

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GEORGE'S CE (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106248

Headteacher: Mrs C Dobson

Reporting inspector: Mrs S Saunders-Singer
23050

Dates of inspection: 19th to 23rd June 2000

Inspection number: 192616

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stamford Street Mossley Ashton-under-Lyne
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Leeson
Date of previous inspection:	December 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
S Saunders-Singer	Registered inspector	Science Information technology History Equal opportunities Special educational needs	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
C Standring	Lay inspector		Attendance Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers Accommodation
H Sumner	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography Music	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Staffing Learning resources
R Webber	Team inspector	English Art Physical education Under-fives	Quality and range of opportunities for learning Assessment

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is voluntarily aided. It is a smaller than average size primary school with 121 pupils on roll and a further 39 children who attend part-time in the 20 place Nursery. Pupils attend full-time from entry into the Reception year group class. Pupils are taught in five classes. The number of pupils on the register of special needs is broadly in line with the national average at 20 in the main school; there are five statements of special educational need in the whole school. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Eligibility for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average at 16.5 per cent. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly in line with the national average although groups vary considerably from year to year. At the time of the inspection five children in the Reception class were under five. The school population is relatively stable but a significant proportion of those who joined the school last year have been low attainers, and most have joined Year 2 or Year 6. Seventy- seven per cent of the present Year 6 pupils have attended since Reception. Since the last inspection there have been considerable staffing changes.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with several good features. The school has coped well with the disruptions in staffing of the last years. Since the appointment of the permanent headteacher there has been significant progress in teaching and learning. The quality of teaching is high and pupils learn well. Pupils are achieving as they should except in the writing element of English. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Provision for children under five is a particular strength. Leadership and management of the school are good overall. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher leads the school very well and with the deputy provides very effective management. This has settled the school, sustained relationships with parents and developed strong teamwork making the recent good progress possible.
- Standards are rising overall.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and is high in Key Stage 2, for the under-fives and in English and this helps the majority of pupils make good progress.
- The management of the implementation of literacy and numeracy by the co-ordinators gives good role models for other subject development.
- Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make good progress because provision for them is good.
- Provision for social and moral development is good and as a result pupils behave well, show good attitudes to their work and work well together.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing with respect to punctuation, spelling and quality of presentation through the school.
- Refinement of the curriculum to ensure logical progression of learning in geography and design and technology.
- The use of the developing assessment procedures to ensure that all teachers are using the information to match learning tasks to pupils' needs.
- The numbers of support staff in the split year group classes to enable teachers and pupils to make best use of the literacy and numeracy lessons.
- The quality of the accommodation to ensure that the environment for learning is appropriate in the temporary classroom, that all aspects of physical education can be provided, that classrooms around the hall are soundproof enabling pupils and teachers to hear each other clearly.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in 1996 and in particular in leadership and management in the eighteen months since the appointment of the headteacher and deputy. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are rising overall although weaknesses in writing still persist. Teaching has greatly improved and this is having a significant impact on pupils' learning. National Curriculum requirements are now met in all subjects and curriculum planning has been soundly developed to ensure logical progression of learning in most subjects. Procedures for assessment are beginning to have a positive impact in matching tasks effectively to pupils' individual needs. Pupils' behaviour and rates of attendance are improved. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because individual education plans are now well matched to pupils' needs and are effectively implemented. The school is well placed to continue making progress.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	C	C	D
mathematics	D	C	C	D
science	D	C	D	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table above indicates that the results in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 were in line with national averages in English and mathematics but below in science. When compared with similar types of schools, pupils' performance was below average in English and mathematics and well below in science. The results were an improvement on those of 1997 and, under the leadership of the current headteacher, the school is making further improvements by tackling systematically the factors affecting pupils' performance. The impact of this is most evident in the good progress being made by pupils in Years 1, 3 and 4.

Given the considerable disruption caused by changes in staffing and the relatively high proportions of pupils who joined Year 2 and Year 6 since September, inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve satisfactory standards by the time they are seven and eleven. Standards for seven- and eleven-year-olds are in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science, but remain below in writing due to poor spelling, punctuation and presentation. The school has put in place relevant measures to tackle the weaknesses in writing, but these have not yet had sufficient time to provide the desired improvements. Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 show significant improvement on those of 1999. Standards in information technology are rising and pupils are now broadly in line with standards expected at the end of both key stages. Standards in the non-core subjects are broadly in line with the standards expected at the age of eleven except in geography, where standards are below average. Religious education and collective worship form part of a separate inspection and are not reported here. The school has set challenging targets related to year group variations and is making steady progress towards them. The majority of children under five reach the levels expected of them by the age of five.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and persevere with their tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is almost always good when moving about the school and in lessons. Pupils are considerate of others.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils take increasing responsibility for a range of duties in classrooms and round the school. Pupils relate well to each other.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils co-operate with adults, they respect each other and older pupils help younger ones willingly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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.

Teaching is good overall; it is meeting the needs of the majority of pupils and is promoting good learning. It was satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons seen during the inspection. Seventy-two per cent were good or better and, of these, twelve per cent were very good or excellent. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is of consistently high quality and is a key factor in the pupils' recent good learning in literacy and science. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also benefit from the excellent mathematics teaching. Instruction in the Nursery is consistently very good and at times excellent. Teaching in Reception and Year 1 is good and often very good, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Although there is no unsatisfactory teaching, where pupils have had a recent change of teacher in Key Stage 1 this disruption has affected some pupils' progress. The implementation of the literacy strategy has improved the teaching of spelling, handwriting and punctuation although standards are still below average at the end of both key stages. Teaching in history is good and in physical education is very well supported by the local education authority coach; the quality of the teaching in these subjects is having a good impact on pupils' learning. Strengths include good subject knowledge, high expectations and challenge, good relationships with pupils, skilful questioning and work well matched to pupils' abilities. The needs of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well met.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Schemes of work are in place and inform planning effectively although geography and design and technology are not fully developed. The curriculum for the under-fives is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision. Good quality support ensures that pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for social and moral development. Spiritual and cultural development are soundly developed.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. All staff provide caring support which contributes to pupils' confidence. Monitoring and assessment procedures are satisfactory.
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Parents have a positive view of the school and the impact of their involvement in the school is good. Their support in classes and fundraising is effective in helping the school. Information for parents is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives a very strong and effective lead to the school, ably supported by the deputy. There is a strong team and commitment to improving standards underpins the work of the school. Relationships with parents are positive.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. There have been many changes and problems to deal with and the governing body have been successful in meeting the challenges. Sharing of the load of responsibility is now beginning through effective committees.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Effective monitoring has targeted and improved teaching and learning. Monitoring by the governing body is satisfactory and is developing to include monitoring in classrooms.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are targeted to raise standards and the school has effectively cleared a deficit budget. The deployment of staff is effective in raising standards in science at Key Stage 2. Specific grants are used effectively for designated purposes and consideration of best value for expenditure is satisfactory.

The school is suitably staffed with teachers. There are insufficient classroom assistants employed by the school and the lack of support for learning in literacy and numeracy in split year group classes inhibits some pupils' progress. Accommodation is poor; physical education is restricted by the lack of suitable space and in the classrooms around the hall where there is no soundproofing, learning is sometimes adversely affected by the noise levels.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress and enjoy school. • The values and attitudes promoted by the school and the good behaviour. • The children are expected to work hard. • The teaching is good and the information about children's progress is good. • They can approach the school with questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some have concerns about the school's upheavals and management. • Some would like more homework while others would like less. • Some feel they do not have enough involvement in the school or information about their children's progress. • Many would like a wider range of extra-curricular activities.

Over half the parents' questionnaires were returned. Parents' and carers' views of the school are largely positive and the inspection team endorses these. Parents are committed to the school in spite of the upheavals over the last years and most report considerable improvement in the information they have received, particularly about staff and class changes since the new headteacher's appointment. They also feel that the upheavals have gone on too long. The inspecting team find that the levels of homework are satisfactory to support pupils' learning, although at Key Stage 2 there is not a steady build up of work in preparation for the transfer to secondary schools. Information about pupils' progress is good but the

information about activities and forthcoming events is inconsistent. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and includes opportunities for both sport and music.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Attainment on entry for the current pupils in the Reception class is broadly average in all the areas of learning. Assessments on entry to school are available for the two most recent entries to school. The entry assessments for the present Year 1 pupils records that there is an unusually large group of pupils with higher than average attainment in the class, as well as a similar size group with below average attainment. In addition, movement in the school population results in a number of pupils entering or leaving the school; consequently, the results of these initial assessments may not represent an accurate picture of the potential attainment of a large number of pupils. This year, 20 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 taking the statutory tests at the end of the year, had been in the school for less than three years and 22 per cent of the pupils who have joined the school in the last two years have special educational needs. Fifteen per cent of pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 have special educational needs. Many of the year group cohorts are small and so results are variable and trends are not always predictable. Teaching for the Nursery, Years 2 and 6 have also been disrupted during this school year. These factors have a significant effect on the standards attained.
2. Taking the three years 1997 to 1999 together, the results of national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards have improved from below average in 1996, to above in 1999 in reading and writing. There has been a marked rise in mathematics since 1996 as teachers are becoming more confident in teaching the subject. Results for pupils in Key Stage 1 indicate that standards in writing are below average, although there is an improvement in reading and speaking and listening. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly in line with averages overall, although there was a significant fall in science attainment in 1999. While there are significant differences in the attainment of different cohorts and this contributes to variations in results year on year, the school's improvement is slightly above the national trend. The school has set challenging targets to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. These targets are based on ongoing assessments and effective analysis of the results of statutory tests. These identify specific areas of weakness, for example in writing at both key stages and consequently, the school is making steady progress towards its targets.
3. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the results achieved by the pupils were close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with all schools. In science, teachers' assessments show that the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was well below the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results achieved by the pupils in English were above the national average reaching Level 4 and close to the average at Level 5. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 was below average and Level 5 was close to the national average. In science results were well below average.
4. Compared to similar schools in 1999, achievement at the age of seven was above average in reading, close to average in writing and well above average in mathematics. By the age of eleven, achievement was below average in English and below average in mathematics and well below in science.
5. By the age of five children have made good progress and achieve as they should, firmly consolidating and broadening their understanding. The majority of children are achieving in line with the expectations for their age in all the areas of learning.

6. There are variations in attainment in different year groups. In this school year the pupils in Years 2 and 6 have experienced considerable disruption and changes of teaching staff. While this has had an effect on their continuity of learning, at the end of the year pupils are attaining broadly in line with national averages. However, in writing at both key stages attainment is below average. In Year 2 a quarter of the pupils have special educational needs and one fifth of the year group have joined since September. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress overall. Standards overall are in line with the expectations for the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils are achieving as they should, except in writing, having received the benefits of good teaching in Reception and Year 1. The present Year 2 have had a recent change of teacher and while this has slowed progress in the last term, overall they are attaining broadly as they should because of the good teaching they received during the year. Almost one third of the pupils in the current Year 6 have special educational needs and one fifth have joined the school in the last three years. In Key Stage 2 at the end of Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although there has been good progress in the recent term's work because of the very good teaching they have received. Although standards are below the expectation for the end of Key Stage 2 in the writing element of English, standards are rising. The implementation of the literacy strategy and the consistently very good teaching pupils receive is raising standards particularly in spelling, punctuation and presentation and pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are achieving as they should. The National Numeracy Strategy is raising standards through the school and is giving teachers increased confidence. In science, pupils are benefiting from the good specialist teaching and standards are rising at the end of Key Stage 2. The good provision and good support made for pupils with special educational needs and the good support enables them to make good progress.
7. Standards in information technology meet those expected by the end of both key stages. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Standards in the foundation subjects have been maintained since the last inspection although standards in geography remain below those expected. Standards in physical education are broadly in line with those expected although the lack of facilities impeded progress in some ball skills and team games. The very good specialist teaching and coaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' skills at the end of Key Stage 2.
8. Standards in literacy are average by the end of both key stages. Pupils use their literacy skills to enhance learning in other areas, for example to research information for their topics, to record their investigations in science and to write reports and evaluations of their designs in design and technology. Standards in numeracy are also average by the end of both key stages. Lessons start with mental problems and pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately across the curriculum. For example, when measuring materials to make vehicles in design and technology and when recording their findings graphically in science.
9. Pupils with special educational needs develop good attitudes to their learning in both key stages. These good attitudes influence their rate of learning and these pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
10. Higher attaining pupils generally achieve as well as might be expected. Group activities, particularly in the literacy hour, are challenging and lead pupils towards further development, particularly in Year 1 for higher attaining and gifted pupils. There is some marked difference in the attainment of boys and girls. This has been identified by the school and is being addressed through the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, many of whom are boys. The targeting of group work is good, tasks are well matched to those boys' needs, enabling them to make appropriate progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The majority of pupils enjoy school and almost all pupils are enthusiastic learners. They usually listen attentively during lessons, are keen to answer questions and generally sustain concentration through the challenging introductory sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons, for example. Some contribute relevant information to class discussions and a few ask questions of their teachers. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and apply themselves well to their work. They co-operate well when working in pairs or small groups. They give due respect to the ideas put forward by other pupils and are generally prepared to tolerate each others' opinions. There are exceptions however. For example, some boys in a Key Stage 1 class were extremely reluctant to share equipment. Their selfish behaviour undermined the progress of other pupils in the group. By contrast, other young pupils in a music lesson, waited patiently for their turn to accompany the class singing by playing a percussion instrument of their choice.
12. Behaviour in class is almost always good. Teachers show respect for their pupils and pupils soon learn to emulate them. Pupils are generally courteous to their teachers, visitors and to one another. A particularly touching example of pupils' consideration for others is the concern which Nursery children show for the children in their class who have very specific needs. Older Key Stage 2 pupils engaged in a local visit, were very polite as they interviewed pedestrians about traffic problems. Observation of pupils at play showed no unruly or oppressive behaviour. Though the behaviour of some boys was quite boisterous at times, it did not overstep the mark. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The school building is in a poor state of repair but pupils do not deface it. They handle all books and school equipment with respect. There were no exclusions during the last school year.
13. Pupils treat their classrooms with some pride and show an increasing sense of responsibility for carrying out small tasks that contribute to its efficiency and attractiveness. Older pupils also show a sense of responsibility through contributions to the school community as a whole, acting as library monitors, for example. However, pupils do not use the library as much as they could to develop independent learning and research skills. In spite of this, Year 6 pupils' independent studies of chosen topics such as The Human Body and The Local Environment are detailed and successful. The majority of parents feel that their children show increasing signs of maturity as they move through the school. By the time they leave the school both boys and girls show good levels of self-control and social poise. The personal development of pupils provides good support to their effectiveness as learners.
14. Attendance is very good and this promotes continuity of learning and although there are a few persistent latecomers, they do not appear to disrupt lessons for other pupils. Attendance is recorded morning and afternoon and attendance has improved significantly over the last year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good overall and leads to good, effective learning. Teaching seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a remarkable improvement since the findings of the previous inspection when 25 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Good teaching was seen in most classes.
16. The quality of teaching is highest in Key Stage 2 and in the Nursery. In Years 5 and 6 most lessons were judged to be very good across most areas of the curriculum and were at times excellent. Consistently good teaching was seen in Years 3 and 4. For children aged under five, teaching was never less than very good and was at times excellent. In Reception and Year 1 most teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. As a result, pupils in these year groups make good progress this year because their needs are

well met and these pupils are attaining the standards expected for their ages in reading and speaking and listening, mathematics and science. Although overall attainment in writing is below average, the school is targeting this element and teachers provide a stimulating and varied range of experiences for pupils to write and express themselves. This is beginning to improve punctuation and presentation skills. The quality of teaching provided by the teacher without a class responsibility contributes positively to the improving standards in science at Key Stage 2. Teaching of literacy ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good overall in Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. In numeracy the pattern is similar, although there is some excellent teaching for the oldest pupils. Teaching of numeracy overall has improved since the last inspection and the school has identified as a priority, the teaching of a wider range of mental mathematics strategies to enable pupils to calculate more readily. Teaching in both literacy and numeracy is contributing positively to improving standards overall in different year groups with significantly different levels of attainment.

17. Features of the lessons where the quality of teaching is particularly strong include teachers' good and very good knowledge of the subjects they teach, high expectations, well-managed pupils and the effective use of questions to extend learning. For example, in an English lesson in Years 3 and 4, well-targeted questions to pupils of different abilities enabled all to learn to use adjectives and similes and to develop their ability to write persuasively. In a good mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 effective, well-paced revision of previous learning and subsequently well matched tasks to pupils' abilities enabled pupils to consolidate their knowledge of decimals and then develop their skills in adding them. Sharing of the learning objective with pupils gave a shared sense of purpose to the lesson and resulted in shared pleasure in their success: 'Yes!' Effective use of assessment enabled the teacher to identify pupils who had not understood quickly, so ensuring that all understood and made good progress. In a very good English lesson for pupils in Year 1, well sequenced, stimulating tasks encouraged all to participate because they were enjoying the lesson. The very brisk pace of the lesson contributed positively to very good learning.
18. Where the teaching was excellent, very confident subject knowledge, very effective use of humour and very challenging activities, enabled all pupils in Years 5 and 6 to make very good progress because they were very well motivated by the work. The teacher used every opportunity to extend learning by skilful questioning and introduced new challenges to encourage pupils to think and explain their thinking. For the youngest children, the outstanding Nursery practice ensures children's continued delight and involvement in a very good balance of teaching with learning activities.
19. Strengths in the teaching of different subjects include the teaching of English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. A wide range of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills and this contributes to the good teaching seen in English at Key Stage 2. For example, spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught well and contribute positively to the improving standards attained in writing. Reading has a high profile and teachers use the group reading times skilfully to develop pupils' reading skills and love of reading. Teaching in science in Key Stage 2 is consistently good, because of the teacher's subject knowledge and the successful sharing of her enthusiasm for the subject with the pupils. Teaching in history at Key Stage 2 is also good and contributes positively to the pupils' understanding of times past. The quality of teaching in physical education is good at Key Stage 2 and is very well supported by the local authority teacher who attends the school regularly. His very high expectations enable Key Stage 2 pupils to develop and improve their skills in athletics and ball skills. Very good use of demonstration by the pupils supported very good learning.
20. While nothing unsatisfactory was seen, there are some lessons where the pace of sessions flags or where teachers are less effective in engaging the pupils in their

enthusiasm for subjects. However, when the pupils are given consistent and clearly expressed expectations of behaviour and effort, lessons are successful and effective, enabling pupils to learn and make appropriate progress. There has been considerable disruption for two classes and for the Nursery during this school year. However, the quality of the teaching and the skilful development of relationships, have ensured that the disruption in learning has been less than it may have been. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in particular, have been well supported and their progress has been satisfactory overall. There are occasions, for example in literacy, history and music when the quality of the teaching and learning in the classrooms surrounding the hall are inhibited by the noise through partitions.

21. Teaching for children who are aged under five is very good overall and is at times excellent and these children make consistently good gains in their learning. The staff are very knowledgeable and well informed about the needs of young children and the newly responsible team work effectively, benefiting from the shared planning. Expectations are high and the children are very well managed, contributing to a happy, well ordered and interesting environment for learning. The atmosphere in the Reception class is warm and welcoming and the needs of individual pupils are carefully met because of the teacher's understanding of the children's needs. Good planning includes an effective balance of experience for the youngest children as well as challenging the older pupils in the class. The quality of the liaison between the Nursery staff and the Reception teacher is effective in ensuring continuity between the two classes and has been successfully established during this school year. The requirements of children with special educational needs are outstandingly well catered for and throughout the school the support for pupils with special educational needs is good, teaching support is well focused and enables these pupils to learn successfully.
22. Special educational needs are seen as a high priority. Pupils are identified accurately. A suitable number of well-trained support assistants is provided by the local authority for individual pupils with specific learning or physical needs. These assistants work closely with class teachers within the classroom and in all aspects of the pupils' school life. The good quality of the support ensures that pupils make good gains in their learning. Other support teachers attend the school for regular sessions within the school day and support learning for some pupils in literacy. Although this is welcome support for their literacy development, it does mean that these pupils miss lessons within the wider school curriculum. However, the school is aware of this and has made representations to the local authority to vary the times of the sessions.
23. In the lessons based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, planning is good and meets all the pupils' needs, including pupils whose attainment is above average for example in Year 1 and those with special educational needs. Group activities in mathematics are challenging and this contributes to rising standards. In science lessons, tasks are challenging, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
24. Homework is used satisfactorily to extend pupils' learning in reading and spelling. Most pupils take reading books home on a regular basis and this supports their reading progress soundly. There are some opportunities at Key Stage 2 to enrich pupils' learning through research tasks and topics as, for example, recently undertaken by the Years 5 and 6 pupils in support of their learning in history, art and science. However, the amount of homework does not increase progressively as pupils move through the school and older pupils approach their secondary education. Parents expressed their concern with the amount of homework that their children are expected to do – some suggesting that they would like less – but inspection evidence shows that the use of homework makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning.

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

25. The quality and range of curricular opportunities offered to pupils are satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and generally well balanced, although there are some aspects of design and technology and geography, which are not fully developed. However, overall the curriculum meets statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the diocesan council syllabus for religious education. Although the school has yet to formally formulate a specific policy for personal, social and health education, it is sufficiently covered and taught and provision is satisfactory. A sex education and drugs misuse policy is effectively in place. The school places a strong emphasis on equal opportunities and is successful for the majority, including those pupils who are severely physically challenged. Representations have been made to the local education authority to ensure that pupils who receive welcome literacy support, do so on a basis which supports the school's commitment to equal access to the curriculum by varying the timing of the support sessions.
26. Since the last inspection the school has implemented appropriate schemes of work based on national guidelines. These schemes have improved planning of what is to be taught, as teachers use these guidelines effectively to inform both their medium- and short-term planning. Curriculum planning identifies clear learning objectives and ensures appropriate coverage and learning opportunities in most subjects. However, curriculum planning in both geography and design and technology is still insufficiently structured to allow the subjects to be studied in sufficient depth and to ensure that skills are taught progressively from one year to the next. Planning for information technology has improved significantly since the last inspection and there are now good quality plans for this subject.
27. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy which is having a positive impact on the quality of curriculum planning, teaching and learning in English. The National Numeracy Strategy is also being implemented generally effectively and is having a positive effect on raising standards in mathematics overall, although it is not fully effective in all classes.
28. The curricular provision for children who are under five is very good and is a strength of the school. Learning opportunities are carefully planned and the curriculum is appropriate for children of this age.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good for children who are under five and good in the rest of the school. All the work is closely matched to the needs of the pupils and the relevant and well-constructed targets in their individual education plans. Well-documented notes, which are made on pupils' development and progress, are used well to inform future work enabling pupils full access to the curriculum. Input by the special needs assistants supports pupils' learning very well, both for learning needs and physical challenges.
30. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. School clubs consist largely of sporting activities such as athletics, football and cricket. These have a positive impact on standards in physical education. The music curriculum is also enhanced by recorder and guitar clubs.
31. The school has established good links with the community and partner institutions to support curricular opportunities. For example, information technology is effectively enriched by knowledgeable input by students from the local college. Their expertise supports the pupils' learning well. The school has forged strong links with the local special school and pupils from both schools are encouraged to integrate and work together in order to promote and develop their social skills. Teachers meet with other teachers from local schools in order to share practice and information, and sound links exist with

receiving secondary schools. These are successful in supporting pupils' transition to the next stage of education. Adults from the community come into the school to talk to pupils about their experiences of World War Two and this enriches the pupils' learning. Visits to the local area for geography and history are well used to enhance the pupils' learning about their local environment.

32. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' moral and social development has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is effectively promoted through assemblies, daily acts of worship and religious education lessons. In assemblies, a candle is lit in order to foster a sense of prayer and reflection and pupils are encouraged to think and reflect about the theme for the day. The school is forging positive links with its partner church and pupils have opportunity to take part in, and contribute to, special services within the church throughout the year, such as Mothering Sunday, Easter and Harvest time. The contribution of the local vicar to religious education lessons in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory in promoting pupils' spiritual awareness. Spiritual and aesthetic reflection is effectively promoted in some subjects across the curriculum. For example, in English, art and music, pupils have opportunity to appreciate how vocabulary, colour and sound can be used to create atmosphere. However, overall there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their spirituality.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school has established an effective code of conduct, which all staff promote consistently well across the school. Class rules are prominently displayed in classrooms and teachers often reinforce how pupils are expected to behave. For example, teachers set behaviour targets for some pupils in lessons and in Year 1 during an English lesson, pupils were encouraged to identify and discuss characters in a book in order to reinforce good and bad behaviour. These procedures and strategies are effectively reinforced through an effective rewards and sanctions policy and all this has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
35. The provision for pupils' social development is good. All staff provide good role models for pupils and pupils show appropriate respect for their teachers. Good manners are promoted from an early age and pupils are expected to show care and consideration for others. Teachers effectively plan opportunities to promote pupils' personal and social development, as seen in Years 5 and 6 where pupils were encouraged to share ideas and opinions in order to solve various problem scenarios through discussion. Pupils develop good co-operative skills through group work and they are often asked to work collaboratively together by teachers. Each class has a list of jobs of responsibility, which pupils take in turn to carry out, and older pupils have a range of jobs such as register and library duties. These contribute positively to the life of the school. Opportunities to sing to local senior citizens and fundraising activities for charities such as the Blue Peter Appeal, provide many opportunities for pupils to consider the needs of others.
36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils share a common cultural background and teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to appreciate their local heritage through study of the local area in which they live and how it has changed over time. History also provides opportunity for pupils to explore ancient civilisations, such as the Romans, the Greeks and the Egyptians. In art, pupils consider works of Mondrian and L S Lowry and use this experience as a stimulus for their own work; and in music pupils listen to and appreciate African music. Some opportunity is given for pupils to learn about other cultures in religious education as they study other world faiths such as Islam

and Judaism, but overall there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate other cultures and lifestyles.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school has clear procedures for child protection, which are used appropriately. Attendance is carefully monitored with the result that most pupils now come to school regularly and on time. Behaviour is carefully monitored and there are well-established rewards to promote good behaviour. These are well used including allocation of 'Golden Time' for good behaviour and the awarding of 'Dinner Time Diamonds'. Good provision is made for pupils' wellbeing and safety, despite difficult physical conditions in classrooms and outdoor areas. These procedures clearly make a significant impact on an appropriate environment for learning and personal development.
38. Clear policies cover all aspects of school life and are followed through in practice by all members of staff. All staff know the pupils and their families and this knowledge supports the effective welfare policies well. Very good provision is made to ensure high standards of care for those pupils who have additional needs, encouraging independence, supportive friendships and full involvement in daily activities. 'Swop-Round' day develops confidence in advance of moves to the next class.
39. The school's arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Since the appointment of the new headteacher effective assessment procedures have been implemented. However, they have not been established long enough to effect future planning substantially. The school analyses both national statutory and non-statutory tests in English, mathematics and science. This is effective and supports target-setting for both group and individual pupils. Other assessment procedures, such as compiling individual pupil profiles in order to track pupils' progress, are effectively being established. The assessment procedures used in the Nursery are good and provide clear information about individual pupils' progress in all areas of learning, which is used effectively to inform future planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents are well satisfied with the school and the attitudes and values the staff promote. They feel that their children achieve appropriate standards academically and are expected to behave well. They have great confidence in the strong family atmosphere, supported by links with the Church and the mutual respect of staff and pupils for each other. Parents feel free to talk to staff at any time and are made welcome at all times, and in particular at the weekly Family Assemblies. Both their relationship with the school and their confidence in the staff make a significant impact on pupils' happiness and readiness to learn.
41. Links with parents overall are good. There is an effective 'open door' policy during the day and the school provides frequent open evenings and letters home to ensure that parents unable to visit the school in the day, have opportunities to meet staff and see their children's work. School reports give good general information about progress, but briefing about future topics and events is inconsistent. Details and expectations about homework and how to help in hearing reading are not sufficiently clear to reassure parents and further promote pupils' learning.
42. Although few parents help regularly in school, they are eager to volunteer to accompany pupils on planned visits and in completing specific projects. Friends of the school raise funds at special events, and friends and relatives contributed significantly to study of local history by recounting their memories in costume.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good. In spite of the effects of ongoing staffing problems and disruption, re-organisation of classes and considerable issues arising from the state of the building, which have created challenges for the management of the school, there has been significant improvement since the last inspection report. Improvement has been particularly apparent since the appointment of the permanent headteacher in January 1999 and the issues are being successfully addressed.
44. The headteacher and recently appointed deputy headteacher share a commitment to raising standards and have successfully identified key areas for improvement. Both headteacher and deputy have a very good understanding of the demands of their roles and work very well together to establish and sustain the progress that the school is making. The leadership has been remarkably successful in fostering a very warm and welcoming school ethos and in nurturing a positive and committed team, who work very well together for the benefit of pupils and parents. Most teachers have responsibility for curricular management and they have a good understanding of areas for development in their subjects. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very well qualified and experienced. She provides good leadership through her consultative role to staff, and by her overview of provision to ensure that the requirements of the national Code of Practice for special educational needs are met. However, due to her teaching commitment, although the organisation of special needs is effective and well managed, she is unable to extend the valuable support for pupils and teachers through any non-contact times.
45. The way in which the governing body fulfils its responsibilities is satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection there have been a number of challenges for the leadership of the school during a long period of instability, caused by a series of acting headships and unavoidable disruption to staffing. The governors have been successful in supporting the new headteacher and reducing the effects of upheaval. There is a small core of very experienced and active governors who have been effective in developing a strategic view of the school's development and they have been authoritative in making the decisions, often difficult, in both personnel and accommodation issues. This active core of governors is now supplemented by a number of new governors. Their knowledge of the school is good; they are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are well informed by the headteacher. Induction procedures to help new governors in developing their roles are well used. They are developing an understanding of their roles and show commitment to the school. The breadth of interest and commitment to change is now sufficient to enable the chair of governors to extend the roles and responsibilities within the governing body. The newly established committees have clear terms of reference to work effectively; this is good development both in spreading the load of responsibility and in enabling all governors to take an active and positive role in the school's development. Areas of weakness at present include the monitoring of the school's performance and raising standards. At present there is insufficient monitoring of value for money spent and some governors are unsure of their responsibilities. However, the individuals with responsibility on the governing body are well aware of the areas for development. They are articulate and very well informed and share a determination to improve the quality of education provided by the school.
46. Co-ordinators now have opportunities to monitor teaching and learning; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators monitor half-termly plans and the senior management team review the curriculum. This good practice is beginning to have a positive effect on the development of subjects. Literacy and numeracy have been monitored more rigorously and regularly by the headteacher and the co-ordinators and this is contributing to the satisfactory implementation, particularly in English in Key Stage 2. This monitoring is systematic and it is raising standards of both teaching and learning as

senior staff ensure that pupils' learning needs are met and that learning is in logical sequence. They identify areas for development successfully and, for example in the teaching of alternative mental mathematics strategies, take steps to improve provision. Co-ordinators of the core subjects are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and well informed.

47. Curriculum development and assessments have been satisfactorily developed, particularly in the last eighteen months, and the good school development plan is clear and well focused in directing funds towards the development and training of staff. This has had a significant impact on the improvements in the quality of teaching. There has been considerable improvement in information technology since January 1999 and provision is now meeting statutory requirements. Development in assessment and monitoring are effective and standards in the core subjects are steadily rising. However, there is still room for further improvement in the use of the information gained from these strategies.
48. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is good. It is effective because it is rigorous and well focused. Monitoring of school performance has been specific and the useful documentation for tracking pupils' progress through the year is beginning to be used to track pupils' progress throughout the school. This is a good development as it informs senior managers of the gaps in pupils' experience. The school is then able to respond, for example, in the extra sessions timetabled for group reading and extended writing and through the teaching of science by the knowledgeable co-ordinator. Procedures for recording the outcomes and for setting targets for improvement are effective and where there are some inconsistencies in teaching, the headteacher and deputy are quick to respond with training or visits to teachers who show excellent practice. The school has set targets to raise standards in English, mathematics and science based on a thorough analysis of assessment data from national tests and consequently, the school is making progress towards its targets.
49. The school makes good use of resources and funds made available to it. The school development plan is a sound, working document, which has been appropriately constructed to raise standards. Spending decisions focus on raising standards in literacy, numeracy and science, improving the buildings and developing the curriculum in line with national requirements. The upheavals in staffing have had a significant impact on the management of the budget and the school has been successful in redressing the deficit budget inherited by the new headteacher. Financial management is prudent and good use is made of all available funds.
50. Good information is provided about the budget regularly, which keeps governors well informed. Funds made available for pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately to enhance their provision. The school is successfully addressing the issues raised in the audit report. The school secretary manages day-to-day accounts and office procedures to a high standard. Financial controls are effective and efficient.
51. Though the school has experienced an unsettled period, with a high turnover of teaching staff, staffing levels are fundamentally good. Currently, the Nursery is staffed by two appropriately qualified nursery nurses, giving a very acceptable ratio of adults to children. The ratio of pupils to teachers in the main school is good, ensuring that classes are not too crowded. The quality of staffing in the main school is also good. Nearly all teachers are qualified to teach primary pupils and the teachers who are trained for other age groups are qualified by experience and have well-developed skills in the teaching of primary pupils. Between them, the school's teachers have a good range of subject expertise, which they are using effectively in their roles as co-ordinators, to raise standards in their specific subject areas and for pupils with special educational needs.
52. The quality of expertise is supported by a developing system of monitoring of teachers' performance. All teachers have received performance management training and have

usefully set their own targets for improvement. The induction of newly qualified teachers is sound. Each attends courses, makes visits to see experienced teachers in action and is supported by a senior member of the school's staff who acts as mentor.

53. The school recognises that recent staffing difficulties have had a negative effect on the progress made by some Year 2 and Year 6 pupils and is planning early remedial action. The overall weakness in staffing is the shortage of class assistants. While specialist support staff are provided by the local authority for pupils with particular educational needs, that which is supplied by the school is well under the national average for the number of pupils in the school. This is a weakness.
54. The bad state of external repair and of some internal fabric, which was identified in the last inspection, has still not been remedied; much has further deteriorated in spite of strenuous efforts and representations by the school. The premises are poor and inadequate for the delivery of parts of the curriculum, in particular for physical education, but also for some aspects of art and design and technology. Despite this, the premises are kept bright and clean. The buildings are difficult to maintain well and the food preparation area does not meet current food hygiene standards. The hall is used throughout the day for physical education, the service of lunches and daily school assemblies and next term will also house the school library. Although improvements have been made, lessons in adjoining classrooms are regularly disrupted by the noise from the hall. The temperature in the temporary classroom cannot be appropriately controlled in winter or summer and it poses difficulty in access and management for pupils who have special needs.
55. Resources for learning are generally adequate. Spending priorities have matched the curriculum priorities identified in the school's development plan. First among these has been the resourcing of literacy, which now provides good support for pupils' progress. The library is well stocked with reference books, although it is not widely used for research. Provision for numeracy is satisfactory, with further funding set aside to enhance the levels of equipment presently available. A new range of computers has been installed and this is already having a positive impact on learning across the curriculum, as well as in mathematics. The school has set aside funding for relevant software and is in the process of building its stock. Music is particularly well resourced and there is a generous supply of a wide variety of percussion instruments. However, the school's sound system is worn and detracts from pupils' appreciation of the music played in daily assemblies. Physical education is well equipped. In geography, some new maps have been provided but resources are limited. Materials to enhance pupils' multicultural education and resources for design and technology are broadly satisfactory. There are no school facilities for food technology.
56. Provision for children in the Nursery is good. Their development is supported by a good range of learning resources and large, outdoor equipment. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the resources for learning and from materials made by teachers, when appropriate.
57. Resources are generally up-to-date, well organised and accessible. Generally, smaller equipment in regular use is kept in classrooms; other resources are well organised and stored centrally.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to raise standards further the school and governors should now:
 - improve standards in English by improving spelling, handwriting, punctuation and presentation skills; (Paragraphs 6, 16, 70)

- review and refine the developments in curriculum planning in order to ensure logical progression of work in all subjects; (Paragraphs 25, 26, 92, 94)
- build on and extend existing assessment procedures and ensure their consistent use; (Paragraphs 39, 48, 78)
- increase the number of support staff in order to support learning in mixed age classes; (Paragraphs 53, 75)
- ensure that the accommodation is improved to:
 - safeguard hygienic food preparation areas;
 - enable the full range of physical education;
 - ensure that noise does not disturb pupils' learning in the classrooms surrounding the hall;
 - upgrade access and the environment for learning in the temporary classroom. (Paragraphs 20, 54, 89, 112)

Minor issues:

Build on numeracy skills by broadening pupils' range of mental mathematics calculations. (Paragraphs 16, 77)

Improve resources in geography, design and technology and multicultural education. (Paragraphs 55, 91, 94, 112)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

40

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	25	42	27	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	121
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	20

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	99 (98)	4 (9)	14 (18)	18 (11)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2 (7)	3 (6)	3 (8)
	Girls	12 (7)	14 (6)	14 (7)
	Total	14 (14)	17 (12)	17 (15)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (83)	95 (71)	95 (89)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
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Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2 (7)	2 (8)	2 (7)
	Girls	12 (6)	12 (7)	11 (7)
	Total	14 (13)	14 (15)	13 (14)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (77)	78 (89)	73 (83)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	99 (98)	6 (10)	11 (9)	17 (19)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	3
	Girls	10	8	9
	Total	14	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (65)	65 (59)	71 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3 (4)	3 (7)	4 (7)
	Girls	8 (5)	9 (4)	10 (6)
	Total	11 (9)	12 (11)	14 (13)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (48)	71 (58)	82 (69)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

No figures are available for individual pupils for the 1998 tests at Key Stage 2.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	321,288
Total expenditure	288,592
Expenditure per pupil	1,729
Balance brought forward from previous year	-13,857
Balance carried forward to next year	18,839

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	138
Number of questionnaires returned	75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	24	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	28	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	40	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	37	9	4	3
The teaching is good.	72	24	0	3	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	29	7	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	13	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	28	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	48	40	5	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	63	27	1	3	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	31	13	11	23

Other issues raised by parents

Parents' and carers' views of the school are largely positive and the inspection team endorses these. Parents are committed to the school in spite of the upheavals over the last years and most report considerable improvement in the information they have received, particularly about staff and class changes since the new headteacher's appointment. However, they also feel that the upheavals have gone on too long. There are a variety of views about homework, some parents wanting more, some less.

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

59. The school makes very good provision for children who are under five and is a strength of the school. Children are taught in the Nursery and Reception class. The children in the Nursery are taught by two nursery nurses, following staffing changes during the present school year. The quality of instruction by adults in the Nursery is consistently very good and sometimes excellent. The quality of teaching in the Reception class is good. This and the very well planned curriculum and organisation of relevant learning activities ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and receive the same experiences that are appropriate for their age. Reception pupils begin working to Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Programmes of Study when they are ready to do so. The children's attainment on entry to Reception is in line with that expected for their age overall although there are considerable variations between year groups.

Personal and social development

60. The children make particularly good progress in their personal and social development. Staff understand the needs of all pupils very well and promote a warm, caring and supportive learning environment in which children quickly settle and happily respond to daily routines and activities. The support given to the severely physically challenged children within the Nursery is very good and staff ensure that they are well integrated and involved in all the activities. Other children respond positively to these children and take obvious delight in working with and sharing learning experiences with them and each other. All children get on well together and work effectively in groups. They share equipment well and play happily together in the theme corner. Staff ensure there is an appropriate balance between adult-directed tasks and free play activities in order to support pupils' learning; children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning as they choose from a range of well planned activities. Children show good levels of concentration for their age and are able to engage in tasks with interest and sustained concentration. Children's personal and social skills are well developed through daily routines such as snack time when children are encouraged to take turns, share and show good manners.

Language and literacy

61. By the age of five children's attainment in language and literacy is in line with national targets for their age. They make good progress in acquiring early literacy skills. Staff consistently promote literacy skills through a variety of activities. For example, in the Nursery children are encouraged to identify key letter sounds and key simple words on wall displays, and in the Reception class the effective organisation and delivery of the literacy hour is used well to promote early reading and writing skills. Children enjoy looking at books and Nursery children soon understand that the written word has meaning and can make some observations about what is happening in illustrations. By the time they are five most pupils know some initial letter sounds and read some simple words and sentences. In writing, most children begin to form many letters of the alphabet correctly and copy over or underneath the teacher's writing. Some higher attaining pupils write some words and sentences independently. Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well through opportunities for imaginative role-play and most pupils listen to and respond to adults and each other in many different situations well.

Mathematics

62. Children make good progress in mathematics and by the time they are five children's attainment is in line with national targets for that age. They count accurately to ten and

beyond and can recognise some of the numerals. They show a developing understanding of simple addition and can add two one-digit numbers together and record accurately. They make good progress in understanding specific mathematical language and know the meaning of add, equals, more than and less. They also develop a sound understanding of shape and can name several different two-dimensional shapes such as a square, circle and triangle.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. By the time they are five children's attainment is in line with targets for their age. Staff ensure that children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world through the careful planning of a wide range of activities that enable children to investigate and explore their surroundings. For example, in the Nursery children learn about various methods of transport through their topic about journeys and explore and observe the changes in substances as they bake cakes. When making sandcastles they begin to understand that by adding water to the sand this will change its texture to a better sticking consistency in order to make a more firm and solid sandcastle. In their topic about France, children in the Reception class begin to appreciate that the world extends beyond their immediate locality as they prepare a typical French meal. From an early age children begin to acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of technology and are familiar with some of the keys on a computer keyboard by the age of five.

Creative development

64. Children make good progress in their creative development and by the age of five attain in line with targets for their age. The children in both the Nursery and Reception class quickly learn how to mix paint in order to create different shades. They learn how to join materials in different ways and apply these skills successfully in order to make model vehicles. They quickly learn how to manipulate various tools such as rollers, brushes and scissors when engaged in various creative activities such as painting, printing and model making. Children make good progress in music and can recognise the sounds of a range of percussion instruments and can distinguish between loud and quiet sounds. They show a good sense of rhythm for their age and can follow a simple beat on tambourine well. They begin to understand simple notation as they respond to written symbols in order to play loud and quiet sound on various percussion instruments. They sing a range of songs from memory well with obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm.

Physical development

65. By the age of five the majority of children attain in line with targets for their age. Children's attainment and progress in physical development is good. The very good quality of instruction by adults in the Nursery and the effective use of a range of appropriate learning resources ensure pupils make rapid progress in their physical development. Children quickly acquire a good sense of balance and control while riding on both three- and two-wheeled vehicles. They experience a good range of activities that involve running, climbing, skipping, hopping, curling and jumping and children acquire a good understanding of the importance of physical exercise in order to keep healthy. Adults give children effective instruction and promote safe practices during lessons. Very clear guidance and support is given to those pupils who have specific physical disabilities. All children engaged in physical activities are encouraged to refine their movements and their dexterity and manual control is developing well through the good range of activities regularly provided. Most respond to instructions very well.

ENGLISH

66. Standards are close to the national average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading although below in writing. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, the performance of pupils was close to the national average but was below average in comparison with similar schools. Taking into account the combined results of the National Curriculum tests since 1996, the performance of boys was well below the national average and the performance of girls in the tests was below the national average. However, the results of these tests show a steady improvement above the national trend in standards each year from 1996.
67. Standards of attainment are below national expectation in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 although in line in reading. In a similar profile to Year 6, the Year 2 pupils have experienced disruption in their teaching and in the year group there is a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, the performance of pupils in reading was above the national average and in writing it was close to the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the performance of pupils in reading was above average and their performance in writing was close to the average. Taking into account the results of the National Curriculum tests for the last four years, the performance of the pupils in reading was above the national average and in writing it was close to the national average.
68. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in speaking and listening. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively and with sustained concentration in many different situations and can respond to instructions promptly and appropriately. Teachers successfully promote speaking skills through skilful questioning, most pupils express their views and opinions clearly and older pupils often give extended replies to questions.
69. Standards in reading are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Teachers ensure that guided and shared reading activities are well structured and enable all pupils to practise and develop their reading skills each day. This supports the good progress pupils make in reading. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have acquired several strategies to read unfamiliar words. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are fluent, confident readers and are able to talk about significant events, themes and characters well. Many show clear preferences about the books they like to read and they show a good understanding of both plot and characters. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of research skills are less well developed and the school library is insufficiently used as a learning resource to promote pupils' personal research skills. However, use of the improved information technology research programs is effective and is beginning to promote research skills in history and science, for example.
70. Standards in writing are below national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils throughout the school make much slower progress in this aspect of the subject. Across the school pupils' knowledge, understanding and use of punctuation rules is weak and their spelling is often poor. Handwriting is not always well formed by pupils at Key Stage 1 and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils joined writing is not consistently used by all pupils. The school is aware of this and has put into place an effective action plan for the development of spelling, punctuation and presentation in order to improve standards. While this is beginning to raise standards, there has not been sufficient time to raise standards overall for the present Year 6. However, teachers do provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to write in a range of styles and for different purposes across the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 2. For example, in history Year 5 and 6 pupils devise a questionnaire in order to conduct a traffic survey within the local area. Teachers promote creative and descriptive writing well and consequently pupils make particularly good progress in understanding, for example, how adjectives and adverbs can be used to enhance their writing. For example, in Years 3 and 4 pupils use carefully chosen vocabulary and figures of speech, such as adjectives and similes very well in order to

describe the land of Narnia from the book 'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe' by C S Lewis.

71. Both teachers and support staff give good levels of support to pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Individual literacy targets are clearly identified for these pupils and work is suitably planned to meet their individual needs.
72. The school has very successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. The quality of teaching in the subject is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 to good and most frequently, very good in other classes. This good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning and is contributing to the rising standards, although there has not been sufficient time to raise standards overall in writing in Years 2 and 6 where there have also been changes in staff. The quality of the teaching and the good attitudes of pupils to their learning, contribute significantly to the good progress that pupils make overall, particularly in Year 6. Where teaching is at its best, learning objectives are clearly communicated to pupils and are appropriately referred to during lessons and ensure pupils remain focused. Teachers have good subject knowledge and consistently promote reading and writing skills effectively through skilful questioning, demonstration and modelling. Teachers give precise instructions and explanations that support pupils' understanding and work is suitably planned to suit all ability groups. Teachers ensure that all pupils contribute to whole-class discussions, including those with special educational needs, and the pace of lessons is brisk. Where teaching is less effective, teachers miss opportunities to promote reading skills effectively during shared reading. Pupils are not always focused on the text and sometimes tasks are insufficiently challenging.
73. The subject is very effectively co-ordinated and provides a good model for the development of other subjects. Strategies to monitor standards and the quality of both teaching and learning are securely in place. Where weaknesses have been identified in teaching and in learning, for example in writing, the school has been actively promoting support for the lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 and plans to retain the additional support for the coming year. This is a positive development towards raising standards. Resources for the subject are of a good range and quality and teachers use them effectively to support learning.

MATHEMATICS

74. Standards at Key Stages 1 and 2 are broadly average. Trends in the school's mathematics results for Key Stage 1 over the years 1996 to 1999 give an erratic profile, but also show the clear improvement made in 1999, when results were well above average for similar schools. The profile for Key Stage 2 also shows clear improvement over time, though there was a very slight dip in 1999 when the school's results in mathematics were below average compared with similar schools. There are considerable differences in the attainment of different year groups and the present Years 2 and 6 include a higher percentage of pupils with low prior attainment. However, the majority of pupils are attaining at the expected level for age or, in a few cases, above this level.
75. Lesson observations indicate that a minority of pupils has been unsettled by staff changes in Year 2 and that slower pupils find it more difficult to succeed where there is no class assistant available. The school is giving urgent attention to this. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the progress of slower pupils and those with special educational needs, is strongly influenced by the level of assistance available to them in lessons. The majority of pupils are achieving satisfactorily in lessons. Key Stage 1 pupils use the four number operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division confidently, a minority using numbers up to 100, though the majority understand the place value of two-digit numbers. Most apply their learning to real life situations such as shopping. A minority of pupils apply their numerical

understanding to solve simple problems involving grams and litres. Pupils learn about shapes in the early stages of Key Stage 1 and reinforce their knowledge by applying it in art, for instance, analysing shapes in the work of Mondrian.

76. In Key Stage 2, attainment is broadly in line with the average. Pupils generally make sound progress in understanding the use of decimals and fractions and show how these are related in value. They use percentages and apply these in graph work, using the computer to construct bar charts and pie charts.
77. The teaching of mathematics is good overall, never less than satisfactory and occasionally excellent and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is consistently of high quality and is contributing effectively to rising standards. Teachers have a good understanding of numeracy requirements and structure their lessons accordingly, to ensure that pupils are challenged and that learning is well matched to pupils' individual needs. This is particularly effective where there are wide variations in attainment within year groups, for example in Years 1, 2 and 6. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effective in improving teaching overall. Teaching is considerable improved since the last inspection and teachers have clear objectives for their lessons and share these with the pupils. Activities are relevant to these objectives and to the needs of pupils at different levels of prior attainment and most pupils concentrate and work hard in mathematics lessons. In the most successful lessons, activities involved application to real world examples and problem solving when pupils applied their mathematics to enquiries, such as the median weight of pupils in the class. Skilful questioning and explanations enabled pupils to show understanding in a lesson which required them to find the mathematical 'secret' about the sum of the angles of triangles. Pupils' interest in the enquiry rose to the level of excitement, clearly indicating the high level of engagement in learning, stimulated by the enquiry-based activities. Teachers pay good attention to the development of pupils' mathematical vocabulary and, by encouraging the pupils to explain their thinking, ensure that pupils use this vocabulary effectively, particularly in Years 5 and 6. However, insufficient attention is given to different methods of calculation and this undermines pupils' skills in mental calculations, including estimation at the end of Key Stage 2. While there was no unsatisfactory teaching, in a minority of lessons seen at Key Stage 1, too much time is spent on introducing the work and too little allowed for pupils' activities and for the important final question and answer session, during which learning can be reinforced and misconceptions corrected. Class teachers apply mathematics in other subjects effectively, for example in design and technology, information technology and science.
78. Developments in the subject are led well by two committed co-ordinators, who have a good understanding of numeracy requirements and have made significant contributions to the professional development of their colleagues. Areas identified for development include the systematic teaching of different methods of calculation to develop pupils' mental mathematics skills; this is a good response to an identified need. A good quality policy and medium-term planning which emphasises enquiry-based approaches to learning, provide a strong basis for teachers' lesson planning. Targets are set for the whole school and for year groups. Both teaching and pupils' attainments are closely monitored by the co-ordinators and senior staff. Assessment strategies are in place but the recording of individual pupils' progress towards the specified learning objectives is not sufficiently developed. Resources for mathematics are adequate and are in the process of development, particularly in relation to information technology.

SCIENCE

79. Standards at Key Stage 1 have been broadly maintained since the previous inspection, and are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2, and represent an improvement on the results of national tests and teacher assessments for 1999.

Standards at Key Stage 2 had been slow to improve, because of the scheme of work which did not support non-specialist staff, particularly in teaching skills of investigation and the variations in attainment between year groups of pupils. There was a significant dip for example in 1999 at Key Stage 2. In addition the school has been concentrating on English and mathematics during the last two years. However, there have been significant changes in the recent past. A revised scheme of work has been developed using a published framework and this is proving successful in raising teachers' expectations and awareness of standards in both key stages. Specialist teaching at Key Stage 2 is also having an effect on standards. Science is suitably identified as a priority on the school development plan for next year. As a result standards in Key Stage 2 are improving. The attainment of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 is on course to meet national standards by the time they are eleven years old. While there is a significant proportion of lower attaining pupils in the current Year 6, at the end of the key stage over 50 per cent of the pupils were achieving standards in line with the national average in each of the areas of science study, and 20 per cent were achieving above average standards. Attainment in the using and applying of pupils' science learning is much improved since the last inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve as they should, although there is some lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 as pupils consolidate what they already know rather than learn new skills. The improvement in science is because of the quality of the teaching at Key Stage 2 and the introduction of published material, which gives an effective framework for planning.

80. Teaching is mainly satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and pupils make appropriate gains in their learning. They enjoy science and show enthusiasm for their work because tasks are interesting. For example, in Reception older pupils of school age investigated the properties of sand and discovered the different properties of wet and dry sand in relation to making sandcastles. Pupils in Year 1 worked well together in groups when investigating which material would be most suitable for a baby's bib. They achieved the task by experimenting to find the most resistant material. These pupils made good progress because the teacher encouraged them to use correct terms and used questions effectively to extend their knowledge. Pupils enjoyed the challenges presented and the tasks were well matched to pupils' attainment including the higher attainers. In a less effective Year 2 lesson, the pupils investigated what makes ice melt. While this was an interesting investigation, there was not always sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. However, the majority of pupils reach the expected standards in science at the end of the key stage because of the satisfactory provision made for them over the year.
81. Teaching in Key Stage 2 was consistently good and pupils are meeting the expected standards at the end of the key stage. The teacher has a very good knowledge of the subject and adapts the work to ensure that activities provide sufficient challenge for all. High expectations and a brisk pace enable pupils to complete a good amount of work in lessons. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, use scientific vocabulary such as carbohydrate, protein, minerals and vitamin and show a good understanding of the functions of these foods in the body. Pupils developed their understanding because the teacher posed challenging questions and presented tasks well. The tasks were interesting and demanding and pupils made effective use of their literacy skills to research healthy menus for a week, or through using information technology to create a questionnaire. Pupils used their knowledge very well to formulate searching questions, for example: 'do you tire easily?' In Years 3 and 4 pupils classify a list of creatures by whether they have skeletons or not. They know that calcium makes a contribution to strong bones and that genes determine body shape and size. They are confident in describing the principle of fair testing and to investigate challenges. They know that the process includes prediction, method, result, conclusion and recording of evidence. While pupils in Years 3 and 4, 5 and 6 learn about photosynthesis, electrical circuits and nutrition at similar times, work is sufficiently well focused to ensure that there is progression of learning and that work is at a level to challenge higher attaining pupils.

82. Pupils use their numeracy skills well to create graphs to record differences in heart rates after exercise and use their literacy skills to record their findings about muscles. They are developing the use of the Internet satisfactorily to research for science facts and use database programs to record their findings.
83. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has appropriate plans to maintain the rise in standards and enthusiasm for the subject in the school.

ART

84. Standards in art at Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with expectations. At the time of the last inspection standards were reported to be below national expectations. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been maintained since the last inspection and remains in line with that expected for their age.
85. Across the school pupils make sound progress in painting techniques, such as colour mixing, brushwork and composition and develop a good understanding of different techniques as they study the work of other artists. For example, in Years 5 and 6 pupils show careful mixing and application of paint in order to create an appropriate background wash which depicts an urban scene in the style of L S Lowry. Teachers encourage pupils to experience and work in a range of different media in order to support their learning in the subject. For example, through a whole-school art day initiative, pupils from each class use different media and techniques, such as chalks, charcoal and rubbings to depict the landscape seen through their classroom window.
86. Pupils make sound progress in observational drawing and use shading techniques well to create shadow and depth of tone to their drawings. Pupils observe carefully and use perspective effectively and most demonstrate through their art an increasing control and understanding of shape, line, texture, tone and pattern, for example in the range of Years 5 and 6 landscape studies.
87. At both key stages pupils make good progress in using art programs on the computer and the work of other artists to inform their work. For example, in Year 2 pupils competently use the computer to create abstract patterns in the style of Mondrian.
88. In half the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was good and satisfactory in the other 50 per cent. When teaching is at its best, planning identifies clear and appropriate learning objectives and teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use effectively to demonstrate and discuss specific techniques in order to develop pupils skills and extend their experiences. When there are weaknesses in teaching, pace is slow, lesson introductions are too long and insufficient time is left for pupils to experience techniques and develop their skills.
89. The subject is well co-ordinated and promoted throughout the school. Resources are sufficient to teach the subject effectively, although the space in some classrooms is small for practical work and there are no sinks or running water in classrooms.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. Insufficient evidence was available for a valid judgement of pupils' achievement in design and technology to be made. At the time of the last inspection, the standard of pupils' work was just about in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils were said to be keen on the subject and some support for this judgement was observed in the single lesson seen during the current inspection. Year 2 pupils were applying themselves well to the designing of a multi-coloured 'dreamcoat' for a doll or teddy bear. Given a basic shape, they worked effectively in pairs to prepare a paper pattern and to work out coloured

decorations for the coat. The usefulness of this assignment was substantially enhanced by the opportunity to use a computer program to develop a multi-coloured design. Apart from paper and card models to support learning in such topics as 'push and pull' forces in science, only one example of the work of Key Stage 2 pupils was seen. This was a well-conceived assignment on the design and making of slippers.

91. Design and technology is an area acknowledged for development by the school. At present, provision is not sufficiently well planned to ensure that pupils learn skills in logical progression. Teachers' subject knowledge is not secure. The range of resources is insufficient and practical activities are inhibited by the lack of space for working and storing pupils' models. However, a new policy has been prepared which reflects National Curriculum intentions for the subject and a new scheme of work is to follow, informed by the Curriculum 2000 guidelines. In-service training for teachers and professional advice from the local education advisory service is being sought.

GEOGRAPHY

92. Pupils' achievement in geography is below standards expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. An important weakness is pupils' below average achievement in mapping skills. There are also weaknesses in their knowledge of places beyond their own locality. While some attention is paid to study of the weather and to environmental changes, pupils' work overall lacks depth. Geography was highlighted for its weaknesses at the time of the last inspection and the school has not yet been successful in effecting the necessary changes. Management difficulties and staffing problems over recent years have combined to impede progress.
93. Some satisfactory work was seen, however. Following a visit, Reception pupils have recorded their impressions of a farm. They are also beginning to appreciate that the world extends beyond their own locality. A collection of holiday photographs and posters, with an emphasis on France, has been successful in alerting them to other ways of life beyond the British Isles. Geography, as part of a science topic, introduced Key Stage 1 pupils to the materials used for housing in hotter climates. These pupils are also aware of basic facts about the solar system, the importance of the sun and of the problem of global warming. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils use large-scale local maps to locate local buildings and landmarks. By the end of the key stage, Years 5 and 6 pupils carry out local fieldwork to study traffic problems. Pupils respond positively to such opportunities. Though valuable in themselves, these learning experiences lack continuity and do not provide a sufficiently rich and firm basis for progress in the subject.
94. The teaching seen in individual lessons was at least sound and sometimes good. Lesson objectives were clear, learning activities appropriate and class management good. Sometimes, helpful opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills are provided. However, the lack of an up-to-date policy and scheme of work means that there is no clear direction for teachers. Information technology is not used routinely to support learning in geography and there is also a shortage of learning resources. The co-ordinator has an appropriate draft plan of action to improve geography in the school. The scheme of work and assessment arrangements are to be updated, in line with the Curriculum 2000 initiative, and the subject is scheduled for further review within the next two years.

HISTORY

95. Standards in history at the end of both key stages are in line with standards expected and have been sustained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 understand concepts such as 'now' and 'then', 'present' and 'past' and have learned to think about themselves and others in terms of time and ageing. Much sequencing work has taken place and they have

a good early sense of chronology, through their comparisons of themselves and their needs between babyhood and the age of four and five. By the end of Key Stage 1, more work has been carried out with regard to developing chronological understanding, factual knowledge has developed well and pupils are beginning to use and discuss historical information. They are starting to use basic historical evidence. For example, pupils in Year 2 make some thoughtful comparisons between illustrations of the past and those of the present day. They are aware of how some significant people and events in history still have an effect on our lives and know, for example, that Louis Braille's invention is still effective today. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils express sound understanding of the past and are beginning to identify the links between characteristics of an area and work and living patterns. In Years 5 and 6, skills of research and comparison have developed well overall through historical investigation, for example into the working conditions of weavers in Mossley in Victorian times. There are good and very good examples in independent research projects and pupils in Year 6 are beginning to interrogate primary sources of information, such as newspaper and census material and to make deductions from the information they read. They use primary and secondary sources effectively and are beginning to exhibit the breadth of knowledge, and make the quality of comparisons, between societies that is expected at the end of Year 6. Standards in work scrutinised in pupils' books are satisfactory overall.

96. Pupils develop their skills appropriately as they move through the school. Literacy skills are used effectively in history. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the subject and, through the use of knowledgeable support and teaching, they are able to access information well. They make good progress in history, although written outcomes are sometimes inhibited by their attainment in literacy.
97. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and leads to good learning. In the lessons observed, the teaching was characterised by challenging pace and the good use of story, artefacts and very good use of resources, including visits to local historical sites and the oral history provided by local people. Work is modified to match the needs of different groups and teachers use an effective mixture of whole-class and group discussion techniques. Enthusiasm for history is evident in Key Stage 2. Teachers share their interest, provide effective revision of what has been learnt and set clear boundaries and targets for work and behaviour. In a good lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, skilful questioning and the very good use of the local environment through study of the weavers' cottages opposite the school, added to the pupils' interest very effectively and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils made direct comparisons between the deployment of the rooms in the house to compare lifestyles then and now. They used information from the recent visit to reinforce their conclusions and inform their discussion and work. In Years 5 and 6 the use of reference books and primary sources was effective in developing research skills. Information technology word processing skills and interrogation of CD-Rom sources are used effectively when writing in history and research. Teachers are confident in developing concepts such as chronology and the best way to discuss and handle artefacts and this also has a positive effect on pupils' response to history. All pupils demonstrate imagination and an interest in other people at other times. They are keen to work, answer and read or talk to the whole class. Significant development takes place in speaking and listening skills and confidence within history.
98. History is soundly co-ordinated and opportunities are developing for staff to add to their skills. History is taught through half-termly topics. The scheme of work using a published scheme as a basis is effective in ensuring progression of skills through these topic units. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The plans are effectively monitored by the co-ordinator. There is evident good practice in the school and this is effectively used for pupils in Key Stage 2. A wide range of visits take place to museums, houses and churches and this is successful in enriching the curriculum and raising pupils' awareness of chronology and their place in the passing of time.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards in information technology are in line with the national expectation by the end of both key stages. Pupils achieve as well as they should and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. One reason for this is because the school has improved its provision for the subject through the updating of hardware. This provides improved opportunities for the teaching of skills. The school has also addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. For example, a new policy has been written and the school is using national guidance alongside its own scheme of work. This ensures that pupils develop their skills steadily and systematically as they move through the school.
100. The school has maintained the emphasis it places on the use of information technology across the curriculum and this helps pupils develop their skills. For example, in Year 6 pupils use their word processing skills in science to write, using a range of fonts and colours. Pupils in Year 5 choose different fonts and show their competent use of punctuation when they type their work. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate their data handling skills in science. Pupils in Year 3 develop their communication and information handling skills in history where they download information about Aztecs from the Internet. In Year 2, pupils write accounts about design and technology activities, showing their use of basic word processing functions and developing their literacy skills. In Year 1 pupils use a drawing package to produce pictures of beautiful places. A particularly strong feature is the use of information technology to support topic work in Key Stage 2. Older pupils produce well researched information to include many examples of word processing and suitable material selected from an encyclopaedia on a CD-Rom. The use of information technology across the curriculum has a positive effect on the standards attained.
101. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching at either key stage because few lessons were seen during the inspection. However, pupils seen using computers during the inspection used them independently and with enjoyment. Pupils in Year 1 used the 'mouse' confidently and showed interest in the different functions of the program. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show that they know how to load, save and print their work and that they have experience of using data handling programs and can use a programmable toy to move along a route. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they enjoy using computers and are competent in all strands of the curriculum.
102. The co-ordinator has successfully raised staff awareness in the use of information technology and this is evident in the examples of work in each class linking different subject areas, for example in history, science and art. Difficulties with the software on the networked system have led to problems with accessing the e-mail facility but many older pupils explained how they use it. The co-ordinator monitors planning and has been successful in providing support in classrooms through the effective deployment of staff and students and the provision of good quality training.

MUSIC

103. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in music match expectations. Good foundations are laid in the Reception class where children learn to clap to a steady beat and to recognise differences in volume. They also become sensitive to the quality of sound made by a wide range of percussion instruments. In a game, Reception pupils name instruments by their sounds, as well as recognising them by shape and demonstrating the correct playing techniques for each. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils sing from memory, sweetly and in tune. Key Stage 2 pupils learn to pick out a melody on tuned percussion instruments such as the xylophone and glockenspiel. They perform rounds, using both voices and instruments, and compose, adding instruments to melodies. They develop a sound

knowledge of musical vocabulary and are familiar with such terms as ostinato and drone, for example.

104. This good progress is based on pupils' pleasure in music, which is strengthened by the good quality teaching, which they enjoy. Teaching itself is based on well-chosen commercial schemes of work, which provide a sound basis for the sequencing of learning experiences and progress in pupils' musical knowledge, skills and understanding. These schemes also give confidence to class teachers who are not experts in the subject. Learning objectives are clearly defined and shared with pupils. Teachers expect pupils to work to a good standard. The good progress of pupils is also supported by the school's wide range of resources for music. Teachers structure learning activities to suit pupils at different levels of prior attainment. Often, this is done with a subtlety that encourages pupils' confidence and adds to their pleasure when participating in whole-class ensemble work. Pupils with a special aptitude and enthusiasm have the opportunity to join the school choir and to receive separate tuition on recorder, guitar or brass instruments. Their extra skills and understanding contribute an expertise from which other pupils can benefit, in group work in particular.
105. The subject is well led and is poised to adjust its schemes of work to take account of the Curriculum 2000 requirements. Development plans include improved assessment procedures to track pupils' progress and inform teaching. A new policy provides a vision for music in education that encompasses a range of whole-school events, such as the leavers' concert and the Christmas musical. In addition, the school contributes to music making in the local community. It provides singing for the local church and for people in residential care. It also co-operates with other schools in events such as choir festivals and a performance of an opera based on the Trojan wars. These provide very good links with the community and raises pupils' enjoyment and involvement in music making.
106. The subject contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Pupils' experience of listening to the work of classical composers in morning assemblies and to examples of music from other cultures is wide and varied. Resources are good overall, although the school's sound system is not sufficiently powerful for the size of the hall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. In order to enhance the provision of the physical education curriculum the school has bought in, from the local education authority, coaching expertise to work alongside teachers for all elements of the subject. This ensures pupils make good progress in the subject and it is also used effectively to train and increase teachers' subject knowledge and skills. Good teaching and very good instruction by the coach during lessons and extra-curricular sporting activities, ensures pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject overall. The quality of teaching by school staff is satisfactory.
108. No judgement can be made about the attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1, because no lesson was observed in Year 2; however standards in Year 1 are in line with those expected. Overall standards are in line with age-related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2, however pupils' attainment in swimming is above average. Almost all pupils swim 25 metres and many swim well beyond this distance. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was reported to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.
109. Pupils make sound progress in gymnastics in Year 1. They demonstrate appropriate balance and control as they jump or stretch their legs to stride across the floor. They show appropriate development in spatial awareness as they walk and jog around the floor at varying speeds. For example, they keep a safe and appropriate distance from each other as they walk, hop and jog around the floor.

110. Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in games and athletics. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils successfully co-ordinate a series of movements involving hops, skips and jumps with appropriate control and balance in order to achieve a triple jump. Equal opportunity is given to all pupils to participate in team games and the school has been successful in being placed within the first three in several local sports tournaments such as football, cricket and swimming.
111. Pupils enjoy taking part in physical activity and take pride in their sporting achievements. They are aware of the need for safety and respond quickly and appropriately to instructions.
112. Physical education provision is restricted by the accommodation. The school has no grassed area or suitably surfaced playground area for pupils to use in order to develop their athletic and game skills safely. However, other resources for the subject are good and staff use them effectively to support pupils' skill development and learning. Physical education is an area for development and this is acknowledged by the school in their development plans.