

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rotherham

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106930

Headteacher: Mr P Storey

Reporting inspector: Mr J White
17242

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th June 2001

Inspection number: 192623

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Herringthorpe Valley Road Rotherham South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S65 2NU
Telephone number:	01709 361502
Fax number:	01709 360506
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr F E Neal
Date of previous inspection:	10 th March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17242	Jeffrey White	Registered inspector	Science; art and design; design and technology; physical education; equal opportunities; English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; mathematics; history; music	
18143	Bernice Magson	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; information and communication technology; geography	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

SES
132 Whitaker Road
Derby
DE23 6AP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is located in Rotherham and draws pupils from several parishes. Pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Eighty percent of pupils are baptised Roman Catholics. The school roll is smaller than average. It is currently 195 (103 boys, 92 girls) and has risen since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. Almost all pupils are white and none has English as an additional language. Thirty-seven pupils are on the special educational needs register, a below average figure, and one has a statement. Children are admitted into the reception class at the beginning of the Autumn or Spring term. Twenty-nine children are currently in the reception class. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The school was rewarded with an Achievement Award for its end of Key Stage 2 statutory tests results in 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' overall standards in English, mathematics and science are high by the age of eleven. The overall teaching is good and much is very good or better. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour help them to achieve well. Leadership and management are effective and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved over time and by the age of eleven are high overall. Standards in mathematics are also high for pupils aged seven.
- Teaching is mainly good, often very good and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and contribute significantly to their learning.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good.
- The headteacher, governors and staff promote pupils' spiritual and moral development very well.

What could be improved

- Provision in the reception class is satisfactory in the main, but often a lack of suitable challenge prevents children from making the best possible progress.
- Pupils aged seven reach satisfactory standards in reading and writing overall, but do not achieve as well as they do in mathematics.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in March 1997 it has made good improvement. Standards in the national tests, and in the work of pupils aged eleven, have improved greatly in English, mathematics and science. They are now high overall. Standards for pupils aged seven have risen marginally in reading and writing but significantly in mathematics where they are now high. Standards in information and communication technology were unsatisfactory in the last inspection; they are now satisfactory and improving quickly because of the school's better teaching and resources. Standards in history are good; previously they were satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching is better and there is a much higher proportion of very good or better teaching. Almost all the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed; most notable improvements include the involvement of governors, assessment procedures and pupils' investigative work. The role of subject co-ordinators has improved but they still have little opportunity to monitor the teaching in their assigned subjects. Provision in the reception class has improved and it is now satisfactory overall. However, there is still not consistent challenge in the children's work.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	B	A	A*
mathematics	B	C	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

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

The results show that overall standards in 2000 were high compared with the performance of all schools. They were also high compared with similar schools and in the case of English the results were within the range of the top five per cent. The school's trend in performance has been above the national trend and it exceeded its statutory targets in 2000. The current pupils in Year 6 also achieve high standards overall in English, mathematics and science. In the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' overall performance was average in reading and writing and high in mathematics. These standards are being maintained in the current Year 2. In no subject is attainment less than satisfactory at ages seven and eleven. Standards are good in history and in some aspects of music. The work seen in physical education in Year 2 was good. Physical education was not observed in Year 6 but in the work seen in Year 4, and in swimming in Year 5, standards were good. In much of their work high attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Children in the reception class are making satisfactory progress towards reaching the goals for learning expected when they enter Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and frequently excellent.
Attendance	The attendance rate is above the national average.

Pupils are invariably enthusiastic, show respect for others and work very diligently.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Ninety-eight per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better, 41 per cent is very good or better and only two per cent (one lesson) is unsatisfactory. Outstanding teaching was observed in several subjects in the infants and juniors. Teaching is good in English and literacy is taught well. Teaching is very good in mathematics and numeracy is taught very well. Significant strengths in the teaching include high and often very high expectations, good or better subject knowledge, brisk pace and very clear exposition. In general the range of pupils' needs is met well. As a result of the many strengths in the teaching, pupils' learning is usually very good. They acquire skills and knowledge very well, are keen and participate well in lessons. Although teaching in the reception class is satisfactory overall, children's work is not consistently purposeful enough and therefore they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is generally good and suitably broad.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The quality of care is very good.

The school works well with parents and they have very positive views of the school's work. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted very effectively. Not enough attention is given to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Pupils' progress and attainment are evaluated well. There has been some useful monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning but currently there is no systematic approach.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well and expenditure is controlled efficiently.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are adequate overall. The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to the school's improvement. The school's attitudes and values are promoted very effectively. The principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school, behave well and standards are good.• Teaching is good and children are expected to work hard.• Parents find the headteacher and staff approachable.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons is not interesting enough.

A high percentage of parents completed the pre-inspection questionnaire. This demonstrates their interest in their children's education. The inspection team strongly endorses parents' positive views. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. A small minority of parents expressed concern over the class size in Year 4. The inspection finds that pupils in this class are making good and often very good progress because of effective teaching.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the 2000 national tests pupils aged eleven achieved high standards in English, mathematics and science, when compared with all and similar schools. The school exceeded its statutory targets. In recent years the trend in pupils' performance has been above the national trend. Standards have risen since 1997 when the school was last inspected. Pupils in Year 6 also attain high standards overall in English, mathematics and science. Standards are marginally better in mathematics and science than in English. In the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds pupils achieved high standards in mathematics in comparison with all and similar schools. Standards in reading and writing were average. Since 1997, although standards have risen in reading and writing, pupils have not done as well as in mathematics where there has been significant improvement. Standards have risen in mathematics mainly because of very good teaching. Standards in the current Year 2 are comparable with the test results and the unvalidated 2001 scores suggest a broadly similar picture. In 2000 teachers assessed that the percentage of seven-year-olds reaching the expected level in science was below average compared with all schools. The percentage reaching the higher level was above average. The current pupils aged seven attain average standards overall. Although standards in science are broadly similar to those seen in the last inspection they are better in investigative work. In the tests and the work seen during the inspection any differences between the performance of girls and boys were not significantly different from that found nationally.
- 2 When pupils begin Year 1 their attainment is broadly average. Over time infant pupils have made satisfactory progress in reading and writing and by the age of seven standards are average. Progress was better in lessons seen during the inspection. Progress is good in speaking and listening and seven-year-olds attain good standards. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities to talk about their work and most listen well. Pupils' confidence in speaking is developing well. A good example was seen in assembly when pupils spoke with assurance as they performed the story of the Prodigal Son. Pupils have developed satisfactory strategies to read unfamiliar words and they enjoy reading especially in the literacy hour. They read regularly and are well supported by their parents. Some of the books they use are unattractive and don't capture their interest. Pupils' writing has developed satisfactorily. They write in a range of forms but seven-year-olds do not have enough opportunities for extended writing. They are developing competent sentence formation and satisfactory use of punctuation but are often too reliant on adults for help with spelling.
- 3 Junior pupils make good progress in English and by the age of eleven standards are generally high. There are many opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening skills and whole class discussion is a feature of most lessons. Many pupils in Year 6 are very confident and articulate and listen very carefully to others. Whether they are discussing advanced mathematical concepts or expressing their feelings about a poem, they show mature use of language. Progress in reading is good throughout the juniors and by the age of eleven many pupils read fluently with good understanding. In general, although reading skills are at least good, pupils do not show great enthusiasm for reading and the range of authors they can talk about

is surprisingly narrow given their capabilities. Pupils talk about how to use a library but don't appear to visit one regularly. They make good use of their skills in using the Internet. Progress in writing is also good. Pupils in Year 6 plan and edit their writing and organise it well. They write in a good range of forms including poetry. Spelling is generally accurate. Writing is used well in other subjects such as science and history.

- 4 Infant and junior pupils make very good progress in mathematics and standards at age seven and eleven are well above average. Very good teaching, especially of the National Numeracy Strategy is a key feature of the school's success. Seven-year-olds have developed at least good knowledge and understanding in all aspects of mathematics. They read, write and order numbers to 1000 and high attainers add and subtract numbers to 100. Pupils apply their skills very well when solving problems. Their mental recall of number facts is very good and they calculate quickly. Seven-year-olds use appropriate mathematical terminology when describing the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and high attainers calculate areas and perimeters accurately. Work in the juniors builds well on the infant work especially in pupils' understanding of numbers and the number system. Eleven-year-olds calculate very quickly and have good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. Most calculate areas and perimeters using simple formulae. Data skills are developed progressively and pupils interpret graphs, charts and diagrams very well. Skills of ratio and proportion were developed well as pupils explored the contents of a packet of sweets. Pupils apply their skills well in other subjects, for example, drawing line graphs to record results of scientific experiments. In all classes teachers give very good attention to pupils' use of subject specific vocabulary and this ensures that pupils' standards of explanation are usually very good.
- 5 Over time, infants make satisfactory progress in science. However, in lessons seen in the inspection they made good progress. By the age of seven standards are average overall. Pupils in Year 2 have developed sound knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. They undertake investigations regularly and understand what makes a test fair. They predict, test and record their findings in writing and/or pictures or diagrams. Good teaching in a lesson about living things helped pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of the differences between plants and animals. Junior pupils make good progress over time but in the lessons seen progress was very good overall. By the age of eleven standards are high because throughout the juniors the teachers have high expectations. Year 6 pupils are aware of the need for fair testing, undertake systematic investigations and make scientific conclusions based firmly on the evidence. Their explanations are very clear and they make very good use of scientific terminology. They apply their scientific knowledge well and make good use of their mathematical skills. For example, in an excellent lesson in which pupils tested their own hypotheses on which brand of washing up liquid would produce the most bubbles, they not only showed their advanced knowledge of materials and their properties but also used skills in measurement and calculating ratios and averages.
- 6 Standards have improved in ICT since the last inspection where they were below expectations. Standards at seven and eleven are now in line with expectations. New resources are enabling the school to teach key skills regularly and in the work seen during the inspection pupils made good progress. Infant and junior pupils achieve well in history and by the ages of seven and eleven standards are above

expectations for pupils' ages. Seven-year-olds are developing good understanding of differences between the past and present and their skills of enquiry are good. By the age of eleven pupils have developed their knowledge of key features in British history and have good understanding of chronology. Infant and junior pupils make good use of resources to improve their investigative skills. For example, Year 6 pupils used census materials to find about the history of their locality. There was not enough evidence to judge overall attainment in music but standards were good in the work seen and better than in the last inspection. Pupils aged seven sing well and achieve good standards in using untuned percussion instruments. Junior pupils are developing good musical vocabulary and evaluate their own and others' performance. High quality singing was observed in Year 6 and pupils played recorders confidently in assemblies. Standards in art and design, design and technology and geography are in line with expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. These standards are similar to those seen in the last inspection. Not enough attention is given to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of music and art from different cultures. Only two lessons were observed in physical education and none in Year 6. The work seen was better than in the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 achieved good standards in games activities and pupils in Year 4 achieved good standards in adventurous activities. Swimming was observed in Year 5: pupils are achieving well.

- 7 The last inspection found that the most able pupils were seldom offered sufficient challenge in their work. This is no longer the case. In much of the work seen the high attaining pupils achieved well, for example, in mathematics in all year groups and in English and science in the junior classes. Although infants generally made good progress in lessons in reading and writing, their progress over time has not been as good as in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress overall but junior pupils make very good progress. Individual educational plans are prepared for each pupil and targets in reading, writing and numeracy are identified each term. Regular assessments ensure that each pupil is challenged appropriately. Teachers and support assistants provide relevant and sensitive support.
- 8 Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress overall in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. However, because the learning purpose in daily activities is not always rigorous enough children are not consistently achieving their potential and progress could therefore be better.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 9 Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships with staff and each other, supported by good levels of attendance, are having a very positive impact on their achievements. This shows an improvement over the already good standards described in the previous report. Pupils and their parents say that they enjoy coming to school and this is confirmed by the very positive and keen interest they show in their work. Children in the reception class generally show satisfactory attitudes to their learning. Attitudes mature as pupils become older and in almost all lessons they are very good. Pupils show very good concentration, work hard and sustain their interest. For example, in a Year 4 geography lesson about India they were disappointed when the bell rang for the end of the lesson and one pupil asked; 'May we continue during the break?'

- 10 Pupils with SEN are valued members of the school community. They are integrated successfully in their class groups and are happy and confident. As good relationships exist with support staff they willingly participate in all school activities, including fieldwork visits. In lessons they concentrate well and show good levels of perseverance. Successes are a source of pleasure for the whole school community not just the individual.
- 11 Behaviour in lessons, assemblies, the dining room and playground is very good. There is little evidence of bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. There have been no exclusions, either temporary or permanent, over the last three years, a figure well below the national average. Pupils know and follow rules very well and they are developing a very good understanding of how their behaviour affects others. They show good respect for the values and beliefs of others and show a genuine appreciation of their efforts. Relationships throughout the school are very good. They have a very positive impact on pupils' learning and the interaction between pupils and teachers is a significant contributory feature. For example, excellent interaction at the start of a Year 5 mathematics lesson ensured that pupils' interest was captured and helped them to be thoroughly absorbed in their work on percentages. Often pupils co-operate very well together in groups or pairs. Year 6 pupils worked together extremely well as they tested three types of washing up liquid to see which provided most bubbles. Pupils are usually polite and well mannered. They relate well to adults and are open and confident. Boys and girls work and play together very well. For example, in the playground a group of Year 6 girls were observed teaching a group of boys a new dance.
- 12 Pupils' personal development is good. They willingly and responsibly undertake a range of duties. In particular, Year 6 pupils give very good help supervising younger pupils in the infant playground. They show initiative well in areas such as designing a new school logo and raising money for charities.
- 13 The attendance rate is good and levels of unauthorised absences are below the national average. There have been no unauthorised absences for the past two years. Few pupils are late and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 14 The overall quality of teaching is good in the two infant classes and very good in the juniors. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Examples of excellent teaching were observed in the infants and juniors. Lessons are well prepared and learning objectives are identified very clearly. Usually the objectives are shared with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them. At the end of most lessons teachers review with the pupils whether the objectives have been met and often develop the learning further. In an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 4 the teacher questioned pupils on what they had learnt and expected them to explain their thinking. As a result they improved their understanding of multiples. Expectations of pupils' performance are usually good and are very high in the very good or better teaching. Consequently, pupils invariably achieve well. Very high expectations in an English lesson in Year 6 helped pupils not only to attain above average literacy standards but also to improve significantly their understanding and appreciation of poetry.

- 15 Clarity of exposition and very good use of subject specific language are also key features of the effective teaching particularly in literacy, mathematics, science and history. In a very good physical education lesson in Year 2 the teacher's very clear instructions and suggestions for how pupils could improve ensured their throwing and catching skills got better. Much of the teaching has good pace and keeps pupils actively interested in their work. This is especially the case in mathematics when pupils are undertaking mental calculations. For example, in Year 2 and Year 4 the lessons began at a fast pace and pupils were kept mentally alert by the teachers' challenging questions. This meant that pupils were in the mood to tackle the subsequent challenging work. Teachers manage pupils well and relationships are very good and often excellent. These qualities ensure that pupils work hard and participate well. Whole class discussion is a feature of most lessons and contributes well to pupils' progress in speaking and listening. Good links are made between subjects. For example, pupils have good opportunities to apply their literacy and mathematical skills in science. Resources are often used well and contribute to the development of pupils' investigative skills. In an art and design lesson in Year 3 the teacher used a good range of artists' work to demonstrate techniques in portrait drawing. In a history lesson in Year 1 the teacher, classroom assistant and a museum visitor made very good use of a range of old and new toys to develop pupils' understanding of the differences between the past and present. Good subject knowledge is a characteristic of the good or better teaching. In an excellent lesson in Year 6 the teacher used her scientific knowledge very effectively as she continually asked pupils very challenging questions. Similarly in Year 5 the teacher's very clear suggestions to pupils on how they could improve their observational drawing demonstrated her expertise in art and design. Because of the overall quality of the teaching pupils' learning is good and often better.
- 16 The whole school commitment to the inclusion and integration of pupils with SEN is very good. A very good partnership between teachers and support assistants benefits the pupils. They provide a caring and supportive environment in which pupils are happy and confident. Equality of access and opportunity is always given a high priority. Class teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils and set achievable challenges. With the help of a very experienced team of support staff a good range of resources are provided to ensure learning experiences are applicable. Outside agencies are invited to give additional help when relevant. All support is closely linked to the targets in each pupil's individual educational plan.
- 17 Teaching in the reception year is satisfactory overall and has improved since the last inspection. Staff develop positive relationships with the children and use praise and encouragement regularly to develop their social and emotional development. Some aspects of the teaching are good, for example, the use of practical work in mathematics. However, there are weaknesses in the planning that are preventing children from making better overall progress. The learning purposes of daily activities are not sufficiently rigorous and as a result staff are not always sure how to develop children's learning further. Time and the use of staff and resources are not consistently productive. Consequently, children, especially the youngest, often become restless and inattentive.

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

- 18 Although the curriculum for the reception year covers the required six areas of learning there are some weaknesses in the planning. Often there is not enough

precise indication of what pupils are going to learn, especially in daily activities involving the use of construction toys, sand, water, structured play, and craft activities. The curriculum in the rest of the school is suitably broad and balanced and all statutory requirements are met. It provides pupils with a good range of learning opportunities relevant to their needs and has improved since the last inspection. More opportunities are now provided for pupils to undertake creative and investigative work and the latter in the case of science has improved considerably. Fieldwork visits enhance the curriculum for each year group and the oldest pupils are offered the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to Hull. All pupils have equal access and opportunity within the curriculum provision. Policies and schemes of work for all subjects have been planned with care and incorporate all nationally recommended learning objectives in the provision for each year group. Teachers' planning takes good account of the schemes of work. Learning objectives are identified clearly and good links are made between subjects.

- 19 Suitable provision is made to develop pupils' awareness of drug misuse. Sex education is taught appropriately through the science curriculum. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss pertinent issues in a circle time activity in each class. Health and environmental issues are also discussed within the science curriculum.
- 20 The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with SEN are fully met. Pupils are placed on the SEN register following a school assessment of their social, emotional and academic needs. Assistance of outside agencies is sought if this is considered to be necessary. Pupils' individual education plans identify suitable targets to help them make progress. They also identify where there is a need for adult intervention and support. Within classrooms pupils with SEN are taught alongside other pupils but on occasion they may be withdrawn from the class to be given more focused teaching. These arrangements work well and pupils are achieving very well
- 21 The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented very well. They have provided a good structure to lessons and are having a very good effect in raising standards especially in numeracy. All the teachers, including the significant number appointed since the last inspection, plan their literacy and numeracy lessons effectively. The school has monitored the progress of pupils in these lessons and additional booster activities have been provided for any pupils who have needed help to achieve the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics.
- 22 The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. A small number of extra-curricular clubs are available for junior pupils but uptake is restricted by the school's wide catchment area. Good links are made with the local secondary feeder school, which has a beneficial effect for the pupils on transfer to their secondary education. A secondary link teacher, who is also a governor, visits the Year 6 class and teaches numeracy. This has a very good impact on standards in this year group, as well as improving links with the secondary school.
- 23 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and matches that found at the time of the last inspection. Provision for their spiritual and moral development is very good and pervades the daily life of the

school. The very good assemblies provide many opportunities for the whole school “family” to participate in activities of spiritual growth, including time for personal reflection. Spiritual development is also fostered well within the curriculum, for example, in aspects of literature and the arts. Pupils are encouraged to think and appreciate the deeper aspects of their spiritual life and that of other Christians. Pupils are developing a strong sense of right and wrong. Teachers act as good role models and encourage pupils to recognise and incorporate moral principles in their own actions. Pupils show mature attitudes to moral concepts such as fairness, trust and honesty. Important moral concepts are discussed regularly in assemblies and lessons. The whole school ethos is built on a strong moral code that expects pupils to understand the need to behave responsibly and respect the equally important needs of others.

- 24 Social development is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take on some responsibilities around the school, which contribute to the school routines. In lessons there are frequent opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs and small groups. Teachers use praise effectively to promote social attitudes and to build self-esteem and confidence. Consideration is given to the development of citizenship. For example, pupils undertake collections for world charities and participate in local charity events. They also sing at the local hospital and Hospice at Christmas time and distribute Harvest gifts to local residents. Parents and friends of the school are invited to join the school community at school social events.
- 25 The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Most classes have visited a local museum, historical site or art gallery. Good consideration is given to ensuring pupils are introduced to a suitable range of prose and poetry reflecting their own cultural heritage. However, pupils’ knowledge of other cultures is too limited. In the curriculum, there is very little consideration given to ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to explore a wide range of cultural experiences. There has been little improvement in provision for the study of cultural diversity since the last inspection and there are few resources reflecting the cultural diversity within Britain and the wider world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 26 The school has built well on the good standards identified in the previous inspection report and provides very good care for its pupils, based on a strong Christian ethos. This enables pupils to feel secure and valued in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. The high standard of care contributes strongly to pupils’ very positive attitudes. Staff know pupils well and this helps them to provide a good level of personal support. The level of support ensures that pupils are confident about their move to secondary school. The general health and well being of the pupils is promoted well. Health and safety procedures and awareness are very good and the school is secure, clean and tidy. Good care is taken of pupils, especially the youngest, at the end of the school day. Child protection procedures are very good and staff are very well aware of what to do if they have any concerns.
- 27 Pupils with SEN receive very good support. The teachers and support assistants are committed to their inclusion and integration in all school activities if this is considered beneficial. Pastoral care is an important element of this provision. With this very good level of sensitive and carefully planned intervention pupils are able to operate as effective and active members of the school community.

- 28 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective and are applied consistently by all staff. The very good use of rewards, and the emphasis on praising good behaviour and attitudes and developing pupils' self-esteem, are having a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Behaviour in the playground is monitored very effectively. The high quality of the outdoor facilities, the very well trained lunchtime staff and the use of older pupils to help younger ones, all contribute very positively to the high standards of behaviour and relationships. The procedures to deal with and discourage bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are also very effective.
- 29 Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are well maintained and parents and pupils are given good advice on the importance of regular, prompt attendance.
- 30 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. The procedures ensure that all staff make consistent and effective judgements about the quality of pupils' work. From the reception year through to Year 6, school assessments, and statutory and non-statutory tests are used effectively to provide useful information about pupils' attainment and progress. The results are analysed and used to identify areas of development for the school, highlight individual learning needs and, to some degree, inform lesson planning. Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is monitored throughout the key stages and the information is used to set whole school statutory targets and targets for each year group. However, the information gained from assessments of pupils' performance is not shared with them and they and their parents are not made aware of their targets. Pupils and parents are usually unaware of the curriculum level they achieve and what precisely they need to do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 31 Partnership with parents is good and has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and achievements. The school has worked hard to maintain and improve this partnership since the previous inspection. Almost three-quarters of parents, a high percentage, replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire. This level of response is a good indication of the interest they take in their children's education. The replies, together with the evidence from the pre-inspection meeting for parents, indicate that parents feel that the school provides a very good education for their children. They almost all feel that their children like school, make good progress, behave well, are well taught and that the school is well led and managed. About one-third feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons and a small number raised concerns about the large class size in Year 4. Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. The range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory, being about usual for a school of this type and size, and is inevitably limited by the distance some pupils have to travel compared with most primary schools. There was no evidence during the inspection to suggest that standards in Year 4 are negatively affected by the class size. The pupils in this class made good and often very good progress in the lessons observed.
- 32 Good information is provided for parents on their children's progress, the general life of the school, and how they can be involved in their children's education. Newsletters give good information and parents have welcomed the meetings on the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Parents also comment favourably on the

use of homework diaries, and being made welcome to help in lessons and with visits. New parents are given good information about the offer of home visits by the reception teacher and are also given some suggestions on how to help their children's learning. The good response by parents to the range of information provided contributes well to their children's learning at home and at school. Annual reports and consultation sessions give parents good detail on their children's achievements and progress. However, targets for pupils' progress are not shared with parents and there is no consistent indication in the reports of where pupils need to improve. Staff are available on a daily basis if parents have issues or concerns and parents welcome the open nature of the staff.

- 33 Parents give good help in classrooms, support activities and fundraising well, especially in relation to enhancing the outdoor facilities, and give good support to homework. For a Year 2 geography lesson parents were most co-operative in collecting artefacts and souvenirs about Cyprus to help pupils study a distant locality. Parents ensure the regular, prompt attendance of their children. The school works effectively with the parents of those pupils with SEN. Together they create a good working partnership. Parents are invited to all meetings and regularly attend. They take an active part in all reviews and their contribution is valued.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 34 Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The headteacher and governors give a strong lead in developing the school's very positive ethos of care and spiritual and moral development. The governors, headteacher and staff are committed to improving standards and since the previous inspection these have risen, by the age of eleven, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The setting of targets has helped to give more focus to the school's work and has helped governors to have a clearer idea of the school's standards. The governors apply the principles of best value well as they compare the school's performance with that of other schools locally and nationally. Governors support the school well. They attend school functions and visit classes whenever possible.
- 35 The school development plan has improved. It includes action plans for developing the curriculum, staffing, premises, governors and finance. Priorities for spending are clear and finances are controlled efficiently. Specific grant funding has been used well in ICT provision. The progress of the development plan is discussed regularly in governors' meetings. The governing body was reconstituted in 1999 and the governors comment that this gave them new impetus and subsequently they have become more actively involved. The governors fulfil their responsibilities. A longer term strategic plan would now help the school to have a clearer idea of its future direction.
- 36 Pupils' performance is monitored more thoroughly than at the time of the last inspection. A system for tracking pupils' progress in statutory and non-statutory tests is now helping the headteacher and staff to set targets for pupils' attainment. Since the last inspection there has been some monitoring of teaching and learning. The headteacher has observed all the staff teaching literacy and numeracy. Newly qualified teachers have also been observed by the headteacher and their mentor. Monitoring of teaching and learning has not extended to subject co-ordinators. For example, the literacy co-ordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher, has not had the opportunity to observe literacy lessons throughout the school. The lack of a

systematic program for observing teaching and learning means that strengths and weaknesses are not being identified to help the school's future development. The able deputy headteacher carries a heavy load but has no release time from her class to help her fulfil her responsibilities. Subject co-ordinators work hard. For example, they scrutinise and assess samples of pupils' work, produce subject action plans and provide useful informal support to their colleagues. By and large, they have had little opportunity to observe lessons and currently none has any release time from their full time class teaching.

- 37 The headteacher, SEN co-ordinator and governing body manage the provision for SEN very well. All statutory duties are undertaken according to the requirements of the Code of Practice. The co-ordinator is an experienced teacher who provides good leadership and offers professional advice to colleagues when necessary. A link governor meets regularly with the school co-ordinator to discuss daily arrangements for pupils and monitor the effect of school provision. The co-ordinator works hard and has no release from her full time teaching commitments to carry out her responsibilities.
- 38 Accommodation, staffing and resources are adequate overall. The accommodation has been improved in recent times, including the addition of two new classrooms and a computer suite. The library is small and it would be difficult for a whole class to use it. The overall book provision lacks variety and there are not enough books in geography. Books are not given a high enough profile in classrooms to excite pupils' interest in reading independently. There are not enough resources reflecting cultural diversity.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 39 The headteacher and governors should:
- (1) Improve the planning and teaching in the reception class by:
 - ensuring the daily activities have clear learning objectives;
 - better use of time, resources and support staff.(Paragraphs: 8, 17-18, 40-8)
 - (2) Raise standards in reading by the age of seven by:
 - improving the use of assessment;
 - providing a more interesting range of books.(Paragraphs: 1-2, 7, 50, 53, 57)
 - (3) Raise standards in writing by the age of seven by:
 - providing more opportunities for extended writing;
 - ensuring pupils have enough aids to help their independent spelling.(Paragraphs: 1-2, 7, 50, 54)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE INCLUDED BY THE SCHOOL FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN

- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity.
(Paragraphs: 6, 25, 38, 82)
- Share targets for pupils' progress with them and their parents.
(Paragraphs: 30, 32, 69, 70)
- Implement a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.
(Paragraphs: 36-37, 58, 70, 78, 101, 106)
- Improve pupils' enthusiasm for books.
(Paragraphs: 2-3, 38, 53, 55)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
16	25	43	14	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	37

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.3
National comparative data	94.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	11	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	9	9	11
	Total	19	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (81)	91 (75)	100 (81)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	19	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (78)	87 (81)	87 (75)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	14	10	14
	Total	26	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (77)	82 (62)	96 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	13	10	13
	Total	25	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (77)	82 (65)	93 (92)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	-
Indian	-
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	166
Any other minority ethnic group	-

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.9
Average class size	27.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	319,553
Total expenditure	312,371
Expenditure per pupil	1,547
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,278
Balance carried forward to next year	11,460

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	195
Number of questionnaires returned	140

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	34	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	26	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	35	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	38	11	0	2
The teaching is good.	70	29	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	43	6	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	25	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	56	33	11	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	33	1	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	34	22	10	11

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

- 40 The provision for children in the foundation stage is in the reception class. Children are admitted to the class at the beginning of the autumn or spring terms in the year in which they become five. Overall, an appropriate range of experiences is provided to promote children's progress towards reaching the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
- 41 The attainment levels of most children entering the reception class are in line with expectations for this age group. Most children have had some pre-school nursery experience. Teaching is satisfactory overall. As a result, most children are on target to reach many of the early learning goals, in all six areas of learning, by the time they join Year 1. However, some weaknesses in the provision result in a lack of challenge and consequently all the children are not achieving their potential, particularly in the key areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 42 Teaching is satisfactory and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. Children enjoy coming to school but some do not always respond well enough to the rules and routines of school life. The youngest children who have been in school for less than two terms find the rigours of the literacy and numeracy hour too demanding and have difficulty concentrating on teacher-directed activities. Children are learning to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as when playing games or building models with large bricks. Emphasis is placed on helping them to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour and the difference between right and wrong. Relationships are positive and children are encouraged to be polite and kind to each other and reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences. There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of other people, their different religions and ways of life. The sharing of the Corpus Christi mass was an excellent opportunity for children to appreciate the significance of belonging to a religious community and the importance of the Catholic ritual and celebrations.

Communication, language and literacy

- 43 Teaching is satisfactory and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. An appropriate range of experiences and activities is provided to develop children's language and literacy skills. However, the implementation of the literacy hour is not always suitable for the youngest children and as a result many of them become bored and inattentive. Children enjoy stories and rhymes, joining in familiar ones, with enthusiasm. They do not always listen attentively and are easily distracted particularly towards the end of a lesson. Children share conversations with adults but staff miss opportunities to develop children's speaking skills in their chosen activities, such as construction or imaginative play. Alphabet and letter sound friezes in addition to teacher-directed activities help children to recognise familiar letters, sounds and words. The oldest

children are beginning to write their own simple sentences using some recognisable letters, sounds and words. However, staff sometimes do not develop children's understanding of sounds and letters through play and daily routines. The planned activities are not always sufficiently challenging for the age and attainment levels of the children. As in the last inspection there are insufficient opportunities for children to write independently not only in teacher-directed activities but also in activities they choose themselves. For example, the writing corner lacks high quality materials and challenging activities to help children record their discoveries or observations. Children are learning to recognise their own names and are able to write their first names using capital and small letters. The oldest children are beginning to read simple sentences with confidence, using letters and sounds to read unfamiliar words. The reading area is lacking in comfort and the range of books is not wide enough to stimulate children's enjoyment.

Mathematical development

- 44 Teaching is satisfactory and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. Some of the high attaining pupils will exceed them. Provision has improved since the last inspection but there are still some areas to be developed further to ensure children make the progress of which they are capable. Elements of the numeracy strategy are taught satisfactorily and some of the practical work is used well. However, at times the teaching sessions are too long and children become bored and lose interest. Whole class activities are directed at the oldest children and younger children, who have had less time in the reception class, find it difficult to engage in the learning. High attaining children recognise numbers to a hundred and can count in tens with confidence. They excitedly identify patterns in numbers on a hundred square. Children have opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a range of games, routines and experiences. In topic work they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. Children further consider size, shape and position when playing with small toys, emptying and filling containers in the sand play area, or sorting objects into heavy and light. However, a lack of planned adult intervention in these activities limits their progress and results in opportunities to extend their mathematical thinking not being used.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 45 Teaching is satisfactory and children are developing a sound understanding of the world around them. They should reach many of the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children have an appropriate range of opportunities to explore made and natural materials. They observe the growth of a sunflower as it extends towards the ceiling. The celebration of religious and cultural festivals and saints' days encourage children to develop an understanding of their own community and culture. Their understanding of other cultures and ways of life is developed well as they learn about the Chinese year of the snake and create their own Chinese dragons and snakes. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. Photographs of themselves as babies and a talk by a member of staff about her childhood gave children an opportunity to compare present-day toys, school, and home with those in the past. Children's confidence in using the computer and mouse is growing. With adult help they use several different programs to support their learning. Construction toys encourage them to design and make their own models. In much of the activities the oldest most able pupils

are often not challenged sufficiently and therefore they could be making better progress.

Physical development

- 46 Teaching is satisfactory and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. Children move around their classroom and school confidently avoiding other children, furniture and equipment. They have structured physical education lessons twice a week to promote their development but none were observed during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of planning indicates there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop spatial awareness, control of their movements and an understanding of the importance of regular exercise. A lack of outdoor space and resources, such as small climbing and balancing equipment and wheeled toys, restricts their progress in this area. Children are developing confidence when handling pencils, crayons, modelling tools, construction toys and malleable materials.

Creative development

- 47 Teaching is satisfactory and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. Provision for creative development has improved since the last inspection but there are still some areas to be developed further to ensure children make better progress. Children enjoy an appropriate range of experiences in art, music and story. However, imaginative play situations are not sufficiently well planned with clear learning intentions. Situations such as a 'clinic' are well conceived but lack a sufficiently wide range of stimulating resources to promote children's imagination and extend their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. A range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes helps to develop children's understanding of sound, rhythm and pattern. Specialist musical support from a parent is used effectively to extend children's enjoyment and appreciation of music making. There are suitable activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. However, tasks are often too teacher-directed or lack purpose or suitable materials to extend children's ideas. For example, an interesting and suitable activity involved children drawing their own faces after observing them in a mirror. However, children were only provided with thin pencils with which to draw, limiting their creativity and resulting in a poor quality of finished work. Materials such as clay, paint, sand and water are available for children to explore but they are not available as regularly as they should be in order to ensure children make better progress in developing ideas and skills.
- 48 The overall quality of teaching in the six areas of learning is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. Although the curriculum covers the required areas of learning, staff's planning does not consistently contain sufficient detail on what children need to learn if they are to consistently make the progress of which they are capable. The learning purposes of daily activities, such as the use of construction toys, sand, water, structured play, and craft activities, do not feature sufficiently well in planning. As a result staff are uncertain how to intervene to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding. Relationships are positive and children are happy to leave their parents and carers at the beginning of the day. Praise and encouragement are used to promote positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. However, the lack of rigour in the planning and organisation of activities and the use of staff often results in children becoming restless, inattentive and occasionally engaging in inappropriate behaviour. This is

especially the case with the youngest children particularly when the teacher-directed activity is more suitable for the oldest pupils. Where teaching is good, for example, in some aspects of mathematical development practical activities are focussed well on specific learning intentions and good adult questions and comments extend children's thinking. "Baseline" assessment is shared with parents and is used to identify children's strengths and weaknesses. Staff maintain a useful record system that records children's progress towards the early learning goals in all areas except mathematical development. In the latter, progress is recorded in relation to key objectives for the numeracy strategy and the Key Stage 1 programme of study. Whilst this is suitable for the oldest children it is not always suitable for those who are younger.

ENGLISH

- 49 Standards in English overall are average at seven years of age but standards in reading and writing are not as high as in mathematics. Standards are high for pupils at eleven years of age. Since the last inspection standards of eleven-year-olds have improved.
- 50 In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds the pupils achieved results in reading and writing in line with national averages. The results were also in line with those of pupils in similar schools. Since 1997 girls' average score has been better than boys' but boys have made good improvements since 1999. The difference between boys' and girls' performance is not significantly different from that found nationally. The school's results in the unvalidated 2001 tests show an improvement in the percentage of pupils who reached the expected standard or above. However, fewer pupils reached the above average standard in reading, and none in writing. Although this suggests a decline in overall performance since the 2000 tests, teacher assessments indicate that two-thirds of pupils in Year 2 have exceeded their expected targets in reading, and almost 50 per cent have exceeded their targets in writing. Pupils' overall performance in the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds was well above the average for all schools and very high when compared with similar schools. Standards have risen since 1997. Differences between the performance of boys and girls are not significantly different from the national picture.
- 51 When pupils begin the National Curriculum their skills in communication, language, and literacy are in line with the expected levels for pupils of their age. Across each key stage there have been some fluctuations in progress over time because of changes in teaching staff. Infants have made satisfactory progress in reading and writing and juniors' overall progress is good. The National Literacy Strategy is having a good influence on raising standards by providing a structured programme of activities in reading and more recently in writing. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. In all lessons pupils have good opportunities to improve their speaking skills, although there is no scheme of work for this aspect of the English curriculum. The pupils with SEN make very good progress towards their individual targets. Their development is a result of a very good team effort of intervention and help by teachers, support assistants, and whenever necessary by the special needs co-ordinator or outside specialists. The pupils are provided with specially prepared activities that encourage them towards independence in their learning. Their progress is reviewed very regularly.

- 52 By the ages of seven and eleven many pupils attain at least above average standards in speaking and listening. Infant pupils listen intently to stories and to instructions, they ask questions of the teachers readily, and join in discussions willingly. The high attaining pupils are confident speakers both in the classroom and in whole school assemblies. For example, some Year 2 pupils confidently undertook a “hot seat” question and answer game for pupils who had recently returned from foreign holidays. In an assembly other pupils of the same age performed the story of the Prodigal Son confidently portraying the different characters in the story. By the age of eleven many pupils are mature, articulate speakers. Throughout the juniors all pupils enjoy class discussions and there is a good level of interaction between the teachers and the pupils as they discuss some pertinent topic. In Year 4 during a geography lesson pupils questioned the teacher intently to gain a better understanding of village life in India. Their discussions significantly improved their understanding of the traditions and beliefs of people living in a different part of the world. They also provided very good opportunities for pupils to develop good attitudes of tolerance towards other faiths and cultures. In Year 5, prior to the production of an information booklet, pupils participated in a very good debate about the protection of whales and dolphins. Pupils debated and decided their own response and showed good tolerance and respect of the opinions of others. In Year 6, during an analysis of the poem “The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Lord Tennyson, all pupils participated in a very deep thinking debate about the effects of war on individuals and families. Many showed considerable empathy with Tennyson as he expressed his opinions about war. They described their own attitudes clearly, concisely, and effectively.
- 53 In reading, standards are average at the age of seven. Infant pupils enjoy reading and describe their favourite stories. In the literacy hour, during shared reading activities, pupils’ reading skills are developing satisfactorily. Pupils learn how to build sounds and decipher new words from their meaning in the text of a book. The school is considering the development of a more structured programme of sound work for pupils in Year 1. All pupils read regularly with teachers or with other adults in school using a scheme of structured readers. These books provide appropriate reading material, but many are worn and are unattractive to the pupils. Parents also use these reading scheme books to share stories with their children at home. There is good parental support and a very useful home/school reading diary system, all of which are helping to raise reading standards. Although by the age of eleven pupils’ skills in reading have developed well, and they read confidently, few have developed skills of choosing books according to their own particular interests and many choose material randomly. In discussion not many pupils identified favourite authors. Reading skills are developed in lessons in the literacy hour and at specific reading times each day. Throughout the junior years all pupils enjoy sharing a class reader with their teacher, for example pupils in Year 5 are currently enjoying reading of a story by Judy Blume. Few pupils in this year group have read independently any other books by the same author. By the age of eleven pupils’ knowledge of classical children’s tales is satisfactory. They enjoy poetry and can name some famous poems, which they have enjoyed, written by Victorian poets. These oldest pupils read a play script effectively and give good attention to interpretation of the characters in their dramatisation. Most know about the functions of a library but very few appear to have regularly used a library independently for research purposes. In general, pupils have better skills in accessing research material from the Internet for use in school projects.

- 54 In writing by the age of seven most pupils are achieving average standards. When pupils begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 most pupils are able to write their name and are beginning to express their ideas in writing. Although by the age of seven pupils learn how to write in a range of forms, including a simple report, a story, a list and a recipe, they do not have enough regular opportunities for extended writing. Consequently, they are not attaining above average standards. Pupils in Year 2 have written an account of a visit to Bridlington, the story of Rumpelstiltskin, and a "For Sale" poster for Goldilocks to sell her house. Most write a complete story and some are beginning to consider their audience and choose their vocabulary carefully. They are beginning to use a cursive handwriting script and many are showing good improvement in size and shape of their letters. Most pupils understand alphabetical order and a few use a dictionary independently. However, because dictionaries and word banks are not always readily available, independent skills with spelling aids are too limited and many pupils still rely on adult assistance. Junior pupils have regular opportunities to write for different audiences each term. By the age of eleven all write effectively and plan and edit their work to create the greatest effect. Most pupils of this age have a good understanding of the need for purpose and organisation in their writing, and they are gradually developing a more mature style in their prose. Pupils write reports accurately with good attention to sequence and organisation of their work. They send an email or fax collating important information in bullet headings, and in poetry give good consideration to alliteration, imagery and repetition so that their work is more effective. Most pupils are able to make good use of their understanding of the conventions of writing as they produce written work in other areas of the curriculum. Handwriting is generally consistent in size and shape and shows maturity in fluency and style. Most pupils spell accurately or use dictionaries to check their spellings. Few pupils use a thesaurus independently of adult intervention or advice.
- 55 Although pupils have positive attitudes to their work and join in all activities conscientiously, few describe English as a favourite subject of the curriculum. However, in their work in other areas of the curriculum most make effective use of their skills in reading and writing in order to produce good quality work. In lessons pupils relate well to each other and share ideas and books co-operatively. Behaviour is consistently good.
- 56 During the inspection the quality of teaching was good overall. In the juniors the teaching was at least very good in two out of five lessons. In general, teachers have good subject knowledge and teach basic skills well. In the infants they plan lessons according to the requirements of the literacy strategy and choose a good range of "Big Books" and group readers to interest and excite the pupils. Good use is made of the support assistants to ensure that pupils are challenged appropriately. In the juniors teachers plan lessons with good attention given to providing a variety of teaching strategies in order to motivate pupils consistently. Lessons are delivered at a brisk pace and teachers question pupils very effectively in order to develop their knowledge and understanding. Teachers usually have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and involvement in lessons, and in the most effective teaching have very high expectations of pupils' achievement. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 6 the teacher made pupils think deeply about their understanding of the poet Tennyson's work especially when she asked them to consider the poet's use of language. The very high expectations resulted in pupils' making excellent progress in their understanding and appreciation of poetry. Teachers often make good use of multi-media, including computers, tape machines and overhead projectors, to vary and direct teaching more emphatically. Good use

is also made of teaching in other subjects in order to consolidate and reinforce new learning. For example, in an art lesson in Year 5 the teacher used the opportunity to reinforce previous learning about abstract nouns of “love and fear” and taught new technical terms of “ellipse and aesthetic” while the pupils studied and drew different containers. Good opportunities to improve spiritual, moral social and cultural development are provided regularly across the English curriculum, particularly by the introduction of some well-chosen literature.

- 57 Teachers assess pupils’ progress in reading and writing at the end of each term and the end of each year. Good use is made of this information to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and in pupils’ learning. Annual targets are set for pupils but have little impact on teaching and learning during the year. New formalised systems are being introduced currently to assess pupils’ progress in reading more regularly. This is especially important in Years 1 and 2 where not enough pupils attain above average standards. Some teachers make regular use of on-going assessment of pupils’ learning to inform their planning but this is not a regular feature in all classes. Pupils are given spelling lists regularly and complete other homework tasks, all of which are assisting in raising standards overall.
- 58 The subject co-ordinator has undertaken useful monitoring of lessons taught by newly qualified teachers but has not had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in all classes. Samples of pupils’ work from each class are scrutinised each term.

MATHEMATICS

- 59 The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and eleven are well above those found nationally and similar to the standards reached in the 2000 tests which were well above the average for all and similar schools. Teacher assessments and the unvalidated 2001 test scores, where they are available, indicate a similar picture of high standards. By the age of seven and eleven the majority of the pupils, including those with SEN, achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment and make very good progress over time. Since the previous inspection attainment at both seven and eleven has improved considerably. At the time of the last inspection standards were in line with those expected nationally and progress was satisfactory. The improved standards are due to the positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy, improved assessment procedures and improved teaching. The overall trend over time is one of sustained improvement. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with SEN are given good support from class teachers and support staff. This support enables them to take a full part in mathematics lessons and to make good overall progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
- 60 Seven-year-olds have a good knowledge and understanding of basic number work. By the end of Year 2 almost all the pupils have a very good understanding of the size of a number and where it fits into the number system. They read, write and order numbers to 1000 with confidence. Pupils make very good progress in calculations and high attaining pupils add and subtract to 100 accurately. Pupils are very skilled in using number and are excited by solving problems in real life situations. High and average attaining pupils demonstrate very effective skills when totalling three amounts of money together to buy toys from their class shop and produce the right money using the smallest number of coins. Mental strategies are of a very high standard and pupils confidently add and subtract in ones and tens,

increasing their speed, skills and competency. Low attaining pupils are confident in using numbers up to a hundred and often beyond.

- 61 In the juniors the planning of work builds very successfully on pupils' previous learning. They make very good progress in understanding multiples, factors and place values and are very accurate when using the four rules of number. The oldest pupils understand the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals. Low attaining pupils work out the fraction of a particular number. High attaining pupils convert percentages to fractions and decimals showing a good understanding of equivalent fractions. They use their knowledge particularly well to solve challenging real life problems such as calculating a 25 per cent discount on £36.99. Pupils used their knowledge of fractions and percentages to solve the problem and then checked their answer using a calculator.
- 62 Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a wide range of very well planned activities and experiences, which support very effectively their learning in work involving shape, space and measures. Seven-year-olds use accurate terminology when describing some of the properties of three and two-dimensional shapes and can calculate areas and perimeters. As they progress through the school pupils confidently use a range of measures. A very high proportion of pupils in Year 4 show a very good understanding of rotational symmetry as they design patterns based on Tudor gardens. By the age of eleven, average and high attaining pupils understand how to calculate perimeters, areas and volume using simple formulae accurately. All pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to solving problems in practical situations.
- 63 Numeracy skills are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of data handling. The youngest infant pupils make and interpret simple pictograms of their favourite fruits. By the age of eleven most pupils interpret graphs, charts and diagrams very well to explain findings and results. Skills in ratio and proportion and probability were used well in exploring the contents of a packet of sweets.
- 64 Pupils almost always present their results in very organised way and are encouraged to always explain clearly the strategies which they use to arrive at an answer. Across the school teachers place considerable emphasis on ensuring pupils understand and use precise mathematical vocabulary when answering questions or discussing their work. Pupils are encouraged to think as mathematicians. For example, in Year 2 pupils were praised as being 'brilliant' mathematicians. They showed a very good understanding of the importance of placing the decimal point in the correct place as they converted pounds into pence.
- 65 Pupils have very good opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects, for example, in science, art, history and geography. There is an increasing use of ICT to help pupils' learning. For example, pupils use spreadsheets to record complex information.
- 66 Throughout the school pupils' attitudes towards the subject are very good and often excellent. They work for extended lengths of time, enjoying the challenge of difficult tasks and responding with an eagerness and enthusiasm to the complexities of mathematics. Pupils respond well to the firm, friendly and authoritative discipline that encourages them to take on ever demanding tasks with increasing confidence. Such approaches have a very positive effect on the progress and standards pupils achieve.

- 67 The quality of teaching is very good with excellent teaching being observed in both the infants and juniors. The teachers are implementing the numeracy strategy with considerable rigour and enthusiasm and enjoy the structure and precise learning which the strategy affords. They use a variety of methods to teach mathematical skills, including very effective whole class mental sessions and fast moving question and answer sessions which assess the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. Lessons have a very good pace and challenge pupils to complete difficult tasks in good time and to a very high standard.
- 68 Relationships are very good and there is an agreement that 'being wrong is ok' and is part of the learning process. This is very effective for those insecure pupils who are beginning to develop confidence in handling numbers and mathematical ideas. Clear objectives are shared and evaluated with the class to ensure they are clear about what they are learning. Very good use is made of the time during lessons' final plenaries to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. This was done particularly well in an outstanding Year 4 lesson where the teacher ensured pupils had understood a very difficult task involving multiples and then extended their learning even further by introducing the concept of halving and doubling. The very best of lessons leave pupils enthusiastic about mathematics and excited about the untold possibilities of what numbers can do.
- 69 The work in mathematics is extremely well planned to take account of pupils' different levels of attainment. Classroom assistants provide effective support to enhance the learning of pupils with special educational needs and those who learn at a slower rate than the majority. These members of staff are well briefed and they know the pupils well. This has a positive effect on the progress pupils make and ensures they achieve the standards expected of them and make gains in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Marking of pupils' work is very good and includes some general comments on where pupils have gone wrong. However, pupils are often unaware of precisely what they need to do to improve their performance.
- 70 Co-ordination of the subject is very effective. Assessment, monitoring and recording of pupils' attainment and progress are now in place and careful attention is given to analysing these results, and the statutory test results, to identify strengths and weakness in the curriculum provision. However, assessments and test results are not sufficiently analysed to set individual targets for pupils to ensure that all achieve their full potential. Opportunities for the co-ordinator to work alongside colleagues are few and support is often informal.
- 71 The curriculum for mathematics is very good and enables all pupils to have equal access to the subject. The subject is effectively resourced and allocated an appropriate amount of time. The content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

- 72 At the age of eleven standards are high and better than in 1997, when the school was last inspected. These are similar to the school's results in the 2000 tests in which pupils' standards were high compared with all and similar schools. Gender differences in performance were not significantly greater than that found nationally. Pupils aged seven attain average standards. In 2000 teachers assessed the percentage of seven-year-olds reaching the expected level or better as below average but above average for the higher level. Infants have made satisfactory progress over time and this is better than at the time of the last inspection when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. Juniors make good progress. Infant and junior pupils made at least good progress in lessons observed during the inspection.
- 73 Infants make good progress in lessons especially in investigative work and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. In Year 1 pupils engaged in a good range of activities that encouraged them to identify push and pull forces. They then recorded their findings in writing, pictures and charts. In Year 2 pupils investigated the differences between plants and animals and in a good whole class discussion showed their developing knowledge of the parts of a plant and what plants need to thrive. A scrutiny of infants' work indicated that they have undertaken a suitable range and in general attain average standards. In some aspects the high attaining pupils reach above average levels. Pupils in Year 1 are learning to make simple predictions and then test their ideas, for example, whether plants need water in order to grow. Year 2 pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties and accurately describe similarities and differences. For example, they predict whether materials will change if heated and the most able pupils suggest whether any changes can be reversed. Other good work includes simple but clear explanations of electrical circuits and good accurate labelling of a circuit diagram.
- 74 Juniors also make good progress in lessons overall. In the lesson observed in Year 6 attainment was high. In Year 3 pupils named a good range of plants and the most able pupils gave especially knowledgeable responses to the teacher's question "how do you know that plants are living?" In Year 5 the teacher reviewed pupils' understanding of solids and gasses prior to an investigation on evaporation. In the discussion, pupils made good use of scientific terminology and showed good knowledge and understanding. However, their discussion of findings following the investigation showed they had improved their understanding of how materials can change. In an excellent lesson in Year 6 most pupils achieved at least above average standards when they tested which brands of washing up liquid made the most bubbles. Pupils' responses to the teacher's question "how shall we judge which mixture is most effective?" produced an excellent discussion in which pupils made extensive use of scientific terminology and demonstrated their very good understanding of the need for fair testing. Pupils selected materials and resources, tested their own ideas and gave very good scientific explanations of their results. Observations and recording became more systematic as the lesson progressed. Pupils applied their mathematical skills as they recorded measurements in millilitres. All pupils were very well challenged, including those with SEN and the most able.
- 75 Junior pupils' work over time indicates that they make good progress overall and experience a good range of work. In Year 3 good investigative work has been undertaken, for example, in testing magnets for strength. No lesson in science was observed in Year 4 but pupils' work indicates that expectations of their performance

are high. Pupils make regular use of an “investigation planner sheet” as they predict, test, and record their conclusions, for instance, when testing how to separate sand and water. Expectations are also high in Year 5 and in several aspects of the work pupils attain high standards, for example, drawing line graphs to record their results. Good work has been undertaken on seed dispersal. Pupils also show good knowledge of the solar system. By the age of eleven standards are high mainly as a result of considerable challenge. Pupils have classified materials according to a range of properties including conductivity, permeability and opaqueness. Pupils’ preparations for investigations often indicate their very good scientific understanding. For example, prior to investigating how to prevent change in materials one pupil wrote that the ice cube; “...will need to be insulated by something air tight”. Scientific conclusions are frequently well explained. In work on dissolving materials a pupil wrote; “There comes a point when you can’t dissolve any more salt, it is called the saturation point”. Very good links are made with mathematics as pupils measure precisely and record accurately in graphs and charts.

- 76 Pupils’ positive attitudes and good behaviour in all lessons contribute to the quality of their learning. Pupils enjoy science, especially the investigative work. They cooperate well and use resources sensibly. In Year 6 the co-operation between girls and boys is excellent.
- 77 The quality of teaching was good in the infant lessons and at least very good in the juniors. All lessons are well planned and have clear and appropriate learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. In the very effective lessons the learning objectives are rigorously reviewed at the end and teachers make sure that key skills and knowledge have been acquired. Questions are used well, often at the beginning of lessons, to recap on pupils’ previous work and during these discussions teachers’ make good use of subject specific terminology. The teaching invariably has good pace and as a consequence leads to sustained and diligent concentration by the pupils. Timed tasks are used well. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 5 pupils were set a time limit to write down what they could remember about previous work on solids, liquids and gasses. At this time the teacher discussed the task with a pupil with SEN who needed her support. The teacher then built on pupils’ knowledge in a whole class discussion prior to investigative work. In all lessons teachers try to make sure that pupils’ work is well matched to their prior attainment. This is particularly effective in the upper juniors where very high expectations ensure that standards are good or better. An outstanding feature of the excellent teaching in Year 6 was the intervention of the teacher in pupils’ investigative work. The teacher continually probed pupils’ thinking and expected them to clearly explain what possible scientific conclusions were emerging. As a result pupils’ learning was of very high quality.
- 78 The subject co-ordinator has worked hard and has a good overview of standards. Priorities for the future are very appropriate and include making more use of ICT and setting precise targets for individual pupils’ performance. There has been no monitoring of lessons.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 79 Three lessons were observed in art and design and one in design and technology. Other evidence of standards was obtained by a scrutiny of pupils’ work and photographic evidence. In the work seen most pupils attain the standards that are

expected for their age but there are examples of good work. Standards are similar to those seen in the last inspection.

- 80 Pupils in Year 1 have drawn good self-portraits and show good skills of mixing paint. Skills of cutting and joining, in their work on constructing houses strong enough to stand up, are satisfactory overall. However, pupils show good ideas in attention to features such as windows, drainpipes and hinged doors. Standards in Year 2 meet expectations overall. In a good lesson Year 2 pupils planned their ideas for a collage using natural materials found on a beach and produced satisfactory observational drawings of shells. Although attainment was average the teacher's advice on drawing skills helped pupils to make good progress. Year 2 pupils have designed, made and evaluated model vehicles. Pupils have tried hard to respond to "what I could do to improve". In the making of finger puppets one pupil wrote; "I could add more features". In a good lesson in Year 3 the teacher's use of a good range of examples of artists' work helped pupils to make good progress in drawing the human form. Interesting work in this class has been inspired by the work of the artist Andy Goldsworthy. Good work in design and technology includes making a structure stable by making a free standing frame. In a good lesson in Year 4, on designing and making a range of "moving" books, pupils made improvements in the accuracy of their designs and measuring. They responded well to the opportunity to evaluate their work. Especially good work in this year group is the designing and making of money containers. In a very good lesson in Year 5 the teacher's very good subject knowledge helped pupils to achieve good standards in their observational drawing. Other good work in this year group includes careful measuring and joining in making musical instruments, the use of ICT to design T-shirts and good blending of colours in still life drawings.
- 81 No lessons were observed in Year 6. Standards in pupils' work meet expectations overall. Good work includes some of the drawing about a "sense of place" and pupils' written appreciation of work by Van Gogh. Pupils' specifications for designing and decorating a functional hat, for example, a woolly winter hat, are good. Pupils have also made well thought out evaluations of their model vehicles. Some of the work in sketchbooks in Year 5 and Year 6 show that pupils are trying their ideas out, for example, in sketching roof tops and exploring media to create certain effects. However, the use of sketchbooks is not established practice in the school.
- 82 The school acknowledges that the breadth of study in art and design is too narrow. This inevitably affects the standards attained. The subject co-ordinator has been at the school for less than a year but has good ideas on how provision should improve especially in the use of techniques from different cultures.

GEOGRAPHY

- 83 Standards in geography are in line with expectations for pupils' ages at seven and eleven and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Geography is taught through a topic approach alongside history. Pupils enjoy geography and show a keen interest in learning about countries of the world but teaching time is too restricted and this affects the rates of pupils' progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons and make good progress towards their own individual targets.

- 84 By the time pupils are seven they have a satisfactory understanding of their local area and of the changes in the environment around them. They make good progress in mapping skills. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to understand a plan view and follow directions. In Year 2 pupils draw a simple map, with the high attaining pupils being able to incorporate a key of geographical symbols. Many pupils at seven can identify Rotherham on an atlas and some can identify other local key locations such as Bridlington, Sheffield and Leeds. They compare similarities and differences between town and country areas. Following a recent visit to the seaside pupils wrote an interesting account of their visit, with some pupils including in their writing a comparison of roads, houses, shops and employment. They are also beginning to have some understanding of differences between features of town and country areas. Visits by pupils abroad are providing a valuable additional geography resource to discuss the differences between countries. Pupils share their personal experiences and show to other class members examples of coinage, photographs of physical features and national costumes. The school's Barnaby Teddy Bear has "visited" several European countries with pupils, and they are beginning to consider the climatic differences in these areas as they plan and pack his suitcase prior to his journeys to different hot and cold climates.
- 85 By the age of eleven many pupils have a good general knowledge of European countries and many can name capital cities, rivers and continents. Through the junior years good progress is made in mapping skills. In Year 3 pupils use compass points effectively, while older pupils use co-ordinate points confidently on an atlas or Ordnance Survey map. Junior pupils are developing their understanding of the cause and effect of natural disasters and also of the need to protect the environment against pollution and global warming. Pupils have a mature vocabulary and are incorporating appropriate technical vocabulary in their discussions.
- 86 Three lessons were observed. The teaching was at least satisfactory and was excellent in one of the lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach basic geographical skills successfully. In an excellent lesson in Year 4 a combination of very good subject knowledge, high expectations and considerable enthusiasm ensured pupils made excellent progress in their understanding of two contrasting countries. Teachers plan lessons well using a variety of teaching strategies and making good use of cross curricular links to assist pupils' learning. The subject provides good opportunities for the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and teachers frequently plan these opportunities.
- 87 Some fieldwork visits are used to enhance pupils' learning by first-hand experience. Resources in the school are generally sufficient in lessons to allow the pupils suitable access to a good range of large and small maps, atlases and globes. However, there is an insufficient selection of books in the school library to promote interest in other countries or to help teachers in their teaching of the subject. Good use is made of local library services to provide additional book resources. Good use is also made of the Internet to offer additional relevant information for pupils in lessons.
- 88 The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and sees teachers' planning. Currently there is no check on progression in pupils' skills.

HISTORY

- 89 The majority of pupils at both seven and eleven attain standards that are above those expected for their ages. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior levels of learning. Standards are better than at the time of the last inspection.
- 90 By the age of seven the pupils show a good understanding of the distinction between the past and present as they examine toys, household objects and homes throughout the ages. Visits from museum curators and well-planned activities are used very effectively to help pupils make comparisons with their own lives and those of children in the past. Pupils in Year 1 were fascinated with a wide range of toys from bygone ages, which developed their observational skills as well as provided them with considerable knowledge and understanding of artefacts and habits from a bygone age.
- 91 By the age of eleven, the pupils have widened their historical knowledge to develop a very good understanding of the more distant past. In their study of topics such as the Romans and Tudors the pupils gain a good range of factual knowledge. Upper juniors have a very secure understanding of chronology and name significant events and people from the past. They discuss the Tudors and Victorians confidently and name the different kings and queens. They also are aware of key historical figures such as Florence Nightingale and Martin Luther King. Pupils are encouraged to consider the impact that different characters and events have had on the past and present. Excellent work in Year 4 combined drama, art and literacy very effectively to help pupils understand the complexities of life for the wives and children of Henry VIII. Links with other subjects such as English and music are very good. Opportunities to write autobiographies and produce their own musicals resulted in pupils getting 'under the skin' of each of Henry's wives as they either awaited execution, the birth of a much-desired son and heir or the responsibility of caring for the King in his old age.
- 92 Very good emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to think as historians as they use a wide range of sources to find out about recent and past events. Year 2 pupils' skills of enquiry were developed well as they listened to a visitors account of holidays in the 1950s, comparing them to holidays in Victorian times and those the children themselves now take. Photographs, books and eyewitness accounts were all used very effectively to develop pupils' historical skills of enquiry and observation. In Year 6 pupils use census materials from the last century very effectively to find out about their own immediate locality. Family size, occupation and financial means were examined in detail as pupils made deductions about the lives people in the past lived. Pupils are beginning to realise that there can be different accounts and views of the same historical events.
- 93 Pupils' attitudes to history are very good. They particularly enjoy lessons that challenge them to think and consider how people lived in past times. They are keen to explore new ideas and exchange these with each other when working in small groups or pairs.
- 94 No lessons were observed in Years 3, 4 and 5 but the quality of pupils' work suggests the teaching is at least good. In the lessons seen the teaching was very good. Lessons are imaginative and well planned in order to motivate pupils' interest in people and events of the past. Tasks are particularly well planned and matched

to the differing levels of attainment. This ensures that pupils have challenging tasks that move learning on at a good pace and ensure high standards. Pupils are surrounded with reminders of the past and the contribution previous generations have made to the community. As pupils move through the school they are encouraged to think of themselves as historians as they consider the authenticity of evidence and use a range of artefacts, photographs, the Internet and books to gain knowledge and understanding of past times. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and a very good understanding of the subject. They use a variety of artefacts, archaeological finds, maps, photographs, the Internet, visits and books to bring the subject alive for the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to organise their own work and record their findings in their own words and there is no longer an over reliance on worksheets which do not challenge and extend pupils' historical skills.

- 95 History is very effectively co-ordinated and makes an important contribution to the aims of the school. The scheme of work now effectively ensures there is progress and continuity across the school, taking into account the needs of the different age groups within each class. This helps teachers to provide pupils with good opportunities to extend their historical knowledge and understanding skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 96 Standards are in line with national expectations for pupils at seven and eleven years of age. There has been good improvement in all aspects of the ICT curriculum since the last inspection when standards were below average. Since the opening of the new computer suite pupils now have many more opportunities for access to machines. Increased opportunities for using machines in classrooms have also been successful in helping to raise standards.
- 97 Pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2. When they start the National Curriculum very few pupils have any skills on the computer and they rely on adult support to help them find letters on the keyboard and move a text up and down a page. During the first two years they gain in confidence. Initially using Roamer turtle machines, they learn that their instructions have direct consequences in moving the turtle machine in a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. By seven pupils enter a text independently on a computer and high attaining pupils are beginning to write stories and reports directly on a computer screen. They have sufficient knowledge of the keyboard to use the mouse, space bar, shift and delete keys successfully. Other pupils are much slower when processing their work and often work with one finger looking for each key before they can continue. Infants are beginning to understand the use of a database. For example, pupils in Year 2 have collected information about favourite holiday destinations and during the inspection they were entering this collated list into the machine. However, apart from the high attaining pupils others have little understanding of the use of this collated evidence. Most pupils have used paint programs to draw patterns, faces and houses. Good links have been made to work in art, initially studying the work of the artist Mondrian when he created pictures from lines and colours, and then creating their own "Mondrian-like" geometric designs using paint programs on computer machines. In both Year 1 and 2 pupils know how to use the various tools, change the colour of their brush and describe the activity to other adults.
- 98 In the lessons for juniors that were observed, pupils made good progress. Their progress over time is satisfactory overall. The school is introducing new software packages, which are helping to improve pupils' skills. Good use is made of ICT

across the curriculum. For example, many pupils in the key stage have now used the Internet to research topics in history, geography and art. Upper juniors are beginning to use the World Wide Web and they have created their own web page about the school. During the inspection the pupils showed enthusiasm and excitement as they accessed the school web page for the first time. Good discussions and learning took place as they reviewed their work and realised, for example, that some colours on the web page are glaring to the eye and needed alteration, while others produced a more effective result. By Year 6 pupils have good word-processing skills. They confidently change the font and format of their work. In creating an information leaflet they cut and paste their information to create a more interesting booklet. Older junior pupils are beginning independently to build good cross-curricular links in their learning. For example, in a lesson in Year 5 pupils created a sequence of instructions to control a number of output devices in a poster design. They consolidated their scientific knowledge about electrical circuits, improved their literary skills in choosing an apt headline for their poster, and also made excellent progress in planning a flow chart recording the sequence of their control devices.

- 99 Most pupils are enthusiastic about ICT. They work consistently well in groups and independently. They show good levels of perseverance and pride in their work and concentrate well. During a good lesson in Year 5 pupils showed very good concentration as they read and replied to emails. The school is working to build email links with another school in Australia and pupils are keen to make these connections and are fascinated with the speed of communication across the world.
- 100 Only a small amount of direct teaching of ICT was observed but the quality was good. In one lesson the teaching was excellent. The overall teaching is improving as resources become more readily available. Non-teaching assistants often lack confidence in using computers but they work well with teachers. Good links are made between subjects to provide opportunities for pupils to experience the various uses of ICT. Lessons in the computer suite are exciting with a good range of activities to interest pupils. Teachers have high expectations. Lessons are planned well to match the experiences of pupils and have clear learning objectives. Teachers make good use of specialist advice if necessary. In the excellent lesson the teacher's very clear demonstration, very high expectations of pupils' performance and effective links with mathematics and science ensured pupils' learning was of high quality.
- 101 The co-ordinator has good specialist knowledge and this is helping to develop staff expertise. She will shortly begin a programme of monitoring the teaching and learning.

MUSIC

- 102 Only two lessons were observed. Other evidence of pupils' standards included singing and playing of instruments. By the age of eleven standards in performing and listening and applying knowledge and understanding are above those expected nationally. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on other aspects of music.
- 103 Music makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal development and adds to the quality of assemblies. The playing of an appropriate piece of music sets a reverent atmosphere for quiet reflection as pupils arrive for

assemblies. The school recorder group adds to the musical quality of assemblies and develops well pupils' skills and confidence in performing. All pupils have very good opportunities to develop their singing skills as they learn appropriate hymns and liturgies. Songs and hymns are challenging and pupils sing with enthusiasm and careful interpretation of meaning. Pupils are encouraged to sing with accuracy, expression, controlled phrasing and articulation as they rehearse liturgical music. Attention is given to the development of listening skills and use of pitch, rhythm, dynamics and musical notation.

- 104 Pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of musical ideas as they use their voices and unpitched percussion instruments to accompany familiar songs. They have a good sense of rhythm and clap a steady beat. Junior pupils build successfully upon this good start. They sing a range of complex songs confidently and with increasing control of pitch and diction. Pupils are learning how to create different moods and effects. In an outstanding lesson in Year 6 pupils and teachers worked very hard to produce a piece of high quality singing. The music, which was very challenging, was based on 'Macbeth' and pupils used their knowledge of mezzo piano and mezzo forte to introduce interesting contrast into their performance. Singing in two parts produced an atmospheric song which in one pupil's words sounded 'just like a spell'. Junior pupils use a growing musical vocabulary accurately in talking about their work and in answering questions posed by their teachers. They have opportunities to reflect on their work and to evaluate their own and other's compositions in order to make improvements.
- 105 In the limited number of lessons seen the teaching was good in the infants and excellent in the juniors. The lessons were well structured and tasks were suitably challenging. Pupils were given very clear strategies to improve their skills. They were encouraged to think as 'musicians' and to use correct musical terms. As a result, pupils enjoyed the lessons and worked with considerable effort and concentration to produce polished performances. Very good provision is made for those pupils with SEN. A few pupils benefit from the specialist teaching of brass and string instruments during school time. The enthusiasm of all staff, including the peripatetic staff, makes a positive contribution to the quality of music in the school. End of year concerts provide pupils with further opportunities to develop their musical skills.
- 106 Music is very effectively co-ordinated and makes an important contribution to the aims of the school. The co-ordinator has specialist skills that are used well to develop a full range of activities to promote effective learning of music. This helps teachers to provide pupils with good opportunities to extend their creative skills. Music has improved since the last inspection except that a continued omission in the provision is the insufficient opportunity for pupils to learn about music from a variety of cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 107 Only two lessons were observed, one in Year 2 and one in Year 4. Year 5 pupils were observed swimming. Because no lessons were seen in Year 6 no judgement can be made on attainment at age eleven. In the lessons seen standards were above average. More lessons were seen in the last inspection and standards met expectations. Year 5 pupils are making good progress in swimming and several are already achieving the target for the end of Year 6.

- 108 In Year 2, pupils' skills of throwing and catching are good and they move with good co-ordination and control. In a good lesson pupils showed that they are aware of the importance of warming up before an activity. They selected equipment sensibly and worked quietly at all times. The teaching was very good and ensured the pupils made progress. For example, pupils were encouraged to set their own targets when practising catching. The teacher's suggestions on how pupils could improve also ensured that progress was good. Pupils participated eagerly and very actively, and responded well to opportunities to evaluate their performance. The teacher's discipline was calm and effective and consequently pupils' behaviour and attitudes were very good as they co-operated in pairs and small groups.
- 109 Teaching was equally effective in a lesson in Year 4. Pupils worked hard in a variety of challenging activities as they developed tactics to work in teams. They co-operated very well and enjoyed the brisk pace set by the teacher. Instructions were very clear and consequently pupils knew exactly what was expected of them. They linked ideas and skills together well as they responded to suggestions on how they could improve. Overall progress was good.
- 110 After school sporting clubs take place throughout the year and include football, matball, netball, cricket and athletics. When pupils reach Year 5 they go swimming each week. The swimming instructor, with the help of the class teacher, has high expectations and pupils work hard. At the time of the last inspection the school did not have a scheme of work for physical education. This has been rectified and all pupils experience a suitably broad curriculum.