

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Yate, near Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109269

Headteacher: Mr Julian Clements

Reporting inspector: Mr Alan Fullwood
21184

Dates of inspection: 5 - 7 March 2001

Inspection number: 192333

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sundridge Park
Yate
South Gloucestershire

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Carol Lawler

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21184	Alan Fullwood	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9880	Anthony Comer	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?
19302	Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
26514	Amanda Tapsfield	Team inspector	Geography History Music Special educational needs English English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Paul's Catholic Primary is a small primary school situated in the town of Yate. There are 118 pupils on roll, taught in four mixed-age classes and a Year 3 class. Currently, there are more girls than boys. At the time of the inspection there were 15 children in their foundation year. The school mainly serves the area around the school but a minority of pupils come from a wider geographical area. Approximately 25 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, slightly above the national average. Approximately 18 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, broadly in line with the national average. Two pupils speak English as an additional language and six pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Nine pupils are from Traveller backgrounds. There is a ten per cent movement of pupils to and from the school at times other than their normal first admission or when they transfer to secondary school. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school, because of the small number of pupils involved, varies from year to year. This year it was average. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Paul's Catholic Primary is an effective school where many pupils make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. It provides a good education for its pupils, and successfully encourages them to develop good attitudes to learning and to behave well. The school is well led and managed. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Creates a happy, caring ethos where pupils feel well supported and develop good attitudes to their learning and behave well.
- The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Standards of attainment in art at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, particularly in the Year 1/2 and Year 3 classes.
- The leadership and management of the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils' standards of attainment in writing and mental arithmetic at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils standards of attainment in information technology.
- Teachers' expectations in some classes of what more able pupils can achieve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in overcoming the serious weaknesses evident at the time of the last inspection in February 1997. The leadership and management of the school have improved considerably since the appointment of the current headteacher two years ago. Through his strong leadership the school has made very good progress. The quality of teaching has improved considerably so in the Year 1/2 and 3 classes. Since 1998 the number of pupils reaching the expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science has risen. Whole-school curriculum planning has improved and pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are now closely tracked. Assessment procedures are now good in these subjects and developing in other curriculum areas. The provision made for art, design and technology, geography, history, information technology, music and physical education has improved and has led to the majority of pupils

achieving at expected levels at the end of key stages. In art, pupils achieve above the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2. The exception is in information technology where, although provision has improved and standards are rising, pupils' achievement at the end of both key stages is not yet at expected levels. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good. Pupils make good progress in their personal development and willingly accept responsibility. The school now makes good use of its financial resources. Much has been achieved in the last two years and the school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The above table shows that pupils' attainment in English in the year 2000 national tests was average in comparison with that in all schools and schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage achieving the higher Level 5¹ was well above the national average. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and science was below average in comparison with all schools and well below average in comparison with similar schools. This was due to the below average percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in these subjects. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was close to national averages. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current group of pupils in Year 6 in English, science and mathematics is average. However, pupils' skills in mental arithmetic are below average. In English, pupils are slow to produce work of sufficient quantity and quality in a given time. Pupils make good progress in these subjects when compared to their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress in science is satisfactory. Standards in these subjects have varied over the last four years but have maintained an upward trend in mathematics and science since 1998. Standards in English rose sharply in 2000. The schools targets for 2000 were exceeded in English and mathematics. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations, but pupils are achieving appropriately. Pupils make good progress and attain above expected standards in art. Attainment in other subjects is at expected levels and pupils make satisfactory progress overall.

National test results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 showed standards of attainment in reading and mathematics to be in line with national averages. Standards of attainment in

¹ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, are expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age. At Key Stage 2 the nationally expected level for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 is Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

writing were well above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the current group of Year 2 pupils are achieving in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in other subjects is average except in information technology, where it is below expectations. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress, and sometimes their progress is good.

The majority of children make satisfactory progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals² by the end of the Foundation Stage³. Some pupils make good progress and have begun to work at National Curriculum levels. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to the targets set for them and generally receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and have good attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively to their teachers and work well together when required.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved in classrooms and around the school. They play happily together in the playground and move around the school in a sensible manner. No pupils have been excluded in the last reporting year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect each other's feelings and beliefs, and understand the impact of their actions on others. Relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility for the running of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance levels are slightly below the national average. A small minority of pupils have poor attendance records. Generally pupils arrive at school on time and are punctual for lessons.

² Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

³ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and personal, social and emotional development, but also include knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons, of which 41 per cent were good and 14 per cent very good. Two per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the Year 1/2 class and in Year 3 was consistently good or better. The proportion of satisfactory or better lessons has improved considerably since the last inspection. Throughout the school the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, with some that is good. There are weaknesses in the pace of pupils' work in some lessons, and the work set for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging. The quality of teaching in English, art and history is good. In the good quality lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and make use of tight time structures to ensure that pupils work quickly and their work is completed on time. In these lessons pupils of all abilities make good progress.

The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs varies but is generally good. Classroom assistants give good support to these pupils. Sometimes work is not sufficiently matched to the needs of the pupils concerned. The teaching undertaken with Traveller children is good.

Homework is used well to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned at school. Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers are very supportive in their comments but do not always include information on how pupils could improve their work. There are good assessment procedures in place to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. These are used well in English and mathematics to plan appropriate work for all pupils but their use in science is inconsistent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Considerable progress has been made in planning the curriculum to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are progressively developed. Literacy and numeracy lessons are particularly well planned. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including visitors to the school and visits to places of interest.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. School assessment procedures quickly identify pupils' individual needs. Teachers make good use of this information in writing individual education plans and providing suitable work in lessons. The school also cares very well for its pupils from the Traveller community.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The same care and attention given to all pupils is given to these pupils and their progress closely monitored.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Considerable improvement has been made in this area. There is a strong, caring Catholic Christian ethos, which permeates all aspects of school life. Good role models of staff and clear codes of behaviour ensure pupils develop a mature understanding of moral and social responsibilities. Good provision is made for pupils to appreciate cultural traditions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff know the children and their families well and respond to their needs. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' good behaviour and academic progress. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are satisfactory. The school has an effective partnership with parents and is currently encouraging parents to be more involved with their children's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear educational direction to the work of the school. He is ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are fully involved in monitoring the work of the school and are effective in acting as a critical friend. They are very supportive of the staff, parents and pupils. Their role has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The management of the school monitors the school's performance closely and involves all staff in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities for development. It now needs to be updated.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning and governors monitor spending effectively. The school applies the principles of best value well, and seeks to gain value for money in all purchases. Specific grants are used for their intended purposes and the school makes good use of funds to improve the professional development of staff. At present there are no formal procedures for evaluating spending decisions in relation to improving standards. Day-to-day financial control and administration are good. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good but there is no secure outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like coming to school, are expected to work hard and make good progress.• The children are well behaved.• The good standard of teaching.• Staff are approachable.• The leadership and management of the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There were no significant weaknesses.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school operates an 'open door' policy and willingly addresses parents' worries and concerns. A small minority of parents did not feel that the school provided an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. The view of the inspection team is that extra-curricular activities are similar to those found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment of the children on entry to the school varies from year to year because of the small number of pupils involved. This year it was average. Evidence from the inspection indicates that, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics and science are at expected levels, and below average in English. Pupils generally make good progress in these subjects in relation to their attainment on entry. There is a slightly higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make at least satisfactory progress, and often their progress is good because of the good support they receive.
2. The majority of children in the reception class are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals expected of pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage with a few children working at the early stages of the National Curriculum. The teacher and the nursery nurse work closely together to deliver an appropriate curriculum where the needs of all the children are met. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and in their language, literacy and numeracy skills. Most children settle quickly into school, listen attentively and behave well. Staff provide good role models and value children's ideas. Frequent opportunities are provided for pupils to talk in a variety of contexts and to explain their ideas and points of view. Through their involvement in the literacy hour, children develop a love of books and know how they are organised. They know the sounds of many letters and use this to read simple words. They begin to form their letters correctly and higher-attaining children are beginning to write their own stories. Children's understanding of number is generally developed well. The majority of children can recognise numbers to ten and can count to 20. They are beginning to add up using these numbers and higher-attaining children use mathematical symbols correctly when recording their addition sums. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical and creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. A variety of opportunities are provided for children to learn about the world in which they live. For example, they learn how to use simple programs on computers and that there are different sources of natural and artificial light. Children's physical skills are developing appropriately and they show confidence and good control in movement. However, the lack of a secure outside play area and limited play resources restrict the development of pupils' physical skills. Children make sound progress in using their imaginations to respond to music and to draw and paint using a variety of media.
3. In the year 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading was in line with national averages for all schools and for schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards of attainment in writing were well above average for all schools and for schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present group of pupils in Year 2 is in line with national expectations in all aspects of English. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed by teachers who encourage pupils to talk about their own and others' ideas and to speak clearly and succinctly. Pupils make satisfactory progress and attain expected standards in reading. They have a sound understanding of phonics which helps them to tackle unfamiliar words. They read with improving fluency and accuracy and are encouraged to read between the lines of stories to help them to understand characters and their feelings. Pupils make sound progress and achieve national expectations in writing. Teachers encourage

pupils to use imaginative words in their writing and to describe how things are happening as well as what is happening. Pupils' handwriting is good but spelling is less secure. The content of pupils' writing at age seven is typical for their age.

4. In mathematics, the results in the year 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show pupils' attainment to be average in comparison with all schools and schools which take their pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was in the highest five per cent nationally. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2B and the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present group of Year 2 pupils is in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of mathematics. In Year 2 pupils make good progress. By the age of seven the majority of pupils have a sound knowledge of number facts to 20 and are proficient when using these numbers to calculate mentally. They have an appropriate knowledge of place value to 100. They identify common shapes and their properties and simple fractions, such as halves and quarters.
5. Teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2, the expected level, to be above average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards by the age of seven have improved, and are now at least average. This is as a result of the good, focused teaching in Year 2. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are knowledgeable about a range of everyday materials and their properties. They are aware that some materials can be changed by heating and that some of these changes are permanent, for example, bread and toast. Pupils know that a test needs to be fair and that their findings can be recorded in a variety of ways, including graphs and tables.
6. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards of attainment are below national expectations in information technology. Pupils select a program and print or save their work. Their word-processing skills are satisfactory as they compose short pieces of writing. The majority of pupils can change the type and size of their font. However, they are very dependent upon their teachers when composing short pieces of writing and many pupils lack confidence when working independently. Pupils are growing in confidence and making satisfactory progress as they now have more frequent opportunities to develop their computing skills by using the workstations in the computer suite.
7. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain average standards in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In art, pupils make good progress in their printing skills and in their observational drawing.
8. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in English in the year 2000, pupils' standards of attainment were in line with national averages for all schools and schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. Over the last four years standards have risen above the nationally improving trend, except in 1999 when they fell. The progress of pupils in relation to their attainment at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory. The proportion of pupils who attained at the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. These results are an improvement upon those from the previous year. Inspection evidence from the current group of Year 6 pupils is that attainment is average. Most pupils are achieving at the expected levels for their age but few pupils are achieving the higher Level 5. There is no evidence of significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Most pupils attain satisfactory standards in speaking

and listening. Pupils discuss their ideas and opinions confidently when talking about their work or the book they are reading. They enjoy stating their ideas and listen attentively to their teachers and the views of other pupils. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment in reading is at expected levels. Most pupils read a range of appropriate texts fluently and accurately. They have developed good skills in finding books in the library and researching information for use in other subjects. Standards of attainment in writing are satisfactory. Pupils write stories using imaginative vocabulary and are beginning to develop characterisation and plot. They write in a range of different formats, including reports, poems, accounts and instructions. However, their pace of working is slow and they take too long to finish their work. Pupils have a sound knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Pupils' spelling is less secure and they often spell a range of common words incorrectly. These pupils have made good progress in comparison with their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.

9. In the year 2000 national tests in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was below average for all schools and well below average for schools who take their pupils from similar backgrounds. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Most pupils achieved the expected Level 4 but few pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Since the time of the last inspection standards of attainment have risen slightly. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is in line with national expectations except with regard to their knowledge of number facts and their ability to carry out mental calculations quickly and accurately. A significant number of pupils lack confidence in their knowledge of number and this slows the pace of their work. The school is aware of this weakness and is addressing it. Pupils' general pace of working is slow, including that of more able pupils some of whom are underachieving in relation to their ability. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
10. The school's targets for English and mathematics are realistic and were exceeded in 2000. Evidence from the inspection indicates that targets for 2001 will be achieved.
11. In science, the results of year 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show pupils' attainment to be close to the national average. However, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was below average. Pupils' progress in relation to their attainment at Key Stage 1 was well below average. Over the last five years, attainment has varied from year to year, but generally declined until 2000 when it rose sharply. Inspection findings show that, by the age of 11, pupils' attainment is in line to meet the expected standard, as it was at the last inspection. During Year 3 pupils build on the good grounding of knowledge and understanding they acquire at Key Stage 1, where the pace of learning continues to be good. As the pupils get older they do not always receive enough challenge, and there are too few opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations, and so enhance their skills to enable them to achieve at the higher level. Work is not always adapted to meet the needs of pupils, particularly the more able. In some lessons the pace of work is slow and explanations not clear. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into all science lessons, and, along with Traveller children, are well supported. They complete tasks at their level, making appropriate progress. There is now a satisfactory emphasis on scientific enquiry that is helping to ensure that pupils think for themselves and are not passive in their learning. Pupils' attainment is regularly assessed but this information is not always used to provide suitable challenging work for the more able at this key stage.

12. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils begin to make satisfactory progress now that full use is being made of the computer suite. Pupils are able to use art programs to draw pictures and a CD-ROM to access information. Their word-processing skills are developing well. However, the attainment of the current group of pupils in Year 6 is below average. Standards are rising in the key stage and pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now working at expected levels for their age.
13. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards in line with expectations in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Pupils attain above standards in art and make good progress because of the varied opportunities and good standard of teaching they receive.
14. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set within their individual education plans for literacy and numeracy. They make satisfactory progress with their class work. Pupils from the Traveller community make good progress in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The pupils' attitudes to school are good. They enjoy coming to school and the interest they show in lessons and in the range of activities outside the classroom is also good.
16. Parents believe that their children like coming to school and that they make good progress. They also believe that behaviour is good, that children are helped to become mature and responsible, and that they are encouraged to work hard and do their best.
17. Overall, behaviour is good and has been maintained at this level since the last inspection. However, in lessons where teaching is focused well and challenging, behaviour is very good and occasionally excellent. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour.
18. Pupils with special educational needs are positive in their response both to class work and to the work they undertake with the special educational needs staff. They work hard and collaborate well with their classmates. Other children give good support to their peers with special educational needs, celebrating their successes generously and taking trouble to include them in group activities. Traveller children work hard and contribute well to the life of the school.
19. Generally pupils respect each other's feelings and beliefs, and understand the impact of their actions on others. They play happily together in the playground and move around the school in a sensible manner. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good throughout the school.
20. The recently formed school council, together with other opportunities for pupils to show initiative and to take responsibility in class, at lunchtime and in assemblies, all contribute positively to pupils' personal development. However, although pupils do contribute to their end-of-year reports, opportunities for them to take responsibility for their own learning are less well developed. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory.
21. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils make a significant contribution to their learning.

22. Pupils' attendance overall is satisfactory and is at about the same level as at the last inspection. Whilst attendance is slightly below the national average and unauthorised absence is slightly above, it is a small minority of pupils with poor attendance records, who affect the overall figure adversely. Generally, pupils arrive at school on time and are punctual for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching is good overall and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons, of which 41 per cent were good and 14 per cent very good. Two per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The proportion of satisfactory or better lessons has improved considerably since the last inspection. Throughout the school the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, with some that is good. There are weaknesses in the pace of pupils' work in some lessons, and the work set for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.
24. The teaching of the children during the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Good opportunities are given to children to take responsibility for their learning. The teacher has high expectations of how children should behave and they settle quickly into school routines. Staff provide good role models and value all the children's ideas and points of view. They use skilful questioning to encourage children to talk and are good listeners. They take every opportunity to enhance the children's vocabulary. Focused teaching ensures that the children communicate well and have a good grounding of literacy skills by the time they complete the reception year. Good use is made of the numeracy strategy to develop children's mathematical and mental arithmetic skills. The work set by the teacher is appropriate to individual children's needs and she ensures that all children use mathematical language correctly. However, there are occasions when too much time is allowed to children to complete simple tasks before offering further challenge. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is soundly built on, including the provision of opportunities to use computers but children are not always given sufficient opportunities to discover for themselves when carrying out science investigations. Satisfactory provision is made for developing children's physical skills but the lack of a secure outside play area and limited resources restrict their development in this area. Children are given sound opportunities to develop their imaginative ideas through art, music and imaginative play.
25. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall, and varied from very good to satisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in all lessons, of which 54 per cent were good and 23 per cent very good. It was consistently good or very good in the Year 1/2 class. Support teachers and assistants are used well and teachers have good relationships with their pupils. The tight time structures and high expectations of the teacher in the Year 1/2 class ensure that the pace of pupils' work is brisk and work is completed on time. Teachers make satisfactory use of information and communication technology in lessons.
26. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall, and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons, of which 41 per cent were good and 14 per cent very good. It was consistently good or better in the Year 3 class. There was one unsatisfactory lesson because of the lack of pace and challenge during most of the lesson. Generally teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and use this to provide activities which are usually

well matched to pupils' differing needs. In some lessons the pace and challenge of activities are not always sufficiently challenging. More able pupils sometimes underachieve and the general pace of work of many pupils is slow. A significant minority of pupils tend to be passive towards their learning when they are not suitably challenged and given tight timetables to work to.

27. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively introduced and literacy is used well to support pupils' work in other subjects. Teachers make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn and how this links with their previous work. Lessons are interesting and generally motivate pupils to give of their best. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used effectively to consolidate pupils' learning. Good use is made of the National Literacy Framework for the teaching of phonics and this is generally done well. Sometimes lessons lack sufficient challenge for more able pupils and the work they complete varies little from other pupils in the class.
28. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to guide their teaching of mathematics and work is generally well planned to meet pupils' individual needs. Grouping pupils by ability aids staff in providing appropriate work for different ability groups. In the better quality teaching the pace of lessons is brisk and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in a given time. Consequently pupils make good progress in these lessons. In other lessons the pace of working is slow and teachers do not always make their expectations of what pupils should achieve clear to the class. Teachers are aware of the need to develop pupils' skills of mental calculation more effectively. This is beginning to impact on standards which have risen at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 to expected levels. However, in Years 5 and 6 a significant number of pupils still lack confidence in this area.
29. Homework is used well to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned at school. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers are very supportive in their comments. However, marking does always include information on how pupils could improve their work. In English good use is made of homework at Key Stage 1. Good assessment procedures are in place for English and mathematics and these are generally well used to plan appropriate work for all pupils in the class. Use of assessments in science is less consistent and sufficiently challenging work is not always provided for more able pupils at Key Stage 2.
30. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs varies. When it is good teachers plan work according to the underlying abilities of their pupils, addressing aspects identified with a pupil's individual education plan. The teaching by the special educational needs staff is good, with work tailored to the individual needs of the pupils concerned. All staff show a great deal of care for their pupils and know them and their difficulties well. However, occasionally class work is not sufficiently matched to the needs of the pupils concerned and this can lead to them being excluded from the activity undertaken by the rest of the class.
31. The teaching undertaken with Traveller children is good. Teachers from the Traveller Support Service liaise well with mainstream teachers to plan work appropriately as well as to support pupils in class. Within lessons mainstream teachers make good use of texts such as 'Melissa to the Rescue' to give pupils a positive and informative picture of the lives of their Traveller classmates.

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

32. The school provides its pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, covering the subjects of the National Curriculum, and takes account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. It includes provision for personal, social and health education, which includes sex education and attention to drug misuse. There is no planned programme for personal and social education, but this is generally addressed throughout the curriculum and through the use of circle time when needed. However, standards in personal development are good.
33. There were a number of elements of the curriculum that were key issues in the last report, including the lack of balance. The balance of the curriculum has now improved, and the deficiencies in curriculum areas highlighted in the last report have now been addressed. This is due to improved planning procedures throughout the school. Planning was a key issue at the last inspection. There is now a detailed planning structure to ensure that all areas of the statutory curriculum are delivered. Literacy and numeracy are well planned according to the national strategies while the remainder of the curriculum is planned over a two-year cycle to take account of the mixed age classes. In this way pupils do not cover the same work twice. There are clear guidelines for all subjects, and teachers use these to plan a programme of activities together, to ensure there is a progression in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This has had a positive impact on the improved standards throughout the school.
34. In the Foundation Stage children receive a relevant curriculum which is planned to meet the Early Learning Goals. They receive a programme of appropriate activities to develop all the areas of learning, and good opportunities are given for children to make their own choices and so develop their personal and social skills. Opportunities are given for children to learn through play but these are limited, as there is no secure outside area.
35. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, and Traveller children are well integrated into the school. Their culture is celebrated through stories such as 'Melissa to the Rescue'. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is sound overall. The work undertaken by the special educational needs staff with pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need follows that detailed in their individual education plans. This focuses on reading and spelling and sometimes include detailed mathematics targets as well. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs within their classes is usually tailored to promote their understanding of the work addressed. The learning support assistants work effectively with the pupils assigned to them and promote the involvement of their pupils in group activities. The timetabling of withdrawal provision is sufficiently flexible not to compromise the full access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The special educational needs staff often adapt their plans for these individual sessions to support and enhance work occurring in the classroom.
36. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including musical and sporting activities, French and drama, enriches the curriculum. There is an emphasis on the arts which has been developed since the last report. All pupils are given an opportunity to learn to play the recorder, and violin tuition is provided by the peripatetic music service. The school stages a variety of dramatic productions throughout the year. A range of visits and visitors to the school further enhances the curriculum, and the older pupils are given an opportunity to attend residential camp. The view of a

minority of parents that extra-curricular provision is unsatisfactory is not supported by the evidence.

37. The personal development of the pupils is good. This is a considerable improvement since the last report when the lack of opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was a key issue. There is a strong Catholic Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils learn to respect the beliefs and feelings of others in assemblies, through prayers and in their daily interactions. The school has a strong caring ethos, in which pupils are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than themselves. They learn about the plight of refugees, and homeless and poverty-stricken children, in places such as Brazil and the Philippines. There are good opportunities to develop spirituality in assemblies and through the curriculum. Teachers make pupils aware of the wonders around them, for example when pupils found Peter Pan's shadow as part of their work on light in science.
38. The school provides good opportunities for the moral and social development of pupils. There is a strong behaviour code that is implemented consistently throughout the school and this results in good behaviour by pupils. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and this ensures that relationships are good. In lessons pupils are given opportunities to work collaboratively and older pupils often help younger ones in the class.
39. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their own culture through art, history, music and literature. Their awareness of other cultures is enhanced through the curriculum. For example, pupils compare and contrast European artists with African art in their study of Benin. The school has a range of multicultural music on disc which is used in assemblies. The school has a link with a child in India who they support through charitable donations. Through this link pupils learn about the life of a child who has a different faith and who lives in a different culture.
40. The school's links with the wider community have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Pupils participate in choral concerts with other local schools and also in a number of fundraising initiatives such as CAFOD, Children in Need and the sponsorship of an Indian child. These and other activities contribute to pupils' learning and personal development.
41. Links with the local cluster group of schools are effective and there are good partnerships with a number of secondary schools involving 'taster days' for Year 6 pupils and visits by Year 7 tutors.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The support and guidance which pupils receive, both formal and informal, are good. The teaching and non-teaching staff know the children and their families well and respond to their needs.
43. The school policies and procedures successfully promote discipline, good behaviour and health and safety. The provision made for pupils' personal and social development during the Foundation Stage is good. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.

44. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems and believe that the school provides a happy and caring environment. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are satisfactory, although the computer-based system is not yet fully operational.
45. The support and care of pupils with special educational needs are good. Staff are quick to identify needs as they arise and monitor pupils' progress well. Class teachers use the general assessment procedures to identify pupils' learning needs. This information is used very effectively when planning individual education plans, in partnership with learning support staff and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school also cares very well for its pupils from the Traveller community. Staff know the families and situations of the pupils and work hard to help children fit back into their peer group as well as to catch up with elements of learning they have missed during extended absences.
46. The school's assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection when assessment arrangements were a key issue. The school has worked hard to put in place meaningful procedures. There are now effective systems for tracking pupils' attainment and progress. Children are tested on entry to the reception class, and assessments in English, mathematics and science are carried out at the age of seven, and eleven in line with statutory requirements. A range of data is collected by the assessment co-ordinator as a result of regular annual testing in all years, particularly in English and mathematics. This gives a clear picture of the pupils' progress from reception to Year 6. This information is used to set targets for the pupils. This practice is relatively new and as yet pupils are not involved in setting their own targets. Although there are school portfolios of pupils' work in English and mathematics, the science portfolio needs developing to ensure that all teachers are familiar with the criteria for levelling work. Assessment in the foundation subjects is not as well developed, but teachers are beginning to make informal judgements about pupils' attainment in all subjects. Statutory test results are analysed, weaknesses identified, and adjustments made to the curriculum. For example, as a result of analysis of the science tests, pupils in Year 6 are revisiting work covered in Year 5, rather than abiding by the two-year curriculum cycle. Teachers identify assessment opportunities in their planning. In literacy and numeracy this information is used well to enable teachers to plan pupils' work to match their learning needs. However, assessment is not used as effectively in science to ensure that all learning needs are met, particularly those of the higher-attaining pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is good. The great majority of parents are happy with what the school provides and achieves and express very positive views of the school. They believe that they are well informed about how their children are getting on and that the school works closely with them.
48. There is good communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, parents' meetings and annual reports. Parents know that they can discuss issues informally with staff and appreciate the openness of the school. The annual pupil reports give parents a clear indication of what pupils know, understand and can do, and although very few specific targets and strategies for improvement are included, parents are more satisfied with these reports than they were at the last inspection.

49. The involvement of parents in the provision for special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are shared with parents who contribute to the review of targets and the setting of new ones.
50. The school makes appropriate efforts to encourage parents to participate in the life of the school. The impact that parents have on the work of the school and their contribution to children's learning are satisfactory and most parents fully support the home-school agreement. Parents help out with reading, with information and communication technology and on school trips. The Friends of St Paul's are very supportive both socially and financially.
51. The school's partnership with parents has significantly improved since the last inspection and further improvement is a high priority for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school is led and managed well.
53. There was a two-year period of instability following the last inspection when a number of acting headteachers were in post. Since the appointment of the current headteacher there has been a strong, clear educational direction to the work of the school. This has ensured that rapid progress has been made in overcoming the serious weaknesses evident at the time of the last inspection. On appointment, the headteacher, with the support and full involvement of the governing body and staff, made a careful and thorough analysis of the school and identified key areas that required attention. As a result, impressive changes have taken place that will raise standards. He has also recognised that more needs to be done and has identified areas where improvements are still to be made. As the original school development plan comes to an end, it is now necessary to begin the planning process again to ensure that previous gains are consolidated and pupils' achievements continue to improve.
54. The headteacher is effective in monitoring teaching and learning through a programme of formal and informal classroom observations. He has been assisted in this process by the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators and local education authority advisers and consultants. Few opportunities have been provided for other co-ordinators to monitor teaching in their subject areas but this is planned for the future. Teachers' planning and pupils' work is monitored and co-ordinators have a clear idea of the future developments necessary in their subjects.
55. The deputy headteacher gives good support to the headteacher. She has been joined by another member of staff to create a senior management team. They are fully involved in the decision making process and have ensured, together with the headteacher, that all staff feel involved in the management of the school and work well together as a team. They are also good classroom practitioners.
56. The governing body is fully involved in the work of the school and is very supportive of the staff, parents and pupils. There is an appropriate committee structure and governors have made considerable improvements in the procedures for directly monitoring the work of the school. Governors are better informed about the work of the school through regular headteacher reports and presentations from subject co-ordinators. They also visit the school regularly to observe lessons and talk with staff

and pupils. They are anxious to ensure that the decrease in the number of pupils on roll, which resulted from the outcome of the last inspection, is reversed and more parents send their children to the school. The governing body is thoroughly involved in school development planning and monitoring the school's success in achieving targets that are set.

57. The deputy headteacher took over as special educational needs co-ordinator in January this year and has therefore had little time to put her own stamp on the provision. However, in the time she has been in the role she has overhauled the management of the associated paperwork, for example, in the way individual education plans are drawn up and recorded. All the paperwork is designed to be manageable and useful whilst meeting the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The school's liaison with outside agencies is effective. The school has a satisfactory range of resources for special educational needs. The design of the school, particularly access to the library, does not make it accessible for those with physical disabilities or wheelchair users.
58. The school has a good number of teachers to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The teaching staff have a range of qualifications and experience and they work well together as a team. The learning support staff have a good level of expertise and give the pupils in their care, good support and guidance. Currently there are no procedures in place for the induction of new staff into the school. Arrangements for the professional development of staff was judged to be unsatisfactory at the last inspection. There has been considerable improvement. A good range of on-going training is now attended by all staff, and training days on aspects of concern to all staff are arranged regularly. Teachers are appraised regularly and performance management procedures are being developed.
59. The accommodation, both internal and external, is spacious. Many changes have taken place to the open-plan building since the appointment of the headteacher, which have ensured that pupils are able to concentrate well and not be disturbed by thoroughfares through classrooms. Inside, the school presents a bright and inviting atmosphere with spacious shared areas. Teachers use display well to celebrate children's efforts and achievements and to give information about topic work.
60. Outside, the school has worked hard to compensate for an uninspiring exterior. It has a good-sized field as well as sufficient hard-surfaced play areas. The recent addition of adventure playground equipment in both infant and junior playgrounds has been a great success. Pupils enjoy these hugely and take great care of the equipment. The school has a pond that is suitably fenced in, and is used well within lessons to extend pupils' appreciation of living things and of different environments. However, there is no secure outside play area for pupils during the Foundation Stage. There are plans to create one in the near future.
61. At the last inspection the library was identified as a weak feature and there has been considerable improvement since then. The central area of the school is now used effectively as a resource base, and a library and information technology suite. The combined area is of sufficient size for a whole class to be working there together. The library has a good selection of good quality reference books. The school's simplification of the Dewey classification system is displayed clearly on the wall and helps pupils of all ages to find a book on the subject they are researching. The computer suite currently has ten workstations.

62. There is good provision for learning resources overall. It is satisfactory for science, art, history and geography and for pupils in the Foundation Stage.
63. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning, and the school has strategic plans for all forms of income. This is an improvement since the last report. The headteacher, the chair of the finance committee, and the county adviser work closely together to plan the school's financial strategy which is linked well to the school's priorities for improvement. This draft plan is then discussed by the full governing body and approved. The governors are very clear about all financial matters, and monitor all spending effectively. They strive to purchase services that provide quality and value within a competitive cost range. Very good use is made of the caretaker's considerable do-it-yourself skills in improving the learning environment for the pupils. This has saved the school money, while at the same time an excellent job has been done.
64. Since the last inspection monies have been spent prudently to increase the level and quality of resources and improve the internal and external environment of the school. All specific grants are used for their designated purposes, and special educational needs funding is used appropriately to support the learning needs of identified pupils. An appropriate amount of money is now allocated to the training of staff which was a weakness highlighted in the last report. Although the governing body is well informed about all financial matters, there are no formal procedures for evaluating spending decisions in relation to improving standards, and there are no formal long-term contingency plans to address falling budgets. There is now good day-to-day financial control as the secretary has a good understanding of the school's business systems. Effective use is made of new technology.
65. The school's aims and values are strongly promoted and reflected in its work and have helped to provide a positive ethos within the school. Pupils feel well cared for and supported by staff and as a result standards are rising.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to continue the improvements made since the time of the last inspection, and to further raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff, with the support of outside agencies as appropriate, should:
- (1) raise standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2, by:
 - i. raising teachers' expectations of the amount of work which should be expected of pupils in a given time; (paragraph 83)
 - ii. providing more opportunities for pupils to improve their pace of writing by being given tighter time structures; (paragraphs 76, 80)
 - (2) raise standards in mathematics at Key stage 2 by improving pupils' knowledge of number facts and their skills in mental calculation. (paragraphs 28, 88)
 - (3) raise standards of attainment in information technology. (paragraphs 117, 118)
 - (4) ensure that the work provided for more able pupils is consistently challenging in all lessons by:
 - i. raising teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve; (paragraphs 26, 27)
 - ii. making more consistent use of the school's good assessment procedures to plan suitable work for more able pupils. (paragraphs 26, 29, 95)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	41	43	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	118
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	21
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	8	11	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	16	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (86)	89 (68)	100 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	18	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (82)	100 (91)	95 (86)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	5	15	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	16	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (60)	75 (67)	85 (57)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	--	--	--
	Girls	--	--	--
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (53)	70 (47)	75 (36)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

As there were fewer than ten boys or girls who took the national tests at the end of both key stages, the number of boys and girls is not published separately in the inspection report.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	112
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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)	6.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	23.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 – 2000
	£
Total income	304,699
Total expenditure	300,428
Expenditure per pupil	2,225
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,513
Balance carried forward to next year	10,784

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	118
Number of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	31	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	33	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	50	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	72	25	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	42	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	22	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	42	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	22	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	22	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	36	17	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

Parents felt that the provision for music in the school was improving. They also acknowledged that the Parents' Association had provided the funding for the new playground equipment.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

67. Children enter the reception class in the September before they are five, and they are taught in a class with some younger Year 1 pupils. The majority of children have had pre-school experience in nurseries or playgroups. The attainment of the children on entry to the school varies from year to year because of the small number of pupils involved. This year it was average. The teacher and the nursery nurse work closely together to deliver an appropriate curriculum where the needs of all the children are met. The adults know the children well, and are sensitive to their needs. As a result all pupils are included in all activities, and appropriate support is given to individuals to ensure that all children achieve as they should. By the end of the Foundation Stage the children will attain the Early Learning Goals, with a few children working at the early stages of the National Curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. By the time children leave the reception class they will achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. Good opportunities are given for children to take responsibility for some of their learning, and make their own appropriate choices of activity. Relationships are good so children are happy to come to school, and quickly learn the routines of the class. They work and play well together, for example, when engaged in role play in the pirate ship. They sit quietly on the carpet, and are polite and well behaved. They move between activities sensibly, and show respect for equipment. They develop good levels of concentration and are interested in their learning. The adults in the class provide good role models, and value all the children's ideas and points of view. The adults listen well to any problems, and this gives the children confidence to express their feelings.

Communication, language and literacy

69. By the time children leave the reception class they will achieve the Early Learning Goals. This is because good opportunities are given for children to develop a whole range of skills. For example, they develop their speaking and negotiating skills when playing in the pirate ship. The children negotiated who was Captain Hook and who was Wendy, and how they were to escape from the island. Children are encouraged to talk to a partner when they are asked to recall the events in a story, thus enhancing their speaking and listening skills. The adults use skilful questioning to encourage children to talk and are good active listeners. They take every opportunity to enhance the children's vocabulary.
70. Children in the reception class are well integrated into the school's literacy strategy. They enjoy books and listen attentively to stories. They use the information from stories to make judgements, for example, about how life on Katie Morag's island was different from their own. They confidently express their thoughts and ideas in front of the whole class when engaged in 'carpet' sessions. Children can recognise the sounds of letters, and use this to help them read simple words. They are beginning to form their letters correctly, and the higher-attaining children are beginning to write their own stories. Good focused teaching ensures that the children communicate well, and have a good grounding of literacy skills by the time they complete the reception year.

Mathematical development

71. Children's awareness and understanding of number are generally developed well, and by the end of the reception year the majority of children will have exceeded the Early Learning Goals. Good use is made of the numeracy strategy, where children develop their mental skills. The teacher uses questioning well in whole-group sessions to ensure all children are appropriately challenged. Assessment is well used to ensure that the set work matches the children's abilities. Children recognise numbers to at least ten, and the majority can count to 20 and beyond. They can identify one more than, and one less than, and know the concept of short and long, and heavy and light. The higher-attaining children use mathematical symbols correctly when recording their addition sums. The adults ensure that all children use the correct mathematical language, so enhancing their learning. Counting skills are reinforced in less formal situations when, for example, pupils count the coins in the pirate treasure. Although expectations are usually appropriate, there are occasions when adults allow too much time for children to complete a simple task before offering additional challenge. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children enter the reception class with a spread of general knowledge. They build on this knowledge through the varied opportunities presented to them, and develop a better understanding of the world they live in. They are in line to achieve the goals for this area of learning by the end of the reception year. They learn about different sources of light, and that some materials let light through while others do not. They are given opportunities to use the computer, and show well developed control of the mouse. They effectively move icons around the screen when they use a program to dress a teddy. They are beginning to appreciate the differences between the past and present when they look at pictures of household items. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory, but children are not always given sufficient opportunities to discover for themselves when exploring scientific concepts.

Physical development

73. The children use the school hall for physical education lessons where they are able to develop their skills using small and large apparatus. Most children are already meeting the Early Learning Goals in this area. They show an awareness of space and other people as they move around, and have reasonable success when catching a ball. The majority of children are developing accuracy in passing a ball over a short distance. They are aware of the health and safety aspects in lessons, and the teacher makes effective use of the children's performance to highlight teaching points to improve the children's performance. In the playground children run, jump, climb and balance with considerable control. They use a variety of small tools, such as scissors, paint brushes, glue sticks and pastry cutters with a good degree of precision, and the majority of children hold their pencil correctly when writing and drawing. The lack of a secure outdoor area and the limited number of wheeled 'ride-on' toys restricts further development of pupils' physical skills. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

Creative development

74. All children are in line to meet the expected standard by the end of the reception year. Children are given opportunities to use paint to create representations of their family, and use sponges and paint to print patterns. They mix colours to form a different

colour and use dough to create models of people. No musical activities were seen during the inspection but children use role play well to develop their imaginations. They use a variety of different materials to produce an effective collage. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning but on occasions activities are too teacher directed, limiting opportunities for the children to use their imagination.

ENGLISH

75. Standards attained in the 2000 national tests in English are comparable with those in 1997 when the school was last inspected. Pupils aged seven achieved standards close to the national averages in reading and well above the national average for writing. These results are overall an improvement upon those in 1999 in that although standards attained in reading have dropped slightly, standards attained in writing have risen dramatically. In the 2000 national tests for 11 year olds the results were comparable with national averages and comparable with schools where pupils attained similar scores at age seven. The proportion of pupils who attained at the higher level was well above the national average, with 40 per cent of pupils attaining Level 5. These results are an improvement upon those from last year. The erratic nature of the attendance of a small minority of the school's population can have a disproportionate influence on the school's results in national testing year-on-year.
76. Inspection findings are that standards overall are close to the national average. Pupils at age seven are attaining overall in line with national expectations. The standard of handwriting is good but spelling is less secure. The content of pupils' writing at age seven is typical for their age. At age 11 most children achieve at the expected levels for their age but fewer children than average are achieving at the higher levels. At 11, standards are unsatisfactory for their age in the quantity of work produced and standards of spelling. This is particularly so for the group of pupils who might be expected to attain at the higher Level 5. However, this particular year group attained standards well below the national average when they were seven. They have, therefore, made good progress during the last four years.
77. Over the last four years there have been marked differences between the performances of boys and girls in English national test results with girls outperforming boys in reading and writing at both key stages. During the inspection no consistent evidence of significant differences in attainment was found.
78. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in speaking and listening due to the positive approach of many of the teachers who encourage pupils to reflect upon their own and other people's feeling and responses from an early age. Discussions in a circle time in Year 2 demonstrated how pupils considered a range of standpoints on a single issue. They use questioning well to clarify a situation that a classmate is describing, before making suggestions as to how to address it. Pupils of all ages are articulate about their preferences in reading, and discuss sensibly the thoughts and feelings of the characters within texts they are sharing. In conversation with the inspector older pupils talk confidently about their reasons for choosing particular books and what they like about stories by their favourite authors. However, their use of extracts from books to illustrate and explain their opinions and ideas is less well developed.
79. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading. They have a sound grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them. They read with improving fluency and accuracy and 11 year olds develop critical appreciation of a range of books and are able to talk with discernment about different authors. The

oldest pupils are competent readers of fiction and poetry and pupils throughout the school are able to use books and the school library to find information. Teachers encourage pupils to 'read between the lines of stories' to help them to understand characters and their feelings. For example, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated a good awareness of how the differences between their own lives and that of a character in one of the books they were studying (Katie Morag) would affect their outlook on life and on what they enjoyed doing. The reading skills of most pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with the texts they need for other subjects.

80. Writing is mainly sound. Teachers guide pupils when they undertake extended writing tasks with the results that pupils can write sustained stories with a good attention to characterisation and plot and make good use of interesting vocabulary. This is evident in the quality of the phrases used, as for example when writing character studies pupils in Year 3 showed an awareness of how different characters might move - 'Slowly and cautiously the girl slipped into the room'. Teachers themselves use a wide vocabulary to promote the pupils' interest in new words and they encourage pupils to select descriptive words carefully. During the inspection the same pupils enjoyed finding strong verbs to put into their writing, for example using 'whispered' or 'screamed' instead of 'talked' or 'said'. However, Year 5 and 6 pupils' writing to time is unsatisfactory. For example, their stories tend to take two sessions to produce the quantity and quality of work they should be able to achieve in one. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils experience writing in a range of forms and are able to alter their style to suit the form. For instance, when writing a newspaper report or a sporting commentary, pupils used short snappy sentences and colloquialisms to create vivid pictures of the events they are seeking to report. When writing recipes, such as to make a cup of tea, or instructions, such as getting ready for physical education, they give thought to the characteristics of instructional writing and the need for clarity and sequencing. By the age of 11 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation.
81. Standards of handwriting are good throughout the school, though the style used by Year 5 and 6 pupils lacks maturity. Young pupils learn a joined script and presentation is of a good standard in nearly all pupils' books. Standards of spelling are below those expected and this is reflected in frequent misspellings in pupils' everyday work. However, the recent introduction of a combined handwriting and spelling programme is developing pupils' ability to identify common spelling patterns, recognise words within words and learn spelling rules. In some classes their use of this knowledge is developing more rapidly than in others. Pupils also have regular lists of key sight words to learn, but the spelling of important vocabulary for other subjects is unsatisfactory. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils do not spell words such as 'investigate' and 'temperature' accurately in their science books.
82. Teaching is good across the school although there are variations in teachers' skills. Two-thirds of the teaching seen was either good or very good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Much of the strength in these lessons comes in the imaginative way teachers begin lessons, inspiring pupils and making them enthusiastic about the language they use. For example, in a lesson when pupils were to write their own 'rap' poems, the teacher dressed up and performed her own rap poem in character to the delight of and great acclaim from her pupils. The children then wrote with great enthusiasm and some were confident to perform their own rap poems at the end of the lesson. In Years 2 and 3, teaching is particularly good. Teachers make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn and how this links to what they have covered previously. The end of the literacy sessions are used effectively to encourage pupils to recap upon what they have learned. However, it is

less common for pupils to be asked to reflect upon their individual success towards a lesson's target. The quality of marking is varied. All teachers give praise and encouragement generously but only a few make suggestions as to how pupils can improve future work. Good use is made of homework at Key Stage 1 to extend pupils' learning. Key Stage 2 pupils undertake regular written tasks at home as well as the usual reading and spelling revision.

83. In a few lessons the learning is not sufficiently challenging for all groups of pupils and this leads to underachievement. In these lessons questioning tends to lead pupils' responses too much, curtailing opportunities for pupils to explore and justify their own opinions and ideas. Writing tasks for the most able pupils in Year 6 are similar to those given for the rest of the class and, as a consequence, the work produced is not as good as it should be. For example some pupils are still failing to write in standard English, for example referring to 'me and Ryan' within their stories.
84. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively introduced and literacy is used well to support work in other subjects. For example, younger pupils write reflectively in religious education about the ways in which they are special. In history pupils in Years 1 and 2 have written interesting accounts of their recent visit to St Fagan's Museum. Year 3 pupils write thoughtfully, for example, in accounts of the Queen's coronation. They have written accounts from differing points of view, such as those of a child waiting in the streets compared with those of one of the Queen's children. Year 6 pupils have written accounts of the immigration of workers during the 1950s, reflecting upon the experiences and feelings of those involved.
85. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual action plans which are followed carefully, resulting in tasks within lessons that are well focused to address pupils' individual needs. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the good contribution made by the learning support assistants who facilitate the involvement and contributions of these pupils and support them in their individual tasks. These staff work closely with teachers to promote the involvement of all pupils in class activities and discussions.
86. The management of the subject is good. The literacy co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has begun to monitor teaching and learning in order to support less confident colleagues better. Resources for the learning of English are good. Class libraries contain a good range of books of reasonable quality and the school makes effective use of its good selection of guided reading texts to extend pupils' understanding of more complex texts. Big books are used effectively with the younger pupils, both to develop reading skills and to demonstrate grammatical and language elements of their lessons, such as when learning about the use of speech marks. Key Stage 2 classes use big books well as they study different genre of writing. For example, one class studied the text 'Whale Rap' before writing their own 'rap' poems.
87. Since the last inspection when the library was identified as 'a weak feature', the school has developed a resources area that combines the library with the computer suite. Staff use this regularly and effectively to enhance learning in a range of lessons and to develop pupils' use of research skills. Nearly all pupils can explain how to find a book about a given subject within the library and pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate effective use of dictionaries, thesauruses and contents and index pages. Pupils use computers to record their work but as yet their keyboard skills are poor. However, they have had experiences of composing stories, poems and accounts in literacy lessons and other curriculum areas.

MATHEMATICS

88. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain the standards expected for their age in most areas of mathematics, for example space, shape and measures, and data handling. In Year 2, pupils' numeracy skills are developing appropriately. The result of last years' national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 paint a similar picture and also shows that standards were comparable with similar schools. However, in Year 6 although most pupils' mental knowledge of number facts, including times tables, is at expected levels, for a significant minority of pupils it is not. Pupils have a sound knowledge of written methods of the four rules of computation but many lack confidence in mental calculations and this slows the pace at which they work. At the end of Key Stage 2, the year 2000 national test results show that most Year 6 pupils achieve the expected Level 4 but that few pupils achieve the higher Level 5. Results were below average for all schools and well below average for similar schools. At Key Stage 2 standards are improving and since 1998, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of 11 year old pupils reaching the expected standards in national tests. However, standards are still not as high as they should be and teachers do not always expect enough of more able pupils some of whom underachieve.
89. At both key stages there are no marked differences between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
90. By the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils have a sound knowledge of number facts to 20 and are efficient when making mental calculations. They have an appropriate knowledge of place value to 100. They know some of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and use a ruler accurately when measuring length. For example, the majority of pupils measure 20 centimetres accurately when making a bag to hold a sandwich in design and technology work. By the end of Key Stage 2, a significant minority of pupils are still slow in working out calculations in their heads and many pupils work slowly during lessons. Pupils have a sound knowledge of written number operations. They understand fractions and percentages, and use and interpret a variety of charts and graphs. Pupils lack confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge to problems. The school is aware of the weaknesses in the subject and work was seen during the inspection of pupils being encouraged to convert words into numbers and what mathematical operations they would need to do to find the right answers.
91. While the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall they could be better for more able pupils in Years 5 and 6. In Years 2 and 3 teaching is usually good. It is satisfactory elsewhere. Teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of what more able pupils should achieve. A scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work reveals that in Years 5 and 6 the amount of work produced by more able pupils differs little from what average pupils produce. Although the teachers' marking does show frequent comments about improving the quantity of work completed this still seems to be a problem. Teachers are aware of the need to develop pupils' skills of mental calculation more effectively. This is beginning to impact on standards and in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 is at expected levels. However, in Years 5 and 6 a significant number of pupils still lack confidence in this area.
92. In the consistently good lessons observed in Year 2 and 3, pupils are aware of the high expectations of their teachers and the need to work quickly and complete tasks efficiently. In these lessons the pace of the short mental arithmetic sessions is brisk. Time is well used and pupils complete their work. In some other lessons the pace of

working is more pedestrian and teachers do not always make clear their expectations of what pupils should achieve in a given amount of time.

93. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and apply this knowledge effectively. All three elements of the National Numeracy Strategy were evident in the lessons observed during the inspection. In the better quality lessons, the pace of the short mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons was brisk and good use was made of resources, such as white boards, to involve all pupils in answering questions. In other lessons the pace of these sessions was satisfactory.
94. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has drawn up an appropriate school policy and a commercial scheme of work is being gradually introduced throughout the school, as it is published. This is providing a more systematic approach to the teaching of mathematics than was previously the case. The school is aware of pupils' weaknesses in mental calculation and teachers' planning shows a good emphasis being placed on this aspect. Standards are rising and at Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 are at expected levels. Information technology is used satisfactorily by teachers in mathematics lessons.

SCIENCE

95. Inspection findings show that, by the age of 11, pupils' attainment is in line to meet the expected standard, as it was at the last inspection. Standards by the age of seven have improved, and are at least average. This is as a result of the good, focused teaching in Year 2, where the teacher sets high expectations, and gives the pupils good opportunities to discover for themselves. The pupils build on this good grounding into Year 3, where the pace of learning continues to be good. These pupils benefit from the considerable expertise of their teacher, who is the co-ordinator. Unfortunately, as the pupils get older they do not always receive enough challenge, and there are too few opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations, and so enhance their skills to enable them to achieve at the higher level.
96. In the national assessment tests for 11 year olds in 2000, attainment was close to the national average, but the percentage of pupils attaining at the higher level was below the national average. Their progress was below the average for all schools, and well below compared with similar schools. The teacher assessments of seven year olds were well above the national average. Over the last five years, attainment has varied from year to year, but generally declined until 2000 when it rose sharply.
97. The quality of teaching varies from class to class, but is satisfactory overall. There is some consistently good practice, and some very good teaching, with a minority of less successful lessons. In the best lessons the pupils were set challenging tasks where they used their previous knowledge to make sensible predictions. For example, in Year 3 where learning was very good, pupils were set a circus of experiments to develop their understanding of light. During their investigation into how the size of shadows changed, they used their knowledge of fair testing to ensure that only one variable changed. In this lesson the pupils worked collaboratively, using each others' suggestions to carry out their own experiments. Good opportunities were given for the pupils' personal development, as they had to plan their own investigation, and then explain to the class what they had discovered. In another successful lesson the teacher very effectively used the story of Peter Pan to inspire younger pupils to discover how shadows were formed. There was a real sense of wonder when the pupils saw Peter Pan's shadow appear as he blocked the light.

Where lessons are less successful the pace is slower, and explanations are not always clear, so that pupils remain confused. For example, in a lesson on sound the majority of pupils confused pitch with loudness. Time is wasted in non-productive tasks such as colouring-in, and additional challenge is not set for the higher-attaining pupils, as all pupils are expected to progress at the same speed. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into all science lessons, and, along with Traveller children are well supported and complete tasks at their level, making appropriate progress.

98. The subject co-ordinator has played a key role in the raising standards. She has developed a new policy and structured the planning to cover all areas of the curriculum so that it ensures progression of learning. This improved planning has had a positive impact on learning and is an improvement since the last inspection. There is an appropriate emphasis on the experimenting and investigating element of the curriculum, which ensures that pupils ask pertinent questions, and seek ways of finding answers for themselves. Her expertise is used throughout the school to enhance teaching methods, and teachers' confidence and competence have improved. Pupils' attainment is assessed and levelled, but assessment procedures are inconsistently applied throughout the school. Although there has been some whole-school agreement on the moderation of pupils' work, this has not ensured that all teachers know the criteria for achievement, particularly at the higher levels. The quantity and quality of resources have improved since the last report, and there is sufficient equipment for practical activities. Resources are well ordered and labelled for easy access. There is still a need to develop greater use of information technology in science lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

99. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were described as below average, with pupils working at an elementary level. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is as expected for this age, but pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is above average. Pupils develop their artistic skills in a systematic way from an early age, which has enabled them to produce quality artwork, and achieve well throughout the school. All aspects of the subject have improved and the subject has benefited from the considerable expertise of the co-ordinator, who has raised the profile of art since the last inspection. This is demonstrated in the high quality of the display, where pupils' work is celebrated and annotated well, so that it can be used as a resource to enhance the learning of others.
100. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their printing skills well. They start by doing simple random printing, then progress through structured steps to printing shapes by translating and rotating images. They experiment with colour, and finally build up quality designs by overlaying different colours. These young pupils use their observational skills well to draw self-portraits, ensuring correct proportions and positioning of the features. Works of famous artists such as Georges Seurat are studied, and the pupils use the method of Pointillism to create pictures of a teddy bear. These pictures show a high degree of care and precision, after the pupils have experimented to find the best way to apply the paint.
101. Between the ages of seven and 11 the pupils are given many opportunities to develop the skills they have learned. Pupils in Year 3 draw representations of figures, using pastels to illustrate the African folk tale of 'Omutugua'. They choose appropriate colours to depict the hot African landscape and clear skies. Pupils in Years 5 and 6

study the picture of Leonardo da Vinci's 'Virgin Mary and St Anne', and then paint self-portraits, using the same earthy colours, developing previously learned skills of proportion and colour mixing. Good opportunities are also given for pupils to use their imagination when, for example, they use clay to make models of aliens, and when they choose an exciting array of bright colours to paint their 'Fantastic Gardens'. Year 6 pupils use thread and a variety of stitches to translate their ideas into embroidery pictures of high quality. They also use appropriate coloured paper to assemble a 'decoupage' of different fruits and vegetables. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their own work and that of others so that they can further improve their own skills. For example, a Year 5 pupil was dissatisfied with his interpretation of 'Jesus being the guiding light in our lives', gave the subject more thought and then mixed paint appropriately, and created a stunning picture of a sunrise.

102. Pupils of all aptitudes and abilities enjoy the same experiences, and have the same opportunities to produce work of high quality. Pupils show an interest and enjoyment in the subject which has a positive impact on their learning, ensuring they all achieve well.
103. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, which is an improvement since the last report when teaching was judged to be generally unsatisfactory. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills progressively in a wide range of contexts. Teachers value the work of pupils. This is shown in the quality of display, where much work has been commercially framed. Good use is made of the much-improved resources to ensure that pupils enjoy quality materials, and learn an appreciation of art by studying the work of different artists. This has a positive impact on pupils' knowledge of the other cultures. Sound use is made of art information technology programs.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Attainment of pupils aged seven and 11 has risen since the last inspection and is now average, with pupils making satisfactory progress. The provision for design and technology was a key issue in the last report, but the deficiencies highlighted have now been addressed. The pupils experience a full range of materials, including food and textiles, and designing skills are developed alongside 'making' skills. Pupils' designing skills have improved. They are beginning to evaluate their designs and suggest improvements.
105. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 examine a variety of paper bags, and take them apart to help them design a bag to carry the Lighthouse Keeper's lunch. The majority of pupils measure the desired length accurately, and use cutting and sticking skills to join the paper into a bag. They recognise that the paper has to be strong and that the handles have to be firmly attached. Pupils in Year 3 design and make a hinge, using joining and cutting skills. They evaluate their designs, and then make appropriate improvements. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 design and make slippers. They are able to identify the main parts of the shoe, choose appropriate materials, and stitch and glue these to produce a finished quality artefact. Pupils with special educational needs do the same tasks as their peers and make satisfactory progress.
106. In the few lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and provide pupils with a good range of learning opportunities, so that skills are developed progressively. In the best lesson the pupils were set a challenge, and given opportunities to use their own ideas, and learn from

their mistakes. The teacher gave the pupils appropriate guidance so that they recognised the shortcomings in their models, and then helped pupils improve their designs so that they were all able to make an effective hinge. The pupils showed a real enthusiasm for the task, worked co-operatively in pairs applying their previous knowledge and concentrating well for the whole session. These positive attitudes ensure that maximum learning takes place.

107. The curriculum is planned so that pupils experience the full range of activities to cover requirements. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject, good expertise, and ensures that teachers are confident and secure in their subject knowledge. This positive leadership has helped standards to rise. Resources have improved and are now good, enabling pupils to experience a wide range of learning opportunities.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are satisfactory overall. They have geographical skills and factual knowledge at the appropriate level, and have experience of using these through proposing or investigating geographical questions. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. Standards have improved since the last inspection. This can be attributed to sensitive subject leadership from the headteacher and a new Programme of Study for geography that sets out expected levels of knowledge and understanding of each age group clearly. The school plans a four-year programme of geography topics in the juniors and each term all classes study the same topic. Similarly a two-year cycle runs in the infants. This approach is effective in ensuring that during their time at St Paul's pupils meet all the required elements of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for geography. The school is now well placed to address those elements where pupils' attainment remains below that expected.
109. The school is careful to ensure that pupils develop geographical skills and knowledge in a progressive way as they move through the school. For example, in the current project on 'Village Settlers' younger pupils debate features of significance when deciding a location for a new settlement as part of role play, where they decide in groups the best location on the island they have 'discovered'. Older pupils study Ordnance Survey maps to draw hypotheses about the origins of several towns or cities in the United Kingdom. In the process they revise their use of six-figure co-ordinates and map symbols.
110. The teaching of geography is satisfactory with many good aspects. Teachers plan imaginative introductions to lessons and then use good questioning to extend pupils' understanding, to excite them about geography and to develop their ability to draw conclusions. For example, during the inspection the Year 1/2 class 'received' a mystery parcel from a favourite storybook character who had been selected as the vehicle for learning about the differences between island and mainland life. Pupils were encouraged to draw comparisons and consider the positive and negative effects of island life. Teachers are careful to balance the teaching of subject knowledge and the development of geographical skills. As a result pupils use appropriate geographical terminology and develop sound use of geographical skills. Teachers involve pupils with special educational needs fully in lessons, either through working with more able colleagues, being assisted by a supporting adult or by simplifying tasks. Although teachers identify assessment opportunities within each project, these do not yet combine to form a systematic programme of assessment for geography throughout the school. There are good learning resources available and these are

used well to promote satisfactorily pupils' knowledge and understanding of different places.

HISTORY

111. Pupils' standards of attainment at the ages of seven and 11 are in line with those expected for their age in terms of their knowledge of historical detail. Their use of the relevant skills, such as evaluating sources of evidence for bias, are less secure. This is because the teaching of skills within history has only been identified as a priority during the last year. Insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to make an overall judgement as to its quality, although the one lesson observed was particularly good in the way it used role play to deepen pupils' empathy for child workers during the Victorian era. Judgements are based largely on scrutiny of pupils' work and on conversations with pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy history and were keen to tell the inspector about the projects they had studied. The school plans a four-year programme of history topics in the juniors and each term all classes study the same topic. Similarly a two-year cycle runs in the infants. This approach is effective in ensuring that during their time at St Paul's pupils meet all the required elements of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for history.
112. By the age of seven pupils can demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past, through learning about such people as Guy Fawkes or Florence Nightingale and the social and political conditions of their age. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding is further developed through making comparisons between homes from the past and their own homes. A recent visit to St Fagan's Museum, when pupils had the opportunity to handle genuine artefacts added to their enthusiasm and appreciation of the changes in people's way of life during the last century. Teachers question effectively to involve everyone in discussions and to probe pupils' understanding, for instance, when 'interviewing' a Victorian chimney sweep about his life and work.
113. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop a sense of time such as when they study the different dynasties who ruled ancient Egypt and consider their influences on the lives of the ordinary people. Teachers capitalise on opportunities to develop skills in the interpretation of historical evidence, for example, as they consider life just after the World War II and aspects such as food and clothing rationing and how work changed, both for men and women. Teachers make good use of a range of resources, including pictures, transcripts of accounts from the time, newspapers and artefacts, to develop research skills and to bring the subject alive. For example, in their study of the 1960s pupils in Years 4 and 5 interviewed their teacher about her memories, asking her to model some of the fashions of the time. Teaching motivates the pupils, who work hard and show great interest in their work. Older pupils consider more complex aspects of the shared topic, such as when researching and debating the effects of immigration during the 1950s, from the differing points of view of those involved. Teachers are careful to plan activities in such a way as to promote the full involvement of pupils with special educational needs, either through working with more able colleagues, assisted by a supporting adult or by simplifying tasks. Good use is made of literacy skills in the guided research undertaken and some teachers also make good use of computers for pupils to research information stored on CD-ROMs.
114. The history units selected by the school address a good balance across time and civilisations, extending pupils' thinking and ensuring that assignments build

successively upon the skills pupils acquired in previous years. Assessment opportunities are identified within each topic but are not planned systematically across the school.

115. Although the range and quality of books, pictures and artefacts is good, the way the curriculum is timetabled (with all of the juniors studying the same topic at once) has implications for resources which the school is beginning to address. The subject is soundly managed by the co-ordinator who monitors teachers' planning and looks at pupils' work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards of attainment are below average overall. It is only in recent times, with the establishment of a new computer suite, that pupils have been given enough opportunities to develop their skills in this subject. Standards are rising but pupils at the end of key stages still lack confidence in their abilities. However, provision is now satisfactory.
117. At Key Stage 1 pupils can log onto the computer network and choose the program that they need to use. Year 1 pupils show good control of the mouse to move the cursor when using programs such as 'Teddy'. By the end of the key stage many pupils use word processors at a satisfactory level to write in a variety of styles. They are able to alter the size and type of font and to save and print their work. With the more frequent opportunities provided in using the computer suite, pupils are beginning to develop their keyboard skills. However, many of them are still slow to write short pieces and do not always use both hands when composing their work. Most pupils are developing confidence when entering information into a data-base and displaying information using bar charts.
118. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have full access to much of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. They are beginning to develop their skills in word processing, data handling and control technology. Year 3 pupils were observed entering commands into a programmable toy, linked to their work with co-ordinates in mathematics. By the end of the key stage, word-processing skills are developing well and by Year 6 most pupils can write stories and use their information technology skills to present their work in a variety of ways. However, pupils' keyboard skills are not yet well developed and many pupils lack confidence with the organisation of the letters. Standards observed with children in Years 3 and 4 show that pupils are gaining more experience in word processing and using CD-ROMs to research information. Pupils are working at the expected level in these aspects.
119. Evidence was seen of computers being used to support work in English, mathematics and science. For example, Year 6 pupils were observed altering incorrect information entered onto a database about creatures of the sea. Pupils were encouraged to use their reference skills to check information and make amendments. Pupils have not yet had experience of e-mail or of monitoring external events such as changes in temperature or using computers to control external events.
120. A significant factor affecting attainment and progress is that the school is just starting to use the new information technology suite. Appropriate training has been provided for teachers who now have a secure knowledge and understanding to teach the

various aspects of the subject. However, many pupils have not yet had sufficient time using computers to develop their skills to an appropriate level.

121. The quality of teaching observed is satisfactory. Teachers' skills in information technology are now sufficiently developed to support pupils effectively in their learning. Lessons are well planned and activities clearly focus on what it is teachers wish their pupils to know or be able to do by the end of the session. This ensures that pupils enjoy using computers, concentrate well on the tasks they are set, and work well together.
122. The computer suite has been funded from the school's own budget prior to the school receiving funding from the National Grid for Learning project. Provision for the subject is now satisfactory and an improvement from the time of the last inspection. However, standards at the end of key stages have not yet been raised sufficiently to meet national expectations for the subject. The management of the subject is satisfactory.

MUSIC

123. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music making activities very much. The new initiative for all of the juniors to learn the recorder has extended this, promoting the enthusiasm of all pupils for music making. In assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm, with recorders accompanying.
124. Younger pupils compose pieces using untuned percussion instruments, creating their own notation for their compositions. They then use this to create and perform a piece of music as a class. They pay close attention to the teacher and follow her directions, listening carefully to constructive suggestions and expressing great delight at their resulting success. Older pupils compose successfully in small groups and listen carefully to each other's ideas, making well-reasoned judgements and offering suggestions for improving composition and performance. They create and record rhythms using their own notation, for example pupils in Year 3 have created visual scores using untuned percussion around the theme of the story Omutugwa. Older pupils can name several famous composers and a few different styles of music (mainly those related to their history project), but their knowledge of the music from other cultures is less secure and they find it difficult to discuss their own musical preferences or experiences in any detail.
125. All teaching of music observed during the inspection was good and the inspectors very much enjoyed being present. Teachers plan imaginative and captivating lessons for pupils to make music, as a result nearly all pupils behave well during music lessons. This contributes effectively to the quality of their learning since concentration levels are maintained throughout. For example in a Year 4/5 lesson pupils were excited by a lesson that linked with their history project on the 1950s. The teacher's use of popular music of the time held the attention of all pupils who joined in enthusiastically as they were taught such songs as 'Summer Holiday'. Pupils rise to the challenges set, working enthusiastically and effectively and acting on teachers' suggestions to improve their performance. A good example of this was observed when a class learned to play ostinato from 'A Summer Place', successfully combining all instruments at the end of the lesson to perform the piece as a class.

126. The co-ordinator gives helpful and enthusiastic support for colleagues. The school has chosen a new scheme of work for music that is more helpful to non-specialist colleagues than the old one. Extra-curricular music gives pupils the opportunity to learn the violin and the music club gives a few the chance to play the guitar.
127. The school has good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and a good selection of teachers' resources for music. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they are fully involved in lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Standards are average at both key stages in the aspects of the subject observed during the inspection. The picture was much the same as at the time of the last inspection. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. Good support is given to a pupil with a physical disability, which enables him to take a full part in the taught curriculum. No gymnastic lessons were observed during the inspection.
129. At Key Stage 1, pupils work enthusiastically in games lessons. They enjoy their work and work well together when required. By the end of the key stage, pupils show appropriate control when push-passing in hockey and most pupils are aware of how to correctly hold their sticks and which side of the hockey stick to use. Most seven year olds are aware of positioning their feet properly and are regularly reminded of this by their teacher. Clear instructions ensure that pupils know what to do and are efficiently questioned when recapping what they learned in the previous lesson. In the better lessons observed, pupils are given clear directions and demonstrations about how they can improve their work. The use of coaching points which focus on how pupils can improve their work is not so strong in some lessons.
130. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to understand the importance of positional play in hockey and not to follow the ball so that there is no one to pass to. Teachers show sound understanding of the curriculum in demonstrating skills and reinforcing the need for tactical play. Pupils work well together and enjoy taking part in physical activities. Correct use of the hockey stick and the need to rotate it in order to control the ball are repeated frequently through lessons.
131. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to swim at the area pool and standards are average. They respond effectively to instructions that enable them to be confident and safe in the water. By the time they leave the school the vast majority of pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres. Many pupils achieve much more, gaining both distance and personal survival awards.
132. The co-ordinator is fully involved in teaching the subject and ensures that pupils have frequent opportunities to take part in inter-school sports events. At present there is a policy for the subject but no scheme of work. Teachers are vigilant in ensuring that pupils work safely and have sensible health and safety procedures in place. Resources are good in most areas but the range of bats and balls available are limited. It is planned that physical education will be a focus for development in the near future. There are after-school clubs for netball and football in the winter and the school takes part in area sports events.