

INSPECTION REPORT

RECTORY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wigan, Lancashire

LEA area: St Helen's

Unique reference number: 104797

Headteacher: Mrs S Ring

Reporting inspector: Mrs E Parry
2615

Dates of inspection: 8 – 12 January 2001

Inspection number: 192668

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Rectory Road,
Ashton in Makerfield,
Wigan,
Lancashire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. T. A. Narayanan

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2615	Eileen Parry	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage	Teaching and learning
			Equal Opportunities	The school's results and achievements
			Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
			English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
			Science	
			Information and communication technology	
			Music	
13808	Mickie Jacobs	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?
1390	Arthur Markham	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art	
			History	
3533	Alan McGregor	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Design and technology	
			Geography	
			Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rectory C.E. Primary has 164 pupils who attend full time. Almost all of the pupils are white. The school takes in pupils of all abilities but is slightly unusual in that there are about as many with special educational needs as there are more able pupils and a lower proportion in the average ability range. Each year the pattern of attainment when children start the school can be quite different. For the current reception class, it is below the average. Ten pupils have statements of special educational needs and about a quarter of pupils have some degree of special need. This is much higher than is usual. Many of these pupils have special educational needs for learning and behaviour difficulties. About a fifth of the pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is within national average band.

The nursery has places for 40 children and currently 37 attend in the morning and 33 in the afternoon. The nursery serves the area and not all of the children will continue their education in this school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school that cares well for its children in a warm, friendly and Christian environment. The standards that eleven year old pupils reach in the national tests have been generally rising each year and based on earlier tests when they were seven, most have made good progress. Teaching overall is satisfactory with strengths in the early years and some weaknesses at the end of Key Stage 2. The headteacher provides good leadership in establishing the caring ethos, effective relationships with parents and financial decisions and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and governors. There are some weaknesses in other aspects of management such as in developing monitoring of teaching. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Eleven year olds do very well in science compared to pupils in similar schools and as well in English.
- The school has a very caring and friendly atmosphere which is effectively promoted by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff.
- Financial planning and control are very secure.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good.
- There is a strong partnership with parents who appreciate all the school is doing for their children.
- Pupils' spiritual development is well promoted and their social and moral development is very good.

What could be improved

- Some of the teaching could be better.
- Standards in information and communication technology are not high enough partly because there have not been enough good quality computers until recently.
- Classrooms are too small for large classes and older pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997 and has made satisfactory improvement since then. Results in the national tests for eleven year olds have increased in English and science, and improvement has been most evident in science. Results in mathematics are also improving but more slowly. For seven year olds, there has been a more erratic pattern with a significant drop from 1999 to 2000 due to the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Although there is a more even allocation of responsibilities to teachers than at the previous inspection, there have been some recent staffing changes which mean that teachers are getting used to different responsibilities and there is some way to go before they all have the relevant management skills. The school has developed its procedures for assessing learning and has made good improvement in this area so that it is now satisfactory with more developments planned for the coming year. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved and will be good when the ICT suite is installed. Standards in design and technology have improved as a result of a better level of experience and clearer curriculum structure.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Results in 2000 for eleven year olds are average for English, below average for mathematics and above average for science. Compared to schools where a similar number of pupils take free school meals, results are average for English, below average for mathematics and well above average for science. The school's results exceeded the targets that were set. Over a three year period, the rate of improvement overall has matched that of most schools in England. When looking at the standards that these same pupils reached in the tests when they were seven, more reached the higher levels at the age of eleven. Overall pupils made satisfactory progress in mathematics tests, better than average in English and very good progress in science.

Results for seven year olds in the year 2000 are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and in the bottom five per cent compared to similar schools. The results are so low because of the significant number of children in that year who have special educational needs; more than half of the group are on the school's special educational needs register.

In English, mathematics and science, the standards of work seen are about average for this time of the year in both key stages. In ICT standards are below where they should be for eleven year olds. Many pupils are working at expected levels in what they do but there are gaps in their experiences. In all other subjects standards are average. In the nursery most

children are on course to reach at least the expected standard. In reception, which does not take all of the children from the nursery, standards this year are below average in key areas related to early English and mathematical skills and knowledge.

The school has a large number of pupils with special needs. These pupils do well when they are receiving additional support through smaller groups, specialist teaching and when the teaching in class is of a high quality. Pupils with special educational needs related to behaviour do not do as well when the school is unable to provide the smaller classes where teachers are able to motivate them and deal with their problems effectively.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Pupils often show interest and enthusiasm in their work and all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. All pupils behave well in assemblies and at playtimes. Most pupils behave consistently well in lessons but a number have special needs related to behaviour which show in some lessons and can affect the learning of other pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The school encourages pupils to care for each other, to learn how to keep themselves healthy and gives them opportunities to take on responsibility.
Attendance	Above the average in the last term and has improved significantly from last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching overall is satisfactory. It is satisfactory or better in 89 per cent of lessons, good in 57 per cent of these with 17 per cent of these being very good and occasionally outstanding. In 11 per cent of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory.

Teaching of both literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. In both areas, there is some very good teaching of specific skills and knowledge which is dynamic and helps children to learn effectively and enjoy what they are doing. At other times, teaching is more modestly paced but secure in ensuring that children cover the essential tasks.

Children in the nursery and reception classes are taught well. The adults in each class work effectively together. Planning is good and everyone is clear about their tasks. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching ranges from outstanding to unsatisfactory. The good teaching is based on effective planning and good ways of keeping the children interested and working hard. Some of the unsatisfactory teaching is because tasks are not suitable for the particular class or because the teachers are new to the school or age group. In other lessons, planning and preparation are not sufficiently detailed, subject knowledge is not at a high enough level and teachers have difficulties in keeping children interested and working. Most children are keen to learn, work hard and enjoy what they are doing but some are easily distracted and can interrupt the flow of lessons and the learning for the others in the class.

The school has a positive approach to pupils with special educational needs and makes very good provision for them. Pupils are taught particularly well in the Progress Class where teaching is of a high order, and they benefit from the close attention possible within a small group. There is very good support for children with special educational needs from teaching assistants and from visiting specialists.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in nursery and reception where the most recent guidance has been incorporated. Satisfactory in infants and juniors. Too little work has taken place in information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school has committed extra resources to helping pupils and staff work hard to meet pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. There are strengths in the provision for moral and social development but cultural development is less evident.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. It works very hard to ensure they are safe and secure and well looked after. The assessment

	of children's learning has improved and is now satisfactory.
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The school's partnership with its parents is a real strength. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciative of all it does for their children. They feel well informed and always welcome. There are special projects in reception and Year 1 where parents are being given more direct advice on helping their children to learn.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. Strengths in creating a caring, Christian ethos and good relationships are balanced by too little recorded monitoring of teaching. Teachers are just getting used to their extra responsibilities and their management skills are at early stages.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Some governors have made significant contributions to the school's development plan, special needs and seeing how well lessons are being taught.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is beginning to track pupils' performance more carefully and to encourage all teachers to evaluate teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and control are very secure. There is a very good understanding of budget setting and monitoring and of the principles of best value.

There are plans to improve the quality of the building with re-roofing happening at the time of the inspection and internal alterations expected to enlarge the reception classroom. However, classrooms are too small. This is especially noticeable where the classes are larger and for the older pupils who do not have enough space. There are sufficient resources for each subject although improvements could be made and in some cases are planned for example, for information and communication technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school expects their children to work hard. The school works closely with parents and they are comfortable in talking to staff. Children are helped to become confident and mature individuals. The school provides an interesting range of extra activities. Children behave well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of information they get about how their children are doing The amount of homework children get to do.

The inspection team agree that the school works closely with parents and helps children to become more confident. There is an interesting range of extra activities and an expectation that children will work hard. Most children behave well but some who have special educational needs find it hard to do so all the time. Information about the school and how children are doing is good. Homework is properly planned and of a reasonable amount.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in 2000 for eleven year olds are average for English, below average for mathematics and above average for science. Compared to schools where a similar number of pupils take free school meals, results are average for English, below average for mathematics and well above average for science. Girls generally do better than boys especially in English. More pupils reach the higher level in English and science when compared to the national average and in mathematics the proportion of attainment at the higher level is average. This reflects the school's population which varies from year to year and is often polarised between more and less able, with fewer children of average attainment in the middle.

2. The school's results exceeded the targets that were set. Over a three year period, the rate of improvement overall has matched that of most schools in England. When looking at the standards that these same pupils reached in the tests when they were seven, more reached the higher levels at the age of eleven. Overall, from the ages of seven to eleven, pupils made satisfactory progress in mathematics tests, better than average in English and very good progress in science.

3. Results for seven year olds in the year 2000 are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and in the bottom five per cent compared to similar schools. Results are spread across all the levels with both attainment at the higher level and some pupils not reaching level 1. The results are so low because of the significant number of children in that year group who have special educational needs; more than half of the group are on the school's register. Because of this, results are acceptable.

4. In English, standards for the oldest pupils are average overall. Whilst some pupils read well, a number by the age of eleven are not enthusiastic. They read competently but without good expression. Similarly some listen attentively, speak confidently and express themselves well, others find it hard to concentrate and do not listen as they should. Higher attainers write well but there are others who have difficulties. There is a similar picture for seven year olds. Overall attainment is average. Reading is satisfactory. Some pupils read and write well and but others struggle. Nevertheless these strugglers have made good progress when considering their limited skills in reception.

5. Pupils in Year 6 are on the whole working at an appropriate level for their age in mathematics with a range from above to below the average. Their knowledge of number is sound. Most understand how to make and use a variety of graphs. Some pupils competently work out real life problems and use mathematical language well whilst others are less secure with these aspects. Seven year olds are working at average levels in number, shape and measures.

6. The standards of work seen in science are about average for this time of the year in both Key Stages. Year 6 pupils are generally able to talk about their work competently. Greater understanding is shown by the higher attainers in their ability to ask pertinent questions. Much written work is similar but when it is entirely the pupils' own writing, differences are evident in the ability of some to relate their findings succinctly and accurately.

7. In information and communication technology standards are below where they should be for eleven year olds. Many pupils are working at average levels in what they do but there are gaps in their experiences, for example in handling data and in creating sequences of instructions to make models move. Pupils are doing well in swimming with all on course to reach or exceed the targets. In other aspects of physical education, pupils are mostly working at appropriate levels. In all other subjects standards are average.

8. In the nursery most children are on course to reach at least the expected standard. In reception, which does not take all of the children from the nursery, standards this year are below average in key areas related to early English and mathematical skills and knowledge.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to their work are satisfactory overall. They concentrate and listen well when their attention and interest are fully engaged. In music at both key stages for example, pupils thoroughly enjoy their lesson and join in and perform with enthusiasm. Also, in Year 1 literacy, pupils understand that they must work independently. A challenging group of Year 3, 4 and 5 pupils participate very well in an excellent literacy lesson. However, when teaching is less secure, pupils are slow to respond and disrupt the flow of lessons with frequent interruptions.

10. Pupils generally behave well in and around school. They play well together and older pupils show regard for younger children; "If we knock one of the little ones over by mistake, we pick them up and take them to an adult". Year 5 pupils act as class monitors to help them learn to care for others. Everyone involved in school is confident that there is no bullying and that any incidents of name calling will be dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils know how they are expected to behave, even if they do not always live up to those expectations. A number of pupils throughout the school have behavioural problems and at times challenge teachers and slow the pace of learning for others. One pupil has been given a fixed term exclusion this academic year.

11. Pupils throughout the school act as monitors and are given jobs to do in the classroom. Year 6 pupils are school monitors and undertake a variety of tasks around school. They particularly enjoy office duty at lunchtime when two of them answer the telephone, take and run messages. All pupils are proud to fulfil their roles conscientiously. A recently introduced team system is encouraging pupils to work hard and behave well to gain points for their 'planet'. Relationships between pupils and adults and amongst pupils of all ages are very good. There is warmth in the way all staff respond to pupils, including when they use positive discipline to correct behaviour.

12. Attendance in the last academic year was below the national average. Attendance in the autumn term shows a significant improvement and is now good and above national figures. There is no unauthorised absence because the majority of parents inform school of reasons for absence promptly. Any absence not accounted for by parents is followed up and an explanation gained. Punctuality is also improving.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Overall teaching in the school is satisfactory. The percentage of teaching that is satisfactory or better is greater than at the previous inspection, although the judgement is that it is satisfactory this time rather than good. The difference in judgements largely relates to the fact that the percentage of teaching that is now regarded as acceptable has changed and is higher. Teaching ranges from outstanding to unsatisfactory. Throughout the school, the

good teaching is based on effective planning and good ways of keeping pupils interested and working hard, as in the music lesson in the Year 3/4 Class. Pupils are made clear about what they are going to learn, how they are going to do it and they are asked at the end whether or not they feel they have achieved their tasks. Some of the unsatisfactory teaching is because tasks are not suitable for the particular class or because the teachers are new to the school or age group. In other lessons, planning and preparation are not sufficiently detailed, subject knowledge is not at a high enough level and teachers have difficulties in keeping children interested and working.

14. Children in the nursery and reception classes are taught well. Teaching ranged from outstanding to satisfactory. The adults in each class work effectively together. Planning is good and everyone is clear about their tasks. However, there are some small areas which can be developed further. There is not enough attention to developing children's phonic skills in the nursery as opportunity arises and children show interest in letters and sounds, and the teaching of physical education in the reception class is not always well enough adapted to the learning needs of this very young group.

15. Teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 have satisfactory knowledge of literacy, plan lessons well and overall, teaching in English is satisfactory. Relationships are good and generally pupils are well managed through firm approaches. In the better teaching, lessons are kept moving at a good pace but in some the pace is too slow and the plenary sessions are not used well enough to round off the lesson. There are clear learning objectives in the planning but these are not consistently made evident to pupils. Classroom assistants and other adults know how they are to help pupils and are often used effectively to support those with special educational needs. Assessment is satisfactory but marking is variable and does not do enough to help pupils to learn from their mistakes.

16. Teachers are working hard to develop the National Numeracy Strategy and to raise standards and quality in mathematics, and this is beginning to have a positive effect on learning and attainment. Teaching is never less than satisfactory with some being good and very good. The best teaching is brisk, well structured and makes a dramatic impact on the rate of pupils' learning within the lesson. Plenary sessions are used effectively to consolidate learning and to tackle misconceptions. Other teaching is more modestly paced. Sometimes planning is a little imprecise and group tasks not as well matched to challenge all the pupils. On occasions, marking sometimes gives insufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve.

17. Science is well taught in Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Where teaching is good, teachers ensure that pupils know exactly what they are to learn and the management and organisation of pupils is effective. Where it is unsatisfactory, the lesson moves too slowly. Some explanations lack crispness and clarity showing insecurity in subject knowledge especially at the end of Key Stage 2.

18. Teaching in the small number of music lessons seen is very good. Lessons are brisk, well planned to develop skills and knowledge and successful in keeping pupils' interest and attention. Swimming benefits from the additional focus given to it by the school and good teaching is making sure that pupils learn to swim well. In design and technology, ICT and in geography there was too little evidence for firm judgements to be made about teaching. In the few lessons of art, insufficient time and attention was given to the development of skills. In all other subjects, teaching is satisfactory.

19. Most children are keen to learn, work hard and enjoy what they are doing but some throughout the school are easily distracted and can interrupt the flow of lessons and the learning for the others in the class. This is particularly noticeable for the youngest and oldest junior classes.

20. The school has a positive approach to pupils with special educational needs and makes very good provision for them. Pupils are taught particularly well in the Progress Class, where teaching is of a high order and they benefit from the close attention possible within a small group. The teacher uses a very good range of strategies to keep the pupils working at a brisk pace, and in the literacy and numeracy sessions these pupils make very good progress in coping with learning to listen and to behave as well as in their subject knowledge. There is very good support for children with special educational needs from teaching assistants and from visiting specialists. An example of this is the work with a pupil who has problems in behaving well. A small group called the 'Circle of Friends' works with the pupil to try to find ways of supporting each other.

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

21. The curriculum for children in the foundation classes is good. Planning has been adapted to take account of the newest guidance and assessment procedures are being changed to match. There is a good balance in the nursery between activities that children choose and those that they are asked to do. There is less choice in the reception class partly because of the difficulties of offering wide choice in the cramped accommodation. The reception class curriculum offers literacy and numeracy sessions of short duration and time for physical education in the hall. Overall it acts as an effective bridge between the nursery and Year 1. It is recognised that there can be better provision for outside play for both classes through more imaginative resources. Another area which is not as well developed as it could be is giving children wider experiences of people from other cultures and beliefs.

22. The curriculum for pupils aged 5 to 11 is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It puts a high priority on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which are being implemented effectively and are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and achievement in English and mathematics. There have been some gaps in pupils' experiences in ICT in areas such as handling data and in using the computer to monitor and control events. Whilst increasing the emphasis on literacy and numeracy in response to national priorities, the school has maintained broad provision in all other subjects.

23. The school has policies and schemes of work for all subjects and as a result planning is effective for all areas of the curriculum. This is an improvement on the position at the previous inspection. All teachers plan their work in the same way and this is improving the quality of teaching. Homework is used effectively and consistently.

24. The school effectively supports the pupils' physical and personal development. There is good provision for pupils to experience personal and social education, including health education, and appropriate attention is given to drugs misuse. An audit has been carried out of pupils' preparedness for drugs misuse education and provision is matched to the findings. 'Circle Time' makes a significant contribution to the sustaining of appropriate behaviour, relationships and personal development. Pupils of all ages are taught to value their own body and have regard for health and safety. The school is participating in a Healthy Schools scheme and is developing pupils' awareness of a healthy diet through its arrangements for the sale of tuck. The school provides for sex education in a sensitive and supportive manner that emphasises family values within a caring school community and keeps parents fully informed of the arrangements.

25. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last

inspection and is now very good. All pupils now have individual education plans that give clear targets, which are broken down into small steps to enable pupils to make good progress in their learning and achieve well. The school makes effective use of additional adult support in classrooms with the result that access to the curriculum for all pupils is good.

26. The school forges good links with the community. Links with the church are strong and the rector is a regular visitor to the school and takes acts of corporate worship. Pupils transfer to secondary schools in a different Local Education Authority due to the location of the school, but transition arrangements for pupils transferring to secondary education are clear and supportive as a result of the good links created with these schools. The school also has good links with nearby primary schools for sporting events. Links with industry are good, the school having benefited from sponsorship by a local company as a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Other links with the community include work with a nearby garden centre to develop pupils' understanding of the world of work and involvement with the Police and Fire Brigade in the 'Crucial Crew' sessions to raise the awareness of pupils of the dangers presented by their environment.

27. A good range of educational visits is used to enhance the quality of educational provision. Pupils in Years 6 are given the opportunity to take part in a residential visit and this opportunity is presented to Year 5 and 4 pupils if numbers permit. There are educational visits to museums and places of historical interest and good use is made of local sporting clubs such as St. Helens Rugby League Club and Manchester United Football Club. Pupils also receive regular visitors to the school to support learning in the topics being studied.

28. A large range of extra-curricular activities is provided. Boys and girls in Key Stage 2 play netball, football, rounders, rugby and quick cricket. Extra tuition in music is provided through groups for recorder. Other activities include a Computer Club, Drama Club, Art Club and French Club. Provision for pupils in Key Stage 1 includes a 'Fit Kids Club' and Story Club.

29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The deputy head teacher led a moving assembly on dark and light to which pupils listened avidly. She created an atmosphere for contemplation and prayer by the use of low lighting, candles and music for the pupils to enter and leave by. There are moments of pure joy in lessons, for example when Year 1 pupils laugh with delight as they beat time on their knees to music which gets faster and faster. The Year 4 and 5 class broke into spontaneous applause for their teacher during an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson and Year 2 gave an uplifting rendition of 'We thank you Lord' following their maths lesson. Close links with the church strengthen the Christian ethos of the school.

30. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All classes decide their own class rules, rewards and sanctions based on the school's code of conduct, at the beginning of the year. There is a strong emphasis in making pupils understand how their behaviour affects others. Anyone in school can write in the Golden Reward Book that is kept in the hall. This records when someone, pupil or adult, has been kind, helpful or thoughtful and the examples read out in the Friday assembly clearly show that this is filled in as often by pupils as by adults. Pupils are expected to apologise immediately if their actions upset or disturb someone else. Parents feel that their children are taught to be polite and to know right from wrong. Pupils respect all adults working with them in school.

31. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Circle time is used to promote awareness of each other's right to speak and be listened to. The technique is skilfully used in Year 1 music to help young pupils learn to take turns. The Friday 'Captain's Table' is a

reward every pupil wishes to achieve. This is the ultimate recognition of effort in all aspects of school life and helps to raise the self-esteem and confidence of many pupils when they take their turn. In breakfast club and at the after school club, pupils of all ages play and work happily together. The dining room is sociable and well organised, and on the playground pupils happily share equipment and wait their turn, for example to play basketball or skittles. Midday supervisors and the extremely popular caretaker actively involve themselves with pupils at lunchtime. An annual weekend residential trip gives older pupils the opportunity to experience sharing accommodation and activities with their peers. The delightful setting of the school helps to raise pupils' environmental awareness.

32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school has adopted a little girl in Ethiopia and pupils understand how different her life is to theirs. There is currently little evidence of other cultures around school in displays, although Key Stage 2 pupils are learning about Ancient Greece this term and the Year 4 and 5 class enjoyed being Spartans and Athenians to learn about their contrasting cultures. At present there is little art showing the work of artists although there are some photographs which show that this aspect is covered. Although the school does cover the faiths of other people in religious education, there is very little evidence of this to judge its effectiveness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The standard of care at the school is very good. All the staff, including the caretaker and cleaner, ensure that the building and grounds are maintained to a very high standard. Child protection guidelines are clear and all staff understand procedures. First aid is administered with sensitivity and care. Very good records are kept and the needs of pupils with specific medical conditions are properly understood. Parents are informed in writing of any accident involving a bump to the head. Although pastoral care is initially the responsibility of each class teacher, all staff know every child and pupils are confident that any adult in school will help them when needed. If there is a concern about a pupil, home visits are made where parents are unable to come to the school. Parents are particularly grateful for the sensitive preparation for children about to attend the nursery. Close liaison between nursery and reception ensures that children moving up to the main school are well prepared. There are good links with high schools for Year 6 pupils who already feel confident about the schools they are transferring to.

34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are excellent. This is mainly because the administration manager ensures figures are collated every week and annotates registers carefully to show reasons for absence or late arrival. All absence that is not accounted for by parents' notes or telephone calls is followed up after two days. Each term, the administration manager checks that there are no outstanding unauthorised absences and obtains a valid reason. She works closely with the Education Welfare Officer who gives very good support. Punctuality is also monitored closely and parents asked to account for why their child is late. As a result of these systems, attendance in the autumn term improved significantly over the previous few years and has risen from below national average for the last academic year to above national average.

35. There is a strong emphasis on positive discipline. Pupils are constantly praised for their effort and behaviour and rewarded with stickers and team points. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are often sensitively handled and managed in lessons. The school makes very good use of the Pupil Referral Service, which gives good support, helping to set up a Circle of Friends for individual pupils and providing one to one anger management. Pupils respond very well to rewards. They are particularly proud to be sent to the head teacher for recognition. The Golden Reward Book, the Friday lunchtime Captain's Table and the new

team points system are all very popular with pupils. Pupils also understand the consequences of poor behaviour and are well aware of the sanctions that may be used if they do misbehave.

36. Attention has been given to all the issues raised in the last inspection report relating to assessment and considerable improvements have been made. Substantial work has been done to develop teachers' expertise and understanding, not least in relation to the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Procedures for assessment are now satisfactory, overall, and a valuable year planner has been developed to guide teachers in planning for assessment. Staff regularly assess pupils' learning in a variety of appropriate ways and for various purposes from the first few weeks of children's entry into the nursery and reception classes. From their knowledge of individual pupils, teachers often set them personal targets, for example in numeracy and literacy, to support them in their learning and achievement but marking sometimes misses opportunities to give guidance on improvement. However, aspects such as communicating the targets more effectively to pupils could be refined further. Assessment information elsewhere, for example, in some foundation subjects is sometimes much less well used and systematically collected.

37. Good procedures are in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and for assessing their progress. Assessment information about these pupils is used well to set targets in their individual education plans.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school's partnership with parents is a strength. Parents are kept very well informed. The prospectus is very useful and informative and its format is neat. It is charmingly illustrated with drawings by pupils. Weekly newsletters are of a very high standard, written in simple, clear English that keeps parents fully up to date. There is a useful notice board in the nursery telling parents about topic work. Documents are available for all parents in the entrance. A regular maths circular for all year groups includes targets. Teachers and the head teacher make themselves available to parents, particularly after school and parents feel very confident to approach any member of staff about their child. Reports to parents have improved significantly. These clearly explain what children know, understand and can do and set targets for improvement. Most parents attend reporting evenings and those who do not are contacted. Parents come eagerly to school productions and special services such as harvest festival. They are less keen to attend curriculum evenings.

39. A number of initiatives have been introduced to support parents in helping their children at home. A group of Year 1 parents and their children attend the SHARE project where they are encouraged to share books together and to undertake a wide range of exciting activities related to reading. The parents of a number of reception children are taking part in a group which meets every two weeks with the deputy head teacher, as part of a scheme to guide parents of very young children on how to help their children learn to read. Both these groups of parents value the schemes highly for the support and confidence they have been given to work with their own children at home. The 'homework' given for these children is highly imaginative, as are the packs for nursery children. Most parents and pupils throughout the school are happy with the amount of homework they are given.

40. Many parents actively support the school. They help in classrooms, often offering their expertise for example in art. Helpers are very well briefed. Some have been trained to help pupils change their reading books and to note books into reading records. All helpers feel valued by staff and pupils. They like the fact that they are welcomed into the staff room.

The home school association is staff led but with an active committee of parents. Parents and the whole community support events very well. One father always runs discos for pupils, which are extremely popular. Funds raised are used to benefit the school. Most recently, an adventure playground has been constructed and a wide range of small outdoor play games purchased.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. Overall management in the school is sound. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are particularly successful in creating a warm and welcoming ethos, developing the provision for pupils with special educational needs and in promoting the very good partnership with parents. Standards by the end of the school have been rising and the success of measures to make the school better valued by the community can be seen in the growing numbers of pupils who attend.

42. The headteacher knows the strengths and weaknesses of the staff but as yet there are few written examples of how teaching and learning is checked. The best ones have been done by one of the governors. Co-ordinators are starting to look at how effectively their subjects are planned, to examine samples of pupils' work, and to evaluate resources. Based on this they are producing development plans for their subjects. Other aspects of monitoring, such as time to see what is happening in lessons and how to use assessment information are planned, but very little has taken place as yet.

43. Although staff know pupils well, the systems for formalising that knowledge through assessment and through tracking pupils' progress are relatively recent and it is acknowledged that more needs to be done to be able to show how the school adds value to pupils' education. However, there are some good examples of using information such as that from tests and assessments. For instance, a group of pupils in reception are receiving help with early reading skills through a special project on helping the parents to help their children. This was organised following concerns about the substantial number who had low scores on their baseline assessments.

44. The governing body fulfils its duties well with substantial commitment being undertaken by a small number of governors including those who are responsible for special educational needs and curriculum.

45. Financial planning is very thorough and effective. Careful consideration is given to spending priorities and available money is used to best advantage for pupils' education. For example, a fourth class has been created in the mornings at Key Stage 2 in order to teach literacy and numeracy more effectively. The value of this commitment can be seen in the differences in the way these pupils respond in a small group, as opposed to within a large class. The budget is carefully monitored and very good systems are in place to ensure prudent financial control. Both the head teacher and administration manager understand the principles of best value and are good financial managers. Day to day administration is efficient, calm and smooth.

46. The newly qualified teacher is being well supported by his mentor and all staff. He attends courses and is working towards planned targets. The school also trains new teachers and welcomes trainee nursery nurses and a range of students on work experience.

47. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. Although there are sufficient classroom bases for the current number of classes, classrooms are too small. They are supplemented by shared areas which have sinks but this does not allow much flexibility. The reception classroom, for

example, is tiny and the teacher uses the space outside which is also used by the two other classes in the infants. Plans to make the reception class bigger are due to be implemented shortly. This will significantly enhance reception provision but will make less for the other infant classes to share. Two of the junior classes have large numbers of pupils and when the teacher wishes to do whole class sessions, pupils are cramped and there is little room for the teachers to move around the room to support pupils. There are a number of small flights of steps around the school with no easy alternative for adults and children who have mobility problems.

48. There are sufficient resources for all subjects and provision for ICT will soon be much better when the school completes plans to put in place an ICT suite and resite the library.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to continue making improvements to the standards that pupils reach and the quality of the environment, the headteacher, staff and governors should consider the points below. The second and third issues have already been identified by the school as areas for development.

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching by: -
 - * providing training in subjects where teachers feel least confident and ensuring that teachers' subject knowledge is high enough;
 - * supporting teachers through more rigorous monitoring of teaching;
 - * ensuring a better balance between teachers' explanations and pupils' time to work within individual lessons.*Paragraphs 13-18; 72; 74; 86/87; 93 108*
- (2) Improve the standards in information technology by: -
 - * ensuring that full use is made of the ICT suite once it is established and that teachers are supported by training to enable them to teach all strands of the curriculum equally well.*Paragraphs 7; 110-113*
- (3) Continue to improve the quality of accommodation by:
 - * Implementing the plans for enlarging the reception class area;
 - * Considering if there is any way to improve classroom space, access for those with mobility problems, and storage.*Paragraphs 47; 94; 124*

In addition, there are a number of smaller issues which governors should consider in their action plan. These can be found in paragraphs; 21; 32; 61; 103

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5.6	16.7	35.2	31.5	11.1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	35	164
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	55

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	15	10	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	8	8	7
	Total	17	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (71)	68 (71)	72 (92)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	11	9
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	15	18	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (67)	72 (71)	64 (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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	15	10	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	14
	Girls	9	7	10
	Total	19	16	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (76)	64 (76)	96 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	18	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (59)	68 (59)	76 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (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	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	163
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	1	
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)	7.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	35

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	357330
Total expenditure	358656
Expenditure per pupil	1934
Balance brought forward from previous year	20102
Balance carried forward to next year	18776

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	234
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	26	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	36	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	32	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	34	11	0	2
The teaching is good.	72	19	2	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	30	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	21	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	74	23	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	72	26	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	26	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	66	26	0	0	9

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

50. Children are taught in the nursery and reception classes. At the time of the inspection, 22 of the 30 children in the reception class were under five. Sixteen of them have summer birthdays so it is a very young group. Children's attainment on entry to school varies from year to year. In the current reception class it is below that expected for this age, particularly in early reading, writing and mathematical skills. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning in both nursery and reception. This is due to the good provision for this age group and the good quality of teaching; during the inspection, the teaching seen was mostly good and never less than satisfactory.

51. The quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection in the provision for reception aged children. Staff show a good awareness of the needs of young children and provide a good range of practical learning experiences that interest and involve children well. Planning of the curriculum and assessment of children's learning takes into account the new guidance.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. Children come into their classrooms happily and confidently. They show an increasing maturity in managing the routines and conventions of school life, such as waiting their turn to speak and joining in assemblies in the reception class. Any who are unsettled are given swift personal attention to their problems so that they are not distressed for long. Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported well both through the general ethos of the school and through the good quality of teaching and learning. Children are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them in a positive way, through praise and encouragement, and their behaviour is good. Children with special educational needs are included as far as is possible in all the activities. Good individual education plans pay attention to particular learning needs and children are well supported in class.

53. Many situations are provided to enable children to learn to co-operate, for example, through acting out the picnic in the nursery and in the reception class's school, and when riding bikes meant for more than one person in the outside play area. Children are encouraged to use activities independently and staff make sensitive interventions to support their learning. In the reception class, children have to be directed to activities much more because the area is too small and the extra space outside the classroom is often shared with other classes in Key Stage 1. The good quality of teaching in nursery and reception results in children making good progress in their personal and social development and almost all are likely to meet the expectations of this age group by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

54. In both classes, staff read stories expressively and this captivates children's attention. There is a good use of questioning to assess children's understanding and extend their learning. Staff encourage all children to contribute to discussions and value each child's efforts. This results, in both the nursery and reception class, in most children answering questions confidently and talking to adults competently. There are a few children whose speech is indistinct and who prefer to do rather than to talk.

55. In the nursery, there is a good balance between teaching specific skills, such as the sounds and shapes of letters, and encouraging children to see themselves as writers through play for example in the writing area or when they order food at the cafe. However, there are times when some of the more advanced children show signs of phonic skills in other activities which are not actively developed. An example of this is during snack time when some children were clearly using initial letter sounds to guess names, more could have been done to push their understanding further. Occasionally, opportunities to extend children's writing skills are missed. This was seen, for example, when adults write children's names for them on their art work without giving children the chance to try to do it themselves first. Overall children in the nursery are on course to reach the level expected when they transfer to the reception class.

56. Some reception children recognise all the letter shapes and the sounds they make, write their names correctly and attempt to write familiar words. Good teaching in the literacy sessions encourages them to read words and to make good attempts to write them by identifying the sounds they can hear such as a 'a little fish in a dish'. There are also some children with little letter or sound recognition. The school has provided a special project to help these children by teaching the parents how to help at home. It is evident from what they can do now compared to what the baseline information says they could do when they first started in the reception class, that these children are making good progress. However, it is still likely that attainment overall by the end of reception will be below the expected level in this area.

Mathematical development

57. Adults make many opportunities to extend children's understanding of number throughout the day. They naturally encourage the children to count themselves, the objects in front of them or animals in the story book they are looking at. Concepts of large and small are reinforced well when an adult works with the children in the dinosaur play in reception and the wild animals play in the nursery.

58. The good quality of teaching, in both the nursery and reception classes, results in good progress being made. Almost all children are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the year in the nursery, with some exceeding them. In reception, attainment is more varied. Some of the children are doing well. They count confidently with larger numbers, write numbers to 10, can undertake simple addition sums and know the names of the most common mathematical shapes. However, there are more children with special needs and, although they are making good progress, some of these children are not likely to meet the targets for the end of the reception year. For example, they know the counting sequence to 10 but do not co-ordinate the counting and pointing to objects so they end up with the wrong number in the group.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world in practical ways and teaching in this area is good. Children learn to use the computer to make simple drawings such as self-portraits in the nursery or abstract doodles in reception. Reception work is extended through programs which develop early reading and mathematical skills although many children need an adult with them when they use these. Listening centres are used regularly and children are quite confident in using headphones and switching the machines on and off to listen to stories and music.

60. Children concentrate for extended periods when using water, sand and malleable materials, exploring their properties intently. A tray of dry tea leaves gave nursery children an

aromatic experience of sifting and pouring using small spoons and receptacles. In reception, children were looking for objects which would float or sink. They were able to guess what an object would do before trying it and in most cases were correct. They enthusiastically tried to make floating objects sink by turning them upside down, pushing them or putting one on top of the other at the teacher's suggestion.

Physical development

61. Children's physical skills are developed satisfactorily. The nursery has an outside area which is very attractively set out with both hard surfaces and grassed areas. A variety of equipment, including climbing apparatus and wheeled toys, is set out each day. Children show average skills in pedalling the toys. They used the slope of the playground well to gain speed on the bikes. However, they tend to ignore the attractive road markings and there are no resources such as garages or police and traffic warden costumes which might stimulate better use of the facility. The reception class are given time to use this space but also time to use the hall. Some of the children move imaginatively in response to the teacher's invitation to find contrasting ways. They wriggled on their tummies or jumped forwards and backwards. Others found it quite difficult to think for themselves and tended to run. There was too little demonstration by the teacher to help them although some good use was made of demonstration by children who had realised what was asked of them,

62. Adults support children's increasing manipulative skills in the classroom, with activities such as threading, jigsaws, cutting with scissors and construction. Most children show average control. Children make steady progress as a result of the provision and almost all are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the year.

Creative development

63. A good range of materials is available in the nursery for children to choose and play is often supported by students.

64. Imaginative play is supported well with dressing-up clothes, picnics in the nursery and areas such as the reception class's 'school'. Children enjoy singing and most enthusiastically join in action songs such as 'I'm a little teapot'. At other times they have sessions where they play instruments. Children watch as the teacher shows them a rain stick and listen with fascination to its gentle sounds. They respond well to instructions by the teacher to make their instruments make louder or softer sounds.

65. The reception class is in a very small area and uses space outside the classroom which is shared with Key Stage 1 classes for much of the creative work. This poses restrictions on the amount of independent choice that children can make. For example, the painting and collage area is up and around some steps and can only accommodate a few children at once. Therefore children are directed to the areas to make sure that none is overcrowded although they can make choices from the materials that are set out. In both classes children use ready mixed paint. They have good control of brushes and apply paint with a smooth action. They could be easily be challenged to mix paint from powder as an alternative medium.

ENGLISH

66. The school's national test results have improved marginally since the previous inspection but there are still concerns about reading and writing standards. The 2000 test results for 7 year olds for reading and writing dropped from the 1999 performance and were

well below those of similar schools. This lower performance was partially the result of the cohort of pupils including a high proportion with special educational needs. The 2000 results for 11 year olds are in line with those of similar schools and, although performance fluctuates, have risen over the last four years in line with the national trend. Girls achieve higher standards than boys.

67. When pupils enter the school their reading skills are often poor and they have limited speaking and listening skills. Many pupils have limited pencil control to enable them to write. The school works hard to address these limitations and pupils make good progress so that by the age of 11 standards are similar to those in comparable schools. Skills in speaking and listening are generally average but throughout the school a sizeable proportion of pupils lack confidence in expressing themselves orally. Standards in reading are average overall but many older pupils are not enthusiastic readers and their reading lacks expression. Pupils' writing skills are average overall and higher attaining pupils achieve results which are above those in similar schools.

68. Pupils between the ages of 5 and 7 achieve satisfactorily, particularly the higher ability group. A large percentage of pupils are still struggling for fluency in their spoken communication and have difficulty when describing their observations and contributing to class and group discussion. However, when considering that many start in the reception class with limited oral skills, pupils make good progress. By the time they are 7, average and above average pupils read accurately and often with good expression and can work out the meaning of unknown words. They are aware of the main features of a book and what an author and illustrator do. However, a sizeable proportion of lower attaining pupils have difficulty with the text and are not skilled in breaking down words to aid their understanding. Children make satisfactory progress in their writing but too many children do not progress beyond writing simple accounts and short stories. The work of above average pupils is well presented, handwriting is neat and simple punctuation is used correctly. Average and below average pupils' work is more variable and shows limited use of punctuation with handwriting which is not well formed and mixes upper and lower case.

69. By the age of eleven, whilst the majority of pupils listen attentively and confidently voice their opinions and develop their ideas in discussion, a sizeable proportion of pupils do not. These pupils lack fluency when speaking, have a limited vocabulary and find it difficult to express themselves as clearly as they would like. They are prone to call out during whole class lessons at inappropriate times and disturb the flow of teaching and the learning of other pupils.

70. Pupils aged 7 to 11 make satisfactory progress in their reading. Although most older pupils are competent readers, there is a large percentage that does not read with much expression. Pupils are able to use a full range of skills to work out unknown words and apply comprehension skills appropriately. The majority of pupils are able to skim and scan appropriately when looking for information and using dictionaries. They talk knowledgeably about authors and illustrators and use contents and index effectively to locate relevant information.

71. Pupils aged between 7 to 11 make satisfactory progress in their writing. The more able, in particular, learn to use interesting and imaginative expressions and set out their thoughts appropriately. There are examples of lively accounts with good use of vocabulary and varied sentence structure to engage the reader's attention. The quality of presentation is generally good but this is spoilt in some books by mixed use of pencil and pen resulting in variations in quality of handwriting. The work of higher attaining pupils is usually punctuated accurately with correct spelling and grammar but other pupils' work is prone to contain spelling errors and incorrect use of words such as there/their, as/has. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 produce a wide range of written work including factual accounts, newspaper articles and imaginative stories. They make satisfactory use of writing plans but insufficient attention

is given to editing and improving their initial drafts to produce work of higher quality. Overall, pupils are attaining at levels that are average.

72. Teaching is satisfactory overall although there are variations in teachers' skills. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and there was some excellent teaching of special needs pupils from years 3, 4 and 5, but there are some weaknesses. In almost all lessons teachers make good use of resources to initiate discussion and to teach specific aspects of language. Group tasks are planned to meet the differing levels of ability. In effective lessons, teachers have good knowledge of the subject, are clear about what they want pupils to achieve and organise the pupils' tasks effectively to extend their knowledge. This was apparent in a successful lesson with Year 4/5 pupils on skimming, scanning and close reading skills and words with the same letter string that sound different. The clear explanation by the teacher developed pupils' interest and enthusiasm and was followed by a lively discussion and ultimately enthusiastic completion of the activities by the pupils. An excellent lesson involving the teaching of the special needs progress class of pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5 was marked by the teacher's awareness of the needs of the pupils and her attention to detail in the planning of the activities. She had very high expectations of behaviour, kept the pupils' concentration through excellent use of questions and made them all work hard throughout the lesson. In contrast to this excellent teaching there are instances of less successful teaching, for example, in a Year 5/6 lesson the teacher was unsure of the subject content and the pace of the lesson as a consequence was slow which resulted in some instances of inappropriate behaviour by pupils.

73. The school has effectively implemented the national literacy strategy and the framework is used as a basis for planning. Insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' writing skills through opportunities in other subjects but the school is taking action to redress this situation. The school has now timetabled extended writing sessions to allow older pupils the opportunity to produce lengthy pieces of writing. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are regular reviews organised for them and their needs are addressed in their individual education plans which are detailed and set out in small steps what they need to do to improve. They are well supported by Class Assistants who work hard to ensure that they have equal access to the curriculum. There are procedures in place to help keep track of the pupils' progress. This has enabled the school to identify areas of common concern such as extended writing and the reading of the very young pupils. As a result the school has taken action to develop pupils' writing through extended writing sessions and is participating in an exciting 'SHARE' project to develop the parents skills in supporting young children's reading. Additional Literacy support is also given to a group of Year 1 pupils and there are plans to extend this practice to target groups of Level 2c pupils in Key Stage 1.

74. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has only been leading this subject for a short period of time but there are procedures in place to monitor teaching and learning. Approaches to the marking of work vary; some teachers make helpful evaluative comments and indicate areas for improvement but in other classes marking consists of a series of ticks and does not make comments to develop pupils' learning. Target setting for individual pupils has been introduced recently.

MATHEMATICS

75. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally; they showed a marked drop from above

average standards in previous years but clearly reflected the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. The results of equivalent tests for eleven year olds were below average in relation to national figures and those of similar schools, however, when compared to pupils' prior attainment at age seven, they were above average. Broadly in line with national trends, girls tend to achieve better than boys. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress and achieve appropriate levels of attainment.

76. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy into the curriculum and is making effective use of the range of strategies and approaches to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Attention has been focused strongly and to positive effect on raising standards of oral and mental work and other important aspects such as using and applying mathematics, including the use of appropriate vocabulary. However, it is also recognised by the school that much more will need to be done, over a longer period of time, before marked gains can be made in pupils' attainment. Nevertheless there are encouraging signs, including the increase in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in the 2000 test results at the age of eleven.

77. The current pupils in Year 2 can count on and backwards in two's and ten's, can recognise sequences of numbers including odd and even numbers and can complete missing numbers in a simple sequence. Many show an understanding of two-digit numbers when they add these together and have a satisfactory grasp of number facts to twenty. Most pupils can name and identify some features of flat and solid shapes appropriately. Some can measure using an increasing range of different standard units, although others are less confident and accurate. Similarly, many pupils are beginning to use an appropriate range of mathematical language, vocabulary and can tackle problem-solving aspects, but others are less confident and competent.

78. By the age of eleven, most pupils are able to use mental recall effectively and some, but not all, use an appropriate range of strategies to estimate and work out their answers. Many pupils have a sound understanding of place value in relation to their age and have an appropriate grasp of fractions, decimals and percentages. Given the opportunity, many pupils can use relevant diagrams, arrays of data and graphs, sometimes linked to work in other subjects such as graphs and tables in science and geography, although this could be developed further. Pupils have satisfactory measurement skills which they use in design and technology as they make models. Many pupils now use mathematical language appropriately and are increasingly competent in working out real life problems in the subject, although others are much less precise, secure and effective in these aspects.

79. Most pupils have appropriate attitudes to the subject and often these are good. Pupils generally work hard, listen carefully and take pride in the presentation of their work and achievements. They mainly behave well and relish varied and challenging mental work and practical tasks which are often provided for them. However, on a few occasions, they lose concentration when the tasks are insufficiently well matched to their age and ability, or management strategies are temporarily less effective. However, teaching and learning overall, are sound and on a number of occasions they are good or better. The quality of provision has been improved significantly since the last inspection with the effective implementation of national strategies.

80. The quality of teachers' planning is often good with careful attention being given to learning objectives for lessons, although the school appreciates that there is sometimes room for further refinements in precision and through communicating these even more effectively with pupils. Lessons are frequently well structured with good use of the mental and oral session at the beginning of the lesson and in the best lessons, the plenary session at the end is well used to tackle misconceptions, to consolidate and extend learning. At best,

the targeted group work is highly effective and pupils make rapid progress in their learning. However, on occasions, this aspect of the lesson is less well developed, particularly where the work is imprecisely matched to pupils' prior attainment and learning. On a number of occasions good quality direct teaching was seen in both key stages which had a dramatic effect on the quality of learning and achievement by pupils. In many lessons the pace is brisk and on numerous occasions good use is made of a range of challenging questions to stimulate and extend pupils in their learning. Teachers often show a good knowledge of the subject of the lesson and have appropriately high expectations which represents an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. However, on a few occasions higher attaining pupils could be stretched even further in both key stages, although valuable attention is being given to this area with some evidence of early improvements. Pupils' progress throughout the school is beginning to improve and is assisted greatly not only by the application of national strategies, but also the commitment of all the staff and some careful targeting of areas of underachievement, individuals and groups of pupils, including those aspiring to the next level.

81. Arrangements for assessment are sound and some aspects are good. Results from a variety of sources are analysed and often used well to target underachievement and the differing needs of pupils. Increasingly effective use is being made of continuous assessment to guide teachers' planning, which at best is proving to be an invaluable source of information in improving the quality of learning and raising standards. On occasions marking does not do enough to say how pupils could improve their work

82. The co-ordinator is providing a strong lead in developments, fully supported by all the staff. Arrangements for staff development are effective and strategies for monitoring and evaluation are already contributing well to improvements in provision and standards, although more still remains to be done over a period of time. The school is satisfactorily resourced for the subject.

SCIENCE

83. Results achieved by eleven year old pupils in science are noticeably better in 2000 than in previous years, continuing an upward trend. They are currently above the national average and well above those for similar schools. Ninety six per cent of the pupils reached the expected level 4 with 40 per cent of these reaching the higher level. For seven year olds results of the teacher assessments were in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. However, almost half of that class have special educational needs and results are acceptable when this is considered. The standards of work seen in science during the inspection are about average for this time of the year in both Key Stages.

84. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a sound knowledge of several areas of scientific study. In an art lesson they showed a sound knowledge of different types of building materials and their purposes. for example glass or metal. Their earlier work shows understanding of different food groups and they are developing clear ideas about foods that are healthy or unhealthy. This work is well supported by the school's development of a healthy eating philosophy and by the healthy choices that are available to them at lunchtimes. At the beginning of their work on electricity, pupils showed a satisfactory knowledge of appliances in school. Their understanding was significantly enhanced by the way that adults used open-ended questions to make them think. Year 1 pupils had some interesting early views about parts of plants including the roots which they compared to worms. They were unsure about why they had not found plants growing on the playground relating this more to the fact that other children tread on them than to conditions for growth. The interesting approach,

searching questions and practical tasks helped to them to a more secure understanding by the end of the lesson that plants need certain conditions to grow well.

85. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to conduct simple scientific experiments as well as to acquire sound knowledge and understanding. Year 6 pupils have a good idea of what constitutes a fair test and when asked can give a range of variables and controls which might make a difference. They can recall work on filtration and evaporation and give secure definitions of what the words mean and of the processes involved. Where they have written up their own conclusions to experiments, there are some differences with the more able pupils writing more succinctly and accurately and the lower attainers taking more time and space to convey the same findings, as in work on dissolving sugar in water.

86. Year 5 pupils' books show that a good amount of work has been covered over the year. Pupils record what they have done in a variety of ways including by drawings, graphs, charts and tables. Whilst there are some examples of their own writing, there is more which is identical because it has been based on worksheets. This has been identified as an area for development and additional time is given each week to writing in science. All of the work is marked and often contains encouraging comments but it is much rarer to find comments which say how the pupils could improve.

87. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from very good to unsatisfactory. Overall it was good in infants and satisfactory in juniors. Where teaching is good, teachers ensure that pupils know exactly what they are to learn and the management and organisation of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. The pace of working is well matched to pupils' needs and other adults give good support to individuals and groups. Pupils are provided with interesting and stimulating work which requires them to think hard about their answers and to use the knowledge they have previously acquired. Lessons are conducted in a pleasant atmosphere with good use of humour. In a Year 2 lesson for example, the teacher gave valuable practical support to pupils on ways to organise themselves to carry out the work on electricity without taking away the problems set for the pupils to solve. Questions are often used effectively at the beginnings of lessons to remind pupils of earlier work and at the ends of lessons to check pupils' understanding and to clear up misconceptions. Where the teaching is less successful, too long is spent on initial work such as the assessment tasks in Year 5/6 and explanations and illustrations are somewhat confused showing gaps in the teacher's understanding of how to make the concepts clear to the age group.

88. Pupils usually enjoy science. They are eager to answer questions, and generally work well in pairs and groups. In a Year 4 lesson, most pupils listened attentively and their excitement at undertaking practical tasks was evident. Some were less easy to motivate and were slower to respond. Although most pupils behave well in science, they can be a little fussy when the teaching is not sharp enough. Older pupils for example, begin to ask questions which move further and further from the lesson's content and some stop listening because the time spent on the introductory assessment task is too long.

89. The co-ordinator has begun to look at planning and to review pupils' work. She has not yet had opportunity to look at what is happening in classrooms but there is time planned this term for her to do so.

ART AND DESIGN

90. Only three lessons of art were seen during the inspection, but pupils' work both in sketchbooks and on display around the school show that standards of attainment of pupils at

both 7 and 11 are in line with national expectations. Pupils are presented with a satisfactory range of activities and pupils' develop the required skills in the use of different media. This is similar to the position at the previous inspection for 7 year olds but there has been a slight deterioration in the attainment of 11 year olds when standards and teaching were judged to be good.

91. By the time they are 7 most children have satisfactory skills in using a range of media. They learn to control drawing tools such as pencils, crayons and pastels and use line, shade and tone when creating their book covers linked to work on "Our Favourite Books". They develop skills in different techniques but work sometimes lacks challenge, for example in a Year 2 lesson the pupils are insufficiently challenged when making rubbings of different surfaces. Pupils' skills are developed through work in other subjects, for example they draw pictures of homes when studying 'Where we live' in geography. Their observational skills are developed through drawing pictures of faces when they make a passport. Younger pupils successfully learn to blend colours and use observational skills in their work on rainbows and drawings of 'Me and my family.'

92. Pupils aged 7 to 11 work with a wider range of materials and their work is often linked to other subjects. They enjoy art and talk about their work with enthusiasm. However, insufficient attention is paid to the direct teaching of skills and techniques and this results in some pupils' drawings and paintings lacking perspective, line and tone of the required quality. For example in a Year 4/5 lesson pupils were enthusiastic when drawing a series of pictures representing a part of the story of Odysseus and the Cyclops but their pictures were simplistic and lacked quality because insufficient attention was given to the different skills and techniques which could be applied to their work. Similarly Year 5/6 work on self-portraits shows limited awareness of proportion. Younger year 3/4 pupils have produced well-crafted portraits based on the work of Beryl Cook, but basing work on that of famous artists is not a feature of other work around the school. Teachers' planning and previous work shows attention is given to the work of famous artists but this is an area which requires more attention. As a result pupils' knowledge and understanding about art is not as good as it should be. Some work lacks challenge and the use made of pupil sketchbooks is limited, containing only a small amount of work and showing little development of artistic skills.

93. A limited amount of teaching was seen and no overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. Whilst teachers' lesson planning is detailed and indicates satisfactory coverage of the requirements of the art curriculum, in a Year 4/5 lesson insufficient attention was given to the progressive development of skills and in a Year 5/6 lesson pupils were not given any time to actually produce any art. In both lessons the teachers created opportunities for discussion but this centred more on the historical aspects of the topic than the art. The Year 5/6 lesson on Textiles and Textures linked to the topic of Ancient Greece was devoted completely to discussion and gave pupils no time to carry out any practical activity and use their art skills and resulted in numerous inappropriate interruptions which slowed the pace of the lesson and wasted time. Teachers use art effectively to support work in other subjects and satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology, for example pupils have used computers to create repeating patterns when producing Christmas wrapping paper designs.

94. Art resources are satisfactory but classrooms are small and present difficulties for the organisation of art lessons. Planning is co-ordinated throughout the school and makes effective use of the most recent national guidelines for the subject. The school has benefited from an artist visiting the school to develop three-dimensional work and display around the school creates a stimulating learning environment. Management of the subject is satisfactory but there has been no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. During the inspection no lessons were seen in design and technology and therefore no overall judgements were made about teaching. However, a range of evidence was drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work including work on display, teachers' planning, discussions with pupils about their work, analysis of assessments, records and reports and other evidence. From the evidence available, appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to make sound progress in the subject and in both key stages attainment is now in line with national expectations. This represents a significant improvement on the last inspection report, which found attainment to be unsatisfactory at the end of each key stage.

96. Pupils in Year 2 have successfully looked at a variety of wheeled vehicles, identified different parts such as wheels, axles, body and designed their own simple wheeled vehicle which they have then built to the brief. The end results show close attention to the quality of finish, designs are appropriately detailed, pupils have clearly taken care in their selection of materials and in the use of tools and equipment. Pupils talk readily about their models, problems they had to solve, solutions and give their own evaluations of the results and processes. Similarly, pupils in Year 1 have used construction kits to design and make models and are beginning to compare and use different materials in designing and making tasks. They are also able to consider the way things work, materials used and purpose as seen in the work relating to the design of chairs for a story-teller.

97. Older pupils work with an increasing range of tools and materials and have appropriate opportunities to design and make things. Work carried out by Year 5/6 pupils on designing and making slippers gave ample opportunity for all of the pupils to produce annotated designs with very clear action plans. They went on to make the slippers, many of good quality, which involved measuring and cutting out before sewing them together with very good guidance provided by the teacher, for example, related to sewing and other skills. Again, pupils talked enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their work and readily identified strengths and weaknesses in a positive way. Younger junior pupils, similarly, had worked thoughtfully and with attention to detail in the design and making of photo frames. In doing so they had used a variety of different formats and finishes and given appropriate attention to issues such as fitness for purpose. Good links have been made with work in other subjects for example, mathematics games such as snakes and ladders and other board games for younger pupils, designing and marking out playground games, Christmas and other cards.

98. Through talking to pupils it is evident that they often enjoy design and technology activities, take pride in their achievements, persist with problems and have good attitudes towards the subject.

99. The co-ordinator is providing a positive lead in developments. A useful policy and well conceived programmes for each key stage have been produced. Teachers' planning is often of good quality with clear learning objectives for lessons. In the best planning, brief but highly useful evaluations of lessons are included related to pupils' learning and achievement together with succinct action points. Improvements in resources have been wisely linked to planning. Generally, they are satisfactory although more are needed in a few areas, such as those to support teaching and learning of control aspects of the subject. Attention is currently being given to useful monitoring and evaluation strategies but, as yet, these are still at an early stage of development.

GEOGRAPHY

100. During the inspection no specific lessons were seen in geography and therefore no overall judgements were made about teaching. Nevertheless, a range of other evidence was available including, pupils' work, teachers' planning, assessments and reports, discussions with pupils about their work and many other sources. This evidence suggests that appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to develop in the subject and attainment at the end of each key stage is in line with national expectations. This maintains the satisfactory progress and standards found in the last inspection.

101. By the age of seven, pupils can talk confidently about significant features of a journey they have made, such as, types of houses, land use, traffic and amenities and know a lot about their own locality. Many are able to make simple comparisons between different localities such as a Scottish island, places visited by "Barnaby Bear", St Helens and the immediate locality of the school. They have studied and know about key people in the local community and are able to draw on first hand experiences of school and other visits. Most pupils are beginning to develop appropriate map skills and can draw simple plans and routes as seen in both Year 1 and 2 in different contexts.

102. By the age of eleven, pupils have an appropriate range of geographical skills and many can use keys and some scale and grid references and interpret important features from a map. Pupils have carried out a range of geographical work and have a sound understanding of their own locality and places further afield. Many can identify and name an appropriate range of different countries and capitals on a world map, have studied rivers and understand how settlements differ and change. Most recognise the importance of location in understanding places and use an appropriate range of geographical vocabulary and language.

103. Pupils often have positive attitudes to geography, enjoy much of the work and see it as important and useful. They talk about their work with confidence, take care in their presentation and make appropriate links with other subjects such as science, English and mathematics. The quality of learning is sound and sometimes both teaching and learning are evidently of good quality, as seen in the results of the work carried out in Year 2 based on the study of a Scottish island linked to a story where pupils have clearly learnt a great deal in relation to geographical skills and understanding in a short period of time. Teachers' planning is often of good quality, with close attention to recent national guidelines and the National Curriculum. Whilst some opportunities have been developed for pupils to enhance their independent learning and individual research skills, more still remains to be done in this area.

104. The co-ordinators are providing a positive lead in the subject. Resources are adequate but more equipment and materials are still needed in some areas, not least to support teaching and learning in new topics which are in the process of being developed, linked with recent national guidelines. Whilst attention is currently being given to monitoring and evaluation, it is, as yet, underdeveloped.

HISTORY

105. Standards in history have been maintained since the last inspection and both seven and eleven year olds are achieving standards that are in line with expectations. By the age of 7 pupils have an understanding of how people lived in previous times. They learn about significant people and events in previous times such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London. Younger pupils gain a sound understanding of then and now through the study of houses. They are able to point out differences and similarities between the old and new houses of the Rector. By the age of 11, knowledge and

understanding of the subject are sound. Pupils learn about life in Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece as well as concentrating on the history of England in Victorian Times.

106. Seven year olds learn about how times have changed through stories about famous people. In their work on the life of Florence Nightingale they develop an understanding about how things such as medicines and hospitals have changed. They learn how to sequence events through the use of time lines and they apply their observational skills to determine differences between times gone by and now. For example in a Year 2 lesson pupils were excited by the use of a video showing the Great Fire of London and in the subsequent activity they showed their understanding of differences when completing a worksheet. Younger pupils have a good understanding of differences in modern housing compared to old through the effective use made of the local area. This was particularly the case in a Year 1 lesson when the teacher developed pupils' observational skills comparing the old and new Rector's house and some pupils were able to give possible reasons for the differences. Younger pupils use photographs to learn about earlier times when studying how we used to live in the 1900's.

107. By the age of 11 pupils have a satisfactory awareness of life in Egyptian times and are eager to use this information when starting to learn about Ancient Greece. The introduction of the topic of Ancient Greece is greeted enthusiastically by pupils and they use their knowledge of the Ancient Egyptians to develop an understanding of time lines through comparing the timing of the Ancient Greeks to Ancient Egypt and learn that BC and AD relate to the birth and life of Christ. Year 4/5 pupils respond well to the good subject knowledge of the teacher when he compares life in modern day America to life in Ancient Greece and uses pithy questions to link the work to previous learning. Work on the Victorians is well presented and shows knowledge of the life of young children in those times. Particular emphasis is given to the work of Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Barnardo and pupils have a good grasp of the conditions experienced by children in those times. Pupils have a very good knowledge about the period; know the key events and characters and some of them clearly have been fired with a thirst to find out about the past.

108. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers plan their lessons well and make effective use of resources and artefacts. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is variable and but overall is satisfactory. Teachers are generally confident and explain things clearly to pupils in an interesting manner. In a lesson with Year 4/5 pupils the teacher had a good understanding of the differences between Athens and Sparta, and explained the principles of democracy which resulted in the pupils becoming excited and involved in the subsequent discussion, resulting in them learning effectively about life in those times. Where teaching was less effective this resulted from the teacher's insecure subject knowledge, lack of preparation of resources and a lack of challenge to Year 5/6 pupils. This resulted in pupils becoming restive and class control becoming difficult with the subsequent lack of concentration and effort resulting in little being produced by some pupils.

109. There is a clear programme of work that meets the National Curriculum requirements. The subject co-ordinator has plans in place to ensure that the new curriculum is implemented and that resources are available to teach it. Whilst subject management is satisfactory, monitoring of the subject is less effective. The co-ordinator has had no opportunity to observe teaching and procedures for assessment lack consistency.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. Provision for ICT has improved since the previous inspection and once the planned ICT suite is completed, the school will be well resourced. Improvements include new

computers in or near to all classrooms, planned teaching time and the appointment of a teacher with expertise in this subject. These measures are beginning to have an effect on raising standards but have not yet done enough. Too little teaching was observed to make overall judgements about quality but in the few seen, there are clearly differences in the teachers' skills, confidence and knowledge which range from very good to uncertain. Pupils have personal folders for storing work but at present these contain very little as they have only recently been created.

111. By the end of their time in school, pupils are reaching satisfactory standards in what they do. Overall, however, standards are below where they should be because there are gaps in the pupils' experience and they have limited time to practise the skills taught in the lessons. Many have a good knowledge of the internet and its possible uses mainly through having computers at home and using them, for example to e-mail their friends. They have some knowledge of how to create graphs and of the different types they can make but know nothing about spreadsheets. The current Y5/6 class created a newspaper before Christmas. In describing how it was made, they show a sound knowledge of word processing skills but insecurity with the more advanced techniques such as setting up the template for the newspaper or importing pictures from clipart or from the digital camera. Pupils were able to talk about making models such as Roamer Robot work but have little further experience of making things work by creating sequences of instructions. A good introduction to using a science program, helped Year 5/6 pupils to understand about using more than one field to narrow down the search for information and they were able to use this to locate different types of dinosaurs.

112. In the Year 4/5 class, a short period of instruction on storing and using information in a database was very successful in achieving its purpose and showed that when pupils are challenged by high quality teaching, they can achieve well in ICT. By the end of the session most pupils knew that the best way to get a yes/no answer is to ask a simple direct question such as 'is it...?' They were beginning to understand the principles of a branching database.

113. There is too little work in Year 2 to make any conclusive judgement about standards. The pupils have used a program to make simple designs based on stars and have typed in and made simple alterations to their names. A planned session on showing them how to research information was unsuccessful because the program content was too difficult. The pupils were not able to learn anything from this. Year 1 pupils were imaginatively introduced to the icons on the tool bar by the teacher showing them how signs and symbols in everyday life are used instead of words and then showing them some of the signs and symbols on the keyboard and monitor. The planned session of thirty minutes was sensibly stopped when the pupils became too restless to listen further. One or two had time to try out what they were shown but the majority have to wait until time can be found and may well have forgotten what they learned before they reach the computer.

MUSIC

114. Only three lessons were seen in music giving too little evidence for overall judgements of teaching in the school. However, the teaching in all of those three lessons was very good. Pupils enjoyed their work and responded enthusiastically. The emphasis was on performance and listening skills and nothing was seen of simple composition work. Based on this small sample, standards have been maintained from the previous inspection and teaching improved.

115. Teachers are well prepared and pay good attention to developing skills. For example, singing is good because teachers do simple technical exercises which are fun to help pupils

to 'find their singing voices'. As a result, pupils are able to pitch their singing confidently without accompaniment and vary the volume of their voices.

116. Because of using effectively a wide range of control strategies, the Y3/4 class, which contains a significant number of pupils with special educational needs related to behaviour, was kept well involved. A brisk pace with fairly rapidly changing activities was set. Pupils listened to music and were shown how to identify an ostinato rhythm. Although they were unable to pick up and clap the rhythm from the music, they did it by copying the teacher's patterns. A challenging task of singing in two parts unaccompanied was tackled well and pupils made a good attempt at this with adults supporting each part. In another Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils learned about an orchestra and its instruments. They were helped to recognise instruments by sound and learned about the different families of instruments such as woodwind. They make good progress and demonstrate good awareness of rhythm and musical instruments.

117. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils clap and tap to music responding with pleasure as the music gets faster. Well chosen songs and spoken rhythm patterns help pupils to learn new material quickly.

118. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play recorders and to join in music and drama activities during lunchtimes and after school. A suitable range of music which pupils hear in lessons and assemblies contributes well to cultural development. There are sufficient instruments but relatively few examples of those from other countries.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. Standards of attainment, overall, are broadly in line with national expectations. The school has worked very hard since the last inspection to improve the provision and standards in swimming. Standards are now above expectations which represents a substantial improvement from the unsatisfactory standards found previously. In other aspects of physical education, standards are broadly in line with what is expected.

120. By the age of seven, pupils show appropriate body awareness, agility, skills and use of space in a range of physical activities. In one dance lesson in Year 2, pupils made very good progress and attained levels which were above expectations, many creating simple dance sequences of good quality which they refined and developed significantly during the lesson.

121. By the age of eleven, many pupils demonstrate a range of performance skills at an appropriate level. In swimming, pupils perform well and many pupils can swim 25 metres in the Year 4/5 class and some have achieved much more in a range of different strokes and in survival aspects. Elsewhere games, gymnastic and other skills are broadly satisfactory, but on a few occasions pupils' progress does not yet match that achieved in most lessons where pupils' learning is sound or better. Many pupils take an active part in a range of extra-curricular activities related to physical education, including a number of team sports which they enjoy and which enhance their learning and achievement in the subject.

122. The quality of teaching and learning is sound, overall. On occasions it is good or better but sometimes it is unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, the teacher has a detailed knowledge of the subject, high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement, and makes real demands on the pupils during the lesson. In such lessons, there are clear and well matched learning objectives, organisation and planning are good and the teaching builds effectively on previous learning, has rapid pace and much is achieved during the course of a

single lesson. These features were evident, for example, in the swimming sessions led by the school staff and by the qualified swimming instructor appointed directly by the school, who makes a highly effective contribution to the quality of provision and achievement of pupils in swimming. Very good teaching and learning was also seen in a Year 2 dance lesson. Elsewhere, on occasions, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory where the pace is too slow and the match of work inappropriate or the management of some pupils' behaviour, particularly related to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in one class, was insufficiently well managed by a teacher new to that class.

123. Overall, pupils have sound attitudes to physical education and often they are good. However, on some occasions a few pupils show immature and inattentive behaviour, often linked to their own specific learning needs, which interrupts the flow and pace of the lesson and reduces the opportunities for other pupils to make appropriate progress.

124. Resources are generally satisfactory; new equipment is being valuably added by the school, but other items are in need of renovation or upgrading such as some of the large apparatus. There is particular pressure on the school hall resulting from the extensive work taking place on the roof during the period of the inspection, nevertheless in spite of the best efforts of those involved, during a number of lessons significant numbers of adults and pupils used the centrally placed hall to get from one part of the building to another, which clearly interrupted the concentration of pupils in some lessons. Arrangements are normally in hand to avoid these interruptions as much as possible but these could usefully be monitored and reviewed to ensure that they are still effective.