

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hyson Green, Nottingham

LEA area: City of Nottingham

Unique reference number: 122778

Headteacher: Mr J K McGowan

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Matthews  
19410

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2001

Inspection number: 192419

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beaconsfield Street Hyson Green Nottingham
Postcode:	NG7 6FL
Telephone number:	0115 9151799
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev P. Ingman
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19410	A C Matthews	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and Communication Technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1305	B Rance	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3227	D Hughes	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art Physical Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18059	R Harrison	Team inspector	English as an additional language Equal Opportunities Science Geography History	How well does the school care for its pupils?
10911	C Deloughry	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs English Design Technology Music	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is situated in the Radford ward of Nottingham, and the majority of pupils come from within St. Mary's Church parish boundary. The school roll has fallen slightly since the last inspection in 1997 but it is an average sized primary school with 223 pupils – 120 boys and 103 girls. The school has a Nursery to which children are admitted when they are three years old. Their attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average. Pupils transfer into Reception in the term before their fifth birthday. A significant minority of pupils come from backgrounds where the proportion of adults in professional occupations is well below the national average. Thirty-seven per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority families, well above the national average. The school has a very high proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language and there are 27 pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Thirty-four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. The school has 19% of its pupils on the special needs register which is broadly average.

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

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a good school with some excellent features. It is very well led by a resourceful headteacher, who is ably supported by knowledgeable governors and a dedicated and hard-working staff. Teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of lessons observed during the inspection being very good and excellent. This leads directly to pupils making good progress through the school and an increasing proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels by the end of Year 6. Standards of the present Year 6 pupils are average in English, mathematics and science. Effective subject co-ordinators have devised a well-planned curriculum that helps pupils develop relevant skills and knowledge as they move through the school. The school manages its budget very carefully and prudent financial management has enabled the school to increase the number of part-time teachers and classroom assistants as well as upgrading resources in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Overall the school provides good value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is ably supported by governors and staff.
- Pupils are taught well, make good progress through the school and attain average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception get a very good start to their education.
- Pupils feel loved, are very well cared for and have very good behaviour and relationships.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The school has good links with parents who are extremely happy with the education it provides.
- The school's curriculum is good and the school provides very good opportunities for pupils to work together in a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

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

- Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1, and the use of computers to support pupils' learning through the school.
- Pupils' attainment in music.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in 1997 and has a very good capacity and enthusiasm to continue this improvement. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved because of carefully planned provision for these aspects. The overall standards in English, mathematics and science for 11-year-olds, have risen well throughout the school, with increasing proportions of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 by the time they leave the school. However, standards in Years 1 and 2 have fluctuated in recent years, but this is mainly due to the proportion of pupils in the different year groups who have special educational needs. The curriculum for all subjects has been improved, particularly with the introduction of the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. However, standards in music and in information and communication technology are not as high as at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, and, during the inspection, there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The school's recent Investors in People award recognised the very good quality staff training that has successfully developed teachers' subject knowledge and skills. There is now very good monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work by the headteacher and the English and mathematics co-ordinators, and this is having a positive effect on standards and is leading to continuous improvements in these subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants. All pupils, and particularly higher-attaining pupils, are now well challenged because teachers make much improved use of pupils' assessments when planning lessons. The school is planning to develop pupils' independent research skills further by a greater use of the newly refurbished and well-stocked library.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	C	E	D	well above average    A above average        B average                 C below average         D well below average    E
Mathematics	D	B	E	E	
Science	D	C	E	E	

Since the previous inspection, Year 6 national test results in English, mathematics and science have fluctuated. Much of this fluctuation is due to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs within each cohort. In the year 2000 the proportion was much higher than the national average. Taking the three subjects together, pupils' attainment has remained below average over the last three years. However, the unconfirmed results for 2001 show that there has been a significant rise in pupils' attainment and particularly with the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5. This shows very good progress for this group of pupils, who entered the Nursery with attainment that was well below the national average. The school has set challenging targets for the present Year 6 pupils,

whose attainment is above average in art and physical education and average in all other subjects apart from music, where attainment is below expectations.

Pupils' attainment in the 2001 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests declined from the previous years. However, assessments show that this group of pupils still achieved well since they entered the school with attainment that was very low. The present Year 2 pupils have average attainment in all subjects apart from art, which is above average, and music and information and communication technology, which are below average. Children make a very good start to their school life in the Nursery because of the very good curriculum and the consistently good teaching. By the time they leave Reception, the children's attainment has risen from well below average to below average, with a significant proportion of pupils making very good progress in English and mathematics.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have a great enthusiasm for school and positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Throughout the school politeness and very good behaviour are the norm.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and take their responsibilities seriously. However, more could be done to give older pupils a greater say in the life of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The great majority of pupils attend school punctually but a small minority of pupils take extended holidays, and this adversely affects their attainment in national tests.

Pupils get on very well with each other and with their teachers and show a very good understanding and consideration for others. These very positive relationships have a noticeable impact on the way that pupils learn when they work together in classes. Pupils respond very well to the good quality teaching and take their responsibilities seriously.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Nursery and Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good, with a significant proportion being very good or better. This shows a significant improvement since the last inspection. The good quality teaching has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and the good progress that they make. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teaching was strongest in the Nursery and Reception and in Years 3 – 6 where teachers use assessment well to ensure that the work is appropriately challenging for all pupils. In Years 1 and 2, the use of assessment is not so well developed and the work set is not always appropriate to the pupils' needs. However, the teaching of basic skills is good throughout the school in both numeracy and literacy. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and make effective use of their good subject knowledge when questioning the pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress in the great majority of subjects, but most importantly in English, mathematics and science. Teachers make very good use of the well-qualified and hard working classroom assistants who work really effectively with groups of pupils. The

teaching for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is consistently good. The teaching of music through the school and information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory overall, and attainment in these two subjects is below average.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is very good in the Foundation Stage, good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is well supplemented by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with individual education plans make good progress towards their targets because of the very good quality support they receive from both teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and particularly good progress in the Nursery thereby enabling them to take a full and active part in the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and this impacts strongly on the atmosphere in the school and pupils' attitudes to work, each other and their outlook on life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is more developed in Years 3 – 6 than in Years 1 – 2.

Whilst all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum are taught, the school does not yet have sufficient programs to ensure that computers support pupils' learning in other subjects. Teachers have a good understanding of appropriate inclusion strategies to ensure that all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, take a full and active part in lessons. There are good links between school and home, with parents receiving good quality information about their children's progress and making a positive contribution to their children's learning.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a very supportive and hardworking staff who are all committed to raising standards. Subject co-ordinators provide good leadership in their individual subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are very supportive of the school, visit regularly and play an active part in the school's strategic planning and in the monitoring of its developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Test results are carefully analysed and challenging targets set. Co-ordinators for English and mathematics regularly monitor teaching and learning in their subjects and make recommendations for improvement. The monitoring of teaching is good and is used very effectively in the performance

	management process.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made good use of funds to improve resources in subjects and to improve the support for individual classes.

Leadership and management are a strength of the school and have helped the school to build further on the strengths of the last report. The school's very good commitment to constant evaluation of its practices is helping it to improve even more. There is good delegation to subject leaders who receive good training for their work. The governors are very supportive of the school but also act well in their capacity of critical friends. The setting of challenging targets for Year 6 pupils shows a strong commitment to raising standards even further. At present the school does not have a rigorous enough assessment system to ensure that targets are met by 7-year-old pupils. The school has a good number of staff and makes effective use of its accommodation. The good resources are generally used well to support pupils' learning; however, teachers do not make enough use of computers and musical instruments. The school applies the principles of best value well, particularly in consultation with parents, when buying resources and in the monitoring of its end-of-key-stage results.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is very well managed and staff are very approachable.</li> <li>• Children thoroughly enjoy coming to school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are particularly well supported.</li> <li>• The school promotes good attitudes and values.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and children behave and achieve well.</li> <li>• School has good relationships with parents and works closely with them in the education of their children.</li> <li>• The school has a very good range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of homework.</li> </ul>

The inspectors fully endorse all the parents' positive comments about the school but do not agree with some parents' concerns about the provision of homework. This they consider to be carefully planned and relevant for the age of pupils who have a clear understanding of the importance of this work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Until the year 2000, the improvement in pupils' attainment over the preceding three years had been in line with the national trends in Key Stage 2. The results for the 2000 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed a decline in the improving standards. This was because this particular cohort had a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils exceeded the target set for them in English but missed the school's target for mathematics. The main reason for the decline in standards was the well below average proportion of pupils who were achieving at the higher Level 5. In English, mathematics and science, pupils' attainment was well below average. When compared to schools with a similar background, attainment in English was below average but well below average in mathematics and science. However, analysis of assessments showed that, despite achieving well below average results, pupils did make satisfactory progress through the school.
2. Results for Year 6 pupils in 2001 show a great improvement overall and terrific improvements in the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5, particularly in English and mathematics. For example, the percentage of pupils gaining this higher Level 5 rose from 3% in 2000 to 28% in 2001 in English, and from 14% to a very high 41% in mathematics. There are no national comparisons for this year at the time of writing the report. These considerable improvements are due to the increased effectiveness of the monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom, improvement in resources and the greater effectiveness of the use of assessment and test results to inform teachers' planning particularly in English and mathematics. In science, teachers' use of assessments to inform their planning is not so well developed, and this is the principal reason for the lower proportion of the higher Level 5s compared to the other two subjects. However, in all three subjects, assessments show that this group of pupils, which had a slightly lower than average number of pupils on the special educational needs register, had made very good progress since entering the school.
3. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 group of pupils, which has a higher proportion of pupils on the special needs register than last year's Year 6 group, has average attainment in English, mathematics and science. This represents the maintenance of standards since the last inspection report. The targets for the present group of pupils in Year 6 are very challenging, being 75% for English and 70% for mathematics.
4. Up until the year 2000, standards in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests had fluctuated considerably in reading and writing but results overall had been above average. In mathematics there had been a rising trend of improvement, although attainment had always been below average. The 2000 results show that attainment in reading and writing was average and below average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The teacher assessment of science showed that attainment was above average. The unconfirmed results for 2001 show a considerable fall on the previous year, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3s. There are three principal reasons for the sharp

decline in standards. Firstly the group of pupils entered the Nursery with attainment that was very low. The attendance of three out of the 27 pupils was poor during their time in Key Stage 1, and four pupils with English as an additional language took extended holidays during their time in Year 2. Staff changes also affected this group of pupils. However, despite these difficulties, analysis of data drawn up by the city education authority shows clearly that, although pupils' attainment was at least below average at the end of Year 2, this group of pupils had made overall good progress since entering the school.

5. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 2 group of pupils has made good progress since being in the Nursery, and that their attainment is average in reading, writing, science and mathematics. This group of pupils entered the Nursery with attainment that was slightly higher than the previous cohort, and have been taught by experienced teachers since entering the school.
6. Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is well below that expected of children of a similar age. Children's individual needs are very well met by all the teaching and support staff, and by the time they leave the Reception class, most children will attain the expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development. They achieve above the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, and physical development. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, although the children make good progress, the majority does not attain the nationally expected levels by the end of their time in Reception. Children show good confidence in their relationships with their classmates, teachers and other adults, and participate eagerly in the many activities that are carefully planned for them by their teachers. Children make continuous good progress because they listen attentively, concentrate hard and persevere well with their tasks.
7. Inspection findings show that standards in English are average at the end of both key stages, and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills because they are encouraged to participate fully in classroom discussions. Pupils build increasingly on their subject vocabularies as they move through the school which enables them to describe their work in more accurate detail. Pupils' reading skills are satisfactory and are well developed through the years. Pupils are enthusiastic readers and read frequently at home but in Key Stage 1 a significant minority of pupils do not have effective strategies for dealing with unfamiliar words. Pupils' writing is in line with national averages, with some higher-attaining pupils achieving very high standards. The school's initiative of allocating more time to extended writing is having a positive impact on standards. The writing of the oldest pupils is thoughtful and imaginative, with above average use of grammar. Whilst pupils use a word processing package for display purposes, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support their literacy work is under developed.
8. Standards in mathematics have been maintained since the last inspection and are average at the end of both key stages. Improvements in Key Stage 2 are due to the school's much improved use of assessment to ensure the work set for pupils is consistently challenging. The use of the recently introduced accelerated mathematics programme in the key stage has had a marked effect on standards and pupils' confidence in their number work. Year 6 pupils have good skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication but their division skills are less well developed because of their comparative weaknesses in tables. Similarly, slow recall

of multiplication tables is restricting their mental mathematics. Whilst pupils make good overall progress through the school, their progress is not so pronounced in Key Stage 1 where the school has not yet introduced the assessment scheme used in Key Stage 2. As a result, the work set by teachers is not always appropriate for pupils' abilities and in some lessons they do not make the progress they are capable of. The use of ICT in mathematics is under developed but there are examples of good links with numeracy in history when databases are used. Whilst pupils have good opportunities for applying their number work in small problem solving activities, the lack of opportunities for extended open-ended investigations is restricting the problem-solving skills of pupils and particularly of the higher-attaining pupils.

9. Standards in science are average at the end of both key stages, as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 build on their good quality experience from the Foundation Stage and develop their scientific understanding through good investigative work. However, higher-attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to design their own investigations independently. Investigative work is an integral part of pupils' science work in Key Stage 2 and they show a good understanding of how to design and modify an investigation. Pupils have satisfactory attainment in all aspects of the subject and they make some good use of computers in lessons, for example, when they use the Internet to investigate the different types of plants that would be suitable for the school's allotment.
10. Pupils' attainment in ICT has fallen since the last inspection. It is now below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, the school has changed to personal computers, with the help of a 50:50 grant from the city education authority. The school had enough money to take advantage of the computer offer but did not have enough money to purchase suitable programs to replace the ones on the previous computers. This has resulted in a very limited range of programs to develop pupils' ICT skills. The poor quality training that the teachers received as part of a national initiative has also exacerbated the problem. As a result, some teachers still do not have the confidence and subject knowledge to use the new programs to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. In Key Stage 1, pupils have satisfactory communications skills, some experience of control but not enough experience of other aspects, such as data handling and simulations. Although pupils have a restricted number of programs in Key Stage 2, teachers are making good use of the Internet, word processing, multi-media and data handling programs to extend pupils' work in subjects such as history. As a result, pupils have well-developed skills in communication but under-developed skills in such aspects as control and monitoring.
11. Standards have improved in art and design and, because of the good quality teaching and the positive attitudes of pupils, attainment is now above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils in Year 2 have good skills in observational drawing and benefit from the appraising and evaluating of their own work and that of classmates. Older pupils show good control with both paint and fabrics and good ability to use the techniques of famous artists in their own individual work. Above average attainment has been maintained in physical education in Key Stage 2. Physical education standards in Key Stage 1 have fallen to in line with national expectations because of the loss of expertise following staff changes. Older pupils are well co-ordinated and in dance perform their movements with good levels of skill, agility and fluency. Pupils benefit from a wide variety of

sports activities, which are supplemented by a very good range of extra-curricular clubs. Attainment is particularly high in tennis, athletics and football, with the school winning trophies for all these sports in recent city competitions.

12. Attainment in music has fallen since the last inspection and is below national expectations throughout the school. Whilst the quality of singing is satisfactory, opportunities for composition and performing are at a very basic level. Standards in all other subjects are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. A strength in design and technology is the way pupils use knowledge and skills from different subjects in their work, for example, when they use their scientific knowledge to help design a burglar alarm. However, limitations in resources, such as wood, are restricting the development of pupils' sawing, shaping and joining skills. Strengths in history include the way that older pupils use first hand evidence, such as 19<sup>th</sup> century census material, and the good links with ICT when they record their findings on spreadsheets. In geography pupils are developing a good understanding of the importance of recycling as a way of protecting the environment and understand that countries need to work together to combat the global issues of acid rain and deforestation.
13. Pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are developed well through the curriculum. There are good opportunities for them to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, particularly in science, geography and history. There is careful planning to develop pupils' numeracy skills in science, design and technology and history and when this happens it creates good opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in different contexts.
14. Pupils on the special educational needs register achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because their teachers and classroom assistants give well focused support in lessons. The school has a significant proportion of pupils who are bilingual and English is not their home language. Some have access to more than one home language, but when they enter the Nursery, English language and literacy skills of the great majority are very low. They make initial very good progress in these skills in the Nursery. Progress in Reception and through the rest of the school is good overall because individual pupils' needs are carefully planned for by all staff and overseen by the experienced specialist language teacher. Most pupils have average language skills by the time they reach Year 3 and a significant minority attain standards in English that are above the national average by the end of Year 6, with a small proportion achieving standards that are well above average.

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

15. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Throughout the school, starting in the Nursery, pupils greatly enjoy coming to school and participating in the wide range of activities available to them. This attitude to their work has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils know and understand the well-established routines of the school. They work both independently and collaboratively on the tasks they are given and are keen to complete them in the set time. They treat each other with respect and understanding because this is a central plank of the school's mission statement that is consistently emphasised by all staff working in school. Pupils enjoy classroom discussions, and politely wait their turn to speak or answer questions. As a result,

- they develop good speaking and listening skills which are used effectively by the teachers in the pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are carefully provided for, fully integrated into the work of the class and, as a result, develop high self esteem, and have positive attitudes to school and their learning.
16. Pupils' behaviour in class, around the school and on trips is very good, and has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents endorse this judgement and comment that the pupils are always well mannered. This was confirmed during the inspection when Year 5 pupils, as part of their geography work, visited an exhibition about the Nottingham Express Transit, a new tram system being installed in the city. Throughout this trip pupils were very well behaved, on the bus and in the exhibition itself, showing great interest in how the system will affect the city. They were similarly very well behaved when, much to everyone's surprise, they were invited to go into the Council House to look briefly at the building, to meet the Lord Mayor and then to have drinks and biscuits.
  17. Even though much of the accommodation is open plan, there is an overall atmosphere of quiet, calm, harmony and industry throughout the school during the day. These high standards are established in the Nursery, where pupils very quickly learn how to behave, to share and be polite to one another. Very good behaviour continues through the main school, although there is a very small minority of disaffected pupils whose behaviour is not so consistently good. However, staff do not allow them to detract from the work and concentration of others in the class. In the playground pupils play sensibly together in mixed-aged, gender and racial groups. There is no evidence of bullying and this was confirmed in discussions with groups of pupils.
  18. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils learn to work independently and manage their own activities as they progress through the school. In Year 6 they share a small number of monitor duties on a rota basis but have too few opportunities to play a full part in the life of the school. However, as part of the school improvement plan, the staff are working towards setting up a school council and giving pupils wider responsibilities and a greater say in school matters. Pupils who have special interests outside school are encouraged to bring their awards and certificates into assemblies to receive congratulations from the school community.
  19. The relationships that pupils have with each other and all members of staff are very good; again these aspects have remained as they were in the previous inspection and are admired by the parents. Throughout the school day, pupils learn to show respect for one another and for the adults with whom they come into contact. Based on a very good start in the nursery, pupils learn to share, to take turns and to work together, and for some of the younger pupils these are clearly difficult concepts to understand. The ethos of care and respect for each individual is manifest in the conduct of everyone in the school and is highlighted by thoughtful assemblies, for example, on care and respect for one another. Pupils of all races and faiths live and work most harmoniously together in the school.
  20. Overall pupils' attendance in 2000/2001 was satisfactory as it was at the time of the previous inspection. It has improved from the previous year when it was unsatisfactory. Both authorised and unauthorised absences are in line with national averages. However, the absences are significantly and adversely affected by a number of pupils being away from school on extended family holidays. The introduction of new rules from the local education authority on extended holidays

should provide an opportunity for a significant improvement in attendance percentages. The great majority of pupils arrive at school punctually so that the day starts promptly.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall, with a significant proportion being very good or excellent. During the inspection 38 lessons were observed, with over two thirds being good or better. There were no unsatisfactory lessons and the quality of teaching has risen significantly since the last inspection, particularly in the proportion of very good or excellent lessons. Teaching was stronger in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1, where there have been staff changes this term and teachers do not use the results of assessments so consistently to plan appropriately challenging work for their pupils. However, teachers' planning generally shows that they have good strategies to ensure that all pupils are carefully planned for, and this results in pupils of all abilities and backgrounds being successfully challenged in their learning as they move through the school.
22. Teaching, as at the time of the last inspection, is consistently good in the Foundation Stage with some very good and excellent features. The quality of teaching is the major reason for the good progress children make in all areas of learning and the positive attitudes that they show in their first two years in school. A great strength of the teaching is the way that all staff co-operate to provide a safe and caring environment in which the children develop confidence and a feeling of security. The very good teamwork leads to well planned practical experiences for the children who enjoy the challenge of their work and are interested and very enthusiastic about their new learning. High expectations of pupils' performance and continual encouragement from all staff, ensure that pupils of all abilities flourish in this positive atmosphere. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make very good progress because the teachers use the results of continuous assessments to plan the work of each child. The carefully planned group activities make very good use of the wide range of resources and have a very positive impact on the development of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
23. Teaching in English has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and well focused monitoring is leading to improvements in the teaching of literacy skills across the curriculum. Teachers work very effectively to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. This ensures that all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are able to take a full and active part in all lessons. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is more developed in Key Stage 2 where teachers consistently set challenging work which leads to good progress being made during lessons. In Year 2, work is not always so well targeted to pupils' individual needs. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and often include suggestions for further improvement. Pupils respond positively to this and to verbal suggestions in class and as a result, clear improvement can be seen in pupils' work.
24. Teaching in mathematics is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Much of the improvement is due to good quality in-service training and the regular monitoring of the quality of learning in the classroom. From this monitoring, weaknesses have been highlighted and staff training has successfully addressed these weaknesses. For example, mental starters at the beginning of lessons have been considerably improved by increased pace and the use of more challenging questioning. Teachers make particularly good use of their classroom assistants who

give good support during the initial teaching sessions and when supporting small groups during the rest of the lesson. The setting of targets for individual pupils in Key Stage 2 has raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and this has led to noticeable improvements in attainment. However, the use of target setting is not fully established in Key Stage 1, where teachers do not have the same quality feedback from assessments to set challenging work. Pupils' work is marked carefully but teachers do not consistently identify what individual pupils need to do to improve their work. Teachers in Key Stage 2 do not place a high enough emphasis on the learning of tables, and this is restricting pupils' mental mathematics progress in Year 6.

25. Teaching in science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers make good use of resources to plan for the wide range of abilities. Pupils are interested in science because their teachers skilfully integrate information and practical activities into lessons. Teachers capitalise on pupils' natural inquisitiveness and ensure practical tasks are well organised and appropriately resourced. Alongside pupils' learning, there is a strong emphasis on the acquisition of new vocabulary and the appropriate application of numeracy and literacy skills. Older pupils in Year 6 are benefiting from the specialist input by a local secondary school. Teachers in Key Stage 2 make good use of informal assessment when they insist that pupils explain the reasoning for their answers. This gives the teachers a clear insight into pupils' understanding of a particular concept. At present, teachers do not use the results of assessments to guide their planning and address weaknesses as well as they do in English and mathematics. The planned use of ICT in science is, at present, unsatisfactory.
26. The quality of teaching of ICT has fallen since the last inspection. It is now unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 because computers are not used consistently to support pupils' learning and to develop their computer skills. Much of the reason for this is that the school does not, at present, possess a good range of appropriate programs for the younger pupils to use on the new computers. At the time of the previous inspection, teachers were familiar with a wide range of programs which they integrated well into the pupils' learning. Although the same problem exists in Key Stage 2, older pupils are making good use of the internet, word processing and multi-media programs to support and extend their learning. This is particularly evident in the high quality work that the Year 6 pupils are doing on the 1881 census as part of their history topic. The school was disappointed with the quality of in-service training facilitated by one of the nationally recognised providers. As a result, at the end of the course, some teachers felt that they still did not have sufficient skills to teach the programs they had with confidence.
27. In all other subjects, teaching is satisfactory overall except for art and design and physical education where teaching is good and music where teaching is unsatisfactory overall because the majority of teachers lack confidence and subject knowledge to teach all aspects of the subject. During the inspection some very good teaching was observed in geography and good teaching in history. Teachers' planning is good overall and clearly identifies what pupils are to learn during each lesson. In most lessons, these objectives are shared with pupils who then have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Teachers have high expectations of the amount of work that pupils are to cover in lessons. As a result pupils produce a good volume of work which gives them good opportunities to practise their skills.

28. Teachers know their pupils well and the different approaches they employ create an enthusiasm for learning and a desire to do well. This was clearly seen in a very good Year 4 geography lesson where pupils quickly learnt about the wastefulness of their 'throw away' society. Teachers expect pupils to behave well during lessons and to listen carefully. This results in lessons having a good pace with very little time being wasted on the disciplining of pupils. Occasionally in the Year 2 class, pupils' concentration waned as the work set was not always appropriate to their ability.
29. There are very good relationships between classroom assistants and teachers. Teachers make very good use the skills of the very well-trained assistants to give good quality support to individuals and groups of pupils. This has a significant impact on the groups of pupils who come into contact with this support. Homework is set regularly and has a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall, with the best clearly identifying how a pupil can make improvements.
30. The pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated into their classes and have the opportunity to experience the whole curriculum. An experienced language teacher, who works closely with all staff, oversees the planning of these pupils' work. Teachers make good efforts to promote these pupils' learning in general and the acquisition of English in particular. They also use the different experiences of these pupils to enhance the cultural understandings of the rest of the class when appropriate opportunities arise. Support assistants are deployed very effectively and give very good one-to-one and group support for these pupils. Many barriers are broken down by the positive attitudes of the pupils towards their peers from different backgrounds.
31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The overall good provision for them is a key factor in the good progress they make in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers ensure that all pupils are involved in discussions at the beginning and end of lessons. They ask questions that are accurately pitched at the level of the individual pupils and the classroom assistants, who work very closely with individuals and small groups of pupils, offer encouragement and support. Individual pupils' needs are carefully met through teachers' good quality planning which makes appropriate use of pupils' individual education plans. The school makes good use of a well-qualified specialist part-time teacher who works with individuals and small groups of pupils. This work is built on carefully by the class teachers to ensure that pupils' learning difficulties are addressed in a consistent and progressive manner.

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

32. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children in the Nursery and the Reception class is very good, and the children take part in a broad range of exciting and appropriate activities. Tasks are well matched to the needs of all children and cover all areas of learning, enabling the children to make good progress.
33. The school has made good progress overall since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2 in developing a broad and balanced curriculum to which all pupils have very good equality of access and opportunity. At the time of the last inspection, insufficient thought had been given to matching levels of work in some subjects to

the ability levels of pupils and to build on what pupils had already covered. Not all schemes of work were in place and some of those that were, did not clearly identify the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught in each year group. Effective action has now been taken to address these curriculum needs indicating a significant improvement in curriculum provision. The school now makes a good overall provision in Key Stage 2 in all subjects of the curriculum except for music and a satisfactory quality and range of educational opportunities in Key Stage 1 where there are areas for development in ICT and music.

34. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy across all the year groups, and these initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education and attention to drug abuse. A healthy life-style is promoted through the curriculum and provides the pupils with the knowledge and skills to make informed and healthy choices, now and in later life.
35. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities on each school day which include sport, music, homework and drama. These activities are well supported by the pupils adding considerably to their personal and social development. Pupils' achievements in competitive sports are outstanding, particularly in the field of athletics and tennis.
36. The curriculum for pupils who have special educational needs is good and ensures that they make good progress towards their targets. All pupils at Stage 2 and above on the school's special educational needs register have good quality individual education plans which clearly state the pupils' individual targets. Pupils receive good support in class from their teachers and from the knowledgeable classroom assistants who work effectively with small groups of pupils helping them to overcome their difficulties. There is also good provision for those pupils who have English as an additional language, with these pupils making very good progress in the Nursery and good progress through the other key stages. The specialist language teacher works closely with staff to ensure that the planned work for individual pupils builds appropriately on their previous experiences.
37. The school has good links with the community and very good relationships with local schools and colleges. Volunteer readers are welcomed into school to listen to pupils and provide them with guidance on their reading. Pupils benefit from their involvement with the city education authority partnership forum where they are afforded opportunities to present their points of view to the city council. The school has close links with the local shops in the area and the school choir performs regularly in local retirement homes. The school has good links with local educational institutions, using the expertise of a science specialist teacher from the local secondary school and borrowing equipment from the nearby technology college. Both these initiatives are having a marked impact on pupils' learning experiences.
38. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a major strength of the school and has improved overall since the previous inspection, particularly in the cultural aspect. The school's aims and daily life are firmly based on a caring Catholic ethos, which also shows great respect for pupils of all faiths. The racial harmony within the school is totally inclusive so that pupils of all backgrounds learn to accept and respect each other's beliefs. In the middle of the school, there is an attractive small quiet/prayer room for pupils to sit quietly or pray.

- Opportunities are also provided throughout the day for pupils to reflect on the wonders of creation and the world they live in. Examples range from Nursery children linking their painting to the mood of background music to Year 5 pupils gasping at the splendour of the high dome and marbled walls of the foyer of the city council chamber.
39. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good and this has a profound impact on the very good behaviour that was evident during the entire inspection. Pupils know and understand the school rules and the respect for others, both pupils and adults, that is expected of them. They clearly know the difference between right and wrong. In one assembly a pupil offered the suggestion that it was just as wrong not to admit to or apologise for doing something that you knew was wrong, as much as doing the wrong itself. Teachers and all the support staff provide very good role models in dealing with pupils in a calm and confident manner, with pupils responding in a similar way.
40. The school's provision for pupils' social development is very good because teachers plan learning experiences that depend on pupils working together. In class, pupils collaborate sensibly in small groups, mostly getting on with their own work but also helping and supporting each other as well. For example, in one art lesson a pupil was asked by another to rub out a mistake, because he was better at it; in a Year 4 geography lesson, pupils had to work together in pairs to describe how waste products could be recycled. In the playground pupils of different ages, genders and cultural backgrounds share their games together in great harmony. Pupils also benefit socially from the very good range of after-school activities and the visits to a number of interesting places, such as a senior citizens' home at harvest time. They also learn that there are others less fortunate than themselves in the world, and raise money for a number of charities, such as the Catholic Children's Society, Shelter and for emergencies such as in Mozambique and Gujarat.
41. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is now also very good because the school has successfully and effectively developed the range and use of multicultural artefacts to specifically develop pupils' cultural awareness. As a result, pupils enjoy sharing their own wide range of cultural traditions, such as in assemblies, when pupils hear a range of musical instruments being played. Attractive displays around the school heighten pupils' awareness of other cultures; included amongst these displays is a wide range of art and special displays associated with Islam and Sikh religions. Pupils' knowledge of these different religions are often reinforced by carefully planned visits to such places as a Jewish synagogue, a Sikh temple as well as regular visits to the local St. Mary's Church.

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

42. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. The school has established a range of assessment strategies which teachers use to support planning for classes and groups or individual pupils. Steps are now being taken to standardise some of these procedures in order to make better use of computers to correlate assessment information, and thus track pupils' progress more accurately. This has begun to happen from Years 3 to 6, where it is having a positive impact on pupils' attainments in English and mathematics. However, the correlation and use of assessment information has yet to be formalised at the lower end of the school.

43. Assessments are carried out soon after children start Nursery and good use is made of results by teachers to plan appropriate work and help children make good progress towards the early learning goals. This careful analysis also helps to identify, early on, those young children who may have problems with aspects of their learning. The school puts strong emphasis in meeting the needs of all children in its care, and a positive approach to allocating appropriate support begins in the Nursery. The children are assessed again at the end of the Reception class to measure the progress they have made before moving on to the statutory curriculum in Year 1. Teachers keep detailed records of what children do and how well they achieve and these are passed on to the children's new teachers.
44. The statutory national tests are administered as required, and the school uses the optional tests at Key Stage 2, to help measure pupils' progress at the end of each year in English and mathematics. This good practice does not yet extend to other subjects. The school has quite rightly focused on these two subjects recently, and has established good procedures. Teachers are now in a position to extend these procedures to other subjects. They keep very detailed records of work pupils have covered and in some subjects they also indicate how well each child is progressing. However, practice is inconsistent, and assessed work is not always related to National Curriculum level descriptors in subjects other than English, mathematics, and sometimes science. In these subjects, the results of termly assessments help teachers plan work for pupils of differing abilities, and guide 'booster support' to those children who require it in Years 2 and 6. The use of assessment to inform planning is more advanced in Years 3-6, where the school has introduced an assessment manager program to monitor pupils' progress. This is already resulting in raised attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. In Years 1 and 2, teachers keep many records which are not translated into levels at the end of a school year to help the class's new teacher in September. This is one of the reasons why the new teacher in Year 2 is taking time to find out the true attainment of her pupils so that the work she sets is appropriately challenging. Target setting for subjects other than English, mathematics and science has not yet been established, but procedures are being put into place to take this forward across the school.
45. The results of end of key stage tests and other standardised tests are analysed carefully, and these help to highlight strengths in teaching and learning and inform planning. For example, the teaching of mental mathematics was identified as an area for development and has been successfully addressed through well-focused in-service training. Teachers and other adults working in the classrooms know the children well, and every attention is paid to helping pupils make the best progress they can. Planning regularly incorporates opportunities to assess progress and to ensure work is appropriately matched to pupils' needs.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good overall. These pupils are carefully monitored and supported from the Foundation Stage onwards and this good practice enables them to make good progress towards meeting their individual targets. Detailed records noting pupils' progress are kept by the co-ordinator, and these are used well at regular review meetings when good quality individual education plans are drawn up. Class teachers, support staff, parents and pupils are involved in the review process. This shared responsibility boosts pupils' confidence and raises their motivation to do well. The school makes regular use of other agencies to ensure pupils are given the most appropriate help to meet their needs.

47. The school has good assessment procedures in place to support pupils with English as an additional language. When pupils first enter the school, their needs are identified, appropriate programmes arranged, and pupils' progress carefully monitored. Baseline assessments indicate that children with no pre-school experience generally have lower levels of attainment in language and literacy on entry to the Nursery and into the Reception Class. Support is targeted well from the start enabling these children to make good progress. Class teachers in partnership with support teachers monitor pupils' achievements regularly throughout the school. Planning of teaching and learning takes into account class and group targets, and class teachers apply the same effective moderating strategies to assess standards as used for all pupils in the class. The specialist language co-ordinator keeps detailed records of progress and supported children have individual education plans which are reviewed regularly. This degree of recording and assessment is very good and greatly enhances the level of success pupils achieve. There are no bilingual assistants but other support staff are deployed well, and they make a good contribution to these pupils' learning.
48. The steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good and have improved since the previous inspection report. Child protection procedures are in place with the head teacher undertaking the role of designated person and spending a significant amount of his time on these issues. All members of staff are aware of their responsibilities in this regard. Procedures for dealing with first aid, medicines and accidents, including notifying parents, are well established. Special additional procedures are used for school trips, including the compulsory wearing of seat belts on buses. Health and safety risks are now continuously reviewed by staff, audited by governors annually and the local education authority every three years. One concern shared by the inspectors is the practice of registers being kept in classrooms during the day. This might compromise the evacuation procedure if teachers are not in their classroom at the time the alarm sounds.
49. The procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are good. The great majority of pupils arrive at school in good time and are settled ready for registration which is taken promptly so that the day gets off to a good start. The great majority of parents co-operate fully with the school by notifying reasons for pupils' absences. The education welfare officer from the local education authority visits the school every two weeks to support the school and the families of the few pupils who have poor attendance. Until recently the guidance from the local education authority with regard to pupils taken on extended family holidays overseas has led to absence statistics that do not reflect the school's good work in this area.
50. The procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The school has a behaviour policy that positively reinforces the school's aims and ethos and this is applied consistently by all staff throughout the school day. As a result, the school remains a calm and ordered place at all times with pupils showing high standards of behaviour and discipline. This very good behaviour is reinforced by a popular reward system of stars, certificates, and congratulations at assemblies. Pupils are fully aware of the sanctions that may be applied when rare misdemeanours occur.

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

51. Parents hold the school in extremely high regard. In the parents' pre-inspection meeting, the questionnaire and through meeting parents before and after school in the playground, there has not been a single criticism of the school's performance. Parents greatly appreciate the caring family ethos of the school, the standards of behaviour and discipline that are fostered in the pupils, as well as the academic standards that the school achieves with their children. Parents feel a genuine partnership with the school in their child's education and are warmly welcomed into the school at all times.
52. Overall, the information provided by the school to parents is good. The general information provided by the school through regular newsletters and other information about forthcoming events, including the curriculum topics to be covered during the each term, is very good. The Prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report are attractively presented and meet statutory guidelines. The information provided to parents regarding the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, and information about the progress of pupils who have English as an additional language are good. Annual reports to parents are generally good for English, mathematics and science and appropriate information is given regarding targets for improvement. In other subjects there are comprehensive commentaries on what has been covered and how well pupils have done.
53. Groups of parents make a significant contribution to the work and life of the school, such as supporting in the classrooms. Parents like the way the school values all pupils and are strongly in favour of the home/school agreement. For the younger pupils, parents actively support their children in learning to read. As they get older parents encourage their children in their other homework assignments. There is always good support for the summer and Christmas fairs, and plenty of volunteers to accompany school trips.

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

54. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership for the school. The headteacher provides a breadth of understanding and a wealth of ideas that have helped to significantly increase the proportion of pupils attaining the national average in the recent tests for pupils at the end of Year 6. He is keenly aware of his own strengths and capabilities and uses the skills of others to very good effect. The governing body, members of staff and parents rightly give him much credit for the improvements made in the school. Governors and staff represent a formidable team that has a very good capacity to succeed in its main goals of constant evaluation of the effectiveness of its work and improving the standards and quality of the education it provides.
55. The governors provide good leadership and their strategic role in school has improved considerably since the last inspection. Ongoing training has given them a greater understanding of ways of judging the school's performance and this they do to good effect by challenging the headteacher on issues such as the impact of spending on standards. They have been highly supportive of the time and money that has been devoted to the implementation of the accelerated mathematics programme which has led to significant improvements in the subject. Although the governing body has only eight members out of a possible twelve, collectively they have a good combination of skills and experience. Improved monitoring of the school's work has made the governors less dependent on the headteacher for

information about the school's performance. Governors observe teaching and give feedback to teachers, and follow the progress of each year cohort carefully using the school's new assessment tracking system. This results in governors having good first hand knowledge about the school's performance, and allows them to play a far more useful role in the strategic management of the school.

56. Subject managers' leadership skills are good overall and are particularly effective in the organisation of special educational needs and English as an additional language, where the pupils' needs are carefully planned for. The monitoring of literacy and numeracy lessons by the headteacher and the subject co-ordinators has given the school a far greater insight into pupils' attainment. Subsequent training and improved assessment and recording are leading to much improved and more accurate targeting of pupils' work in English and mathematics. This is particularly so in Key Stage 2 where standards rose markedly last year. The role of the co-ordinator is not so well developed in the non-core subjects, as the school has rightly prioritised the raising of standards in English, mathematics and science. Through effective delegation, the headteacher has given managers increasing responsibility and has established clear systems to maintain a watching brief over their work.
57. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and leads directly to the good progress that these pupils make through the school. The co-ordinator has good relationships with outside agencies that she calls on when required. The special educational needs co-ordinator takes an active role in assessment and the joint drawing up of the individual education plans with class teachers. The school has a good range of resources for supporting pupils with special educational needs and these are used effectively by all staff working with the pupils.
58. Management of English as an additional language provision is good and the co-ordinator works hard, sharing this responsibility with all class teachers and support staff. This effective partnership working results in pupils' achieving well by the time they leave the school.
59. The school's aims are highly appropriate and are incorporated into its mission statement. The statement highlights the importance of good relationships and a commitment to equality of opportunity within a strong Catholic ethos. Developments consistently reflect the school's mission and lead directly to the creation of a most civilised and caring atmosphere in the school in which all pupils are valued and yet challenged. The school development plan is based on these aims. The plan is carefully drawn up and takes appropriate account of the views of parents, staff and governors and the analysis of data that the school has collected over the past year. The present plan clearly identifies where the school aims to be in the year 2005. To achieve this, detailed plans are drawn up for each year. The thorough development planning process ensures that priorities are most appropriate for the school and, as a result, past developments have been instrumental in the raising of standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. There has also been a significant improvement in resources around the school, particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.
60. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection. Opportunities for the English and mathematics co-ordinators to develop their role has been successfully achieved through well focused in-service training and through the

timetabling of opportunities for these co-ordinators to observe teaching and learning in the classroom and to monitor pupils' work. The quality of teaching has risen as a direct result of this monitoring and also because individual teachers have observed each other in the classroom so that good practice has been shared. The role of co-ordinators in other subjects is less well developed. However, the school recognises this area for development in the present school improvement plan and has devised a rolling timetable for co-ordinators to have release time to monitor standards of teaching and learning in their subjects. All subjects now have clear schemes of work which clearly identify the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught in each year group and, in most subjects, are leading to the clear development of pupils' skills and knowledge. This is particularly so in English, mathematics, art and physical education. However, because of a lack of subject expertise amongst the staff, the development of pupils' skills and knowledge in music is unsatisfactory. Although the school library has been refurbished and the school has spent large amounts of money on replacing out of date books, there is not enough planned use of this good learning resource at present.

61. The school's finances are in sound order. The deficit budget carry forward will be corrected by monies which are owed to the school. Much of extra spending for the previous year was on computers and was unplanned. The city education authority drew up a plan whereby schools could take part in a limited-period 50/50 scheme for the purchase of new computers. The school and governors rightly decided that this scheme offered very good value for money and took advantage of this offer to update and increase the number of computers in the school. There are secure financial systems and effective control in place, with the headteacher and governors having a clear picture of the school's finances and how these can be used to their maximum effect. The office manager, who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the budget, gives very good support to the school. She keeps clear records of curriculum spending as well as records of other funds, such as school visits. The general school administration is very good, with day-to-day routines very well established. The recommendations of the recent audit have all been dealt with effectively. Subject managers bid for funding and senior managers make appropriate decisions that take account of the school's needs and the identified school priorities. The specific grants which the school receives for special educational needs and English as an additional language are effectively spent. The school is able to give a good level of support to these pupils who are very well integrated into all aspects of school life, making subsequent good progress and developing high self-esteem.
62. The headteacher acknowledges that the amount of bureaucracy has increased in recent years, but finds the statistical data from the Department for Education and Employment and the city education authority gives useful comparators for the school's performance. The school gives good consideration to the principles of best value through the work of the headteacher and the finance committee. It carefully considers its comparison with local schools, consults very well with parents and receives good support from them, particularly with regard to the way that the school is organised and pupils' achievement and the high standards of behaviour. The school shows very good attention to competition by carefully ensuring that it gets the best possible deal when buying resources. As a result of this, good savings have been made on the refurbishment of the toilets, new carpeting, the purchase of computers and a new reading scheme.

63. The match of teachers and support staff employed by the school to meet the demands of the curriculum is good. The qualified teachers have a good range of experience and expertise. The provision of support staff is good. Classroom assistants are suitably qualified, feel that their work is valued and appreciated by the school, work very well with teachers and make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. Some of them are involved with the organisation and management of the homework club and a short residential weekend for pupils. All teaching staff have received significant in-service training in recent years in line with an annual training plan and as part of the well-organised performance management scheme. There are good arrangements for the induction and mentoring of newly qualified teachers and new teachers to the school. The teaching staff, classroom assistants, clerical assistants, caretaker and lunchtime supervisors show very good teamwork and all play a significant role in ensuring the effective day-to-day running of the school.
64. The accommodation is good and is used effectively. The school is kept clean and well maintained by the commitment of the caretaker and cleaners. All classrooms and corridors benefit from high quality displays of pupils' work, which provides colourful and stimulating surroundings. The teachers make effective use of the open plan nature of the teaching areas but these areas are rather cramped for the older pupils in Year 6.
65. The outside grounds consist of grassed and hard areas and a school field. The Nursery has a very suitable outdoor secure area which consists of hard, soft and grass areas which are used extensively for the benefit of the children's learning and development. Resources are very good in English, good in mathematics, music and physical education, and satisfactory in science, art, geography and history. There are some shortcomings in the level of resources for design technology and ICT. Resources for pupils with special educational needs and English as additional language pupils are good. In the majority of subjects the resources are well used to enhance the educational standards of all pupils.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

### 1) \*Raise attainment in information and communication technology in Key Stage 1 by:

- Ensuring there are enough relevant programs to support pupils' learning in all aspects of the subject;
- Improving the confidence and subject knowledge of the teachers to ensure these programs can be taught successfully;
- Ensuring the planned activities for the use of ICT are implemented;
- Providing release time for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms and ICT suite.

(Paragraphs 10, 26, 33, 56, 92, 99, 116-121)

### 2) \*Raise attainment in music across the school by:

- Improving teachers' subject knowledge and confidence through well-focused in-service training;
- Releasing the co-ordinator to monitor teachers' planning and teaching and learning in the classrooms;
- Sharing the good practice in the school to help address identified weaknesses.
- The consideration of introducing more instrumental tuition.

(Paragraphs 12, 27, 33, 60, 122-125 )

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Increase the breadth of pupils' learning experiences in design and technology. (Paragraphs 12, 65, 104-108 )
- Plan more opportunities for pupils to use the library. (Paragraph 81 )
- Further develop the management and use of assessment in Years 1 and 2. (Paragraphs 21, 42, 84 )
- \*Further develop the use of information and communication technology in Years 3-6. (Paragraphs 7, 8, 10, 26, 116-121 )
- Further develop the role that older pupils play in the life of the school. (Paragraph 18 )
- \*Increase the monitoring role of non-core subject co-ordinators. (Paragraphs 56, 111, 124)
- Improve consistency in marking to ensure pupils know what they have to do to improve their work, and clarify and standardise the correction policy in mathematics. (Paragraphs 24, 29, 84, 90 )

\*These points for improvement are part of the present school development plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	18	11	0	0	0
Percentage	5	18	48	29	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	198
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	41

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	30

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	9	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (90)	86 (90)	86 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	19	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (93)	86 (90)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (96)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	9
	Girls	12	6	11
	Total	21	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (81)	55 (71)	69 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	11	8	12
	Total	19	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (74)	62 (84)	72 (87)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	17
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	14
Indian	11
Pakistani	39
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	92
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	28.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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	1	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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	451136
Total expenditure	453421
Expenditure per pupil	1955
Balance brought forward from previous year	15219
Balance carried forward to next year	12934

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

190

Number of questionnaires returned

39

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	88	12	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	76	24	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	24	21	0	12
The teaching is good.	73	24	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	30	9	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	30	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	21	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	58	36	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	73	27	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	33	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	43	9	0	12

## **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. The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. The attainment for the majority of children on entry to the Reception class is well below the national average particularly in language and mathematical development. As a result of the consistently good teaching in the Nursery and Reception class, children make good progress in their first years at school. By the time they reach the end of the Reception, most children will attain the expected learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development and will achieve above the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, and physical development. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, although the children make good progress, the majority does not attain the nationally expected goals by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. Children are confident in their relationships with their classmates, teachers and other adults and participate eagerly in the many activities planned for them by their teachers. They listen attentively and concentrate and persevere well with their tasks, both in and out of their classrooms. They work conscientiously individually, or as members of a small group, and demonstrate very good behaviour in a supervised or unsupervised situation.
68. The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is consistently good. Teaching and support staff in both classes co-operate very well to provide a safe, secure and very caring environment for the school's youngest pupils. They have worked together very successfully to plan and implement a broad and balanced curriculum which is geared to the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for children of this age. Teachers plan very carefully to ensure the individual needs of all children are met. As a result, children thrive in this caring and well-focused learning environment. High expectations of children's performance, allied to constant praise and encouragement from all staff, enable the children to develop confidence and a feeling of security. Very good liaison is encouraged and achieved between the Nursery teacher, who is co-ordinator of the Foundation Stage, and the senior management team. Baseline assessment is carried out in an effective manner and the information is then used to guide and inform curriculum planning so that the needs of individual children are met. Day-to-day monitoring of children's progress and attainment is carried out carefully and the teachers and support staff note all aspects of social and academic development. Accommodation and resources at the Foundation Stage are very good and there is a designated secure outside play area, which develops and enhances the children's physical development. Children with special educational needs or English as an additional language are very well supported by the well-planned additional support that they receive and all make very good progress.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

69. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development in the Nursery and Reception classes. Most are confident and establish very effective relationships with their classmates, teachers and other adults. They are polite and respectful and show sensitivity to the feeling of others as is apparent in whole class sessions and whole school assemblies. Children concentrate well and are eager to explore any new learning. They work well as part

of a group, or independently, and are willing to take turns and share fairly. These children are mature for their age. They are beginning to demonstrate independence in dressing and personal hygiene and select activities with confidence, such as when children in Reception select their own resources to help them practise their letter sounds. They initiate ideas, especially in their imaginative work in art. The vast majority of children of this age have developed a good understanding of what is right and wrong and they treat their school environment with care. The good, and often very good quality teaching actively encourages independent learning and makes a significant contribution to children's progress. All teaching staff and classroom assistants relate very well to the children and this has a very positive impact on the quality of learning. Staff know their children well and relationships are very positive and friendly. Even the youngest children understand the routines and rules, for example, when they learn to take turns to use the climbing equipment, the wheeled toys or to work in the creative areas. When children struggle to decide what to do, all adults in both classes are very supportive, gentle and sensitive when guiding the children to be more independent. The teacher sets high expectations for good behaviour. Many opportunities are provided for children to co-operate together, for example in role-play in 'the grocer's shop', these activities develop the children's self-confidence and extends effectively their social and personal skills. In the Foundation Stage there is a sense of community which provides safe, secure and happy settings that enable children to make good progress in this area of learning and most attain standards above those expected before they leave the Reception class.

### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

70. Children enter the school with language and literacy skills that are well below average and, although they make good progress in this area of learning, the majority do not attain the nationally expected goals by the end of Reception. All staff work hard to develop children's communication skills by using incidental and structured opportunities to extend and reinforce speech patterns, vocabulary and awareness, and understanding of the language and literacy skills needed to read and write. Pupils listen eagerly to nursery rhymes and stories, such as 'The Gingerbread Man', but some find it difficult to listen to the views of others in class discussions and sometimes their responses to questions are limited to one-word answers. Not all children have the vocabulary to express themselves effectively when offering explanations or descriptions. A few have specific speech difficulties that further limit their spoken thoughts and ideas. Some children enter the Nursery with very little understanding of English. They are very sensitively supported throughout the day, and particularly in 'carpet sessions,' so that they take a full part in all the class's activities. As a result, children make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills.
71. When they arrive at school, the Nursery children try to copy their own names. Some children can recognise and link initial letters and sounds as they draw the shape of the letters in the air. The older children read high frequency words and make good progress when working with teachers in word activities. The majority of older children understand the concept of rhyming words and a few use phonic skills to spell simple words such as cat, mat and hat. They enjoy looking at books or photographs with adult support and are developing satisfactory early reading and writing habits. A few children point to the cover and title of a book and understand the work of authors and illustrators. A minority of children copy their own names legibly and form letters correctly, but few can write independently. The children

enjoy the 'Big Books' and show a growing interest in alliteration, sounds and words. Standards of spoken language increase rapidly because the children are encouraged to talk about themselves and the activities they are involved in: for example, they talk about the shapes of areas of the outdoor area and count the different colours of cars and bicycles.

72. In the attractive Nursery, particularly good use is made of labels and the staff constantly refer to the wall displays to reinforce word recognition skills. The children extend their vocabulary when the teacher explains directional words, such as left, under and through. A group of children work with the teacher sorting words into sets using hoops, whilst others use the listening centre. The children know that writing in books tells a story but are less secure about naming full stops and capital letters. In the Reception class, good use is made of computer programs to develop children's literacy skills, for example, when they match sounds to pictures. Many opportunities are provided to develop spoken language through conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups. For example, the children guess the animals described in the non-fiction big book 'Who am I?' and talk about the butterfly collages they have made. The quality of teaching is good, often very good and on one occasion in the Nursery was judged to be excellent. Classroom assistants give very good support to teachers in both the Nursery and Reception to ensure that all children are fully involved and their communication skills extended.

### **Mathematical development**

73. Baseline assessments show that the children's attainment is well below average when they start school, and many will not achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the Reception class. However, good progress is made as wide ranging activities and opportunities are provided for mathematics, including counting activities, simple arithmetic, number patterns and shape recognition. In the Nursery, the children sing rhymes and use finger play in counting songs, but some find it difficult to show three or four fingers without help. Some children count to 10 with the teacher but then find it difficult to complete a similar exercise in their workbooks. They learn to form numbers to record their counting activities and recognise numbers 1-10 when using objects in matching activities. In role-play in the 'grocery shop' in the Nursery some higher-attaining children add together 1 pence and 5 pence.
74. Nursery children can draw, count and match objects to five. The older children in Reception have a good knowledge of shapes and most understand halves, quarters and repeating number patterns. They count the faces of a cube and show awareness of measures, symmetry and orientation. Challenges for children are provided for higher-attaining pupils, such as extending the numbers to 20 and above when counting forward and backwards using the teacher's counting stick.
75. The children make good progress in sorting and ordering and practise counting from the many attractive and informative wall displays and number lines in the Nursery and classrooms. Most children can sequence objects in order using ordinal numbers, such as fourth and fifth, and understand patterns with larger numbers. They use counting computer programmes and games. In the sand and water play areas they learn to use specific mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more than' and 'smaller than'. The quality of teaching is good, for example, when children were taught to recognise coins by size, shape and colour and were asked to apply their knowledge in challenging group activities. Discussion with the older children in

Reception shows that they are developing appropriate knowledge and understanding of the properties of numbers, size and shape and use of mathematical language.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

76. Children make good progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world and nearly all children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of their time in the Reception class. The quality of teaching is good and often very good in both classes. Teachers plan a good variety of experiences that develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world effectively. Work in this area is also enhanced by visits in the local area. Children look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change, for example, by looking at the features of the work linked to the study of the local environment. They draw a simple map of the local area, identifying important buildings, such as the church, the school and the shops. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for children to develop a sense of time, for example, by looking at 'my family and members of my family'. Children in Reception experiment with materials, such as sand, and find out that sand passes out of a bottle with a big hole more quickly than one with little holes. During the inspection, children were developing an early understanding of forces by identifying and experiencing pushing and pulling forces over smooth and rough surfaces. Children in the Nursery and Reception class have access to information and communication technology, but their computer skills need further development and improvement. They are beginning to learn about their own culture and beliefs and those of others. Teachers give children appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through first-hand experiences, and effective use is made of questioning to encourage children in the Nursery and Reception to think about how things work and why they happen.

## **Physical Development**

77. The teaching in this area of learning is very good and children of all abilities make good progress in their physical development, moving well in any physical exercise. Children in Reception show increasing control and co-ordination in their movements, especially when running and jumping. Most are able to hop. They show an increasing awareness of space and use equipment safely and sensibly. Staff support and challenge children well. They encourage them to think about their movements and how they can improve. Through the use of demonstration and the direct teaching of physical skills the level of children's performance improves. Staff are keen to use opportunities to enhance children's personal and social development and because of this the children move from the classroom to the hall quickly and quietly and all dress and undress independently. They show a satisfactory capability to demonstrate a variety of movements and their willingness to talk about their own and others' skills. Children of all abilities handle tools and materials well when engaged in creative activities. They show confidence in handling construction kits and malleable materials like plasticine and clay. The teachers encourage the children to be imaginative in their physical play and activities and to evaluate their own level of performance. The children respond very well to this. By the end of Reception, most pupils achieve beyond the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

## **Creative Development**

78. Attainment is in line with the Early Learning Goals for children at the end of Reception. The quality of teaching is good and children make good progress. The children are given good quality opportunities in the Nursery to explore colour in painting and texture through clay. Children use appropriate styles and colours to

produce attractive and interesting paintings. Teachers in both classes properly emphasise the importance of planning out activities before children start their activities. For example, before making Gingerbread Man biscuits, the children in the Nursery first had to discuss their ideas. This was effective because it provided them with the opportunity to evaluate the finished product and to explore and discuss how it could be improved the next time. There are examples of good teaching in music where the children are encouraged to be imaginative and creative. Good management strategies ensure that all children are involved and all are gaining in confidence because of the praise and encouragement which builds up their self-image and esteem effectively. The majority of the older children in Reception clap in time and sing well with the piano accompaniment. They know that percussion instruments are hit or shaken and that different instruments make different sounds. Staff capitalise on the role-play opportunities which do much to improve children's language skills as well as adding to the quality of relationships which are already a strong and important feature in the Foundation Stage.

## ENGLISH

79. Attainment in English, in both Key Stages, is in line with the national average, and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The great majority of pupils are making good progress, with many of those who are gifted or have special educational needs or have English as an additional language making very good progress as they move through the school.
80. The school is to be congratulated on the very good progress made by pupils in speaking and listening, especially those for whom English is an additional language. This is achieved by the high quality of specialist support and because most teachers carefully ensure that all pupils are included in classroom discussions, encouraging them to participate fully. Most pupils, in both key stages, listen well to their teachers and each other and will often ask questions to clarify their understanding. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 speak confidently, but many experience difficulty in constructing whole sentences and often use colloquial phrases. By the end of the Year 2 most have learned to organise their speech into full sentences and to use more precise and imaginative vocabulary. They continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 2, so that by Year 6 most are speaking and listening confidently in a range of situations. They respond well to questions and ideas using descriptive and precise vocabulary that has been broadened through the knowledge of technical vocabulary from other subjects. The youngest pupils take part in role-play and the school provides many opportunities for the pupils to participate in various performances, which often include speaking in public. However, there are not enough planned choral speaking activities to help to improve the clarity of pupils' speech.
81. Standards in reading in both key stages are in line with national expectations, with a small minority of pupils reading well above this. A Year 2 pupil, for example, has read all the Harry Potter books, and some pupils in Year 6 have enjoyed Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings". The pupils are enthusiastic readers and are very well supplied with a wide range of attractive books in the school reading scheme. When they become free readers, in Key Stage 2, they are provided with a very good choice of quality fiction books in the classroom collections and this maintains their enthusiasm for reading. There is also a very well stocked non-fiction library, which is bright, attractive and efficiently organised. This is an improvement since the

previous inspection, but, at the present time, teachers do not plan enough use of this valuable resource to develop pupils' personal research skills. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have positive attitudes to reading. They enjoy their shared reading experiences in school, using the Big Books, and following the text, but they are not always expected to join in with the reading, so opportunities are missed to help their word recognition. Pupils read frequently at home to their parents, and this is having a beneficial effect on their progress. There is a home/school diary system in operation which would be even more effective if teachers were to provide specific guidance and short-term targets for parents to follow. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have made a good start in reading and are able to recognise many words on sight and have a good understanding of the stories they read. Although they have gained some knowledge of letter sounds, many do not readily or effectively apply them when encountering unfamiliar words. Sound progress is made throughout Key Stage 2 and pupils in Year 6 are able to talk about the characters in their books and predict what might happen next, giving reasons for their opinions. Most read fluently, with few errors, which they usually self-correct. A small minority reads aloud with good expression, but most pupils require more practice and encouragement in this aspect. Pupils are keen to read non-fiction books and know how to locate books and information from the library, but do not have sufficient opportunities to use these skills for independent research.

82. Pupils' written work, in both key stages is in line with the national average, but the more able pupils exceed this and achieve standards that are good, very good and, in some instances, excellent. The school has set a high priority on further improvement and has allocated more time for extended writing. This initiative is having a positive impact on standards. A significant emphasis is placed, especially in Key Stage 2, on developing and broadening pupils' vocabulary during the Literacy Hour, which is very effectively helping the pupils to choose imaginative language in their creative writing. The Year 2 pupils write stories and news using logically sequenced sentences. In one literacy lesson, for example, pupils adapt the story of "The Jolly Witch", to describe unusual events in their own classroom. Events, which range from objects and furniture moving around the room, to work being magically completed overnight. The majority of pupils form letters legibly to spell simple words correctly, and use their individual dictionaries efficiently. The lower-attaining pupils receive more support from their teachers, for example, when they dictate their ideas so they can be written down. By the end of Year 2, a large majority of pupils convey their meaning clearly when writing for a range of purposes, such as reports of visits, stories, news, nonsense rhymes and letters. A small minority of pupils use a well-formed cursive script. Many of their ideas are imaginative, with the higher-attaining pupils writing at length and structuring and organising their ideas very well. The great majority of pupils develop an understanding of how to punctuate sentences using capital letters and full stops, and are reaching the national expectation in their ability to spell.
83. Good progress continues to be made in Key Stage 2, so that by the time the pupils reach the end of Year 6, most are writing confidently, fluently and legibly in ink, frequently choosing interesting, adventurous and descriptive vocabulary to express imaginative ideas. They write for a good range of purposes and audiences and are carefully taught to plan and draft their work. The higher-attaining and gifted pupils make very good progress. Their writing is thoughtful, imaginative, well spelt, correctly punctuated and organised into paragraphs. The average and lower-attaining pupils do not write at such length and are less secure in spelling and punctuation but most reach the expected level in these skills. A good range of

curriculum opportunities enables the pupils to practise writing in a variety of styles. For example, they write persuasive arguments for the protection of animals in captivity, descriptions of sights and sounds in the rainforest, book reviews, prayers, stories and factual reports. They write blank and rhyming verse, using imaginative vocabulary, often with humour, such as this extract from a "Seasons" poem, "When the last dead leaves fall from trees, And Granny falls off your toboggan". Another pupil, in Year 4, describes a tiger in her poem as having "Eyes like a laser". Pupils are expected to use their literacy skills in other curriculum areas. They do this well; for example, in a Year 6 history lesson they transfer an analysis of a census form into a prose passage and Year 5 pupils write about the effects of traffic in the High Street as part of their geography studies. There has been some improvement since the previous inspection in providing pupils with opportunities to use the word processor to support their work, but these experiences still remain too limited.

84. The quality of teaching is good; during the inspection, teaching was good in Key Stage 2, where there was one excellent lesson in Year 4, and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The main reason for the difference in the quality of teaching in the two key stages is the recent turnover of teaching staff in Key Stage 1 and the better use of assessment in Key Stage 2 which enables teachers to set consistently challenging work. All teachers work very hard and the great majority adapt the work well to the needs and interests of the pupils. As a result, pupils' behaviour is very good and they respond well to their lessons. This was particularly evident on one occasion, when a Key Stage 2 teacher modified her plans during the lesson. Occasionally teachers do not plan appropriately for pupils' needs, and when this happens the work is not sufficiently challenging, and pupils' concentration and interest wanes. However, teachers are generally enthusiastic and pupils respond with similar enthusiasm and work with interest and good concentration. The best teaching was characterised by very good questioning techniques, well-sequenced challenging activities and lessons, which moved at a good pace. In an excellent lesson observed during the inspection, the teacher took full advantage of the wide range of opportunities that arose to consolidate and develop the pupils' literacy skills. These included, extending and enriching the vocabulary, emphasising the grammar and style, and reinforcing the rules of punctuation. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully, and often include a comment of praise or a suggestion for further improvement. Pupils respond positively to this and to verbal suggestions in class, by rising to the challenge and persevering when the task is difficult. Teachers celebrate their efforts by attractively displaying their written work in the classrooms and the shared areas.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. Inspection evidence indicates standards have been maintained since the last inspection and that attainment of pupils in the present Year 2 and Year 6 classes is average.
86. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good overall progress through the key stage. Work for pupils in Year 1 builds well on the carefully planned experiences of the Foundation Stage. Pupils recognise numbers to ten, with higher-achieving pupils able to record numbers up to 20. Pupils measure length accurately using non-standard units. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have an appropriate understanding of number and pattern. Pupils have satisfactory understanding of place value and higher-achieving pupils have good mental skills, for example, when they add and take away 21 from a double-digit number. Pupils' mathematics vocabulary is less well developed, for

example, when some pupils in Year 2 did not realise that 'total' and 'sum' require the use of addition. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of time and symmetry but data handling is less well developed. Teachers use homework appropriately to consolidate pupils' number skills.

87. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make consistently good progress with pupils in Year 3 making particularly good progress in their number work because of the enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge of the teacher. The work is challenging to the pupils who respond enthusiastically. For example, in one lesson, pupils were asked to think of a two-digit number that was more than 50 with both digits different, and to count on from this in tens. Similarly, good progress takes place in Year 4 because the teacher uses good quality open-ended questioning and maintains a very good pace of learning in lessons. These pupils are gaining increasing confidence in their number work, for example, in the development of new subtraction methods that are derived from their mental complementary addition work. Pupils in Year 5 have made good progress in the development of number strategies to solve mental problems because of well-focused and enthusiastic teaching. As a result, they have a good understanding of place value and an increasing agility in their recall of multiplication facts. Despite the good quality teaching and emphasis on number work in Year 5, there are still too many pupils in Year 6 who do not have quick recall of tables facts. However, the use of the recently introduced accelerated mathematics programme has had a marked impact on pupils' number work through the key stage.
88. By the age of 11, pupils have good skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication, although their division skills are less well developed. Pupils have a good understanding of place value, as this is strongly emphasised in the teaching, and use this knowledge well in their decimal and percentage work. Whilst higher-ability pupils have particularly good knowledge of tables, the knowledge of tables amongst the average and lower-achieving pupils is not well developed, and this is restricting the development of their mental mathematics and written manipulation of numbers. Pupils have satisfactory understanding of probability and good knowledge of data handling. Pupils have a good knowledge of reflective symmetry and use their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes well when constructing quadrilaterals using given angles and the lengths of sides. Pupils use and apply their mathematical skills satisfactorily in practical situations but do not have enough planned opportunities for open-ended investigations.
89. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well as they move through the school and reach their full potential by the end of Year 6. Much of this is due to the enthusiastic teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, which helps pupils enjoy their mathematics work and motivates them in the tasks that they are set. The great majority of pupils have positive attitudes and increasing levels of confidence in themselves as mathematicians and this is having a good impact on the quality of their learning. Pupils work hard in lessons and behave very well. Pupils' enjoyment of mathematics is, at present, not so noticeable in Key Stage 1, where the work that is set for pupils is not always at the appropriate level.
90. The teaching of mathematics is good overall, with some very good and excellent lessons being seen during the inspection. Teaching is not so strong in Key Stage 1, where the use of assessment is not yet well developed. Good quality in-service training and regular monitoring of pupils' work and the quality of learning in the classroom have improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection. This is clearly evident when pupils' work from last year was analysed as part of the

inspection. Teachers make particularly good use of their classroom assistants who give good support during the teaching sessions at the beginning of lessons and work with commitment and good understanding with small groups during the rest of the lesson. Because of this good quality support, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, all make consistently good progress and have very positive attitudes towards the subject. Pupils' work is marked carefully but more could be done to identify to pupils what they could do to improve their work. There is no clear policy on corrections, with very little work that is marked as incorrect being corrected. As a result, pupils are not benefiting as much as they could from their teachers' careful marking. Setting targets for individual pupils has raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is due to be extended to Key Stage 1 during this academic year and will help to standardise the present assessment and recording methods used by teachers. Plenaries at the end of lessons are generally used well to consolidate pupils' learning, and give good opportunities to pupils to reflect on the ideas of their peers. The discussions that take place make a good contribution to pupils' social development.

91. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented. Good quality monitoring of lessons and pupils' work by the two co-ordinators has led to well focused developments in areas of perceived weaknesses. The staff in-service training for mental starters at the beginning of lessons has led to noticeable improvements in the pace of learning and challenge to individual pupils. However, despite ensuring that pupils have opportunities to use their mathematics skills in subjects, such as history, design and technology and geography, opportunities for pupils to carry out extended, open-ended investigations, are too limited. This lack of opportunities is preventing pupils from further developing their problem-solving skills and denying teachers a further insight into individual pupils' mathematical thinking.
92. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is an ongoing area of school development. Good use is made of computers for the accelerated mathematics work in Key Stage 2, and there are some good cross-curricular links in Year 6 where pupils have been using a database as part of their census work in their Victorian project. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have access to a sufficient range of programs to consolidate and develop their class work.
93. The two co-ordinators have benefited from extended in-service training courses and are aware of the strengths and areas that need to be developed through the school. The subject development plan clearly identifies what needs to be done. The school does not at present make enough use of the expertise of the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator for the ongoing monitoring of the Year 2 pupils, so that areas of comparative weakness can be addressed. At present in Years 1 and 2, individual targets are not clearly set nor progress regularly monitored to ensure that pupils are achieving their potential. High quality resources have been acquired since the last inspection and overall, these are used effectively by the teachers to develop pupils' mathematical thinking and understanding.

## **SCIENCE**

94. Inspection findings indicate that the great majority of pupils make good progress in science and at the end of Year 2 attain standards that broadly match national expectations. No science lessons were observed in Key Stage 2, but the analysis of

pupils' work shows that these pupils make good progress through the key stage and attain average standards by the end of Year 6. The picture for both key stages is much the same as that found at the time of the last inspection overall. Since the last inspection, the school has begun to identify trends with improving assessment and tracking strategies, and procedures are in hand to identify pupils requiring extra support and to monitor their progress even more closely. Whilst the majority of pupils attain broadly in line with national average expectations, the school has a small but significant number of higher-attaining pupils who achieve well and attain above average standards. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are carefully planned for, receive good support and are helped to make overall good progress.

95. Pupils enter Year 1 with good quality early scientific experiences from the Foundation Stage curriculum for knowledge and understanding. They build on this good learning, by continuing to explore, for example, healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, understanding well the links between the two aspects. Teachers help pupils to develop good enquiry skills, for example, when Year 1 pupils explore the five senses. By incorporating factual information with good investigative work, teachers help pupils think about, and articulate, what they distinguish with each of their senses. This process builds pupils' scientific vocabulary and also makes a positive contribution towards the development of the speaking and listening skills of pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils clearly enjoy the practical learning experiences, and teachers make good use of these sessions to encourage pupils to make simple hypotheses before they begin their work. For example, pupils in Year 2, as part of their work on diets, were asked to make predictions as to their peers' food preferences before conducting the survey. However, despite the good emphasis on learning through practical investigations, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to design investigations independently. Similarly, some pupils with shorter concentration spans pass over responsibility for thinking to other members in their group, and do not learn as much through the planned work as they should.
96. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards are broadly in line with expectations and the good progress made in Years 1 and 2 continues to be sustained. Pupils continue to enjoy learning and have regular opportunities to carry out investigations. Pupils in Year 6 talk excitedly about work they have carried out using circuit boards to explore electricity, and know how switches and buzzers can be incorporated into a circuit. They have a satisfactory understanding of the key features of life cycles of plants and animals, and recognise some of the implications of genetic engineering. One very high-attaining pupil articulated quite clearly, his fears about how scientists have the capacity to change life forms, and how some viruses may become very hard to 'eradicate' because they change faster than scientists can destroy them. Pupils understand why observations and records need to be kept when carrying out investigations, and how this information can be stored on computers. By the time pupils are in Year 6, investigation work has become a key feature of the curriculum and pupils are able to consider design and modifications, taking into account a range of variables. For example, when identifying essential factors for healthy plant growth, pupils knew how to test the impact of each variable on their overall findings. Some pupils were then able to explain how this knowledge could be applied to their cultivation of the school allotment.
97. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good overall in Key Stage 2. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and ensure all aspects of the curriculum are

suitably covered. The effective use of the scheme of work and other published materials help teachers plan well for the wide range of abilities. Appropriate emphasis is placed on investigation, and teachers skilfully integrate information and practical activities to captivate pupils' interest. They capitalise on pupils' natural capacity to explore, and ensure practical tasks are organised well with appropriate resources and additional adult help when necessary. For example, a very valuable partnership with the local secondary school exists whereby a teacher from that school comes to work alongside the Year 6 teacher. Pupils look forward to these lessons and benefit from challenging work and the extra high quality resources at the disposal of the secondary school. Because pupils feel they are receiving privileged help, they are highly motivated and try hard.

98. Whilst no science lessons in Key Stage 2 were seen during the inspection, pupils' books show that teachers plan to ensure good curriculum coverage, that is delivered at a good pace. Sufficient time is given to consolidating facts and practical work, and there is a strong emphasis on learning new vocabulary, and applying literacy and numeracy skills appropriately. For example, pupils are regularly asked to present their findings in report form and to present any data they may have collected in appropriate graphical format, be it manually or on computer. Teachers generally expect pupils to offer their views and ideas, but regularly insist they give reasons for their answers. Opportunities for the use of ICT are limited, but the school is building up its resources in this area. Other resources are satisfactory to support teaching and learning. Effective use is made of the local and wider environment, for example the residential visits, to support learning about habitats, and pupils respond very enthusiastically to the experiences the school offers them.
99. Satisfactory systems are in place for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress in science. Teachers carry out termly assessment tasks to record achievement. Analysis of this information is at an early stage of development, but it is beginning to offer teachers some guidance on improvements that will help raise standards further. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for teachers to adopt a more consistent approach to monitoring progress and standards. It is accepted that science has not taken the same priority as English and mathematics in the recent past. Further work to develop the subject is planned and this includes planning more effectively for the use of ICT to support teaching and learning in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

100. Standards in art and design are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Because of the good quality of teaching and the positive attitudes that pupils display, pupils of all abilities make good gains in their knowledge and skill as they move through the school. Standards and provision have improved since the time of the last inspection when standards in art were judged to be in line with national expectations.
101. At Key Stage 1 the pupils show good ability to draw for different purposes and recognise that by using different types of pencils they can produce different effects, as seen in a figure drawing lesson in Year 3. They work with a range of materials, tools and techniques and produce finished pieces of two- and three-dimensional work to an above-average standard, as seen in their work in the 'butterfly express'. Pupils are encouraged to mix tertiary colours and to experiment with differing hues and colours. Pupils show a satisfactory level of printing skill and make one colour

press prints on fabric, paper and card. The teaching encourages pupils to look for pattern, colour and texture in the natural world that surrounds them and they respond to this in an appropriate manner. Pupils carry out observational drawings to a good standard in their work on figure drawings. The wide range of materials that the pupils are asked to work with produces an enthusiastic response. Pupils really enjoy the subject and are always willing to have a go, knowing that their work will be valued. Pupils are confident in appraising and evaluating their own work, that of classmates or of famous artists. Pupils are eager to talk about the work that they have completed, take a pride in what they have accomplished and are ready to learn from their mistakes. These very positive attitudes contribute much to the quality of learning and to the good progress that pupils make.

102. In Key Stage 2, pupils have good opportunities to build on this good start and they continue to make good progress in developing their skills. Older pupils in this key stage have experienced working with a wide range of media. Their work becomes more detailed and intricate as in their work on Indian patterns. Their careful observational drawings demonstrate their more effective control over both lines and shade and they have experimented with texture with both paint and fabrics, as seen in the many effective displays around the school, such as the work on patterns in circles in Year 5. Many finished pieces of work are of a good standard. Pupils have the ability to use the techniques of famous artists without simply copying famous pieces of work. In discussion with pupils it becomes clear that pupils often try out different techniques in art before committing their ideas and techniques to paper and this good practice is used in most year groups. Pupils are always ready to listen to constructive comments to help improve their work and this impacts positively on their learning. The school's art folio contains some very good examples of pupils' work, in particular their pieces linked to pattern, tone, line, shape, form and space.
103. The school has improved the standards observed at the last inspection when standards in art were judged to be in line with national expectations. The progress for all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. The quality of teaching is good through the school, and staff are confident and have good subject knowledge. This is clearly demonstrated in the wide range of planned experiences they give to their pupils and the high standards of work displayed around the school. In lessons there is a strong emphasis on acquiring and extending pupils' skills. Teachers make good use of sketch books to help pupils plan and practise their ideas, and then move on to make their own choices of design and pictures. Works of celebrated artists are used particularly well by teachers to demonstrate techniques and to help motivate pupils to develop their skills further. Most pupils take a pride in what they do. They are highly motivated and concentrate well to complete their work to a good standard. Pupils enjoy discussing their work on display and are especially proud if their work is selected to be displayed in the more prominent areas of the school. The staff support pupils very well with ideas and resources and encourage them to modify their work after reflecting on its strengths and weaknesses. Pupils' artwork is very well displayed reflecting the high profile of art in the school and the care staff take in celebrating the achievements of the pupils. Art makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Standards of attainment in design and technology have not altered from the previous inspection and are in line with the national expectations. Pupils, in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school.
105. Evidence from work in folders and displays around the school indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have satisfactory joining skills shown in their work on Joseph's technicolour coat. They understand the importance of the properties of different materials before deciding which ones they will need for the making process. Pupils demonstrate sound cutting and joining skills when creating cars, houses and models of a mosque and collaborate well, as in their work on the planning and making of their playground apparatus.
106. In Key Stage 2, the pupils design and make a range of models, and have a good understanding of the importance of evaluation of their work so that modifications can improve the finished product. Teachers plan a careful range of activities to extend pupils' skills and understanding. For example, as part of a structures project, the Year 3 class disassemble a photo frame to study its construction before designing and making their own frame. Teachers plan good links with other subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils make good use of their knowledge of electric circuits gained in their science lessons to build a burglar alarm, and Year 5 pupils make good use of a computer 'draw' program to design musical instruments. When completed, these instruments will be used to create different percussion and shaking sounds as part of their music work. Pupils' design skills are reinforced when using assembly kits, such as Mobilo. Recently the school has negotiated a loan of a Scantek kit from the local technology college, which is providing Year 6 with excellent opportunities to investigate and build frameworks as part of their work on structures.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory through the school. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and plan pupils' work carefully to ensure it is relevant and interesting. For example, in the Scantek lesson, the teacher provided clear instructions that motivated and encouraged the pupils to investigate and try out their own ideas. As a result, they responded enthusiastically, collaborating sensitively in small groups and acquiring new skills. The pupils speak with pride and enthusiasm about their models and describe how they were designed and made. It was noted in the previous inspection that teachers over directed the pupils' work. There has been some improvement in this aspect of the subject but pupils' ideas and choices often remain too restricted, and this limits the progress of some higher-ability pupils.
108. The resources for the subject are not all used effectively. As a result, pupils have little experience of using a variety of tools, such as saws. Opportunities for the development of pupils' food technology skills have improved since the last inspection through the inclusion of a healthy snack project. Design and technology makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to work together and to create models from different cultural backgrounds, such as African musical instruments and Rangoli tile patterns. The attractive, well designed and carefully constructed banners displayed in the hall, depicting the 'Jubilee Pledge and Celebration' are a good example of collaborative textile work.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

109. The school has integrated these two subjects under the humanities umbrella. In a number of instances the subjects are inextricably linked through common themes, for example, the history and geography of their immediate local area, and this is designed to give pupils a broader understanding and experience of the world in which they live. Whilst appropriate emphasis is given to skills and knowledge acquisition as outlined in the required curriculum, the school has maximised opportunities to enhance learning through some shared studies. For example, in Year 5, pupils looking at the impact of the pending tram system on the city, also consider, how people's shopping and work habits have changed over time. From pupils' discussions in this lesson, it was evident that issues of cause and effect are clearly understood by many of them and their awareness of the world is developing well. Similarly, in Year 2, pupils on a walk-about in streets adjacent to the school, suddenly became aware of locations of shops, and were introduced to thinking about position and usage over time. For a few, it was quite a revelation how buildings ranged in style of architecture and use.
110. This rounded approach to these two subjects positively enhances pupils' learning and they achieve standards that are broadly in line with the national expectations. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, and this is sustained throughout as pupils move up to Year 6. A few higher-attaining pupils achieve very good standards because they are highly motivated and apply independent research skills out of sheer interest in learning more about things the school introduces to them. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well, and many with English as an additional language attain standards that match their peers.
111. Teaching is broadly satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and is often good in Key Stage 2. Pupils respond well to learning, especially when teaching is good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Opportunities to spend time to develop the subject have been limited by the school's attention being appropriately devoted to developing English and mathematics. The co-ordinators for geography and history, are enthusiastic, and recognise that these subjects now need greater focus. They have action plans in place to develop appropriate teaching materials to support learning. Teachers' planning is good, taking due note of what pupils already know and building on this to extend their knowledge and understanding. Because teachers know their pupils' needs well, planning takes into account specific learning needs so that all pupils are given good opportunities to take an appropriate part in lessons. Group work often takes into consideration the needs of individual pupils and the school places appropriate emphasis on ensuring inclusion strategies are implemented well. This level of interest in pupils' well-being motivates pupils to do their best. Day to day assessment is generally satisfactory, and teachers keep detailed records of what pupils have covered. Marking is generally satisfactory, although it does not always help pupils see how they might improve their work. Teachers are aware, generally, of how well each pupil is progressing, but this information is not always recorded consistently across the school. Portfolios of work are collated providing a good evidence base of the curriculum covered. The co-ordinators now have it in hand to begin to assess standards, and record this for each pupil so standards are raised further. Very good use is made of the resources available to teachers in school. However, some very effective learning takes place when children visit places of interest or the school invites visitors into lessons to

work with the pupils on specific topics. For example, professional history dramatists have worked with pupils to explore Victorian lifestyles and aspects of World War 2; and in geography, planning officers and environmentalists have given pupils an insight into how their work shapes the area in which pupils live. Both subjects are vividly brought to life, on a regular basis, through quality learning experiences such as these. The use of ICT is developing, with teachers at the upper end of the school encouraging pupils to explore topics using a range of appropriate web sites. Pupils confident in their ICT skills showed a good aptitude to learning independently using this resource well. Planned use of ICT across the school in these subjects is developing satisfactorily.

112. In geography, pupils generally work hard, engaging well in all the work they are asked to do, whether as a class or in groups. Where work is challenging, and pupils are asked to think about what they already know and apply this to new learning, many respond well. This was evident in the Year 2 lesson on exploring the area around the school. Those engaged in recording observations and explaining what they were thinking about through skilful adult interventions, achieved well. A few who had no written tasks to do, and who did not relate well to the activity, quickly lost interest. Although they behaved well, progress for these pupils was slow. In a very good lesson in Year 4, pupils were kept on task by skilful questioning and interest in the lesson was sustained through a range of appropriate activities. The concept of a 'throw away society', fired up debate and brought out from pupils, views and opinions that gave them food for thought about wider moral and ethical issues. Learning was very good because the teaching inspired pupils to think for themselves and encouraged them to be confident in expressing their views in front of others.
113. Social, cultural and moral education is explored well through the subject and work on contrasting localities introduces pupils well to the diversity of landscapes and environments the world has to offer. Pupils in Year 6 understand that climate and environmental changes affect the planet, and talk knowledgeably about the impact of the greenhouse effect, acid rain, deforestation and how countries need to work together to combat global issues. Teachers introduce pupils well to key concepts applied in the subject to explore planning and mapping skills, and man's intervention on the world around is a fundamental principle pupils regularly review in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 trace their route to school, taking due notice of streets, roads and traffic.
114. In history, pupils achieve standards that are in line with expectations. The highest-attaining pupils, of which there are a few in the school, achieve well, and have mature understanding of how to interpret first hand resource material. For example, some pupils in Year 6 looked at information from the 1857 Census and compared this with current information, identifying occupational differences, and household sizes in the two periods. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 compared lifestyles of school children in Victorian times to their own experiences. In both instances, good use of ICT helped pupils gather further information by using Internet facilities to explore beyond the lesson. Good links are made with other subjects, and opportunities for speaking and writing support good application of literacy skills. No history lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, but evidence from pupils' work and teachers' planning show standards are in line with expectations.
115. Pupils have a sound understanding of chronology, and use their knowledge and understanding of the world to reflect on 'then and now' through, for example,

appropriate topic work on toys and play through the ages, and how people lived at various points in history. A lively lesson in Year 3 on invaders and settlers gave pupils an opportunity to think about the way different people have either conquered or settled in new lands, and the range of vocabulary they explored challenged the highest-attaining pupils well. However, sensitive questioning and very gentle encouragement from the teacher enabled all ability groups to achieve well. Moral, cultural and social implications of how waves of 'visitors' impact on this country were handled expertly, giving the teacher a clear insight into what perceptions pupils already had, and how to move them to the next stage of thinking. Opportunities for handling artefacts, and using a good range of other resources help pupils learn new knowledge and skills appropriately. Because teachers make the subject matter interesting, weaving opportunities for pupils' social and cultural development into lessons, pupils enjoy their work. History is taught well, especially at Key Stage 2, and by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, they have a secure awareness of the key skills and knowledge they need to take on further work in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

116. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in developing their information and communication technology skills and have standards of attainment that are below national expectations. By the end of Year 6, progress of learning has increased and pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is similar to that of their peer groups in both key stages. Standards are not as high as at the time of the last inspection and computers are generally not used enough to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
117. By the end of Year 2, pupils have satisfactory word processing skills, clearly shown in a story entitled "A worm lives in the soil". Sentences are enhanced by illustrations using 'clip art'. Pupils have limited experience of handling data but there is evidence of pupils making graphs of their favourites colours. Most pupils have satisfactory control skills using a 'roamer' but have undeveloped skills in modelling when they explore what happens in real and imaginary situations. During the inspection, the computers in Key Stage 1 were rarely in use, and good opportunities are being missed to support pupils' learning through the use of computers and to consolidate and develop their computer skills. Much of the reason for the decline in standards in Key Stage 1 is due to the replacement of the old Acorn computers which had a wide range of relevant programs. The purchase of the new personal computers as part of the city education authority's initiative drained the school's standards fund and also much of the contingency funding. As a result, the school was not able to afford the range of programs for the new PCs, which do not, at present, have the same range of quality programs as the computers they replaced.
118. By the age of 11, pupils have developed above average skills in some aspects of the subject. Pupils are extremely confident using word processing and have a good awareness of audience when changing font, size of print, colour and layout. Some eye-catching work was produced using 'clip art' when pupils illustrated their Lenten promise with great sensitivity. The multi-media work was also of very high quality. Pupils' confident use of the Internet allowed them to investigate the history of the school allotment, research different herbs and create a map to show the position of the allotment in relation to the school. There was good integration of a draw program into pupils' design and labelling of a musical shaker they were constructing for design and technology. Pupils have satisfactory skills in handling data and have

mastery of a range of graphs to illustrate data they have collected. Pupils have not had recent experience of control and monitoring aspects of the subject and in these two areas pupils' attainment is below expectations. Good use is made of computers to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The recently developed accelerated mathematics course, which has been instrumental in raising standards throughout Key Stage 2, has also made good use of the class computers and the computer suite.

119. Older pupils have very positive attitudes towards computers and their use in school. Year 6 pupils spoke excitedly and knowledgeably about their history project, which is based on the 1881 census of their local area. Pupils have used a digital camera to take photographs of nearby houses that they are scanning onto a map and onto a database that they have created from the census information. Pupils rightly feel that the use of computers in this way, to enhance and develop their learning, is an exciting element of the curriculum.
120. No whole-class lessons were seen during the inspection. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 because teachers are not following their lesson plans which outline how computers should be used in the particular lesson to support pupils' learning and to develop their skills. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, with teachers making far greater use of the limited range of programs to supplement and extend pupils' learning. Whilst the recent National Opportunities Fund training for teachers has not developed teachers' skills as the school had hoped, nevertheless the work planned by teachers in certain elements of the subject is demanding, innovative and shows good subject knowledge. This is particularly so in the Year 6 Victorian project work. The development of pupils' control and monitoring skills is not, at present, being developed to the same extent as other areas of the subject.
121. The school has a well-equipped, discrete computer suite, which is linked to individual classroom computers. Good use is made of the nursery nurse's computer skills through the school for the teaching of small groups that are withdrawn from the classes. Further use is also made by pupils who stay after school for the homework club. However, rarely during the inspection was the full potential of the suite used, particularly in the areas of numeracy and literacy. The school's development plan clearly identifies how the subject is to be developed and integrated into pupils' learning. The co-ordinator, together with the headteacher, provides good leadership for the subject and they have a clear strategy to raise the standards further during the present academic year.

## **MUSIC**

122. Attainment and progress is, overall, below national expectations, and this represents a fall in standards since the previous inspection when music was judged as being in line with national expectations. However, there are some good features especially in Key Stage 2, but, overall, since the last inspection, the subject has not been given a high enough priority as time and attention have been devoted to the core subjects.
123. The standard of singing throughout the school is satisfactory, with pupils making satisfactory progress in this aspect of the music curriculum. The singing is tuneful and the pupils join in enthusiastically with the hymns during the acts of collective

worship. The co-ordinator works hard and successfully to maintain a school choir for pupils in Key Stage 2 and this performs to a good standard. The pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy singing nursery rhymes and songs, but their knowledge of rhythm and pitch is very limited. They have also had little experience of working with musical instruments with the result that the teaching in Year 3 starts at a low base. Year 3 pupils are able to reproduce different rhythms, using clapping and percussion instruments, but opportunities for them to compose their own music are very restricted. There are some occasions when older pupils make suggestions for suitable instruments to represent different events, such as in the journey of the Three Wise Men. The music for this composition is depicted at a very basic level in pictures, and as a result, the pupils have a below-average knowledge of notation. A range of music is played as the pupils enter and leave the hall during assembly times. The work in the school portfolio provides examples of pupils' drawings, thoughts and emotions in response to various pieces of music, such as Vivaldi's, "Four Seasons", and Holst's, "Planet Suite". However, pupils in Year 6, have an unsatisfactory knowledge of composers or their music as they have done too little music appreciation in lessons.

124. The overall music provision is unsatisfactory as pupils are not making enough progress as they move through the school. This is mainly due to lack of confidence among the teachers, and insufficient opportunities for the co-ordinator to work alongside teachers and share her expertise. The school is aware of this area for development, and is planning an in-service workshop for all staff later in the year. However, during the inspection, the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory and the one in Key Stage 2 was good. In the good lesson, the teacher conveyed her enthusiasm to the pupils, presented the activities in a variety of interesting ways and at a good pace, so that the pupils remained motivated throughout and worked hard to meet the challenges of the lesson. As a result, they made good progress. In a lesson where there was less clarity of purpose and structure, some pupils went off task, and although they gained some experience of playing xylophones and glockenspiels, their planned learning opportunities were not appropriately matched to their previous experiences.
125. Resources in the school are good, with a suitable range of musical instruments from different cultures. These are supplemented by visits from visiting artists, such as a Sikh music group. Pupils have opportunities to perform in assemblies and in Carol Services, and to participate in an informal concert in the summer term. The choir has performed on Radio Nottingham and a whole day was devoted to preparing and performing music as a celebration of the new millennium. At the time of the inspection there was little instrumental tuition, but the school has made provision for subject specialist teaching in this area to begin later on in the term.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126. Pupils' attainment in physical education at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations and is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is satisfactory throughout Years 1 and 2 and is good in Key Stage 2. Standards in Key Stage 1 are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection because the expertise of some teachers has been lost through staff changes. However, all pupils benefit from a broad and well-balanced curriculum that reflects all areas of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

127. In Key Stage 1, pupils successfully control their body movements to represent moods, feelings and colours. They travel in a variety of ways and are starting to combine the movements to form a sequence. Pupils have an appropriate awareness of space, and are well co-ordinated. They change the direction, speed and level of their movements to add variety to their work, and are able to hold a balance. Pupils work confidently on apparatus, and work hard to make their movements neat and well defined. They are confident and competent performers, who plan their work thoughtfully.
128. In Key Stage 2, some pupils extend the range of their body movements effectively in a dance lesson in Year 5. Pupils control their movements well and all participate enthusiastically. All pupils have a clear understanding of a starting position and can respond appropriately to pieces of music. They control their movements well when working at different speeds. Most pupils are well co-ordinated and many perform their movements with good levels of skills, agility and fluency in dance. They listen carefully to the music and respond appropriately to what they hear.
129. All pupils enjoy physical education lessons and respond well in lessons. Pupils have positive attitudes and they are always prepared to give of their best and try hard to improve their performance. Relationships are very good and this has a positive effect upon rates of progress and levels of attainment. Pupils respond sensibly when invited to comment upon other pupils' performance and accept constructive criticism of their own performances in a positive way. They work very well in pairs, groups and small teams with very good levels of self-discipline. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language, are making good overall progress as they move through the school.
130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2 where teachers have higher expectations that are reflected in the pupils' rates of progress in acquiring skills and improving their performances. Good use is made of demonstration. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Relationships are very good and teaching styles are encouraging, supportive and friendly. There is much enjoyment in physical education lessons and this is due to the expertise of the teachers and the way in which they value the pupils' contributions, and encourage them to do even better.
131. Swimming is an integral part of the school curriculum; pupils enjoy going to the local baths and, by the end of Year 6, attain standards that are higher than national expectations. In addition to the elements outlined in the National Curriculum documents, pupils are also given the opportunity to take part in a wide range of other sports activities, such as inter-school football matches, area sports and swimming galas. There is also a wide variety of sports activities included in the very good provision made for extra-curricular activities at the school. The school has won an impressive number of city sports trophies, including tennis, athletics and football.