from the subject and that leads to improvement in the standards attained by pupils with various levels of ability. Those pupils with special educational needs are provided with support to enable them to succeed in making their models and structures to an acceptable standard.

129. The pride the pupils take in the things they produce increases their sense of self-worth and this contributes to the achievement of the schools aims with respect to the personal development of the pupils. Much of the work involves co-operation with others and this contributes significantly to the provision for the pupils' social and moral development.

130. The subject is satisfactorily co-ordinated and the resources provided are appropriate for the topics undertaken and of a reasonable quality. The subject plays a full part in providing for a rounded and balanced education for the pupils, enabling them to enjoy the pride attendant on successfully making something that works and does what it was designed to do.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

131. Attainment and progress in geography is satisfactory overall. Pupils in both key stages make sound progress in learning about places, geographical features and life in different areas and countries. Discussion with the oldest pupils shows that they have had limited opportunities to develop their skills of measurement as part of their investigations.

132. At Key Stage 1 pupils have learned about their own area and its features. They recognise similarities and differences between their village and the nearby town. Pupils understand the different seasons and their effect on people's lives. For example, they know that the weather influences decisions about wearing appropriate clothes. Progress is good in the Year 2 class, where a considerable amount of research has been undertaken by the class teacher to plan and prepare interesting and challenging work. Progress is satisfactory elsewhere, with the exception of that for the youngest Key Stage 1 pupils who have limited opportunities to investigate and learn about their surroundings. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, though their limited literacy skills are not always sufficiently taken into account during lessons.

133. At Key Stage 2, younger pupils have considered the reasons for settlement and why people move to different areas. They understand simple maps and know the relationship between aerial views and maps. In the current focus on the local area, pupils show secure knowledge and understanding of leisure facilities, such as the local sports centre and the dry ski slope. Older pupils continue this theme by comparing and contrasting features of the local main shopping street with that of a nearby centre. The main focus is on studying land use, linking the work being undertaken in history. Pupils benefit greatly from the teacher's good knowledge of the local area and make good progress in this topic.

134. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good in the lessons seen. In the good instances, the lesson was developed effectively, included pupils in discussion and in making suggestions and proceeded at a good pace. Group tasks were clearly adapted and provided appropriate challenge for all pupils. In one lesson, the planned conclusion included a debate about the shopping area development, supporting pupils' literacy skills. In some other work seen, the lesson content and the introduction were appropriate but the pace was too slow to maintain pupils' interest. Pupils had insufficient opportunity to ask questions.

135. Effective leadership of the subject is not yet in place. The co-ordinator has yet to become involved in whole school planning, monitoring and evaluation. Teachers rely on their own professional knowledge to plan work, in the absence of a good scheme of work. Topics are resourced largely by staff bringing their own resources. The use of information and communication technology is not yet included in the development of skills such as storing and retrieving data and other information. There are no systematic procedures for assessing and recording pupils' work.

## **HISTORY**

136. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in history by the end of both key stages. Progress is satisfactory overall, with some weaknesses in the lower part of Key Stage 1, where some pupils have insufficient opportunity to learn about the past.

137. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the immediate past, through studying their families. Year 2 pupils have sound understanding of change over time, such as in recognising that their grandparents' lives were different from theirs. Their understanding of time is reinforced by making time lines and a family tree. Pupils know about events and some famous people. The scrutiny of work shows little evidence of the use of different sources of information. Year 1 pupils in the reception class have had limited opportunities to learn about the past.

138. At Key Stage 2, younger pupils have learned about events such as the execution of Guy Fawkes. Their present study is about the Romans and their invasion of the British Isles. Pupils have had enhanced opportunities to learn about Romans, for example, through a visit from a "Roman Soldier", who described his duties and his perceptions. Most pupils know the methods used at that time for building roads and guarding Roman settlements. In the oldest class, pupils study the Victorian period. They understand that conditions varied between the lives of the poor and the rich. They compare and contrast life then and now, stating their preferences clearly. Their work is enhanced by the use of relevant literature, such as the abridged story of Nicholas Nickleby, by Charles Dickens. The class is preparing a Victorian Day, with parents contributing to the project by making Victorian outfits for the pupils. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that they have sound knowledge and understanding of periods in history, such as Ancient Greece and Egypt and famous people such as Tudor monarchs. They have yet to become secure in understanding these periods in a sense of sequence. Pupils have yet to learn how to select and assess the reliability of different sources of evidence.

139. Pupils respond well. They are interested in the past and have positive attitudes to learning. Their interest is often successfully enhanced by the provision of good artefacts that are donated by adults and the loan service. For example, Victorian objects have been supplied by teachers and parents and the school has borrowed a good range of Roman artefacts to support

learning. Some pupils become restless when some worksheets require routine completion and do not provide sufficient challenge, such as enabling pupils to reason, investigate and explore.

140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In a good lesson, pupils were all successfully included in expressing their opinions about Victorian toys. They suggested who might play with them and recognised that some old games are still played in the present day. Pupils with special educational needs were included effectively in the discussion and follow up work was adapted well to suit their prior attainment in literacy. Links were successfully made with other subjects, such as when pupils recognised a toy that had parts similar to those they had previously made in design and technology. In the satisfactory lesson, pupils' knowledge and understanding is sound, but they begin to lose interest when there is insufficient interaction with the teacher. In some cases, subsequent work, usually from worksheets, is insufficiently adapted to meet pupils' differing prior attainment.

141. Teachers work hard to prepare topic resources and to plan relevant work but they lack guidance from a scheme of work. This results in some areas being insufficiently included, such as the use of different sources of evidence. Pupils at Key Stage 2 generally have better provision and resources. The school recognises the need for improved provision and plans to address this by enabling co-ordinators to take a more effective role in planning, monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. Assessment procedures and records of achievement are not yet in place. Pupils' work is marked well in Key Stage 2 but is less consistent elsewhere in the school. Resources for history are not yet sufficient to meet the needs of all pupils. The accommodation is good and supports pupils' learning about their local area both in the past and the present day.

## **MUSIC**

142. Most of the good elements in the standards and teaching of music identified in the inspection report of 1996 have been maintained. Standards of singing throughout the school are good as are the opportunities afforded to pupils to develop musically, for example, through tuition in brass instruments. Standards in composition and performance by the older pupils in the school are clearly in line with what is expected of pupils aged 11. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and in its contribution to the life both of the parish and the local community.

143. By the time the pupils are 7 the standards in music, both in composition and musical performance using the wide range of percussion instruments provided by the school, is at least in line with what is expected of pupils of that age. The standard of their singing is good. They have a good understanding of beat and respond well to rhythmical works, moving their bodies in time to the music. They understand how different patterns of sound convey different feelings and respond appropriately to the music they hear, with either enthusiasm or sensitive reflection. The pupils make good progress throughout Years 1 and 2.

144. When the pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2 standards in music are good, their singing is better than that generally expected of pupils aged 11 and their compositions show levels of musical understanding and imagination that are also better than that usually expected. They compose pieces based on a variety of ideas, such as the sound and feel of machinery. They are stimulated by the works of a range of composers from various ages and backgrounds. They use percussion and some wind instruments effectively, working in small groups and in concert to produce interesting musical effects. Pupils make good progress through Years 3 to 6. The public performances that the school provides for the community, such as carols in the market

square or the musical productions to which parents, friends and senior citizens are invited, are of a good standard and enjoyed by performers and audience alike.

145. Pupils with particular talents are encouraged to develop, for example, through instrumental tuition in brass instruments. The voluntary school choir, which practices in a lunch hour, involves about half the school and includes both boys and girls. It provides a good and strong lead for the enthusiastic and high quality singing in school assemblies. A notable feature of this is the way in which the staff also participate providing good models for singing as a social activity. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with support to enable them to participate fully in music lessons.

146. All the teaching of music is good. The quality is readily maintained throughout the school because the subject is taught by a specialist with a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Music lessons are conducted with a brisk pace so that no time is wasted. The lessons are well planned. The planning is related to the national guidance materials. This link ensures that the programme of studies planned by the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum as well as providing a rich musical experience for the pupils. The work in music supports the aims of the school by providing opportunities for the pupils' personal development as well as introducing them to important aspects of their own, and other people's culture.

147. The pupils respond well to the good teaching and the high expectations of the staff. They work hard and with a good level of interest, they are imaginative in their creative activities and careful in performance. They are properly self-critical and observant in their sensitively made judgements about one another's performance. The pupils enjoy the lessons and their behaviour is good so that all the time available for the subject is used well. Music plays a significant part in the provision for the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, while the need to behave in a disciplined way when performing music supports the provision for moral development.

148. The subject is well managed and the resources provided support the scheme of work very well. Good use is made of opportunities to further the pupils' experience of music but the use of computers in the subject is underdeveloped. Formal assessment of music is not a feature of the work in the subject. The high level of interest by the staff in the subject and the high proportion of the pupils engaged in voluntary musical activities ensure that individual standards are well known and that opportunities to develop the subject are not lost.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

149. During the inspection, few lessons were observed due to the organisation of the timetable. Evidence from those lessons seen and discussion with staff and pupils show that standards of attainment are satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress.

150. A Key Stage 1 lesson was led by the Year 5 and 6 class teacher. This successfully developed pupils' exploration of movement through the theme of people who help. The teacher entered into the spirit of the theme by dressing up as a cleaner, complete with brush, mop and duster. This introduced the lesson effectively and motivated pupils to develop a range of movements, such as scrubbing, dusting and brushing. Pupils worked hard and successfully refined their performance. They interpreted the accompanying music well.

151. In the Year 3 and 4 lesson, the aim was to develop a sequence, involving stretching, balancing and moving around the hall. Pupils showed satisfactory skills in these aspects and a few showed poise. Many were inattentive and did not make appropriate progress during the

lesson. They showed insecure understanding of the rules of gymnastics and teamwork was less effective than could be expected for their age. The oldest pupils played basketball outside, showing good stamina. When discussing their work with the inspector Year 6 pupils described their knowledge and understanding and progress across the school. They know

the rules of many team sports such as football, netball, basketball and handball. They described their enjoyment of work with a parachute and ball. Many attend local sports centres after school and show interest in physical education.

152. Pupils' response is good overall, with the exception of some younger Key Stage 2 pupils, who have yet to learn appropriate rules and methods of responding. Pupils with special educational needs respond well.

153. The quality of teaching was good in one lesson observed, due to the effective planning and development of appropriately devised activities. Management of pupils was good and there were good opportunities for them to contribute their own ideas and suggestions. In another lesson, for Year 3 and 4 pupils, there were weaknesses in the teaching, largely due to the ineffective management of pupils and the slow pace of the lesson, which was also insufficiently challenging.

154. The co-ordinator has secure subject knowledge but has had little opportunity to influence work across the school. A published scheme of work has been recently adopted to address continuity and progression; this is being carefully adapted by some teachers. There are no assessment and recording procedures to monitor pupils' achievements and progress across both key stages. The school has good resources for physical education, including a well equipped hall and large outdoor playing areas.