

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. RICHARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Skelmersdale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119684

Headteacher: Mr M Holden

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Gough
22361

Dates of inspection: 12th - 15th February 2001

Inspection number: 192046

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sandy Lane Skelmersdale Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Lydon
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22361	Marina Gough	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Equal opportunities English as an additional language	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
31729	Bernard Harrington	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?
22556	Eifion Morgan	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
30398	Chris Scola	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs	
10911	Cic Deloughry	Team Inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Richard's Catholic Primary School is situated in the town of Skelmersdale. The school caters for one hundred and ninety seven pupils, including forty three part-time Nursery pupils. Most pupils come from the immediate area and almost all pupils are of white ethnicity. One pupil has English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils on the special educational needs is 21%, which is similar to the national average, although the percentage of pupils who have statements of special educational needs is above the national average at 4%. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is 12%, which is below the national average. The school is aware that, for a variety of reasons, a significant number of parents do not claim free school meals, and estimates that the actual number of pupils eligible for free school meals is considerably higher than the records indicate. The area is one of high unemployment, and the school recognises that some pupils do not have the same advantages at home as others, and does its best to compensate for this. The school's Nursery class, which caters for three and four year old pupils, has only been operational for just over one year. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Nursery class is well below average, and many pupils have poorly developed language skills.

The inspection of the school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an excellent school which has many significant strengths. By the time they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science, and many other subjects of the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching is outstanding, and is of a very high standard throughout the school. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language, make very good progress from a well below average starting point. The pupils' attitudes to work and to school are excellent, and contribute significantly to the quality of life in the school. The leadership and management of the school are excellent, and there is a shared commitment to school improvement which leads to consistency of approach and a tremendous team spirit amongst the staff. There is no sense of complacency in the school, and the headteacher constantly seeks out ways of improving the quality of education the school provides. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science and in most other subjects of the National Curriculum is above average.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language, make very good progress, and achieve their full potential.
- Teaching is very good throughout the school.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to work and their behaviour in and around the school is excellent.
- The school provides a very good curriculum for pupils of all ages.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. Provision for their social, moral and personal development is excellent.
- The way in which the school cares for the pupils is excellent. Assessment procedures are very good, and assessment information is used very well to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent.
- The Governing Body is very effective, and plays an important role in the leadership and management of the school.

What could be improved

- The accommodation for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997 when it was judged to be very effective. Since that time, the headteacher and staff have worked extremely hard to improve provision wherever possible, and to maintain high standards across many aspects of the school's work. The quality of teaching and learning has improved dramatically since the last inspection, and has had a very positive impact on standards, especially in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology. A free-standing Nursery has been built, which opened just over one year ago. This provision has already had a positive impact, and standards are now higher than they were, although still below average, when pupils join the Reception class. A small computer suite has been set up, which is very well used by pupils of all ages, and the school is currently in the process of building a medical room, to enable the needs of pupils who have specific medical requirements to be met. The school has not been successful in its efforts to improve the accommodation, and some classrooms are very small and cramped. The lack of space in Key Stage 2 especially, constrains the range of practical activities that can be carried out, and this adversely affects pupils' learning in some subjects. The commitment and energy of the staff, headteacher and Governing Body, together with effective self-evaluation procedures, ensure that the school is very well placed for future development.

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	B	C	C	B
Mathematics	C	A	C	C
Science	C	A	C	C

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

The table shows that pupils' attainment, on the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, is in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The test results vary quite dramatically from year to year, depending on the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. There is no significant variation in the results of boys and girls or of groups of different ability. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is above average in English, and average in mathematics and science. The school makes very good use of assessment information to set appropriate annual targets which are realistic and achievable. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations.

The end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum 2000 tests show that pupils' attainment is above the national average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. In comparison with

similar schools, pupils' performance is above average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. The results vary from year to year depending on the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, and on the range of pre-school education the pupils have experienced. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science.

In information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, geography and history, pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is above national expectations. Pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress as they move through the school in these subjects, and benefit from very good teaching. In music and physical education, pupils make satisfactory progress, and their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.

By the time pupils transfer to Year 1 at the end of the Foundation Stage, they achieve the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning, with the exception of personal, social and emotional development where they attain beyond the expected level, and communication, language and literacy where they do not attain the expected level. Pupils make very good progress from a very low starting point.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils of all ages and abilities enjoy their work, and have very positive attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils throughout the school have excellent levels of self-discipline. They are very polite and considerate of the needs of others. Pupils work very well together in pairs and small groups.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are based on mutual respect and trust. Pupils are keen to take responsibility, and show very good levels of initiative.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
42 lessons seen overall	very good	very good	very 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 seen during the inspection was outstanding, and had a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Teaching was excellent in 26% of lessons seen, very good in 36% of lessons, good in 33% of lessons, and satisfactory in 5% of lessons. Teaching throughout the school is characterised by very good planning and preparation, very secure subject knowledge, and excellent organisation and management of the pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent, and there is often a great deal of warm humour in lessons, which makes pupils' learning fun and pleasurable. One of the most significant strengths of teaching is the way in which teachers cater for the different age and ability groups within the mixed age classes, enabling pupils of all ages and abilities to do their best and to achieve their potential. Teachers provide excellent levels of support for pupils who have special educational needs, and work hard to ensure that higher attaining pupils are fully challenged. Classroom

assistants are used extremely well to work with small groups of pupils to enhance their learning, and their input is very valuable.

The teaching of English and mathematics is very good throughout the school, and enables pupils to achieve high standards. The way in which teachers promote literacy skills through work in other curriculum areas is excellent, and no opportunities are missed or wasted. The promotion of numeracy and information and communication technology skills is very good in all classes, and there are frequent good quality opportunities for pupils to use these skills to support their learning in other subjects.

The teaching of the pupils in the Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good, and enables these pupils to have a very good start to their education. Activities are always stimulating and challenging, and promote pupils' interest in learning.

Teachers in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are extremely effective in compensating for the very poor accommodation, and work hard to ensure that pupils' learning is not adversely affected. Nevertheless, in some lessons, despite the excellent behaviour of the pupils, and the ingenuity of the teachers, the quality of teaching and learning is adversely affected by the cramped and unpleasant working conditions.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage pupils is very effective in promoting the early learning goals. Curriculum planning in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is excellent, and fully meets the needs of all pupils. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. The school caters extremely well for pupils who have special educational needs, including those with statements. Pupils are very well supported in class by their teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils who have English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good, and the provision for their personal, social and moral development is excellent. The catholic ethos of the school permeates all of its life and work, and promotes a sense of community and belonging.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent. The welfare and well-being of the pupils is the shared concern of teachers, governors and parents. All necessary procedures are in place to guarantee the pupils' health and safety.
Partnership with parents	Excellent. The school works very closely with parents, and there are very high levels of parental satisfaction. Parents receive excellent information about the life and work of the school, and many help out on a regular basis.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher provides clear and strong leadership to guide the school's work, and enjoys the full support of a committed and hard-working staff. The school's monitoring and evaluating procedures are rigorous, and effectively highlight strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The Governing Body is knowledgeable, supportive and well informed about the quality of education provided by the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and Governing Body have a very good appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses through a well established programme of monitoring and evaluation. Very good use is made of the results of standardised tests to measure the extent of pupils' progress and to ensure that all pupils achieve their very best.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes the best use possible of its resources, and gives very good value for money.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	There are enough teachers for the number of pupils on roll, and a generous number of support staff. The quality and range of learning resources are good overall. The adequacy of the accommodation is very poor and adversely affects the quality of education provided.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents appreciate the warm welcome they receive from the headteacher and staff when they visit the school. Parents are pleased with the values and attitudes promoted by the school. They believe that the standard of behaviour in the school is very good. Parents agree that the standard of teaching, leadership and management, is very good. Most parents believe that the amount of homework is about right. Parents agree that their children like coming to school. Parents are well informed about their children's progress Parents believe that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have no significant concerns about any aspect of the school's life and work.

There are justifiably very high levels of parental satisfaction. The inspection findings fully endorse the parents' positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The test results vary quite dramatically from year to year, depending on the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. Although in the 2000 end of key stage tests, the percentage of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science was above average, the overall results were depressed by a high proportion of pupils who had special educational needs, including three who had statements. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is above average in English, and average in mathematics and science. The school sets realistic but achievable targets based on pupils' progress and attainment which are regularly assessed as they move through the school.
2. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations, and that half of the group of current Year 6 pupils is on course to attain the higher Level 5 in the end of year National Curriculum tests. Nearly all pupils read well by the end of Key Stage 2, and this helps them with their learning across all subjects of the National Curriculum. Many pupils effectively carry out independent research, using books and CD ROMs to find information, and are skilled in the higher order skills of note-taking, and skimming and scanning text. Pupils use their literacy skills to very good effect in their work in other subjects, and confidently write accounts in geography, reports in science, or instructions in design and technology. Pupils' number skills are very good, and they make effective use of their mathematical knowledge and understanding in their work in geography and science, when they are required to collect and present data, to take measurements and to read scales. Pupils' scientific knowledge is impressive, and because a great deal of their learning stems from practical investigations, they have a very secure scientific understanding. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in Key Stage 2 as the result of very good teaching which enables pupils to achieve their full potential.
3. The end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum 2000 tests show that pupils' attainment is above the national average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. The school places a great deal of emphasis on ensuring that pupils have a good start to their reading in Key Stage 1, and as a result, more pupils attain the higher Level 3 in the reading tests than in the writing and mathematics tests. The test results vary from year to year depending on the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, and on the range of pre-school education the pupils have experienced. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is above average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics.
4. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make very good progress in all of their learning, but especially in reading. Many pupils are confident and fluent readers by the end of the key stage, and most have a real love of books. However, a small number of pupils have difficulty mastering the reading process, despite the best efforts of teachers and parents. Although pupils' attainment in writing is in line with national expectations overall, there is significant variation in the standards achieved by pupils. Some pupils write lengthy well structured pieces, whilst others struggle to sequence their ideas in sentences. Pupils of all abilities are confident writers, and all respond well to the encouragement of their teachers and make very good progress.

Teachers provide many excellent opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in their work in other subjects. In mathematics, most Key Stage 1 pupils have a secure grasp of number and pattern, although the mental recall of many pupils is quite slow. Pupils confidently solve number problems, and the highest attaining pupils use their knowledge of pattern in number to check whether their answers are sensible. Pupils make good use of their mathematical knowledge in their work in other subjects, and gain an appreciation of how mathematics is used in real life situations. Pupils have a secure scientific knowledge and understanding and confidently carry out experiments and investigations. In their practical work, the higher attaining pupils make predictions about what they think will happen next, but few pupils are secure about the notion of fair-testing. The vast majority of pupils have lively enquiring minds which help them in their investigative work.

5. In information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, geography and history, pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is above national expectations, and pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress in these subjects as they move through the school. There are particular strengths in the way in which pupils use information and communication technology to support their work in other subjects, and many pupils appropriately view computers as tools to aid their learning. In music and physical education, pupils make satisfactory progress, and their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.
6. Pupils' attainment when they start in the Nursery class is well below average. Despite making very good progress, their attainment is still below average when they join the Reception class, especially in terms of their language skills. By the time pupils transfer to Year 1 at the end of the Foundation Stage, most achieve the early learning goals in the areas of learning of mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In personal, social and emotional development most pupils attain beyond the expected level, and in communication, language and literacy many pupils do not attain the expected level. Throughout the Foundation Stage, pupils benefit from very good teaching, and they are well prepared for starting the National Curriculum programmes of study when they join the Year 1 class.
7. The school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs is excellent, and has a very positive impact on their progress and achievement. Teachers and classroom assistants work very effectively with small groups of pupils who have special educational needs, helping them to achieve their own goals and targets, and ensuring that wherever possible they work alongside their classmates, sharing the same tasks, at their own level. The school currently has only one pupil who has English as an additional language, and makes very good provision for this pupil to ensure that he is fully integrated into the life of the school, and to enable him to make good progress.
8. The staff and headteacher work extremely hard to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities achieve their full potential. Homework is set on a daily basis throughout the school and is always linked to ongoing work to ensure that pupils have time for reflection, and the opportunity to consolidate their learning. Teachers recognise that some pupils do not have the same advantages at home as others, and do their best to compensate for this. Pupils who do not have access to computers at home are encouraged to use the school computers, and to borrow resources such as books. In addition to the after-school 'booster classes', the Year 6 teachers operates a 'drop-in' session one evening after school for pupils to discuss any aspect of their learning which is giving them cause for concern.
9. Since the time of the last inspection, standards have improved in many subjects, and this is a direct result of the improvements in teaching and assessment that have taken place over the past few years.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent, and have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school are very enthusiastic learners who enjoy the challenges presented by their teachers, and who take an active part in lessons. All pupils work to the best of their ability, and show a high level of commitment and perseverance. Most pupils are aware of their own shortcomings, and make significant efforts to attain the learning and behaviour targets that have been set jointly with their teachers. Pupils are very supportive of one another, and during the inspection, frequent examples were seen of higher attaining pupils supporting classmates who were experiencing difficulties.
11. The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is excellent and is a major strength of the school. There have been improvements in the standard of behaviour in the school since the last inspection. Despite the extremely cramped working conditions in some classrooms, pupils are considerate of the needs of others and show very good levels of self-discipline. Lessons proceed without interruption, and older Key Stage 2 pupils especially, can be relied upon to work in small groups away from the direct supervision of their teacher. When moving around the school, pupils of all ages are extremely polite, and consistently hold the doors open for others to move through. Older pupils set excellent examples for younger pupils, and almost always can be relied upon model the very high standard of behaviour which the school expects. There is no oppressive behaviour in school and pupils put themselves out to look after those who need help and companionship. There have been no recent exclusions.
12. Relationships amongst pupils and between adults and pupils are excellent, and there are extremely high levels of mutual respect and trust. The excellent relationships create a positive learning climate where pupils feel confident and comfortable about sharing their thoughts. From an early age pupils are encouraged to respect the views and opinions of others, and in the Reception class for example, very good use is made of role and puppet play to help pupils to express their feelings and to resolve conflict. Pupils understand the need for consideration within and beyond the community of the school. In all classes, pupils undertake monitorial tasks, such as taking registers to the office, or setting out equipment, and do so with pride and a sense of responsibility. Independent learning skills are effectively promoted across all ages groups, and pupils of all ages and abilities show very good levels of initiative.
13. Attendance is satisfactory and has been close the national average for a number of years. Almost all absences are authorised, although a number are related to family holidays taken in term time. Pupils are punctual, enabling lessons to start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 26% of lessons seen, very good in 36% of lessons, good in 33% of lessons and satisfactory in 5% of lessons. There has been a dramatic improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when only 7% of teaching was very good or better. Examples of excellent and very good teaching were spread throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. The very good teaching has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, and some excellent examples were seen during the inspection of pupils tackling and solving problems, and making choices and decisions about their work. Pupils of all ages and abilities are enthusiastic and well motivated, and they work hard to achieve

their best. Throughout the school pupils show high levels of independence and concentration, and a quiet confidence in their ability as learners.

15. The teaching of the Foundation Stage pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good overall. Pupils are given a wide range of exciting and challenging learning experiences which enable them to make very good progress. Activities are very well organised and planned, and there is often a real sense of fun and enjoyment as the pupils carry out their tasks. Excellent use is made of support staff to enhance pupils' learning, and all adults are very well briefed by teachers, to enable them to work effectively with individuals, and small groups of pupils. Very good emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic language and number skills, and the promotion of pupils' personal and social development is an ongoing priority. Teachers value the importance of play as a vehicle for pupils' learning, and provide many excellent free and structured play activities, which greatly enhance pupils' spoken language skills. For example, during the inspection, Nursery pupils discussed and prepared a 'shopping list' before going to play in the baker's shop, where, with the assistance of their teacher, they placed their orders, baked bread and cakes, and used the till. The Nursery and Reception teachers make very good use of ongoing assessment to measure the pupils' progress and to plan the next stage in the pupils' learning.
16. Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, English and mathematics are taught very well, and the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been very successfully implemented in all classes. Teachers provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, and very good opportunities for them to use and apply basic mathematical skills. The very good teaching of English and mathematics enables pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs, and English as an additional language, to make very good progress. Teachers make very effective use of ongoing assessments in English and mathematics to check and track pupils' progress, and to ensure that they are achieving their full potential.
17. The teaching of science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology is very good in both key stages. One of the strengths of teaching in these subjects, is the emphasis teachers place on pupils learning through practical experience, and becoming independent learners. For example, in science, pupils carry out investigations and experiments, and as they become more experienced, they are encouraged to develop their own methods of recording. Key Stage 2 pupils acquire geographical field-work skills through taking part in archaeological digs, and pupils in both key stages benefit from visits to places of educational and historical interest which stimulate their imaginations and help them to visualise life in the past. In information and communication technology, a very good balance is achieved between the teaching of computer skills, and the application of these skills in meaningful contexts. For example, pupils are taught basic skills of copying, cutting and pasting text using a word-processing programme, before using these skills in their English work. Additionally, teachers are very successful in encouraging pupils to use computers to support their learning across the curriculum, and in a Year 6 geography lesson seen during the inspection, pupils retrieved information from CD ROMs to enable them to make comparisons between a location in Great Britain, and one abroad.
18. In music and physical education, teaching is satisfactory, and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. However, teachers are not always as confident as they are in the teaching of other subjects, and this is sometimes evidenced by their slightly diffident manner.

19. In both key stages, all classes contain mixed age ranges. The school has put in place a variety of strategies to overcome any possible disadvantages this arrangement may present, and teachers are extremely effective in identifying the needs of pupils in different age and ability groups and catering for them accordingly. A part-time teacher is employed to teach English and mathematics each morning, and this enables pupils in the mixed Year 1/Year 2 class and the mixed Year 2 /Year 3 class to be taught as separate age groups. This organisation is very effective and contributes significantly to the very good progress made by these pupils. The headteacher supports the Year 5/Year 6 teacher each morning in mathematics by working with a small group of pupils who need additional support. For all other lessons, teachers ensure that the different age groups within each class follow separate units of work, although the start to the lesson or activity is often the same. Teachers are very clear about the skills and knowledge they intend to convey to the different age groups, and are very successful in their efforts. Although complex, and demanding in terms of organisation and preparation, this model of working means that the school can ensure that pupils of all ages make good progress, despite the fact that the composition of classes will almost certainly change from year to year as the school continues to grow in size.
20. Throughout the school, one of the great strengths of teaching is the way in which teachers make use of questions to extend pupils' learning, and to help them to clarify their thinking. Teachers phrase questions very carefully to support those pupils who have special educational needs, and allow plenty of time for pupils to think of their answers. Questions for the higher attaining pupils are much more challenging and really make them think. In the best lessons, teachers use questions very effectively to establish pupils' previous knowledge, and are adept at picking up incidental opportunities to promote new learning.
21. Class discussions, and question and answer sessions, are invariably very well organised and paced, and there is almost always an over-riding sense of fun and humour. Pupils are given the confidence to make suggestions and give answers without fear of being wrong. They are encouraged to present their own views, and this is made easier for them because of the high levels of respect shown by all pupils for the beliefs of others, and because of the way in which teachers value the contributions of all class members.
22. Teachers use a variety of successful strategies to promote effective learning. Pupils work as a class, in groups, in pairs and individually, and where the very best teaching occurs, pupils are encouraged to take charge of their own learning by choosing how to approach a task, or by taking an activity beyond the point the teacher originally planned. Often teachers pair higher and lower attaining pupils, enabling pupils to learn from one another, and this is especially effective in activities such as information and communication technology where some pupils have high levels of expertise because they have regular access to computers at home.
23. Teachers are very effective in showing pupils how they can improve their work further. They frequently discuss work with individual pupils, and help them to set their own targets for development. Individual teachers have their own ways of helping pupils to achieve their targets, such as in one Key Stage 1 class where 'work wizards' are nominated on a daily basis. The 'work wizards' each wear a short cloak, appropriately covered in gold stars, and know that on this day, they must concentrate hard on achieving their literacy and numeracy targets, which are displayed for them on the wall. The marking of pupils' work, although variable throughout the school, is always satisfactory, and is often very good, especially in one class where the teacher regularly enters into written dialogue with the pupils about their work.

24. Teachers throughout the school have extremely high expectations of the pupils in terms of their behaviour and academic achievement, and excellent use is made of judicious praise and encouragement to motivate pupils in their learning. The few school rules are consistently applied, and pupils know exactly what is expected of them. The excellent behaviour and attitudes of the pupils, and the excellent way in which pupils are managed, are crucial factors in enabling effective teaching and learning to take place in very poor quality accommodation. There are many occasions where pupils, teachers and support staff are cramped and uncomfortable, especially in whole-class discussions at the start and end of literacy and numeracy sessions. Despite the adverse working conditions, teachers ensure that pupils have full access to all elements of the curriculum, and do their best to remain positive under difficult circumstances.
25. The school makes excellent provision for pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers use individual education plans very well to ensure that work is well matched to the pupils' needs, and they make very good use of ongoing assessments to measure pupils' progress. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers to provide very good levels of support in class, enabling pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress towards their individual learning targets. The needs of pupils who have statements are fully and sensitively met. The school makes very good provision for pupils who have English as an additional language, enabling these pupils to be fully integrated into the life and work of the school. Teachers are very astute at recognising pupils who are experiencing temporary difficulties with their work, perhaps because of their home circumstances, and unobtrusively give the necessary support. This is exemplified by the way in which older Key Stage 2 pupils who do not have access to computers or books at home are encouraged to use the school's facilities.
26. A good amount of homework is set in all classes, and reading practice is a regular homework task for all pupils. Pupils are conscientious about completing homework tasks, which almost always complement and extend their ongoing learning. However, most of the tasks are linked to English and mathematics, and insufficient use is made of homework in subjects such as art and design, music and physical education.

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

27. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is broad and well balanced, and provides pupils of all ages with a very good range of stimulating and challenging experiences. It fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and religious education is taught in accordance with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Improvements to the curriculum have been made since the time of the last inspection which take account of recent national initiatives and developments. The national guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been successfully dovetailed with the school's own planning, providing very secure guidance and support for teachers' individual planning. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. The provision for the Foundation Stage children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good, and successfully promotes the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning.
28. The way in which teachers cater for the needs of individual pupils, and groups of pupils, is excellent. For example, because of the almost annual change in the composition of class groups, teachers in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 follow separate plans, within the same lesson, for different year groups. This requires a great deal of thought and effort, but is extremely successful in ensuring that pupils of all ages and abilities are appropriately challenged and enabled to achieve their full potential. Despite the very

difficult conditions posed by the accommodation, teachers work hard to ensure that pupils receive a well balanced curriculum, and all subjects are taught regularly, and for an appropriate amount of time. The only minor weakness in terms of the organisation of the curriculum, is the practice of teaching art and design, design and technology, geography and history in half yearly blocks. Although each subject receives an appropriate amount of time overall, long periods of time elapse until the subject is next revisited, and this presents particular problems for those pupils who have difficulty retaining their learning.

29. The curriculum for the Nursery and Reception children is very well organised and ensures that all children receive a very good grounding in early skills of literacy and numeracy. Very good emphasis is placed on the notion of play as a vehicle for learning, and excellent input from teachers and classroom assistants helps the children to get the best out of free and structured play activities. Tasks are planned to ensure that the children have plenty of opportunities to develop independent learning skills, and to make choices and decisions about their learning. Careful planning, and excellent communication amongst all of the staff concerned with the Foundation Stage children, ensure that all activities are purposeful, stimulating, challenging and enjoyable. The very good curriculum for the Nursery and reception children has a very positive impact on their learning and progress, and prepares them extremely well for their transfer at the end of the Reception year to the Key Stage 1 programmes of study.
30. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is excellent, and contributes significantly to the very good progress they make. Pupils are identified at an early stage, and are given targeted support to help them to overcome their difficulties. Individual education plans are of very good quality, and are used effectively by teachers when they plan their lessons. Excellent use of classroom assistants helps pupils who have special educational needs to meet the targets in their individual education plans, and enables them to take a full and active role in all class activities. Pupils who have special educational needs, including those with statements, are fully integrated into the life and work of the school. The school closely follows the guidance of the Code of Practice for special educational needs, and the co-ordinator is meticulous and conscientious about keeping records up to date, arranging reviews, and involving parents. The provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is very good.
31. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. In addition to inter-school sporting activities, some of which are competitive, the school provides a good range of after-school clubs which are offered to pupils from both key stages. These include infant gymnastics, art, netball, football, recorders, and French club. All activities are well attended. For example, just over forty pupils are on the register for the French club.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, aspects of which are effectively taught through topics such as the science 'Health for Life' topic, or the religious education 'Here I am' programme. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drug misuse, and sex education is addressed within the context of Catholic education. Excellent relationships between pupils and adults ensure that pupils feel confident about asking questions or expressing their feelings, and enable teachers to take into account the needs of different pupils when potentially sensitive topics and issues are being discussed.
33. The school has very good links with the community it serves and with other schools in the district. Pupils visit local museums and theatres, which enhance their learning and raise their awareness of many features of their own culture. Younger children are taken to the local shops so that they can begin to understand the need for trading and to help

develop their sense of community. Visits to places of interest in the area, such as the sand-washing factory provide older children with a insight into the world of work, in addition to providing substantial opportunities to discuss environmental issues. The school has established very good links with a local company. Representatives from the company have received training, and regularly listen to individual pupils read. Students from local colleges and schools are regularly welcomed into school to undertake work experience placements.

34. The school successfully promotes a positive image of its work through fundraising events and the support of charities associated with the Catholic church, and through these activities, pupils have developed a very caring attitude towards those less fortunate than themselves. Senior citizens are invited to see the children perform their concerts, and both the children and the senior citizens gain much from this link. There is a very good partnership between the teacher of the Nursery class and the leader of the 'Tiny Tots' group which ensures that children starting school are more confident. Very good arrangements are in place to guide pupils in their choice of secondary school. Staff from the two main receiving high schools visit the school to meet pupils and attend the summer parents' evening to resolve any parental concerns. Pupils visit the high schools for specific lessons and to meet the staff so that they will feel more at ease about their transfer. There are extensive sporting links with other schools in the area involving a number of sporting leagues, a swimming gala, and cross country running.
35. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, and cultural development is very good, and the provision for their social and moral development is excellent. The excellent way in which all adults and pupils within the school relate to each other is an affirmation of the value the school places on every individual. Throughout the school day there are many opportunities for the pupils to reflect upon aspects of their lives. The school makes very good use of cross-curricular links to extend the pupils' sense of awe and wonder at the world and develop their spirituality.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. All adults working in the school have consistently very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and all pupils live up to this. Pupils are made aware at an early age of the difference between right and wrong, and have an excellent appreciation of how their actions affect the well-being and happiness of others. Through their studies in geography and history, older pupils gain an understanding of the wider moral issues such as urban development, pollution and war. Younger pupils listen attentively to stories which have moral dilemmas, and consider how they might best be resolved.
37. The provision for pupils' social development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils are encouraged to contribute actively to the life of the school. They are taught from an early age to take responsibility, and their help and collaboration ensure that the school functions as an orderly community. The way in which older pupils use personal initiative to care for younger ones is particularly praiseworthy. During the inspection older pupils were frequently seen tending to younger pupils who had been hurt, or finding out why they were upset. The pupils have many excellent opportunities to make decisions that affect the life of the school. For example pupils recycled aluminium cans to generate funds which they chose to spend on improving the provision of games and activities for wet playtimes.
38. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school makes very good use of the local area as a resource for the pupils' learning and this develops their understanding of the local community and its cultural heritage. The pupils' appreciation of their own and other cultures is furthered by lessons in art and design, music, history and

geography. Pupils have the opportunity to study other world faiths and to gain an insight into the beliefs and cultures of others.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' health, welfare and safety are excellent overall, and are even better than they were at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher is nominated to deal with any issues of child protection that arise, and is assisted in this role by the deputy headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body. The headteacher and staff have received appropriate training and are further supported by the Education Welfare Officer, and the child protection officer of the LEA.
40. Children who feel unwell are very kindly cared for by their classteachers and support assistants, until arrangements can be made for them to go home. Minor cuts and grazes are dealt with by one of the three members of staff holding a current certificate in first-aid. A record is kept of all accidents that occur, and parents are informed. The specific medical needs of individual children are known to all staff, and a medical room is currently being built to enhance the provision for these pupils. The high ratio of adults to pupils and the good use of duty rotas to cover all areas of the school help to ensure that pupils are secure and well cared for at playtimes and when they are moving around the school.
41. The Governing Body conducts regular annual risk assessments of the school building. The senior management team and the site supervisor have received training in risk assessment, as has one of the members of the site committee of the Governing Body. Problems identified as the result of audits of the premises are shared with all governors, and the agreed action is recorded and swiftly acted upon. Safety and security systems are checked regularly, and evacuation procedures are tested each term.
42. The school provides excellent educational and personal support and guidance for all pupils and this is a further strength of the work of the school. The school tracks the progress of all pupils and uses this information to provide pupils with the support that is appropriate to their individual needs. Each pupil has a record of achievement which contains targets, awards for achievement, and samples of work which mark the pupils' progress. Throughout the school, class and individual targets are set, and pupils are familiar with their own learning targets as well as the learning objectives for their group. All staff work hard to raise pupils' self-esteem and to give them confidence in their learning. Potential barriers to learning are identified by teachers who make every effort to remove them and ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. This is very evident in the way in which the school provides access to computers for those who do not have them at home, and additional study sessions for older Key Stage 2 pupils.
43. The school has excellent systems in place for promoting and rewarding good behaviour and achievement. Pupils respond very well to the rewards that are available for good work, attendance and behaviour which are presented at monthly assemblies. Weekly assemblies reward pupils for demonstrating good manners, and this is a very successful approach to teaching pupils how to behave in a socially acceptable way. In the Reception class, children receive 'stamps' on their hands or nose in recognition of their successes, and they proudly show their collection of 'stamps' to their parents at the end of the day. Pupils rarely need to be sanctioned for misbehaviour, but occasional incidents are dealt with fairly and swiftly, and teachers always explain to the pupils why their behaviour is unacceptable, and what its impact is on others.

44. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are very good and clearly understood by parents and carers. Regular contacts with the Education Welfare Officer and parents/carers are maintained. Overall administrative systems for promoting punctuality and attendance are very good and have been maintained since the last inspection.
45. The school has maintained and built upon the positive features noted in the last inspection in terms of the way it monitors pupils' academic progress. Informal procedures are excellent, and are enhanced by the excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Teachers know their pupils very well, and are well aware of the needs, strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils.
46. Formal procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are very good. The school has established uniform methods of assessment across the school. Each week pupils' progress is evaluated against lesson objectives, and this information is fed into teachers' planning for the following week, ensuring that pupils' learning is constantly and steadily advanced. In addition, pupils are assessed when they have completed blocks or units of work, half way through the year, and at the end of the year in English, mathematics and science, by means of standardised tests. Very good use is made of this information to track and monitor pupils' progress as they move from class to class and through the school. Detailed analysis of end of key stage National Curriculum test results enables teachers to highlight relative strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.
47. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent, and pupils are extremely well supported in their learning. The school has very good contact with the educational psychologist and other external agencies. Support in class for pupils who have learning difficulties is excellent, and classroom assistants provide excellent support for individual pupils and small groups who are experiencing difficulties with their work. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in reviews and in setting targets. Currently only one pupil has English as an additional language, and this pupil receives very good levels of support.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The overwhelming majority of parents are very positive about the school, and there are very high levels of parental satisfaction. Parents appreciate the warm welcome they receive from the headteacher and staff when they visit the school, and the way in which their concerns and suggestions are acted upon. They are pleased with the values and attitudes promoted by the school, and the Catholic ethos and atmosphere. They believe that the standard of behaviour in the school is very good, and are effusive in their praise of the quality of teaching, leadership and management. Parents are well informed about the life and work of the school, and receive good levels of information about their children's progress and attainment. Parents have no significant concerns about any aspect of the school's life and work. The inspection findings fully confirm the parents' views of the school.
49. The school maintains excellent links with parents through letters, notices and the daily informal interaction between parents and teachers. The quality of pupils' end of year progress reports is good, and parents and pupils are invited to add their comments. The prospectus and annual report from the Governing Body meet statutory requirements, and provide very good levels of information about school routines and procedures. The separate prospectus for the Nursery class lets parents know what they can do at home to help with their children's learning and personal development. The school canvasses

parents' opinions and makes careful consideration of any concerns. For example, a recent review of homework tasks has resulted in a more focused approach to the tasks and a shared expectation between the school and the parents. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in setting targets, and in reviewing and monitoring their progress.

50. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is excellent. A good number of parents come into school to help and are very well deployed in a variety of tasks. Parents are sufficiently enthusiastic about working in school that the school maintains a relief list of parents who may be called upon should the assigned parent be unable to attend. Nearly all parents support their children at home by listening to their children read, keeping a record of their reading, and encouraging them to do their homework. Parents of children in the Reception class help to maintain the diary of Rosie Rabbit, whom their children take turns to bring home. As an alternative to Rosie Rabbit, Max the Monkey, who is not very good at mathematics, is a popular choice.
51. The excellent partnership between the school and parents has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The agreed and shared commitment to ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential is a factor in the very good progress made by pupils of all ages and abilities. The school has further developed its partnership with parents since the last inspection, and links have improved as a result.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. One of the main reasons for the schools' continued success is the excellent quality of leadership and management provided by the senior management team, in particular the headteacher. An excellent atmosphere prevails in the school, arising from a common intent, and an excellent team spirit amongst staff. There is a strong commitment to enabling pupils to attain high standards in their work, but most of all, the school strives to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of their age, ability, gender or home circumstances, achieve their very best. The high standard of leadership and management described in the last inspection report has improved further since that time.
53. The headteacher has a very clear vision of where the school is going, which is linked closely to its aims and values. He is very effective in monitoring the effectiveness of the school, through an ongoing process of critical evaluation. This enables the headteacher, staff and Governing Body to have a very clear idea of the strengths and relative weaknesses in the school's provision. Although all those involved with the school take justifiable pride in its many achievements, there is no sense of complacency.
54. The headteacher maintains a high profile in the school, and regularly teaches a group of upper Key Stage 2 pupils. He is a regular visitor to classes, and monitors teaching and learning on both a formal and informal basis. Outcomes of monitoring exercises are shared and fully discussed with each teacher, enabling high standards to be achieved and maintained. Classteachers are provided with opportunities to observe other colleagues teach, and this enables best practice to be identified and shared. The number of teachers who visit from other schools to observe lessons is an indication of the quality and status of the teaching staff. Curriculum co-ordinators are extremely effective and are provided with frequent opportunities to lead, and to use their initiative to the benefit of all.
55. The school enjoys the support of a very committed, knowledgeable and effective Governing Body. The contribution made by the Governing Body is a significant strength in the management of the school. Governors are well informed and have all benefited from training courses, including those relating to the recently introduced performance management. Governors bring a breadth of expertise to the school, and feel that their

input is appreciated and valued. Suitable committees are in place and individual governors make regular visits to classes. The school development plan is a useful, well-constructed document that is drawn up after full consultation with the co-ordinators, teachers and governors. It is carefully costed and sets realistic and achievable goals.

56. The school meets all statutory requirements. Equality of opportunity is positively promoted, and the needs of pupils of all abilities are met. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is excellent, and fully reflects the recommendations of the Code of Practice. This aspect of the school's work is overviewed by an experienced and very committed co-ordinator who maintains meticulous records, and who ensures that the school fully meets the pupils' individual needs. Specific funding for special educational needs is very well used for its intended purpose. Provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is very good.
57. The school's financial systems and procedures are very good. The school budgets carefully for all expenditure, which is closely aligned to income. Specific grants are fully utilised for their intended purpose. Subject co-ordinators receive budget allocations based on a review of the previous year's action plan. Each half-term, budget statements are prepared for presentation to the senior management team and the Governing Body, enabling all those involved to have a clear picture of spending. The recommendations of the most recent external financial audit have been addressed. The Governing Body is aware of the need for ensuring that best value for money is achieved, and duly considers the cost-effectiveness of major spending decisions. The school has maintained a significant underspend for the past few years in an attempt to acquire enough money to enable the planned classroom building project to go ahead.
58. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Teachers are appropriately trained in the primary phase and receive regular and planned in-service training to meet the needs of the school, their co-ordinator roles and their personal development. Support staff are extremely well deployed, often working closely with groups of children in class under the general supervision and instruction of the teacher. This is especially beneficial in the split age group classes when activities differ significantly for the different age groups. The input of classroom assistants in supporting pupils who have special educational needs is significant, and extremely valuable.
59. The school occupies a small part of a spacious site. There are hard and grassed surfaces for the pupils to play on, and a separate enclosed play area for children in the Foundation Stage. The modern building has been developed in the last three years to include a new Reception classroom, office accommodation, and a separate Nursery block. A medical room is currently being built to provide additional support for children with specific medical requirements. The interiors of the buildings are kept very clean by the diligent site staff.
60. Despite the recent improvements to the building, the accommodation is poor overall. Most of the classrooms are very cramped and this is not conducive to effective learning. Some subjects in Key Stage 2, such as art and design, and design and technology, are taught in the open areas of corridors, where the only sink is located. There are very few storage facilities. In some classes, supporting pillars dictate the layout of tables, and inhibit the free movement of teachers and pupils. Access to staff toilets and the staff room is unsatisfactory as it is through the Reception or Year 2/Year 3 classroom. There is no opportunity for movement by pupils or adults in the Year 4/Year 5 classroom, and practical demonstrations are limited to those that can be carried out on the pupils' desks. When the door of this classroom is closed, no exchanges of air occur and the level of carbon-dioxide increases to an uncomfortable level. In other classrooms, heaters and

timers are noisy and teachers need to talk loudly to overcome the background noise. Although the school has done everything in its power to alleviate the problems associated with the very poor accommodation, pupils' learning is inhibited by the lack of suitable space.

61. Resources for all subjects are of good quality and adequate in quantity and range. They are well maintained and very well used to support teaching and learning.
62. In the light of the high standards attained in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2, the very good progress of pupils of all ages and abilities, the very good quality of teaching throughout the school, the excellent attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils, and the excellent leadership and management, the school is judged to be giving very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- The headteacher and Governing Body should continue in its efforts to improve the quality of the accommodation to enable the current high standards to be maintained across all areas of the school's work.

Other minor issues which should be considered by the school:-

- the consistency and impact of marking across the school;
- the use made of homework to support learning in all subjects;
- the half yearly blocking of some foundation subjects;

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
26	36	33	5			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	151
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	9	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	9
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	18	118	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (95)	90 (95)	90 (95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (95)	95 (90)	95 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	6	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	5	4	6
	Total	13	13	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (77)	72 (95)	83 (95)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	9
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	11	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (77)	83 (95)	78 (86)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	120
Any other minority ethnic group	121

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	117

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	308507
Total expenditure	288975
Expenditure per pupil	1720
Balance brought forward from previous year	46488
Balance carried forward to next year	66020

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	171
Number of questionnaires returned	150

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	26	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	35	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	35	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	36	4	3	3
The teaching is good.	75	23	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	34	5	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	18	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	23	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	54	38	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	71	26	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	27	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	31	6	1	10

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

63. There has been a significant improvement in the provision for the children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection, with the opening of the purpose built Nursery. Most pupils now attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis, for at least one year before entering the Reception class. This additional time in school is already having a very positive impact on the children's progress, especially in terms of their personal, social and emotional development.
64. The teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good overall, and it is frequently excellent in the Reception class. Although many of the children start school with well below average skills, they make very good progress. By the time they transfer to Year 1 at the end of the Foundation Stage, most achieve the early learning goals in the areas of learning of mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In personal, social and emotional development most pupils attain beyond the expected level, and in communication, language and literacy many pupils do not attain the expected level.
65. The teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes work very closely together and their planning and organisation of the curriculum are very good. Detailed records of the children's progress are maintained and care is taken to meet the children's individual needs. Excellent support is provided by the classroom assistants, who are very much part of the team. The children in the Foundation Stage have a very good start to their education, and are well prepared to start the National Curriculum in Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The teaching of emotional, personal and social development is very good throughout the Foundation Stage, and helps the children to learn the necessary routines of the school, and the skills of relating to, and considering the needs of others. Some of the children enter the Nursery class with poorly developed personal, social and emotional skills. They find it difficult to share, to take turns, and to take responsibility for themselves. The staff provide plenty of opportunities throughout the day and through role-play activities for the children to learn and practise these skills. As a result, the children make very good progress and most achieve beyond the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. In the 'Baker's', and the 'Fancy Dress' shops, the children learn how to queue and wait their turn, and at the end of the session to tidy the equipment away. The children are encouraged and expected to dress themselves and to deal with their own personal hygiene routines, which they soon learn to do confidently and effectively.
67. Teachers and classroom support assistants provide very good role models for the children, and there are high levels of mutual consideration, tolerance and respect. The Reception teacher especially has an excellent relationship with the children, creating an atmosphere of co-operation and fun through humour and positive encouragement. The children in both the Nursery and Reception classes are highly motivated and develop excellent attitudes towards learning. They are positively encouraged to consider the needs of others. There are, for example, disabled characters in wheelchairs in the doll's house, and playing with these figures promotes the children's awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. During the inspection, one child, responding to a topical news

item, composed a short compassionate prayer for a zookeeper who had been struck by an elephant.

Communication, language and literacy

68. The communication skills of many of the children entering the nursery class are well below average. Although all children in the Nursery and Reception classes make very good progress in this area of learning, only a small number of children attain the early learning goals in this aspect of their work by the end of the Foundation Stage. The current children in the Reception class have not benefited from a full year of education in the Nursery class.
69. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is very good and is an ongoing priority in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers work hard to promote the children's spoken language, and provide a wide range of exciting and interesting activities which stimulate the children's imaginations and make them want to learn. The children are actively encouraged to create and enact their own stories and plays using puppets. Excellent use is made of role-play to promote spoken language, especially in the home corner, which is often converted to provide different language opportunities, for example, into a shop, a post office, a restaurant or a travel agency.
70. All of the children listen attentively to stories and join in with well-known rhymes and jingles. They are encouraged to regard themselves as readers and writers. For example, in the Nursery class, many children make marks on paper and read them back as a shopping list. A small proportion of children in the Reception class have made a good start in learning to read, and have some knowledge of letter sounds, and are beginning to write some words independently. The teachers' enthusiasm for books, and the exciting way in which they present stories, often enhancing them with resources such as puppets, help to motivate the children and to promote effective learning.

Mathematical Development

71. Early mathematical skills are taught particularly well in both the Nursery and Reception classes, enabling children of all abilities make very good progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain the early learning goals in this area of their work, and some of the current Reception pupils are on course to attain beyond the expected level.
72. The Reception teacher very effectively utilises and extends the children's mathematical knowledge in a variety of exciting ways. For example, during the inspection, a darts game engendered great excitement as the scores were added up and recorded by one child on the board. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children confidently count to ten, both forwards and backwards, and many go well beyond this, counting in fives and tens to a hundred. Daily counting activities are most effective in helping the children to become familiar with the order of numbers, and are presented in a fun way which appeal to them and enhance their learning. Most children accurately name and recognise colours and basic two dimensional shapes.
73. The children use mathematics throughout the day in many practical situations. They buy bread and fancy dress from their class shops, carefully checking the price tags, counting the money from their purses and receiving a written receipt from the shopkeeper. Filling a variety of containers in the sand and water play area gives them a good understanding of capacity and the Nursery children learn how to weigh and measure the ingredients for their cakes when baking.

74. Teachers and classroom support staff are very effective in helping the children to develop mathematical vocabulary, and their input during free and structured play activities is very effective in ensuring that the children gain a mathematical understanding, and that their learning builds on their previous knowledge.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

75. Many children entering the Nursery and Reception classes lack a basic general knowledge and an understanding of the world in which they live. Teaching in this area of learning is very good, and very good opportunities are provided to widen and deepen the children's knowledge and understanding. Teachers recognise the tremendous value of first-hand experiences, such as walks around the school, or to the shops, which really enhance and consolidate the children's learning. Following such adventures, the children often record their visits in pictures, and are encouraged to talk about what they have seen.
76. The annual visit to a farm is particularly popular with the children, and widens their experience further, especially when they are given the pleasure of holding the newborn animals. The children gain good insight into a variety of cultures by celebrating different festivals, such as Christmas, the Chinese New Year and Diwali, and by designing and decorating attractive saris.
77. Reception children are very confident when using the computer. They have good control of the mouse and accurately click on icons to make tunes or to use programmes to help them count and check their numbers. There has been an improvement in this area of the children's learning since the previous inspection.
78. Nursery children have gained an understanding of the needs of living things by watching bulbs grow, and the Reception class children maintain their own small garden. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy identifying different materials and textures and using the 'feely-bag', and make further discoveries when substances, such as soap flakes, or porridge oats are added to the water tray.

Physical Development

79. The children make good progress in their physical development and by the end of the Foundation Stage most achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning.
80. The Nursery pupils have a large, secure outdoor area that allows them to play safely using large toys encouraging them to pull, push and pedal. This is having a positive effect on their physical development, and they run, jump and balance with satisfactory control.
81. The Reception children use the Nursery play area at dinnertime to good advantage, and they also have regular physical education lessons in the school hall. These lessons are often tremendous fun, and the teachers are very effective in motivating the children. The children behave well and improve their running, hopping, and walking skills, moving with good body control and showing a good awareness of space. The Reception children enjoy more formal team and individual games, and work well with a partner, practising running, throwing, and catching a beanbag.
82. The finer skills of folding, cutting, sticking and glueing are taught well and practised regularly in the classroom, in a variety of learning experiences, such as when making Chinese fans. Children in Reception design and make bags for teddies, and shoes like the elves, with considerable skill. There are many very good opportunities for the children to develop pencil and brush control during art and writing activities, and very effective

adult intervention by teachers and classroom assistants, helps the children to make very good progress.

Creative Development

83. Many children start school with poorly developed creative skills. The very good planning, the broad range of experiences, and the very good teaching however, enable them to make very good progress, so that by the end of the Reception year many, although not all, attain the early learning goals in this area of learning.
84. The children are taught the skills required to use brushes and to mix paint, and enjoy discovering the effects that can be obtained by painting with their fingers and hands. They print with sponges, and splodge and blow paint to create a variety of textures. A good display of printed T-shirts in the Reception classroom exemplifies the children's ability to work with control and imagination. Teachers and adults are very effective in the way in which they promote and celebrate originality of thought, and their willingness to accept a picture or model which is different from the majority, gives the children the confidence to experiment and to try out their own ideas.
85. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy singing songs and rhymes and moving to music. The Nursery children experiment with musical sounds using a good range of percussion instruments to create sound effects to favourite stories, such as the Three Billy Goats Gruff. In the Reception class children compose short tunes on the computer for the class to sing, and identify differences in volume and rhythm.
86. Excellent use is made of role-play in both the Nursery and Reception classes, and the children quickly develop enough confidence to perform in assemblies and to an audience of parents.

ENGLISH

87. On the basis of the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests for 2000, pupils' attainment in English is in line with the national average, but above average in comparison with similar schools. The end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for 2000 show that pupils' attainment is above the national average in reading, and in line with the national average in writing. Pupils' performance in comparison with similar schools is above average in reading and average in writing. The school's results fluctuate on an annual basis, because the cohorts are relatively small, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs can significantly affect the results.
88. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations overall, and that there are particular strengths in pupils' reading. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. The slight discrepancy between the inspection findings and the 2000 end of key stage test results reflects the difference in the natural ability of the cohorts. Pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress as they move through the school, due largely to very good quality of teaching which ensures that all pupils achieve their full potential. No pupil in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 has English as an additional language. The standards achieved by boys, particularly at Key Stage 2 are generally slightly lower than those of the girls, although not significantly so, and the school works hard to motivate the boys through the use of exciting resources which appeal to their range of interests.
89. Pupils throughout the school make excellent use of their literacy skills to support their learning in other subjects, and teachers provide excellent opportunities for them to read

and write in a wide variety of contexts. There are some very good examples in all classes of pieces of writing which support activities in history, geography and religious education, for example. Occasionally worksheets are used for recording purposes, but in the main, pupils are encouraged to write their own accounts, reports and instructions.

90. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with national expectations, and pupils make especially good progress in this aspect of their English work. Most pupils confidently answer questions, using extended sentences, and explain their ideas. The school takes every opportunity to provide activities that enhance pupils' public speaking skills. Whether in an assembly or reporting back to their group or class all pupils are constantly challenged and encouraged to express themselves clearly. The way in which language is used and enjoyed is emphasised in lessons. For example, during the inspection, Year 2 pupils took great delight in performing a poem entitled the 'Wobbly Wheel.' Without spoiling the pupils' fun, the teacher constantly challenged them to raise the level of their performance by developing tone, volume, pitch, expression and rhythm, and this input greatly enhanced their progress.
91. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above national expectations. The vast majority of pupils speak very well and listen attentively to their teachers and classmates. They confidently express their suggestions and opinions, and there are some good opportunities in their work in other subjects for pupils to take part in group discussions, or to present feedback to the whole class. For example, during the inspection, a group of Year 5 pupils shared their findings about three dimensional shapes with the rest of the class.
92. Standards in reading are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils have a good knowledge of letter sounds, which they use well to help them sound out unfamiliar words. They have a good sight vocabulary of commonly used words, and are encouraged to read challenging text. A highly structured reading scheme, and a very strong homework policy, help to ensure that most pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, attain at the higher Level 3 in the end of key stage National Curriculum reading tests. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are very well supported in their reading by classroom assistants and the many other adult helpers who are frequently around the school encouraging and supporting pupils. The school benefits significantly from the excellent involvement of volunteers from a local company, who undertook training in 'Reading Partner' work, and now give up their lunch-times three times each week to listen to individual pupils read.
93. By the end of Key Stage 2, nearly all pupils are fluent, expressive, and confident readers. They are keen to discuss different authors, and to express their preferences, and give a variety of reasons for why they choose particular types of books. Detailed comprehensive reading records show that all pupils have read a wide range of books at their level. The school library, and books borrowed from the Library Service, are used extensively for research, and the higher attaining pupils are very effective in using books for finding and retrieving information to support their work in other subjects. Good examples of research were seen during the inspection when Year 3 pupils carried out some excellent investigations into various aspects of Ancient Egyptian life. They selected a range of very appropriate books for the information they required, and confidently used the index and contents pages to narrow their search. By Year 6, these skills are further improved, as was seen when pupils used a range of books to gain information about how natural forces impact on a coastline. For this exercise, the reference library was well used, and pupils quickly located the book they required. Poetry features strongly in pupils' reading and older pupils name several poets whose works they have read, and explain what they liked about their work.

94. The school has recently targeted writing across both key stages in order to raise standards. Techniques of writing for different audiences are specifically taught. For example, Year 1 pupils listened to Nick Butterworth's 'The Cross Rabbit' and analysed the book for story structure, plot and characterisation, then wrote their own book review using this model. Great attention is paid to teaching grammar so that most Year 2 pupils know parts of speech and tenses.
95. By Year 6, most pupils express themselves well in their writing. Spelling, presentation and handwriting are all of a high standard. The pupils' work shows a wide range of writing for different audiences and purposes. A visit to a local theatre to see Macbeth, for example, inspired some very good work, analysing the way in which Shakespeare creates his characters. Excellent poems are written using poetic techniques such as rhyme and half rhyme, alliteration, and metaphor to produce poems containing very strong imagery. Key Stage 2 pupils of all abilities make very good progress in their writing, often because they are highly enthused by their teachers, and because they are given the confidence they need to succeed.
96. The teaching of English is very good throughout the school, and is a significant factor in the very good progress made by pupils of all abilities, and the high standards attained by pupils when they leave the school at the age of eleven. During the inspection, all teaching was at least good and the teaching in one third of the lessons seen was excellent. The main strength of teaching in both key stages is the excellent planning, which is based on the National Literacy Strategy, but adapted so that pupils of all abilities are targeted with work that matches their needs precisely. Alongside the planning, is an excellent system of ongoing assessment, which enables teachers and classroom assistants to know exactly what each pupil is capable of and to track their progress. Teachers' planning is shared with classroom assistants and the pupils themselves, so that everyone involved knows the intended outcomes. Teachers have excellent systems for encouraging and motivating pupils, and are extremely skilled in building up pupils' confidence and self-esteem so that they want to do their best. In Key Stage 1, and the lower part of Key Stage 2, the practice of employing a part-time teacher, so that all of the year groups can be taught as single age groups for English, is highly cost-effective and is having a very positive impact on the pupils' progress. Homework is set on a daily basis, and is conscientiously completed by pupils. Tasks complement classwork, and enhance the pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is used extremely well in all classes to support pupils' learning, and the pupils understand the value of drafting and editing their work on computers.

MATHEMATICS

97. On the basis of the end of key stage tests in mathematics in 2000, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average at the end of both key stages. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance in both key stages is average. The school's results fluctuate on an annual basis, because the cohorts are relatively small, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs can significantly affect the results. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
98. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations, and by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. Standards are the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, although there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching. The discrepancy between the inspection findings and the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 results reflects the difference in the natural ability of the cohorts.

99. As they move through the school, pupils of all ages and abilities benefit from very good teaching, and this enables them to make very good progress, and to achieve their potential. In Key Stage 1, a part-time teacher is employed to enable the pupils to be taught in single age groups. This is a very effective strategy and is having a very positive impact on pupils' progress. In Key Stage 2, the headteacher regularly works with a group of pupils from the Year 5/Year 6 class, and this additional support, together with after-school 'booster' classes, contributes significantly to the high standards attained by many pupils at the end of the key stage. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy in both key stages.
100. Pupils' skills of numeracy are very good in both key stages, and there are many very good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical learning in other subjects. For example, pupils use and read scales and measures in science, they make measurements and estimates in design and technology, and use timelines in history. Pupils in both key stages have a very good understanding of how mathematics is used in real-life situations. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils know that money transactions are a daily event in most people's lives, and Key Stage 2 pupils understand the need to interpret rail and bus timetables correctly using the twenty-four hour clock. In both key stages, very good use is made of computers to support pupils' learning.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a good grasp of number and pattern. The majority of pupils confidently count forwards and backwards in ones, twos, fives and tens, and recognise odd and even numbers, although some pupils find it difficult to count backwards, and to count on from a point other than zero. The highest attaining pupils use their knowledge of pattern in number to check their answers, for example, when counting in fives, pupils know the answer must end in five or zero. The average and higher attaining pupils have a very good grasp of place value, and know for example, that twenty-five is the same as twenty plus five, which is the same as two tens and five units. This ability to break numbers up helps the pupils when they are working with larger numbers. Most pupils have a good understanding of fractions as equal parts of a whole, and identify and name halves and quarters of shapes. Very good teaching helps pupils to learn strategies for calculating number problems mentally and on paper, and very good use of questions in introductory mental sessions, encourages the pupils to consider how they have arrived at their answers, and to extend their thinking further.
102. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a satisfactory grasp of shape, space and measure. Coverage of this aspect of the mathematics curriculum is very good, and teachers provide many real-life contexts for this aspect of the pupils' learning. Pupils identify and name a wide range of two and three dimensional shapes, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary such as edges, faces and sides to describe their properties. Teachers often provide very good practical opportunities for pupils to handle two and three dimensional shapes, which help to consolidate their understanding. Pupils measure length, weight and capacity well using both standard and non-standard units of measure, and by the end of the key stage, the highest attaining pupils make accurate estimates of length before carrying out the actual measuring tasks. Most pupils tell the time well using o'clock, half past, quarter past and quarter to, but only a few pupils have a secure understanding of the passage of time.
103. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of number and pattern, and respond very positively to the progressively more demanding challenges posed by their teachers. Pupils have a very secure grasp and understanding of place value, which helps them when they are using decimals, percentages and fractions. They complete mental and written calculations accurately and with good levels of confidence, using methods which they fully understand. Teachers constantly probe the pupils' mathematical thinking, encouraging them to

explain their methods of working, to make estimates, and establish reasonable parameters for their answers. Pupils enjoy their number work and approach all tasks with extremely high levels of enthusiasm. Higher attainers in all Key Stage 2 classes are particularly methodical in their work, and solve problems by taking logical small steps. Pupils produce good amounts of written work, especially towards the end of the key stage, and are helped in this by their fast mental recall and agility which saves them the time of working out on paper some of the early steps of complex written calculations. Key Stage 2 pupils are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary appropriately and do so with confidence. This helps them to explain their work clearly to others, and assists them in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests.

104. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very secure understanding and knowledge of most aspects of shape, space and measure. Very good opportunities are provided for them to learn how to measure and draw right, acute, obtuse and reflex angles, and to accurately calculate the area and perimeter of a variety of regular and irregular two dimensional shapes. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils physically counted the sides, vertices and edges of complex three dimensional shapes, including dodecahedrons, and reported their findings back to the rest of the class. This practical task, focusing on a wide variety of different shapes, helped the pupils to start to make generalisations about the relationships between edges, vertices and sides. Most pupils understand line symmetry, and recognise that some shapes have more than one line of symmetry. Although most pupils understand the notion of rotational symmetry, not all pupils perceive this clearly. Pupils' knowledge of metric measures is very good, and they are also fully conversant with the imperial measures, such as pints and gallons, which are still in daily use.
105. Pupils in both key stages make effective use of a variety of different graphs and charts to support their mathematical work, some of which are produced on the computer. Pupils understand how to interpret graphs, and how to use them to find information. Data handling is very well developed in Key Stage 2, and by the end of the key stage, pupils produce sophisticated line graphs, having sorted given data, and established the appropriate scale. Older Key Stage 2 pupils appreciate the notion of probability, and understand terms such as the mode, median and average. They understand probability in terms of the likelihood of an event happening, and in discussion, give examples of conditions that might happen, will definitely happen, or will definitely not happen.
106. The teaching in mathematics is very good in both key stages, and has a significant and positive impact on pupils' progress. Some excellent examples of teaching were seen during the inspection. In Key Stage 1, pupils receive a very good grounding in basic mathematical skills, which prepares them well for their work in Key Stage 2. Very good emphasis is placed on the notion of learning through first-hand experience, and there are many very good practical opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding. For example, during the inspection, high attaining Year 1 pupils were asked to make models of three dimensional shapes using dough. Although these pupils had a good theoretical knowledge of the properties of three dimensional shapes, such as cones, cylinders, pyramids and spheres, the teacher had realised that these pupils needed practical experience of handling these shapes, and indeed, most of the pupils found the task quite difficult. Teachers' planning is excellent. Teachers cater very well for each of the different age groups in their classes, and the way in which they promote the learning of those pupils who have special educational needs is excellent. The daily mental mathematics sessions, which are a feature of the numeracy lessons, are very well organised in all classes, and provide a stimulating start to lessons. All teachers make very effective use of questions to extend pupils' learning, and are skilled in involving pupils in whole-class discussions. Very good use is made of classroom assistants to work with small groups of pupils, often the lower attainers, helping them to maintain good levels of attention, and

supporting them in their work. The quality of marking varies from class to class, and is particularly effective in Year 1. Although work is marked regularly in all classes, comments are not always sufficiently helpful in showing pupils how they might improve their work further. Homework is set on a very regular basis in all classes, and is a significant factor in ensuring pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress.

SCIENCE

107. The national end of Key Stage 2 test results for 2000 show that pupils' attainment in science was in line with the national average. In comparison with similar schools pupils' performance was average. At the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment, on the basis of teachers' assessments was above the national average. The school's results fluctuate on an annual basis, because the cohorts are relatively small, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs can significantly affect the results. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
108. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The discrepancy between the inspection findings and the test results reflects the difference in the natural ability of the cohorts Pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress as they move through the school, due largely to very good quality of teaching which ensures that all pupils achieve their full potential.
109. Pupils in Key Stage 1 experience a good range of practical activities, which help them to develop scientific skills and to gain a secure understanding of the subject. They respond extremely well to their teachers' skilful questioning, and most express their ideas clearly. Higher attaining pupils make realistic predictions when carrying out investigations, such as in a lesson seen during the inspection when they considered the best material to use to make a waterproof coat. Key Stage 1 pupils use simple equipment confidently, make careful observations and record their findings accurately, and in a variety of different ways.
110. By the end of the Key Stage 2, most pupils have well-developed experimental and investigative skills and they have good opportunities to apply their scientific knowledge. Their understanding of the concept of fair-testing is very good, and procedures for ensuring a fair-test was carried out were observed during the inspection when pupils investigated the effect of temperature on the rate at which substances dissolve in water. Pupils demonstrated an awareness of the need to keep key variables constant, such as the amount of water used and the quantity of substance being dissolved. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are encouraged to use a standard format for their experimental work that effectively guides them through their experiment highlighting appropriate methodology. This is good preparation for more independent work at the end of the key stage, but sometimes restricts the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop individual skills of scientific enquiry. Key Stage 2 pupils know the importance of making and recording accurate measurements, and older pupils realise the importance of carrying out repeated measurements to ensure the validity and reliability of their findings. Teachers intervene skilfully while groups of pupils are carrying out experiments, encouraging them to observe carefully and record their observations. Pupils throughout the key stage record their observations clearly and accurately and older pupils have very well developed presentation skills. Their conclusions are consistent with the evidence and they often make practical suggestions about how their methods could be improved. They have a well-developed scientific vocabulary and use information technology to support their work, for example Year 3 pupils used the computer to tabulate the results of their findings when testing the strength of a magnet.

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a secure knowledge of living things and the vast majority of pupils recognise the differences between living and non-living things, and group living things using simple features, such as the number of legs, or the presence of wings or beaks. Pupils match animal pictures with habitats such as ponds, woodland and fields. They name the external parts of the body, such as the head, shoulders, arms and fingers and know that some foods are beneficial in maintaining a healthy life style. Older pupils name the external parts of plants including the main parts of the flower, such as petals and know that plants require water and light in order to survive. Not all pupils consistently use their existing knowledge to make generalisations about living things. For example, although they know that plants require water and light, they do not realise that these are necessary conditions for all life forms.
112. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes are well above average. Pupils have a thorough knowledge of parts of the flower and accurately relate structure to function. They know that coloured petals attract insects and that pollen is produced in the anthers and conveyed to other flowers by insects that visit the flower to obtain nectar. Pupils know that pollen can also be dispersed by wind, and that some flowers are not visited by insects. They have a good understanding of the processes of pollination, fertilisation, seed production and dispersal. They know the main stages of the life cycle of plants and of human beings, and understand that reproduction is a common feature of living things. Pupils have a secure knowledge of basic human life processes and know what constitutes a healthy life style.
113. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials and know that the different properties of materials determine the use that can be made of them. Through their study of materials used in the construction of houses, they have come to realise that roof tiles need to be waterproof and that glass almost always needs to be transparent. Higher attaining pupils know that materials can be changed by heating and cooling, and appreciate that some of these changes are reversible, such as when heating and cooling chocolate, whilst others are not, such as burning.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a secure understanding of the properties of materials. They know that there are three states of matter and that these differences can be used to classify substances. They understand and explain that solids occupy a distinct shape, and that liquids and gases can fill a space. Teachers ensure that pupils are working at an appropriate level and group pupils together well to give older and higher attaining pupils opportunities to work independently. The pupils respond well to these opportunities, for example, when a group of Year 5 pupils were experimenting with separating mixtures, the pupils worked well on their own, with a high degree of motivation and sustained concentration. Older pupils have a well-developed scientific vocabulary and accurately describe different chemical processes, such as evaporation and condensation. They know how different mixtures can be separated, such as salt and sand, and can suggest ways in which the salt can be recovered from a saltwater solution. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the difference between insulators and conductors through their work relating to electricity.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the nature of electrical circuits and higher attaining pupils explain why incomplete circuits will not work. Support staff are used well to help the pupils to develop a firm understanding of the scientific concepts involved in their work, for example, by reinforcing the idea of a complete circuit by linking arms. Pupils use circuits to test the conductivity of materials and group materials into those that conduct electricity and those that can be used as insulators. Pupils have opportunities in their investigative work to compare the distance

travelled by different toys as they move down a slope, which helps them to develop their understanding of pushes and pulls as examples of forces.

116. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils develop their understanding of physical forces and draw electrical circuits and represent both series and parallel circuits using conventional symbols. They know that light travels from a source and that shadows are formed when opaque objects inhibit the passage of light. Pupils demonstrate, using simple models, a secure understanding of how the movement of the Earth around the Sun creates day and night and seasons of the year. They have a secure understanding of forces and friction, and understand air resistance and gravity as forces.
117. The overall quality of the teaching in science is very good, and some excellent examples were seen during the inspection. Teachers' planning is excellent, and is quite different for each of the age groups within the class. Support staff are fully involved in the planning, enabling them to make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and understanding of science. Teachers set clear objectives that are shared with the pupils and questioning is very well used to consolidate previous learning and to draw out pupils' ideas. Teachers encourage the pupils to use correct scientific vocabulary and ensure that the pupils have a good understanding of key terms, such as the distinction between guesswork and making a prediction that can be tested. Ongoing assessment of the pupils' progress and attainment is used very effectively by teachers when planning the next stage of pupils' learning, and this ensures that the work is well matched to pupils' ability and prior attainment. Teachers use end of session discussions very well to draw the threads of the lesson together, and to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills, as pupils describe to the class the particular investigation they have undertaken, the predictions they made and the conclusions they reached. Activities are frequently very practical, and very good use is made of resources to give a real focus to the lesson and to capture pupils' interest. Classes are managed extremely well, and teachers successfully and determinedly overcome many of the disadvantages posed by the very poor accommodation. Lessons are very well paced ensuring the pupils' interest is maintained. Information and communication technology is very well used to support pupils' learning. Teachers have very high, but realistic expectations of pupils, which are largely met both in terms of academic achievements and standards of behaviour. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but varies from class to class. The best examples show pupils how they might advance their learning further.

ART AND DESIGN

118. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in art and design exceeds national expectations. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection, and standards in Key Stage 2 have been maintained. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress as they move through the school. Although the accommodation is extremely cramped, and access to running water is very limited, the teachers provide a good range of opportunities for the pupils to experience a variety of media and to practise different techniques. Although an appropriate amount of time is given to the subject over the course of one year, the subject is taught in half yearly blocks. This means that there are substantial gaps between series of lessons, and in the interim period, some pupils forget their previous learning.
119. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn how to mix colours and make washes with paint. They use a variety of brushes, sponges, fingers and hands to apply the paint, print patterns and experiment with different effects. Their paintings of spring flowers clearly demonstrate their control and skill, and their attention to detail. Pupils select a variety of media such as wax and pencil crayons, chalk, pastels and pencil when making still life drawings of

everyday articles, such as toys, tools and fruit. Older pupils make good use of sketchbooks to observe and draw eyes before painting portraits of each other, and enthusiastically describe the details of the seashells they are sketching. However, even more use could be made of sketch books for preparatory work, and to give pupils the opportunity to practise skills and techniques before using them in their final pieces. A very wide range of materials is available for collage work and pupils confidently make their own choices about which materials they wish to use. Teachers promote pupils' individuality and creativity, and help them to become independent learners by providing opportunities for them to make choices and decisions about their work.

120. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils produce high quality observational drawings which show good progress in the development of techniques such as shading, using pencils and pastel. The teachers successfully encourage the pupils to use and combine a variety of techniques and materials, as demonstrated in a series of water-colour paintings which showed details added in pencil, and exaggerated by the use of torn tissue paper. Much of the good art work emerges from the studies pupils are making in other curriculum areas. The Greek pots and masks created by incising designs into a background of black wax crayon are particularly effective, and there are also some good imaginative posters from World War 2. The teachers make regular use of the work of famous world artists such as Seurat, Monet and Sisley, to help pupils to understand and experiment with different techniques. The results of these are of varying quality but the current Mondrian display in the hall is bright and attractive. The designs for printed textiles using straws and pipe-cleaners are particularly imaginative and impressive. Pupils' understanding and knowledge of three dimensional work such as sculpture is relatively weak, and the co-ordinator has firm plans to address this area of the art and design curriculum in the near future.
121. The teaching of art and design is very good. The teachers have a good understanding of the subject and ensure the pupils are taught a variety of techniques and are introduced to a range of media. There are occasions when pupils choose their own materials but some opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their own initiative and creative style in Key Stage 2. Learning support assistants are used effectively to work with small groups of pupils and they guide their learning well. Teachers establish excellent relationships with the pupils and encourage them to give of their best. The pupils respond positively and enjoy their lessons. The pupils' work is very well displayed throughout the school. Good use is made of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning in art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of both key stages, and standards have improved since the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress in developing the necessary designing and making skills, and benefit from the wide range of experiences that are provided for them. The subject is currently taught in half yearly blocks, and whilst an appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject during the course of one year, the gap between topics is too long for some pupils, and they forget their previous learning.
123. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a basic understanding of the idea of the design process. They make simple sketches of their models to show how parts will move and work, as for example when they designed a sock puppet. Materials for this project were selected on account of their specific properties, such as dowel for the moving parts, and pupils recognised some of the problems of joining different materials together. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their finished models and to comment on what they liked about

their finished product and how it might be improved. For example, when making a model of a baby's high-chair, pupils suggested that a cushion might be added to make it more comfortable.

124. Pupils' design and technology skills and understanding are developed progressively as they move through Key Stage 2. There are some very good opportunities for pupils to consider the notion of design and technology in the 'real world', and Year 4 pupils, in conjunction with the Business and Education Partnership, visit a commercial bakery to see the commercial design process in action. In this instance pupils see how sandwiches are made and packaged commercially, before embarking on designing their own similar products. Food technology skills are further developed in the upper part of Key Stage 2, where pupils experiment with different ingredients to highlight texture, taste and appearance before finally reviewing their samples. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a very good understanding of the need to ensure that products must be fit for the intended purpose, and recognise the value of marketing strategies, to find out what is required before embarking on a new design project. In their project to design and make a pair of slippers, Year 6 pupils carried out a survey to determine what people wanted. Good quality sketches were produced and materials were considered carefully to ensure for example that the sole was sufficiently robust. Pupils are skilled in evaluating their finished products against the initial design and make suggestions for how the model or product might be improved if the exercise were to be repeated. Pupils in Year 6 dismantle moveable toys to see how cogs, wheels, spindles and axles are inter-linked. They construct models to their own design using electric motors and their knowledge of electrical circuits derived from their work in science. These pupils are well aware that testing and evaluating the finished product is a pre-requisite for improvement.
125. The teaching of design and technology is very good overall. Very good emphasis is placed on the designing element of the process, with the result that pupils understand the importance of planning and evaluating their work, and selecting appropriate materials. Pupils use a useful format referred to as an 'inventors' roundabout', which incorporates the main elements of design and technology, including purpose, looking for ideas, planning, making and evaluating. This is a good support for pupils in their work and keeps them well focused. Lessons are stimulating, and pupils of all abilities are challenged in their thinking as they make choices and decisions, and review and evaluate their work. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems in an imaginative way, and tasks promote creativity. Projects are well chosen to incorporate a good range of skills, including accurate measurement, cutting, joining and selecting appropriate materials. There are some good examples of marking in some, but not all classes, showing pupils how their task might be extended, or their work improved and developed.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is above national expectations. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress. Standards in geography have improved since the last inspection. This is partly the result of improved teaching, and also the result of the introduction of a new scheme of work, and an emphasis on using the local environment to extend pupils' fieldwork skills. An appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject, although the practice of teaching topics in half yearly blocks means that there are significant gaps between units of work, and this is not helpful to those pupils who have difficulty recalling their previous learning.
127. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a good knowledge of their local area. They examine the location of various buildings and have started to develop an environmental awareness by looking at how the local area can be made safer. They use the area

around the school to develop good mapping skills, and the highest attaining pupils have an understanding of the perspective of the 'bird's eye' view. Most Key Stage 1 pupils identify countries of the British Isles, and through their history studies, have gained an insight into the features of a seaside town. Older pupils are beginning to discriminate between manmade and natural geographical features and to see how they might be used as landmarks when giving verbal directions.

128. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to develop their geographical skills. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a very good knowledge of how natural forces impact on the coastline, and their understanding of this aspect of their work was greatly enhanced by a field trip to Southport. Pupils know how rivers are formed, and make very good use of geographical vocabulary to describe the route of a river from its source to the sea. They have a very secure knowledge of the water cycle, which they explain correctly using terms such as evaporation, condensation, precipitation and transpiration. In their work on rivers, pupils make very good use of their mathematical skills as they compare the lengths of well-known rivers by means of a graph. Pupils use Ordnance Survey maps well to interpret physical and manmade features, and understand that maps are drawn to different scales according to their purpose. Year 6 pupils use a range of sources, including computers, to support their learning, and to bring geography to life. During the inspection pupils were involved in making comparisons between landscape, tourism and travel in mountain ranges of the world such as the Lake District and the Andes, and made very good use of CD ROM material for their research.
129. In both key stages, the standard of teaching is very good. The curriculum co-ordinator has adapted the national scheme of work to the school's needs and the resulting planning of the overall curriculum is excellent. Teachers make a very accurate assessment of the pupils' abilities and plan work to systemically build upon this. There are excellent cross-curricular links such as in mathematics when pupils produce line graphs showing temperature in two contrasting mountain localities and are able to explain and interpret their data. Effective monitoring and assessment of the pupils' work is regularly carried out by the co-ordinator, and this ensures that high standards are maintained and that good practice is shared and celebrated.

HISTORY

130. Pupils' attainment in history is above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress. Since the last inspection, standards have improved at the end of Key Stage 1, and have been maintained at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities which bring the subject to life, and capture the pupils' interest. As a result, the pupils' written work demonstrates lively interest in past events, and a perseverance in learning about, recording and sharing their historical knowledge and understanding. An appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject, although the practice of teaching topics in half yearly blocks means that there are significant gaps between units of work, and some pupils forget their previous learning in the interim period.
131. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good sense of chronology, and a growing understanding of past societies. Through their study of toys and domestic objects from the past, pupils have gained a sense of how and why things have changed. The higher attaining pupils appreciate the impact of such developments as the introduction of electricity, and know that inventors from the past had a great impact on present day living. Older pupils have a good understanding of how homes have developed over time. The school has accumulated a wide range of good quality artefacts such as dolly tubs, ceramic water bottles, and other objects from the recent past, that are used as first hand

evidence. This first-hand experience helps pupils to begin to understand how information is passed from one generation to the next, and to gain an appreciation of the importance of historical evidence.

132. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils have a good factual knowledge of the way of life, traditions and beliefs of the Egyptians, Tudors and Victorians. They have researched the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. Books, artefacts and audio-visual materials from the School Library Service stimulate discussion and research, and reinforce the importance of secondary evidence as a source of historical evidence and information. Local visits to Wigan Pier and Croxteth House to study Victorian life, or Astley Manor where pupils wear Tudor clothes, work in a Tudor kitchen and investigate a 'priest-hole', have a very positive impact on pupils' learning, and provide very good opportunities for them to handle historical artefacts. Pupils study at first hand how archaeologists find out about the past by working alongside them on an archaeological dig at Beacon Hill. This is an excellent experience for the pupils, and really inspires them in their own history work. Very good links are made with other areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology, and pupils are very skilled in accessing and retrieving data and information from computers.
133. The quality of teaching is very good in both key stages, and the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and on their attitudes to history. Lessons are very well planned and have a clear and well focused purpose. Overall curriculum planning is excellent, and shows clearly how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are to be developed as they move through the school. Very effective questioning, pace, and classroom management are also strong features of teaching in all classes. The effective teaching is promoted by good co-ordination of the work, collaborative planning and the enrichment of the curriculum by a wide range of very well chosen visits and events. Literacy skills are promoted extremely well in history, in both key stages, as pupils are encouraged to write accounts, reports, and to recall events.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is above national expectations. Standards have improved since the last inspection in Key Stage 1, and have been maintained in Key Stage 2. The school has adopted a very positive approach to the teaching of information and communication technology, and the school's provision for the subject has improved. The small computer suite is in almost constant use throughout the day, and pupils who do not have computers at home are encouraged to use the school's computers when they wish to do so. The curriculum is very well planned to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress, and systematically build upon their previous learning. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects, especially for research, and for producing graphs and charts.
135. Pupils in Key Stage 1 receive a solid foundation in basic computer skills. By the end of the key stage, they know and name the external parts of the computer and are competent users of the keyboard and mouse. Nearly all pupils confidently and independently print short pieces of text, change words, and illustrate their stories using graphics programmes, such as 'Tiny Draw'. Older pupils successfully use computers to collect, record, present and store information, such as when they investigated their classmates' favourite car colours. They present their results as bar graphs and pie charts. By the end of the key stage pupils know that many household appliances use control mechanisms and know the use made of information technology in the world of commerce, such as bar codes in supermarkets. Pupils are familiar with programmable

toys and can programme them to undertake simple predetermined movements on the floor, using directional instructions such as left, right, forward, backwards. Pupils also know how to programme a screen turtle.

136. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils have good word-processing skills. These skills are most evident in the presentation of their project work, where text and graphics are combined to very good effect. Pupils are skilled in drafting and redrafting their work, as for example when writing poetry, and use graphics, such as 'clip-art', to good effect to illustrate their work. Opportunities for pupils who have special educational needs to use computers to support their writing are particularly valuable, especially for those pupils who have difficulty with handwriting. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are adept at gathering information they need, and there are many very good quality opportunities for them to do this to support their work in history and geography, for example. Pupils are competent at finding information on a CD ROM, and access the Internet for additional information. They recognise that electronic mail is an efficient means of sending and receiving information, and that this is often the main means of communication in the world of business and commerce. Older Key Stage 2 pupils are aware that devices can be controlled by a set of instructions and recognise the need to be precise when sequencing instructions. Pupils know that sensors can be used to monitor external events, such as changes in temperature, but their experience of using such equipment is limited.
137. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good, and has improved since the last inspection, resulting in improved learning opportunities for all pupils. Teachers have become proficient users of information and communication technology themselves, and this has made them more confident. Time is used extremely well to enable pupils to develop their computer skills, to use the technology to reinforce their learning, and to extend their knowledge. Pupils show considerable interest in the work and have, in general, good keyboard skills that enable them to work at a good pace. They work well independently but a feature of the paired and small group work is the support the more able pupils give to their colleagues who are less proficient. The subject co-ordinator, with the full support of her colleagues, has put in place a scheme of work that ensures that all pupils experience a full range of skills and develop a sound understanding of the technology. The school has a good range of computers including those which are classroom based and those which are located in the computer suite.

MUSIC

138. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. No judgements about pupils' attainment in music were made in the previous report, and it is therefore not possible to measure the extent to which standards have improved. Pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school, and the many good opportunities for them to take part in musical productions have a very positive impact on their performance skills. Music is taught regularly in all classes, and coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is satisfactory. However, there is no music specialist on the staff, and although teaching is satisfactory, some teachers lack confidence in their ability to teach the subject.
139. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory sense of rhythm and pitch and an understanding of the notion of composition. They use musical instruments to create sound effects for their favourite nursery rhymes and to accompany the telling of well-known stories. Pupils know what type of sounds various percussion instruments produce, and have drawn pictures of their favourite instruments, explaining what type of sound they make, and describing how the sounds are produced. These opportunities for

writing about their musical experiences are very effective in helping pupils to develop literacy skills, and to help them to see the purpose of factual writing. Pupils understand the need to record their compositions, and have devised graphical and pictorial symbols to represent shakes, rattles and bangs. Pupils listen attentively to recorded music in class and in key stage and whole school assemblies. Most pupils have good recall of the type of music they performed in a 'Victorian Music Hall' performance, and this experience helped them to gain an appreciation of British music from a past era.

140. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are effective composers, although their work could be even more imaginative. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils worked in groups to produce pieces that described pictures they had drawn. The pupils worked well together, and produced satisfactory compositions, but were restricted to using untuned percussion instruments which ruled out the opportunity for them to create melodies. Pupils sing tunefully and maintain their parts well when singing rounds, but their repertoire of songs is not sufficiently demanding, and some of the highest attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in singing. Key Stage 2 pupils are very confident performers who volunteer to play instruments or to sing in pairs. Most pupils have a good understanding of how music from different cultures has its own distinctive style, and recall a visit to a workshop linked to Indian music where they experimented with sitars, tabla and the harmonium, and listened to Indian singers. Pupils have listened to a variety of recorded European music, and name some well-known composers, but do not consistently recall the main musical elements of the music they have heard.
141. The school offers extra-curricular recorder lessons for Key Stage 2 pupils, which are very popular, but does not have a choir or orchestra. No pupil receives instrumental tuition from peripatetic music teachers.
142. The quality of music teaching in the school is satisfactory. Lessons are taught regularly and address all elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The school has a good quality commercial scheme to help teachers with their planning, and is currently linking work to the newly produced national guidelines for music. Teachers do not always have enough confidence when teaching music, and there is a tendency for some activities to be over-directed. The lack of space in the school is an ongoing problem, as practical sessions often affect the learning of neighbouring classes. Teachers make good use of resources to enhance teaching and learning, and good use of classroom assistants to help with group work. At present, pupils do not have any exercise books in which to make a record of the musical activities in which they have taken part, or to write about their listening experiences. This lack of reference material makes it difficult for pupils to recall their learning at a later date.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages meets the national expectation, and standards in dance are a particular strength. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages, and standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The pupils experience the full range of recommended activities, and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject.
144. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils show satisfactory levels of co-ordination, and move purposefully around the hall, and on the playground. Although most Key Stage 1 pupils have good levels of balance, a few find this difficult. In gymnastics lessons, pupils control their movements well, and use mats and benches effectively to help them to put together a series of movements at different levels, using different parts of the body. Pupils successfully evaluate their own work, and enjoy watching the performances of others. However, they do not have enough opportunities to critically appraise the work of their classmates. Older pupils have a good appreciation of the need for exercise in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and understand the purpose of warm-up and cool-down sessions at the start and end of lessons.
145. Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress and become more confident and controlled in their gymnastics and dance work. Most pupils have very good control over their body weight, as seen during the inspection when they formed imaginative shapes, balanced on various parts of their bodies, and then successfully transferred their weight to another point and adopted an alternative position. Key Stage 2 pupils are extremely co-operative, and this enhances their learning significantly, especially when they are asked to work together in small groups to plan and perform their ideas. During a dance lesson seen during the inspection, the vast majority of pupils demonstrated fluency and precision in their movements when they devised sequences to represent aspects of teenage interests and behaviour. They interpreted the music in a sensitive manner, and their ideas were imaginative and original. Pupils comment appreciatively on the routines of others, but require support from the teacher when making critical appraisals of their own work and that of their classmates. Standards in swimming are good. All pupils leaving the school are able to swim at least 25 metres, and have achieved the water safety award.
146. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and some good examples of teaching were seen during the inspection. Teachers have a secure knowledge and plan their lessons well, so that the challenge gradually increases as pupils move through the school. Time is allowed for pupils to practise and improve their skills, and this helps them to make progress. Teachers maintain excellent, good-humoured relationships with the pupils and manage their classes well, placing a high priority on safety. The pupils respond very positively and are enthusiastic and behave impeccably in lessons. The lessons usually move at a good pace and good use is made of the classroom assistants. In one lesson during the inspection, the support assistant carefully and discretely tracked a pupil with physical disabilities to ensure that the pupil was fully included. Although there are no significant weaknesses in the teaching of physical education, teachers do not always display the same level of confidence and enthusiasm that is evident when they teach other subjects.
147. A range of extra-curricular activities, which include, football, netball, athletics and a gym club for Key stage 1, enhances the subject. The school successfully competes in inter-school sports, the annual swimming gala, and cross country running. Upper Key Stage 2 pupils participate in a series of rock and river adventure activities, which in addition to promoting physical skills, provide good opportunities for the development of pupils' social skills.