

INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105765

Headteacher: Ms L Torrance

Reporting inspector: Mr A J Dobell
10373

Dates of inspection: 12th - 15th February 2001

Inspection number: 192922

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hillcrest Road Castleton Rochdale
Postcode:	OL11 2QD
Telephone number:	(01706) 631858
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Heather Edge
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Registered inspector	Music Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27718	Ms S Abrol	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language History	
15474	Mr J Fairclough	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children under five English Art Information and communication technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?
10144	Mrs M P Marriott	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics The speech and language unit	
20380	Mr J N Pinkney	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated to the south west of Rochdale town centre. Most pupils come from the local area, but those in the speech and language unit may travel some distance. The school's catchment area covers a wide social mix, but a high proportion of pupils experience social disadvantage. Overall, the attainment of children is well below the national average when they enter the Nursery.

There are 288 pupils on roll from the Reception Year to Year 6, and an additional 54 children attend the Nursery on a part time basis. This full time equivalent of 315 pupils makes this school bigger than the average primary school. There are slightly more boys than girls in the school. Some 15 per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is high in relation to the national average. The large majority of these speak English as an additional language which, again, is much higher than the national average. Three of these pupils are in the early stages of learning English.

The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (24.6 per cent) is above the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs (31.25 per cent) is above the national average and has increased markedly since the school was first inspected. Including the speech and language unit, some seven per cent of the school's pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have a range of learning difficulties including emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, hearing impairment, dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism. Over one fifth of the school's pupils either left the school early or joined the school late during the last complete year, which is above average.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school in the context within which it is working. It offers its pupils a very high level of support and care, and provides them with a secure and stimulating learning environment. Standards of attainment are rising, although, overall, they remain below the national average.

The quality of teaching is good and most pupils are enthusiastic about their work in school. The headteacher works unstintingly on behalf of the school and offers very good leadership. Equality of access and opportunity are central to the school's work and are achieved for most pupils. Given the good progress made in recent years, and the context within which the school is operating, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall and results in good quality learning experiences in the Foundation stage and Key Stage 2 and sound learning in Key Stage 1.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to school and are keen to play a full part in lessons.
- The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well.
- The school makes good provision for moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- There is very good provision for pupils in the speech and language unit.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school: it is to raise attainment while maintaining the school's very good record of care.

What could be improved

- Attainment in mathematics and science lags behind attainment in English.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent across the key stages, which results in discontinuities in teaching and learning.
- The use of information and communication technology to support learning in subjects across the

curriculum is underdeveloped.

- Pupils are given few opportunities to manage and take responsibility for their own learning.

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 February 1997. Since then, attainment has improved overall at the end of both key stages. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, the school was at the national average in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and in English at the end of Key Stage 2. It was below the national average in the other subjects examined in the National Curriculum tests at the end of each key stage. These results matched the attainment of pupils in schools which serve similar communities at the end of both key stages. There has been improvement in some subjects by the end of Key Stage 2, for example, in geography, music and physical education, but attainment in information and communication technology is now below the national expectation.

There is a very good commitment to improving standards of attainment and the quality of education and a very good capacity to succeed. To this end, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now very good and the results of these assessments are used well to guide the planning of future lessons. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. There has been a very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection and in leadership and management in the last 18 months.

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	C	D	C	B
mathematics	E	E	E	D
science	E	D	E	D

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

Since the last inspection, attainment in English at Key Stage 2 has improved overall. In 2000, it matched the national average and is better than the average in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics and science, attainment in 2000 was well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In 2000, the school exceeded its agreed targets for English and mathematics.

At Key Stage 1, attainment has been erratic. In 2000, it matched the national average in writing and was close to the national average in reading and mathematics. In reading and mathematics, pupils in this school matched the standards achieved by pupils in similar schools; in writing, they exceed the standard in similar schools. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

Inspection findings are that attainment in speaking and listening is below average throughout the school. In reading, attainment is average at the end of Key Stage 1, but below average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the strategies introduced by the school are raising attainment in reading. Attainment in writing and mathematics matches the national average at the end of each key stage. Attainment in science is below average at the end of each key stage. Attainment in information and communication technology and design and technology is below average at the end of Key Stage 2, but average at the end of Key Stage 1. Attainment in geography, history, music and physical education is average at the

end of both key stages. Art and design is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and there was insufficient evidence to judge standards at the end of Key Stage 2. In religious education, attainment is at the level expected for pupils following the Rochdale locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages.

Attainment is below average at the age of five, but pupils have made good progress in their learning during the Foundation Stage, as they continue to do in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, progress is satisfactory in most areas and is improving as the effects of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and other strategies introduced by the school, have an increasing effect. While standards are not yet high enough, they have improved well, overall, since the last inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to the school. Most pupils enjoy their work and are keen to play a full part in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Most pupils behave well in and out of class. However, in one or two classes, behaviour is unsatisfactory and this adversely affects attainment and progress.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good overall. The school makes good provision for the personal development of pupils.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

Most pupils are well motivated and enjoy their work. Their conduct reflects this. A minority of pupils find it difficult to concentrate for more than a short time and this affects their behaviour and the learning of others. Relationships are good overall and have a positive effect on learning. No pupils were excluded from the school in the last full school year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good across the key stages and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Then, two per cent of teaching was very good or better; the proportion is now 39 per cent. At the last inspection, 80 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, this percentage is now 94 per cent. At the last inspection, 20 per cent of teaching was less than satisfactory; this proportion is now six per cent. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy in English and mathematics lessons are taught well throughout the school. The teaching of the skills of information and communication technology is good, but the use of this technology to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory.

Teachers have sensible and realistic expectations for their pupils in most lessons, which meet the needs of all groups of pupils in the school. Skilful questioning tests and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding. In most classes, the management of pupils is a strength and interesting lessons motivate pupils successfully. In a minority of classes, the management of pupils is less secure. Time, learning resources and support staff are used well and pupils' work is assessed effectively. However, homework is not used consistently and systematically to support learning. This could provide pupils with opportunities to plan and take responsibility for their own learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and teachers try very hard to plan lessons which are interesting for all pupils. Virtually all groups of pupils have equality of access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is sound provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage who have special educational needs. The provision for these pupils is good in Key Stage 2, but in Key Stage 1, it is unsatisfactory because it is insufficiently linked to their work in class. There is very good provision for the pupils in the Speech and Language Unit.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is no systematic learning strategy for pupils who have English as an additional language. However, they have full access to the school's activities and attain in line with their ability.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' personal development. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is good; for spiritual development, it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Educational and personal support for all pupils are very good. Teachers know their pupils very well and they, and all adults, are very concerned to promote their pupils' welfare.

The school's curriculum is carefully planned and relevant to the needs of all pupils. Pupils and parents are appreciative of the quality of care and support that the school provides. The school has very good links with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy, provides very good leadership. Her enthusiasm, determination and very high work rate have been central to the school's significant improvement in the last 18 months. Delegation of responsibilities to other key staff is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body was reconstructed in September 2000. It is very supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work and for identifying its priorities for future development.
The strategic use of	The school uses its human and physical resources well. It is alert to the

resources	need to get the best value from its expenditure.
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Leadership and management have a clear vision for the school. It is to continue to raise attainment while maintaining the school's good record of care and the respect with which it is held in the community. Equality of access and opportunity is a key element in what the school is seeking to achieve. Staff are united in a determination to offer all pupils high quality teaching so that they reach their potential academically and personally. The school is very well staffed to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Accommodation is adequate, but its age brings problems with regard to its condition and decoration and learning resources are adequate overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children make good progress. ▪ Behaviour is good. ▪ Teaching is good. ▪ Parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with concerns. ▪ Children are expected to work hard. ▪ The school works closely with parents. ▪ The school is well led and managed. ▪ Children become more responsible. ▪ Children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20 per cent of parents who replied to the questionnaire have concerns about the amount of homework that pupils receive. ▪ Ten per cent of parents believe that they are not well informed about progress. ▪ 19 per cent of parents do not believe that there are enough activities outside lessons.

The school distributed 342 questionnaires and 229 were returned (66.9 per cent). This is an exceptionally high rate of return and shows a good level of parental support for the school. Thirty parents attended the meeting held before the inspection.

Inspectors support the very positive views held by parents. The school does not use homework consistently to support learning. The methods used to inform parents about progress are good. The range of activities outside lessons is gradually increasing, but is less than is found in many schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, in English, 71 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 4, with 28 per cent attaining the higher level 5. This was broadly in line with the national average and above the average attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics 51 per cent of the school's pupils attained level 4 at least, with 13 per cent attaining level 5. This was well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In science, 71 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least level 4, and 17 per cent attained level 5. This, too, was well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Boys were ahead of all boys nationally in English, but were less successful than all boys in mathematics and science. Girls were less successful than all girls nationally in all three subjects. Results have been erratic since the school was last inspected, but overall, the rate of improvement in attainment has matched the national rate. However, in 2000, just over a quarter of the pupils entered for the tests were on the school's register of special educational needs and almost a quarter joined the school during the key stage.

- 2 In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, in reading, 79 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 2, with 18 per cent attaining the higher level 3. This was below the national average, but matched the average for similar schools. In writing, 82 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least level 2, with 11 per cent attaining level 3. This matched the national average and was above the average for similar schools. In mathematics, 80 per cent of the school's pupils attained level 2 at least and 20 per cent attained level 3. This was below the national average, but matched the average in similar schools. Teacher assessments placed attainment in science well below the national average. Again, results since the last inspection have been erratic, but the rate of improvement has exceeded the national trend overall. In 2000, boys' attainment was below that of all boys nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls were better than all girls in all three subjects. In this year group, almost one third of pupils were on the special needs register and a quarter joined the school during the key stage.

- 3 In English, inspection evidence shows that speaking and listening skills are weak throughout the key stages. Pupils have considerable difficulty in expressing their views at length and in using a varied and interesting vocabulary. In reading, pupils are at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1, but below at the end of Key Stage 2, with the exception of higher attaining pupils. This situation is likely to improve as the school's initiatives in reading have an impact on pupils as they progress through Key Stage 2. In writing, attainment is at the expected level at the end of both key stages. Higher attaining pupils are capable of good imaginative writing. However, there is a large gap between high attaining pupils and the large body of average and below average pupils at the end of each key stage. Overall, attainment in English is below that normally found at the age of 11. In mathematics, the work observed in lessons suggests that pupils are attaining at the expected levels at the end of each key stage. This is an improvement on the National Curriculum tests for 2000. For many pupils in Key Stage 2, progress is slowed by lack of competence in numerical manipulations, for example, when using tables. In science, attainment is below that expected at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress, but have insufficient opportunities to measure the results of their investigations accurately, so that they do not develop the habit of scientific precision. At Key Stage 2, pupils are more secure in their knowledge of Life and Living Processes than they are in Material and Physical Processes. In information and communication technology, pupils are at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1, but below at the end of Key Stage 2. Here, the deficiencies are in the use of sensing and control equipment. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory and pupils have yet to appreciate that this is a tool for learning in all subjects.

- 4 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain at the expected level in the foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In religious education, they are at the expected level for pupils following the Rochdale agreed syllabus. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is at the nationally expected level in geography, history, music and physical education. In design and technology, it is below that normally found. In art and design, there was insufficient evidence to judge attainment. In religious education, pupils reach the expected level for pupils following the locally agreed syllabus. Attainment in French is good in Year 6 and at the level found in Year 7 in many secondary schools. At Key Stage 2, there have been good improvements in English, geography, music and physical education since the last inspection. This results from the improvement in the quality of teaching and the improved use of assessment. Attainment in information and communication technology has not kept pace with developments in the subject.
- 5 Children under the age of five enter the Nursery with levels of attainment which are well below those normally found. They make good progress in their learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result of the good provision made for them, most children are expected to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development by the end of the Foundation Stage. In communications, language and literacy and in mathematical development, higher attaining children are likely to reach the early learning goals, while most are likely to be below the expected levels.
- 6 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. While their attainment is below that of their peers, it is satisfactory when account is taken of their learning difficulties. For pupils in Key Stage 1, progress is hindered because the work that they do when withdrawn from class is not related systematically to their learning during the rest of the week. The register for pupils with special educational needs is used actively and pupils move appropriately through the stages. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve sound standards of attainment. They are fully involved in lessons and make good progress in their learning in Key Stage 2 and sound progress in Key Stage 1.
- 7 The school has introduced the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully. Teachers have a secure understanding of the principles of these strategies and they are being used well to raise attainment. However, opportunities to practise the skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects are not planned systematically, which means that opportunities to practise these skills to reinforce learning are missed.
- 8 The school sets agreed targets for attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics for 2000 (but not in science). These targets were both met (only just in the case of mathematics). The targets for English and mathematics have been raised slightly for 2001. The school is in line to meet these targets.
- 9 As a result of the carefully planned provision for all pupils, there are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender and educational backgrounds. The school uses its resources well to promote learning and there is good added value as pupils move through the key stages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 The school has continued to promote good attitudes and maintained the standards reported in the last inspection. Pupils are keen to come to school and this was strongly supported by parents' comments. Few pupils arrive late. Pupils are generally amenable and friendly. Where lessons are delivered at a good pace, pupils are attentive to instructions, settle down to work quickly and answer questions with enthusiasm. Practical activities are tackled with eagerness and most pupils are keen to do their best. For example, in an excellent Year 3 science lesson on dental hygiene, pupils' enthusiasm was engaged as they enjoyed their learning. Children in

the Foundation Stage are enthusiastic about school and, in the Nursery, are confident and eager. For example some children rush in without taking their coats off because they are so keen to be involved in the Nursery environment.

- 11 Pupils with special educational needs are responsive to lessons taking a positive attitude to their work. Pupils with behaviour identified as an issue on their individual education plans make good progress towards their targets. These pupils are fully accepted by their peers and are not teased or harassed in any way. There were no noted incidents of non-acceptance of special educational needs pupils during the inspection. The absence rates of pupils with special educational needs are not significantly different from those of other groups. Social relationships between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds are good.
- 12 Behaviour in and around school is satisfactory overall. Pupils understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions. In almost all classes, pupils are well behaved due to the skilful behaviour management of teachers. However, there is a significant minority of pupils who are disruptive and inattentive both in and out of class and this affects the learning of other pupils. At the beginning of the school year, each class is involved in deciding the class rules and this helps them to feel responsible for keeping them. There were no exclusions from school in the last school year. Pupils feel confident that, should any bullying or name calling occur, teachers "will get it sorted out straight away". Lunchtime supervisors read with pupils prior to the start of the lunchtime supervision and this provides a good opportunity to build close relationships. On the school visit to Bridgewater Hall, pupils were excellently behaved during the concert. However, the excitement of the visit led to some disorder on their way to and from the coaches.
- 13 Opportunities for personal development are satisfactory. The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to develop their own opinions and express their ideas and helps them to feel valued as part of the decision making process. Older pupils are given a few duties that assist in the smooth running of the school. This helps them to develop some awareness of responsibility. These duties include helping with assemblies and in the library. However the opportunities for younger pupils, and the range of opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility, are limited. In many lessons, the review of lesson targets at the end of the lesson gives pupils an opportunity to reflect on their achievements and whether they have met the learning objectives. Pupils still have few opportunities for independent learning and this was mentioned as a concern in the quality of education provided in the previous report. For example, during the inspection there was no evidence of pupils working independently in the library, or on computers for extended research. There is a limited range of out-of-school visits although, during the inspection, a Key Stage 2 visit to the Halle Orchestra in Manchester provided a good opportunity for pupils to develop an awareness of the excitement of orchestral music.
- 14 Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Adults have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of their pupils. Pupils of all ages feel secure in the school and are confident that all adults care for them and their wellbeing. This is key factor in their successful learning. Year 6 pupils who help out in the dining hall show good care and support for younger pupils.
- 15 Attendance levels are satisfactory. Both authorised and unauthorised absences are in line with the national average. The great majority of pupils arrive on time and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 16 The quality of teaching is good throughout the key stages. During the inspection, 77 lessons were observed. In eight per cent of these, the quality of teaching was judged to be excellent, in 31 per cent it was very good, in 44 per cent it was good, in 11 per cent it was satisfactory, in 5 per cent it was unsatisfactory and in one per cent it was poor. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection when only two per cent of teaching was very good or excellent, and 20 per cent was less than satisfactory.

- 17 The quality of teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good overall, with many examples of very good and some examples of excellent teaching. As a result, the key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in these subjects, although the school is aware of the need to continue its efforts to develop pupils' language skills. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 in these subjects overall, and at least satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. The current priorities of improved use of phonics in Key Stage 1, so that pupils develop a clear understanding of how sounds fit together to form a word, and of spelling and comprehension at Key Stage 2, are improving learning in English. This is raising attainment. Understanding in mathematics is improving as the impact of the different aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy increases. In science, good teaching is not having its full impact on standards because less time is devoted to science teaching than is the case in most schools.
- 18 Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, overall, throughout the key stages. The subjects in which teachers' knowledge and understanding are less secure are design and technology and information and communication technology. The main problem in design and technology is the narrow range of learning resources, which prevents teachers from offering sufficiently broad learning experiences. In information and communication technology, teachers are just getting used to the relatively new computer suite and have yet to offer the full range of learning experiences at Key Stage 2. There have been improvements since the last inspection in the teaching of some subjects, including geography at Key Stage 2, music and physical education.
- 19 Teachers' planning is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage, planning does not cover the two years with a view to building up knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. In most classes, a major strength is the imaginatively planned learning experiences, which enable lessons to proceed with pace and variety. Teachers' enthusiasm for their teaching and high expectations for their pupils motivate all groups of pupils, so that they enjoy learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. In these lessons, the quality of learning is good. Teachers share the learning objectives for the lesson with pupils, so that they have a clear idea of what they are doing and why. This frequently involves useful concentration on specialist vocabulary as teachers try to improve pupils' speaking skills and range of language.
- 20 In most lessons, another key strength is teachers' very good skills in managing their pupils. The best lessons are characterised by a unity of purpose between teachers, support assistants, and pupils, as they share in the pleasure of learning. The very effective management is rooted in very good relationships supported by challenging but realistic expectations for concentration and effort. These good relationships are enhanced by the effective use of humour and praise. In these lessons, the management of behaviour is virtually unnoticed and pupils work productively with good concentration and pace.
- 21 There are one or two classes where the management of pupils is less secure. In these classes, too much time is taken up in attaining the pupils' attention, so that the pace of learning slows and insufficient learning takes place in the time available. It is a measure of the success that most teachers have in managing their classes that, when pupils have a different teacher, standards of behaviour and co-operation often deteriorate.
- 22 For much of the time, learning activities are carefully controlled by teachers. This means that pupils have few opportunities to take decisions about how to manage their own work. As a result, their skills as independent learners are not being developed effectively. Homework, which could be a means of developing such independence, is not used consistently across the key stages to support learning.
- 23 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well overall and make good progress towards the targets set for them. The school believes that pupils with special educational needs are the shared responsibility of all. They are well provided for by extra support within the classroom and within groups. Teachers use assessments to set targets for these pupils and teaching focuses on what is needed to help pupils to reach these targets. Pupils are aware of their own targets

- and these relate effectively to their individual education plans. These plans are reviewed by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, and other staff, on a termly basis, and adjusted appropriately. Support for special educational needs pupils in Key Stage 2 is almost entirely within the class situation. In Key Stage 1, there is a system of weekly withdrawal. This disrupts normal learning in other lessons and the school is aware of the need to review this practice in order to determine if it is the best form of provision. Learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.
- 24 Pupils with English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum in their respective classes. However, there is no bi-lingual support, or systematic provision to meet their learning needs. There is no evidence that, in the long term, they attain less well, but the school understands that there is a need to review and improve teaching and learning for these pupils.
- 25 Teachers have good systems for assessing pupils' work and promoting progress. Work is marked regularly and there are examples of positive comments suggesting how further progress might be made. As a result, pupils have a good awareness of what they are learning and why. This means that pupils in most classes make a good effort with their work and concentrate well.
- 26 Teaching has improved well since the school was last inspected. The school is now in a good position to go on to improve further.

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

- 27 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum in both Key Stages 1 and 2, covering all subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In addition, French is taught to pupils in Year 6 and covers much of the early work of the National Curriculum course in French for Key Stage 3. The curriculum makes good provision for supporting the intellectual and physical development of pupils and also for their moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. A satisfactory programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is in place, but it is still in its early stage of implementation and more detailed planning is required to ensure its effective delivery.
- 28 Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in curriculum planning, with all subjects now adopting a common format. Most subjects have undertaken comprehensive audits of their curricula and produced new schemes of work, based on the proposals of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. These fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, there are some weaknesses in coverage of the art and design syllabus in Key Stage 2 and schemes of work are not yet fully in place for geography and history. There is insufficient teaching of control technology in the area of information and communication technology and the limited range of materials and tools continues to prevent full delivery of the programme of study for design and technology, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- 29 The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The school has introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy successfully and, as a result, standards of attainment are gradually rising. However, pupils' speaking skills remain below average throughout the school, and this is hindering the progress, particularly of average and below average attaining pupils.
- 30 The school arranges visits for pupils to places of interest to enhance and enrich the curriculum. Recent visits have included those to the Millennium Dome, the Lowry exhibition and 'Eureka'. Pupils in Key Stage 1 visit the Parish Church and explore the local area in connection with their early map work in geography. Pupils in Key Stage 2 attended a special performance by the Halle Orchestra, during the inspection, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have attended a performance of "Phantom of the Opera". A number of groups and visitors to the school provide much interest and stimulation for pupils' work. Visits by a Zulu dance group, an Asian dancer, a local poet, a musical composer, a puppeteer and members of the Fire Service have all provided good quality

learning opportunities, inspiring pupils' imagination and work in many subject areas. A residential activity week is planned for Year 6 pupils in the summer term.

- 31 The school's provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. At present, the provision is informal and coverage has been the responsibility of the class teacher. In January, a co-ordinator was assigned to this area and his first task has been to audit teachers' planning. This is not yet complete, but the process has been methodical and appropriate, and will provide a basis for the provision of a policy and consistent programmes of study throughout the school. Visitors to school, including the school nurse and community police officer, support and benefit pupils' learning.
- 32 The school gives a high priority to equality and access and opportunity. However, resources and other curricular activities are mono-cultural apart from a few bi-lingual books in the Nursery. This gives little recognition of those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The curriculum would be further enriched by the introduction of more multi-cultural elements in subjects, such as music and art.
- 33 The school fully responds to the Code of Practice on the assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs and has already initiated a policy of inclusion. Individual education plans are well written. All pupils are provided with an appropriate curriculum, which enables them to work towards identified targets for improvement. The co-ordinator has recently introduced a system to improve pupils' phonic awareness and this is showing early results of improvement in learning. The school has a clear policy for early identification and support for pupils with special educational needs and follows a policy of inclusion. The present practice within the school of withdrawing pupils on a regular basis from lessons to receive support in pairs or very small groups, in Key Stage 1, creates discontinuity in the provision between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and conflicts with the school's emphasis on inclusion.
- 34 The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the range of activities has been extended with the development of sporting activities to include gymnastics, net-ball and rounders, as well as football. Plans are in hand to make use of the facilities at nearby Hollingworth Lake to provide pupils with the opportunities for sailing, canoeing and wind-surfing. There is a thriving chess club and an Internet club, which is making good use of the bank of networked computers in the new information and communication technology suite. Pupils have opportunities to do additional artwork and the school runs an after-school club on two evenings each week.
- 35 The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. It is promoted chiefly through the teaching of religious education where pupils learn to appreciate the major beliefs of Christianity and other faiths, such as Islam and Judaism. Opportunities are provided in these lessons for pupils to reflect on the nature of creation and to write simple prayers. The major religious festivals of Christianity, Islam and Judaism are celebrated through assemblies and in class lessons. The wonder of new life was celebrated by pupils in the Nursery when a mother bathed her new baby in front of them and the "magic" of computers was fully appreciated by Year 6 pupils as they witnessed information randomly fed into a computer being rapidly rearranged in alphabetical order. Unfortunately, the school does not make the best use of its class or whole school assemblies to promote spiritual development. The absence of suitable music and a sense of reverence do not create an atmosphere conducive to spirituality and opportunities for prayer and reflection are not well constructed or adequately focused.
- 36 The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. The school has a framework of values to regulate the personal behaviour of pupils, including the rules of behaviour and the associated system of rewards and sanctions. Teachers and support staff deal with instances of misbehaviour positively and efficiently. Parents comment favourably on the standards set by the school. Assemblies promote clear moral messages through the careful use of stories from a range of sources and discussion of the issues raised. The school council has representatives from all classes in the school and regularly considers issues relating to behaviour.

- 37 The provision for pupils' social development is good. Social skills, such as sharing and participating in class activities, are promoted throughout the school and these provide a firm basis for pupils' social development. Pupils generally work well together in subjects such as science, art and design and design and technology, where they share the work, exchange ideas and respect the views of others. The school council is well used to share concerns about social aspects of school life. The planned residential activity week will greatly contribute to the social development of the Year 6 pupils.
- 38 The school's provision for cultural development is good overall. Opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions in a number of areas of the curriculum. Pupils in early Key Stage 1 make visits to the local area as part of their studies in geography and religious education. In art and design, they study the work of different artists and have visited an exhibition of the work of L S Lowry. They learn about other cultures through their study of an Indian village in Year 5, comparing climate, life styles and crops and also through the visits of various dance groups and performers. Pupils in Year 6 learn something of French life and cultural traditions through their early learning of the language. Visiting musicians and attending an orchestral concert increase pupils' awareness of the role of music in their cultural heritage. Provision for multicultural appreciation is less rich. A planned technology fortnight in conjunction with other local primary schools will contribute significantly to their appreciation of the technical and scientific heritage of the area.
- 39 The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory. The school has worked alongside Rochdale Training and Enterprise Council to introduce a Better Reading Partnership which has involved some parents. Beyond local retailers, limited links exist with the business community. However, the headteacher and other staff have begun to approach local industries for support for the school.
- 40 Relationships with partner institutions are good. The school is part of a cluster with three other neighbouring primary schools. They hold shared curricular events, for example, the planned technology fortnight, and subject co-ordinators offer support and advice to each other. Good practice is shared between the schools. The school is part of an initiative to try to improve transfer arrangements with one of its partner secondary schools. Headteachers also meet to discuss joint concerns. Pupils have opportunities to compete against other schools and this enriches their learning. Pupils from Castleton may feed into any of five secondary schools. They are given opportunities to visit these schools and Year 7 teachers visit them in Year 6.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 41 The school's procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are satisfactory. A sound health and safety policy is in place. It covers essential areas and names the key staff for first aid. The two first aid stations have accident books and 'bump-heads' letters are sent out when required. The headteacher and cleaner in charge carry out regular risk assessments of the building which is generally in a good state of repair. However the building is old and is in need of maintenance in a number of areas. The entrances to both the toilet areas in the junior corridor have no doors and this provides no privacy for older pupils.
- 42 The school has a child protection policy dated 1996. However, this is now out of date in light of the new Rochdale child protection policy. The designated staff member, the headteacher, has yet to receive full training. This is partly the result of the cancellation of a previous course. She is aware of the need to complete a course in line with statutory requirements as soon as possible and is currently waiting for the date of a new course. The day-to-day procedures are satisfactory and all adults know the pupils well and are alert to any changes which might suggest problems of welfare.
- 43 Good procedures are in place for the monitoring and improving of attendance. The headteacher, secretary and educational welfare officer monitor and analyse any absences. The headteacher and the secretary often phone parents to confirm a pupil's absence. A recent newsletter stressed the harm that holidays during term time can do to a pupil's education. This

demonstrates that the school is alert to any undesirable trends that may affect pupils' education.

- 44 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very well established and consistently applied. The behaviour policy is based on positive praise and rewards and sanctions are graduated depending on the severity of any incidents. A shortened version of the policy has been sent to parents and is useful in ensuring they are aware of the procedures in place. Class rules are displayed in all classrooms. Pupils are rewarded for good work and certificates are awarded in assemblies and during the school day. Pupils' behaviour is well monitored and the headteacher is very effective in using immediate personal contact with parents should any pupil's behaviour cause concern. Lunchtime assistants liaise daily with teachers to ensure a consistent approach in dealing with any concerns regarding behaviour or welfare.
- 45 Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is monitored and co-ordinated very effectively. Relationships with outside agencies are very good. The use of assessment is very good in deciding targets in pupils' individual education plans. Progress is assessed by regular review meetings. Similarly, pupils who have English as an additional language are supported well and are fully integrated into the school's activities. However, there are occasions when opportunities are missed to provide them with separate work which would accelerate their progress.
- 46 The school has very good arrangements for assessing the attainment of pupils and for recording their progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Good use is made of this information in planning teaching and learning. Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons and may change plans for future lessons as a result of their findings. The school uses early assessments at Nursery and Reception level together with standardised tests and optional government tests, as well as the results from the National Curriculum tests at the end of both key stages, to build a picture of the attainment of each pupil. This information is then used to track pupils through the school and to project expected outcomes at the end of each key stage. The pupils' answers to the National Curriculum tests are analysed to identify areas of weakness, so that teaching can focus on work to improve pupils' future learning. This process is giving encouraging results and the improvements achieved in English are significant. However, there is a need for more structure to the assessment records in the Nursery. At the present time, they do not provide an average against which new information could be compared. This means that learning activities for the children are not always structured to meet their learning needs.
- 47 There are good procedures for monitoring the progress of the pupils. Academic performance is recorded on an individual basis, with projections for future performance. Targets are set for the school as a whole, and for class groups, and most teachers also have individual targets in their classrooms for pupils to achieve. School reports ensure that parents receive a positive and useful evaluation of their children's progress, together with points for individual improvement. Teachers have good records of pupils' personal development and there is good informal knowledge of their families. There is much informal discussion and any difficulties are reported to the headteacher. However, there is no formal and confidential procedure for recording incidents and the action taken and this reduces the effectiveness of the support for pupils. The school has a behaviour management policy that is clear and supports teachers in underpinning a consistent approach to behaviour management. Very good links with parents mean that they are very supportive of all that the school does for their children.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 48 Parents have positive views of the school overall. The school makes great efforts to promote its links with parents and sees them as key partners in their children's education. Parents are very supportive of the headteacher and staff and appreciate the positive improvements in the school over the past 18 months. The informal links that the headteacher has with parents are very effective and are highly valued in the community. For example, any instances of serious poor

behaviour will result in an immediate phone call to parents or carers.

- 49 The quantity and quality of information for parents are good overall. The current prospectus is a useful document and outlines all that parents need to know. The governors' annual report to parents is comprehensive and a good summary of the previous year's work. Newsletters are sent out and some teachers send out regular curriculum information. The Nursery maintains very good contact with parents both via newsletters, the parents' notice board in the entrance hall and informal verbal daily communication. Reports to parents for the last school year were generally good and clear. They told parents what pupils know, understand and can do, as well as giving targets for improvement and opportunities for a degree of self-assessment by pupils. The headteacher has already identified improvements for next year, which include making reports still more meaningful.
- 50 In the parental survey prior to this inspection, two areas gave cause for concern. Some parents felt that inappropriate amounts of homework are set. The homework policy is currently at the discussion stage and has yet to be agreed. This lack of policy leads to parents not being aware of the amount of homework expected for their child. Homework is used less effectively than in many schools to improve attainment and progress.
- 51 Some parents believe that there should be more activities available to their children outside lessons. Inspectors found there to be a satisfactory, although limited, range of activities. They included football, swimming, chess and information and communication technology. However, the range of activities is not apparent to all parents.
- 52 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed regarding their children's progress. They are consulted and involved in the implementation of individual education plans and a home-school booklet contributes to the very good links that the school has with parents. Parents are fully involved in annual and other reviews and get copies of all documentation. Parents are very happy with the way in which their children are supported in the school. The school has no one on the staff who can translate information for minority ethnic parents who do not read English and this situation remains unresolved.
- 53 The involvement of parents in the work of the school is satisfactory. Parents are invited to contribute to pupils' reading records, although few of them do so. Most parents have signed and returned the home-school agreement. The school's parent-teacher association has raised a remarkable and much appreciated £1800 in the last six months. This has been spent on improving the quality of learning and improving the school environment with bookcases, video recorders, blinds for windows and woodworking tools.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 54 The school has a positive ethos and a clear vision of what it is trying to achieve for its pupils. This vision is based in the school's mission statement, which enshrines 'three rights' - the right to learn, the right to safety and the right to fair treatment.
- 55 The school wishes to develop in its pupils an awareness of their own worth, as well as that of others, and a respect for themselves, their families and community and the wider world in which they live. As this awareness develops, and pupils' confidence increases, the school aims to help them to achieve their potential academically.
- 56 The headteacher has been in post since September 1999 and has been central in the development of this positive ethos. She is supported very well by her deputy, who has a good capacity for analytical thought. The headteacher has worked unstintingly to move the school forward. Her clarity of thought and drive have enabled the school to recover well from a long period when the previous headteacher was absent and to respond well to the challenges posed by the first inspection. The key issues from the last inspection have all been addressed successfully with the exception of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of senior staff. The headteacher and her deputy meet weekly, but the large senior management team only meets

monthly. Its role is unclear and it is not a significant force in moving the school forward. Strategic planning has improved well since the last inspection and is now good. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning effectively, but the school acknowledges that the role of subject co-ordinators could usefully be extended in this area.

- 57 The headteacher is frequently about the school and her presence is a major factor in the school's orderly conduct and cheerful atmosphere. Indeed, one pupil wrote to her, 'when you smile, I think about the sun'. She and her colleagues recognise equality of access and opportunity as a key entitlement. With a few minor exceptions, all pupils in the school are fully involved in its activities. Indeed, procedures for the inclusion of pupils in the speech and language unit are a strength. The minor breaches involve the withdrawal of some pupils from lessons, for example, for separate teaching for pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 1 and for swimming. There is no clear strategy for ensuring that these pupils do not miss aspects of the National Curriculum or religious education.
- 58 The governing body was reconstituted in September 2000 and has a number of new members. New governors are undergoing training to help them to play a full part in the governing body's work. Many governors are in school regularly and are able to bring a first hand knowledge of the school's work to the governing body's deliberations. The governing body has a sensible structure of committees and good arrangements for ensuring that the outcomes of committee meetings are known to the full governing body. Governors are involved appropriately in determining priorities for the school's future development in the School Development Plan and in setting the budget. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and its energetic chair is optimistic about its future role in managing the school and supporting the headteacher and staff.
- 59 Very good systems are in place for managing special educational needs and the recently appointed co-ordinator is continuing to develop them. She is being effectively inducted into her responsibilities by the previous co-ordinator. She liaises well with teachers and support staff to ensure that pupils get the support they need to make good progress. The necessary administrative procedures and documentation are up-to-date and are monitored regularly by the headteacher. A governor has responsibility for monitoring the provision of special educational needs and is frequently in school. The school makes effective use of the services of outside agencies. The speech and language unit is managed very effectively and liaison between the unit and the school is very good. However, it is a matter for concern that the school provides a nursery nurse for the unit out of its own resources. This means that the school's own pupils do not benefit from this nursery nurse's services. There is no specific management of provision for pupils who have English as an additional language. The headteacher recognises the need to develop a systematic strategy for these pupils who have no bi-lingual support.
- 60 The school makes good use of new technology in administration. In teaching and learning, its use is developing well as staff and pupils get used to the new computer suite. However, the use in information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is underdeveloped and pupils do not see it as an everyday tool for learning.
- 61 The school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Its routines are clear and well-understood. Most pupils move smoothly from one activity to the next. Finance is managed well on a day-to-day basis by the school's bursar and the school has efficient procedures for ordering and paying for its purchases. The finance committee of the governing body monitors the school's finances throughout the year and has good procedures for achieving best value from the school's expenditure. The school's finances were last audited in November 1999 and the report was largely supportive. Its few recommendations have been acted upon. The school manages its budget prudently.
- 62 The school is well staffed with teachers and support staff to teach the National Curriculum and religious education, apart from in the Foundation Stage. The number of teachers in the school for the number of pupils is better than the national average and the availability of support staff is well above average. Teachers and other staff work very effectively together and this is a key

factor in achieving the quality of learning experiences that the school provides. All adults in the school have a very good commitment to improvement. Their enthusiasm and concern for their pupils underpin the good improvement achieved since the last inspection. Teaching is managed well and new staff are settled into the school effectively. The school supports initial teacher training effectively.

- 63 The school's accommodation is spacious and benefits from good hard play areas and an adjacent playing field. However, the building is old and has a number of problems. The roof needs attention, a number of window frames are rotten, there are areas of dry rot and corridors have uneven surfaces where different floors join. There is a problem with surface water draining onto the Nursery playground and blocked drains cause flooding to the cellar. In many parts of the building, the standard of decoration is poor and toilet facilities for the largely female staff are grossly inadequate. Staff work very hard to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment in what could be a barren and unattractive building. The cleaner in charge and his staff work hard to maintain a clean and attractive school for the pupils. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall, although there are shortcomings in art and design and in design and technology.
- 64 The school has improved well since the last inspection and particularly in the last 18 months, because of the vigorous leadership of the headteacher and the support that she has received from her colleagues. The headteacher appreciates that much remains to be done, and the school is in a good position to go on to improve further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 65 In order to improve further the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- raise the level of attainment in mathematics and science to match that being achieved in English (see paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 7, 17, 99, 100, 107, 108);
 - re-organise the provision for pupils with special educational needs so that there is consistency of provision across the key stages and so that pupils in Key Stage 1 do not have their learning in other subjects disrupted (see paragraphs 23, 33, 57);
 - develop the use of information and communications technology so that standards of attainment improve and it supports learning in other subjects (see paragraphs 3, 60, 96, 114, 131, 134, 140, 149); and
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to manage and take responsibility for their learning with a view to raising their confidence and self-esteem (see paragraphs 13, 22, 96, 111, 131).

In addition to these key issues, the governors should consider the following points for development when writing their action plan:

- give key staff more opportunities to contribute to the management of the school; (see paragraph 56); and
- create a strategy to improve the use of outdoor play for all children in the Foundation Stage, to support their physical development (see paragraph 89).

THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT

- 66 The provision made for pupils with speech and language difficulties is very good. The unit provides a short intensive speech and language therapy course for 12 pupils who are resident in the local education authority. The unit provides a safe, secure and stimulating learning

environment for these pupils. Pupils are admitted to the unit when a formal assessment of special educational needs has been made. The unit caters for pupils between three and seven years of age. Parents are warmly welcomed into the unit so that they have a clear understanding about how their child learns. The main aim of the unit is to develop pupils' speech and language skills to enable them to return to their local school wherever possible. The unit has a policy of integration within the main school, with access to learning in activities shared with other pupils in their classes. This promotes the inclusive education ethos of the school and provides opportunities for pupils to develop social and behavioural skills, together with an appropriate curriculum to meet their individual learning needs within classrooms. This, in turn, prepares pupils for re-integration into their neighbourhood schools. The unit has specific leaving criteria, which pupils must fulfil before their gradual integration or re-integration into their local school, or into the main school in which the unit is situated. Pupils are supported back into their local school by staff from the unit, giving stability and continuity to their education. However, the unit does not have a nursery nurse included in its staffing and this limits the amount of support that can be provided for re-integration.

- 67 The Language Unit is very well equipped and organised. All areas of the curriculum are covered and learning experiences are firmly based in the National Curriculum and, where appropriate, in the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage. Speech and language therapy is part of the routines of teaching and learning for all pupils. The staff of the unit have appropriate skills in speech and language teaching and visiting speech therapists join this successful team. The lack of a nursery nurse limits the support available to pupils, many of whom have complex needs. Visiting professionals, such as the Educational Psychologist, also support teachers and pupils in the unit.
- 68 The attainment of pupils within the unit is close to the national average for the majority and one pupil is beginning to show high ability learning skills. Good progress in learning is maintained when pupils join classes in the main school.
- 69 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They listen to their teachers and are keen to answer questions. Lessons are well organised and pupils respond well to this and make very good progress overall. Personal development is very good and pupils play together successfully at break and lunch times. They have their 'own' lunch-time supervisor as have other classes and are fully integrated into this part of the school day.
- 70 Very good teaching enables pupils to learn effectively. Team work utilises the strengths of individual teachers. Teachers place emphasis on speaking and listening skills. Pupils follow individual speech and language therapy programmes designed to meet their individual needs. These targets are incorporated into their individual education plans. Teachers work on these targets during lessons. Planning is very good; teachers plan effectively and set clear objectives that pupils understand. The assessment of learning is thorough and carried out during the lesson. Teachers focus on the use of speech and language skills and challenge pupils to learn. Teaching methods enable all pupils to learn effectively, pupils know and understand their own learning and strive to do well. Management and organisation are very good. Teachers are well prepared and have high expectations for their pupils' learning. Support staff and other adults are used well and understand the routines of the unit. They are well supported and tasks are carefully explained to them. Consistency in approach, for example, a clear beginning to lessons, use of questioning to check previous learning and that learning is secure, together with a clear focus for lessons, enable all pupils to learn effectively. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in English and mathematics.
- 71 The unit provides a broad range of opportunities to promote successful learning for all pupils, with a strong emphasis on speech and language development. Pupils work in a variety of settings which include one-to-one provision, small group work, whole class work within the unit and joining classes within the main school. A topic based approach, which meets the needs of all pupils, is used to give full access to the National Curriculum. Individual education plans for all pupils are reviewed termly. Staff review all areas of the curriculum each half term and this information guides planning for the next half term. A weekly plan is written to incorporate all

areas of the curriculum, speech and language therapy and integration within the main school. Planning also considers the targets specified in statements of need, together with the main school's curriculum planning with regard to the order and timing of units and topics. This makes integration into main school classes easier. The unit has very effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which follow national guidance. Teachers from the unit and the main school work in harmony to provide a very effective inclusion programme for pupils within the unit. For example, in an excellent literacy lesson, teachers planned and worked together to provide rich and stimulating learning experiences for all pupils.

- 72 The speech and language unit is situated within the main school. The unit, together with the school, effectively inducts new pupils and ensures that their needs are met through a strong support system, so that all pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school.
- 73 The unit has very effective assessment procedures in place. A data bank has been created to assist the analysis of assessment information. It is regularly up-dated and gives evidence of successful re-integration and integration into local schools. This is carried out during day-to-day teaching activities and on a one-to-one basis. Specialists visit the unit to carry out speech and language assessments. Each pupil has an individual file of records. Annual reviews are undertaken, together with additional case reviews, as appropriate. On leaving the unit, all relevant assessment and records are sent to the receiving school, together with a report.
- 74 Parents are welcomed into the unit and work in partnership with teachers. Communication is very good. The unit provides regular newsletters and a home-to-school notebook for informal day-to-day communication. An end of year report on the progress of their child is sent to parents and they are invited to take part in annual reviews and are sent all documentation.
- 75 Parents share information about school activities and homework and, in turn, share information with the unit if they have concerns or wish to celebrate success. Annual review meetings, termly parent meetings and informal meetings with parents all add to the very strong liaison which has been established. Parents can e-mail or telephone the unit for immediate communication.
- 76 The teacher in charge of the unit, together with the governors, staff and headteacher of the school work in partnership to create a positive ethos for inclusive learning. The speech and language unit is very well managed and organised. A development plan for the unit includes links with the main school and is a good example of joint working practice with the school to support inclusive education. Leadership of the unit ensures a clear educational direction and reflects the aims of both school and unit in its work. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning take place, but there is scope for these to be further developed. Financial planning takes account of the needs of pupils, but the finance allocated does not allow for a nursery nurse to be employed. Young children in the unit who have complex needs would benefit from this support. Accommodation is good and provides a stimulating environment in which pupils learn.
- 77 Pupils from the unit join with the main school for assemblies, playtimes, lunchtime and special events, for example, concerts and National Poetry Day performances. They link with their own peer group class for 'wet' lunchtimes. They also join in with their year groups for special assemblies, trips and workshops.
- 78 The pupils are integrated into their year group in the main school. The inclusion begins once pupils have become sufficiently secure and confident in their learning within the unit. Pupils, in groups, initially join in for one lesson per week and, as they become more confident and their speech and language skills develop, the time is increased. All pupils are supported by the staff from the unit when in main school classes and all lessons are individually recorded. As inclusion becomes more developed, a 'skills towards successful inclusion' recording list is kept. Teachers liaise effectively, the nature of individual pupils' needs is identified and implications for this on learning are discussed. During the inspection, all lessons seen were effective and included all children. Younger children integrated well to develop their social and play skills and to encourage them to interact, communicate and practise and use their language skills with

their classmates. Older pupils integrate for literacy, mathematics and science. As they get older, pupils need a high level of support for inclusion to be successful. Teachers in the unit have a very good record for successfully reintegrating pupils into their local school. This success would be enhanced further if a nursery nurse was included in the staffing for the unit. At present, the school provides this support which is intended for the main school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	31	44	11	5	1	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)	27	288
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	71

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	90

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	40

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	45
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	21	23	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	20	22	20
	Total	35	36	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (65)	82 (65)	80 (80)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	15
	Girls	20	18	21
	Total	33	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (67)	75 (76)	82 (78)
	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	25	20	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Boys	18	14	16

Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Girls	14	9	15
	Total	32	23	3
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (64)	51 (47)	69 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	11	9	13
	Total	24	21	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (40)	47 (27)	60 (40)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	31
Bangladeshi	5
Chinese	2
White	241
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	222

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	585,124
Total expenditure	566,910
Expenditure per pupil	1,638
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,474
Balance carried forward to next year	38,688

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	342
Number of questionnaires returned	229

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	31	2	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	38	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	44	4	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	41	16	4	8
The teaching is good.	68	28	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	36	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	34	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	40	7	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	66	27	1	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	40	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	36	16	3	18

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

- 79 The overall provision made for children under five is good. Children enter the Nursery in the year during which they reach the age of three and move into one of the two Reception classes in the September after they are four. Approximately half of these children move to other schools in the area on leaving the Nursery. There are 54 children attending the Nursery on a part time basis rota of morning or afternoon sessions. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below that normally found, and, by the time the children are admitted to the Reception classes, baseline assessments show attainment to be below average but closer to expectations. This indicates that good progress has been made, and is a result of the good teaching in the Nursery. There are 41 children in the Reception classes with a significantly higher proportion of boys than girls. Approximately a quarter of children have come from other nurseries or play groups, but a number have had no pre-school experience. By the time these pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1, their attainment is broadly in line with expectations, and good teaching in the Foundation Stage has contributed to this.
- 80 Each Reception class group has one teacher supported by a part time assistant and in the Nursery there is one nursery nurse to assist the teacher. This is unsatisfactory provision for a large group of children who have very low social and language skills. There are four children identified as having special educational needs in the Foundation Stage and three others that are being monitored. The accommodation is suitable for the Foundation Stage of education. It is attractive, colourful, and interesting, and benefits from a separate outdoor play area. However, this is a hard surface and suffers from surface water drainage from the playing field. There is no fixed climbing equipment. The only soft landing area is a base that was beneath a slide, but the school does use mats when outside play is taking place. This area of provision lacks a clear focus for the learning and physical development of the children, and is unsatisfactory. Parents' feel that the school supports their children well at the beginning of their education. There are good relationships between the teachers and parents and this leads to good support for the children and confidence in the work of the school. Children are happy to come to school, and expect to enjoy their learning. The Nursery has extensive records about the development of individual children, and is seeking to develop this into a baseline assessment system at entry to the Nursery. However, as yet there is no structure to the information that would provide an 'average' against which children could be compared in order to 'measure' their starting point for future learning. The required areas of learning are taught well, and there has been satisfactory improvement in provision at the Foundation Stage as a result of the good planning and co-ordination of lessons.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 81 As a result of the good teaching in this area of learning, the majority of the children are likely to meet the nationally expected level by the age of five. The majority of the children are socially underdeveloped on entry to the Nursery and the school places a strong emphasis on this area of their development. Detailed records are kept of their progress and a record of their achievement shows progress with such skills as dressing, toileting and washing. Many children do not work well together to begin with and are unable to concentrate for more than a very short period of time. They are not easily involved in activities that require interest and imagination. The teaching in the Nursery focuses on social skills such as dressing and undressing, as well as on the ability to work with others and to respond to adult guidance during activities. Praise and encouragement are used well to build children's self-confidence. In the Reception classes, the children have developed well and work together with a good understanding of group activities. They concentrate and show interest in their lessons. They respond well to adults during activities such as collage and follow class routines with a good standard of behaviour. There has been good progress in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

- 82 Good teaching again supports the children in making good progress in this area of learning. The children have very poor language skills on average when they join the Nursery. Many cannot listen for more than a short time and have very limited experience in expressing themselves in speech. There is a high frequency of pointing and holding things up rather than using words to communicate. Answers to questions are usually brief without any use of sentences or development of simple ideas. Teaching to the class uses familiar rhymes and songs to ensure that all children are involved. Good vocabulary is used to extend the children's range of words and they usually listen well, but most make only very short and simple responses.
- 83 Although much language is used during whole class discussions, there is insufficient focus on language and talk during activities in the Nursery. This means that children play without any focus and are not stimulated well to use words or to develop ideas of their own. In the Reception classes, the teaching involves children at a deeper level and they make suggestions, for example, in a discussion about opposites in 'Goldilocks and the three bears', and listen intently to a very well read story about 'The Bear Hunt'. Effective reading with good expression and changes of speed and emphasis captures their interest. They know the sequence of the story well, but do not express many opinions about its development. Reading skills are developed by using stories in the Nursery class and building up the letter sounds of words. In the Reception classes, teachers make good use of flash cards for recognition and suggestion of words that begin with a particular letter.
- 84 All classes have computers in the room and these are used by the pupils to follow stories and reading/listening programs that are designed to extend their vocabulary and enjoyment of spoken and written words. Children in the Reception classes have reading books and parents are involved in home reading with their children. Some are reading at the expected level and read a number of simple words accurately, but they are still developing their knowledge of letter sounds and how to use them in 'building' words that are new to them. Writing is developed in all classes as 'emergent' writing where children write their stories freely and gradually learn about word and letter formation. Teachers also use copy writing and tracing of words to develop the children's writing skills. However, writing lacks imagination and is based on a limited vocabulary. Although higher attaining children are likely to exceed the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, the average and lower attaining children are likely to be below the expected level.

Mathematical development

- 85 The teaching of mathematics across the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers plan the goals for early learning and make use of many opportunities to use numbers in everyday situations. An end of day activity in one Reception class is to change the date for tomorrow. The situation is used to count days on the calendar, match counting with marbles to fix children's understanding of number and to move forward and backward by one day. The opportunity is also used to establish ideas about time and the organisation of days of the week and months of the year. At other times, counting opportunities are created. For example, Nursery children count heads after registration and use objects to develop one-to-one links with objects and numbers. However, the attainment of the Nursery children is very low and many are not reliable in counting out four coloured paper clips or seven spots on a display, although they reliably name numbers to ten. In the Reception classes, children of all abilities count to ten and beyond and the higher attaining children manage simple additions well, such as five add four equals nine. Numbers are put in order and quantities are matched to numbers for values up to ten. Reception children also name and match shapes such as squares, triangles, circles and cylinders. Other work on measure includes comparisons of size in Nursery with a wall scale to identify tall, taller and tallest bears in a class collection. Activities are at different levels of difficulty and there is a good level of challenge for the higher attaining children. These children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for mathematics but average and lower attaining children are likely to be below the expected level.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 86 The good teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world uses skilled questioning to get interesting observations from the children. For example, when bathing a baby that a parent had brought into school, the children showed gentle care and recognised how many things they could do that a baby could not, such as wash, dry and dress themselves. They also realised how great a difference there was in the size of clothes. Detailed planning for lessons showed good expectations for the children and opportunities were taken to extend the children's language and understanding in meaningful situations. In another lesson about bees and honey, the Nursery children were totally fascinated by a demonstration of how bees make honey and a good range of resources was used to help the explanation. However, children became restless during an extended period of listening and the teacher persevered with the lesson when a change of focus could have re-gained the children's attention. Reception children work well in small groups with the nursery nurse to give a programmable toy called a Roamer simple instructions for travelling along the floor. They have studied light and identify objects that give us light; they label different parts of the body successfully. The good long term planning ensures that all goals for early learning will be covered and it is likely that most children will achieve the expected goals.

Physical development

- 87 On entry to the Nursery, many children have poor physical control and are underdeveloped in the use of scissors and the fine control needed for a pencil. Activities organised for the children such as cutting out to make parts, for example, legs and wings for a bee and then colouring the body in stripes, help the children to develop better control of fine movement. Physical education lessons develop their control of speed and direction in their movement, for example, in the challenge of a balance on a low bench and the climbing of a ladder. Children in the Nursery twist and turn, hop and skip with varying degrees of success but the majority have good control and awareness of space with the result that there are no collisions. In one Reception class, children made very good use of space in the hall when running and turning, skipping and jumping. They then interpreted music with a sequence of free expression movements that captured its mood and used a series of movements that were linked well in response to the changing rhythms of the music. The goals for early learning were exceeded in this lesson and were comfortably above the lowest level expected in Key Stage 1. Most children are likely to reach the expected standards by the time they begin to work on the National Curriculum as a result of the good teaching in this area of learning.

Creative development

- 88 The children's creative skills develop very well as a result of the very good teaching. Nursery children use percussion instruments to accompany 'Humpty Dumpty' and 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' and they dance in time to rhythmic music. They are generally in time, some keeping a good rhythm, and respond well to the teacher's suggestions about movement and body control. They also clap, nod, tap and shake heads to music, but are not imaginative in their use of 'free' movement that expresses the joy of music. Reception children were totally captivated during a music lesson using music from 'Peter and the Wolf'. They listened carefully and recognised the sounds of different instruments. Early learning goals were achieved and very good learning resulted from the very effectively planned lesson. High expectations, together with very good quality questions, ensured that the children had good understanding and appreciation of why the sounds are related to different characters in the story. This appreciation successfully transferred to interpretation in a physical education lesson, when children expressed the movements of the music in their own actions. Children gain experience in colour and drawing as part of activities such as collage, to represent current themes for learning. Nursery children know about colours and draw figures that are developmentally appropriate with head, legs and feet and with mouth and hair and eyes on the faces. Reception children have made effective scenery for a class theatre, book illustrations and finger puppets. Most children are expected to attain the expected standard in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.

- 89 There is good progress in learning during the Foundation Stage. This results from the quality of teaching, which is good overall. However, the school has yet to plan progression in learning for each of the early learning goals across the Foundation Stage. For example, there is no structured planning of outdoor play as children move through the Foundation Stage to ensure that physical skills are developed systematically. Such planning would put the school in a stronger position to monitor progress and to plan future learning activities so that knowledge and understanding build systematically.

ENGLISH

- 90 Since the last inspection standards in English have improved significantly. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, at Key Stage 2, attainment was at the national average, as it was in writing at Key Stage 1. When compared with similar schools, the results in National Curriculum tests are comparable for reading and above average for writing at the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, attainment in 2000 was above that of similar schools in the National Curriculum tests. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning overall. The performance of pupils achieving higher levels of attainment is well above that of similar schools. This reflects the way in which the school has been concentrating on writing standards. At Key Stage 2, the trend of improvement in the National Curriculum tests has matched the national average and the school exceeded its agreed targets in English for 2000 by a good margin. However, the performance of pupils achieving the average level of attainment is below the national average and this is the reason for the school's current focus on reading and comprehension. Findings from the inspection confirm this position, but note that the results for the current year may not show the same level of improvement.
- 91 Speaking and listening skills are weak throughout the school. The majority of younger pupils have poorly developed language with limited vocabulary and a short attention span. Reading skills are underdeveloped and they have weak control of fine movement for the development of writing skills. There is good teaching throughout the school and this has the effect of raising the pupils' performance as they progress through the school so that they make good progress. By the age of seven, pupils are meeting expectations in reading and writing but are still weak in speaking and listening. There is a clear difference between the performance of the higher attaining pupils and others. By the age of eleven, the improvement has been maintained, but the effects are less obvious for the older pupils who have worked to the structure of the Literacy Hour for a smaller part of their school career. Reading is below expectations at the age of eleven, writing is at the expected level and speaking and listening continues to be weak. Listening has improved but speaking and the poor use of reasoning and explanation continue to hold back pupils in their learning. The clear difference between the performance of higher attaining pupils and others is still clear.
- 92 The pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below the expected level at the end of both key stages, although listening is significantly better than speaking. Younger pupils listen well in class and show pleasure and enthusiasm, for example, at a poem from Roald Dahl's 'Revolting Rhymes', and they used good expression when reading the poem as a group. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 listened carefully during group work and offered relevant answers and observations to the teacher's questions. Sentences were mainly of simple structure or even one-word comments, they were not developed effectively and did not contain many examples of reasoning or the use of words such as 'because'. This weakness of spoken language and lack of a rich vocabulary are present all through the school.
- 93 Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is at the expected level, but below this level at the end of Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils read with very good expression and fluency, they use details from the story to explain what has already happened and talk about probable endings to the story. Other pupils read with care but are hesitant in the use of letter sounds to work out words that they have not met before. Some do not know letter sounds well, and cannot combine letters such as 'ai' or 'ch' to achieve the correct sound. Pupils in the early years of Key Stage 2 continue to achieve at the expected level, but older pupils are below; this reflects the greater impact of the recent focus on reading for the younger pupils. With the exception of higher attaining pupils there is weak use of letter sounds and combinations by

most of the older pupils. For example, the word 'persuade' was read as 'pursued' and other words are guessed to produce 'sunk' for 'stuck' and 'cuddled' for 'changed'. These substitutes do not always match the idea of the sentence and show the weaknesses in language which hinder pupils' progress in English.

- 94 The expected level of attainment in writing is achieved at both key stages. At the age of seven, higher attaining pupils use well-formed joined handwriting to write imaginative stories and accounts of experiences. They write about conversations with accurate punctuation of speech and use mostly simple sentences with mainly accurate spelling of words such as comfortable. However, other pupils use mostly basic handwriting with weaker letter formation and less reliable spelling. The work of the eleven-year-old pupils follows a school scheme for handwriting and is generally neat and shows pride. Well written imaginative writing by the higher attaining pupils is effective in creating suspense when writing to titles such as 'Ghost Dog'. Sentence length is varied, paragraphs are used and speech helps to carry the story along. Complex words such as 'grotesque' are spelt correctly and handwriting uses a neat and regular style of joined writing. However, other pupils, whilst following the style of the better writing, lose control of sentence structure. They are less successful with punctuation and make weaker attempts at spelling.
- 95 Teaching is good across both key stages, with three lessons that were excellent and very little that was less than good. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. The pupils make good progress as a result of this very good teaching, but the lack of basic language skills and a wide ranging vocabulary continues to affect attainment for the average and below average pupils.
- 96 The structure of the National Literacy Strategy is used well. Lessons are planned with clear objectives and provide a framework from which the teachers develop a structure to their lessons that is also used in other subject areas. Pupils work hard and take a keen interest in their work, concentrating well at their tasks. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to work independently and so have less responsibility for their own learning. Reading skills are not successfully developed for less able pupils and opportunities for developing the language of reasoning are missed with few questions from teachers that require extended answers. Opportunities for the use of information and communication technology skills are underdeveloped. Few pupils have the opportunity to write directly onto the computer. Word processing is mainly copying of previously corrected work.
- 97 In a good lesson on narrative writing for Year 2 pupils, the teacher shared objectives with the pupils and used good illustrative writing of her own to provide the pupils with a good model. The lesson moved forward at a speed that ensured that the pupils would listen carefully. The teacher encouraged pupils to use a wider range of adjectives, such as 'fantastic' instead of 'nice', and good questions meant that pupils had to think carefully about the content of their writing. As a result, pupils wrote about their weekend with confidence and a more interesting vocabulary. Excellent teaching had the effect of exciting Year 3 pupils and generated an enthusiasm for their work with a poem that brought the comment from one pupil, 'its got us hooked'. Good use of praise, and the sensitive inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, meant that all pupils were confident and involved in the lesson. Because of this, the pupils took a great interest in rhyming couplets, suffixes and collective nouns. Year 6 pupils used accurate vocabulary for language and observed that a phrase in the text was 'personification as well as alliteration' in a very good lesson about conversational poems. The lesson was brisk and purposeful and reflected high expectations that the pupils would find answers to the demanding questions. The effectiveness of this teaching was seen in the work of the pupils who, in a short space of time, used the structure and style of the model to produce writing such as; 'What is snow? - wonderful white rabbits slipping off their coats'.
- 98 The improvement in English from a very low to satisfactory performance has resulted from the school's enthusiastic use of the National Literacy structure and from the good leadership of the co-ordinator, who has identified areas of weakness and made improvements to the curriculum and in resources which have addressed these. Pupils' work from the National Curriculum tests has been analysed and areas of weakness identified, such as reading and writing. Reading

performance has improved significantly and an initiative for 'Reading in the Community' is in place. New resources for language are planned in order to improve pupils' understanding of their reading. Performance targets are set for the school and learning targets are set for the class and for individual pupils. Useful opportunities are taken to practise skills in English in other subjects such as history and religious education. These are achieving good improvements and the school is in a good position to continue to raise attainment.

MATHEMATICS

- 99 On the basis of the 2000 National Curriculum test results, attainment was below the national average at Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 2, was well below the national average, but the proportion achieving the higher level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 was close to the national average. Pupils' performance in the Key Stage 1 mathematics tests was close to the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
- 100 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was well below the national average. The proportion attaining level 4, the expected level nationally, was well below the national average and, at the higher level 5, it was also well below the national average. The attainment of this group of pupils was below that achieved in schools of a similar type.
- 101 Attainment in the lessons observed and in the analysis of pupils' work, is in line with the national average at the end of both key stages. Pupils are working confidently within level 2 attainment targets at Key Stage 1 and, at Key Stage 2, are confidently working within level 4 attainment targets.
- 102 In Years 1 and 2 pupils, using a range of 3D shapes, predict which will roll and which will slide. In Year 2, pupils learn to investigate position and understand that a right angle is a measure of a quarter turn. Higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 generally have a sound knowledge of their multiplication tables and this helps them in other areas of their mathematics' learning. Pupils in Year 3, in an excellent lesson, solved problems involving time. They had a target time to beat, which they had set for themselves the previous day, and achieved this successfully. In Years 4 and 5, pupils learned to partition by using brackets. In Year 6, they learned to order positive and negative numbers in a variety of ways, for example, when putting negative numbers into a calculator and when investigating temperatures including negative numbers. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the basic two and three dimensional shapes and measure degrees using a protractor. They know the difference between acute and obtuse angles. Targets have been set in all year groups as part of a strategy to help raise achievement. Pupils have individual targets to meet, which they understand. Pupils estimate the time available to complete the mental and oral exercises and try to beat this each day. This gives challenge and confidence to learning and makes mathematics fun. There was no difference in the performance of boys and girls in the lessons seen. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection.
- 103 The progress of pupils since September has been good in both key stages. There are differences between year groups in the rate at which pupils learn. The best progress occurs in Key Stage 2. Factors aiding this progress include very good attitudes and behaviour supported by much very good and excellent teaching. Features which enhance the quality of teaching include the very good planning, effective assessment, a brisk but appropriate pace and very high expectations. In the best lessons, learning objectives are clearly explained and pupils look at them during and at the end of the lessons to see how far they have been achieved. Teachers check on pupils' knowledge of their own learning and have implemented a system of trust in which pupils confidently say if they feel that they need some more time to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. In lessons which were less good, there was, at times, a lack of sufficient challenge and teachers allowed too much time to be taken up by a simple exercise. Teachers in most numeracy lessons start off with appropriate rapid question and answers sessions to get pupils thinking. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all lessons, making sound progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2.
- 104 The pupils' responses in lessons are good in both key stages. Pupils behave well and are interested in their lessons. Their attitudes to mathematics are positive and they enjoy the challenges set for them. Pupils particularly enjoy mental and oral mathematics and are keen to beat the challenge time. Relationships between pupils and with their teachers, learning support assistants, and other adults, are very good.

- 105 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully. Assessment procedures are good. The numeracy planning is evaluated at the end of each half term to guide lesson planning for the next half term. The National Curriculum tests results are analysed and used to target pupils' learning needs. Pupils have individual targets and know and understand these. Each class has its own target for the week and strives hard to achieve this. During the inspection, evidence was seen of quick tests to assess pupils' learning. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work is very good in lessons and increases pupils' understanding of their learning. Marking seen in pupils' books was generally satisfactory. The standards of presentation are good.
- 106 The school has good resources for mathematics and use of these resources and of practical apparatus to support learning is good. The co-ordinator for mathematics is very committed and works hard. She has monitored planning, marking and assessment. She has undertaken lesson observations and gives feedback to staff. Teaching strategies are good. The subject has made some very good improvements since the last inspection and is in a secure position to improve further.

SCIENCE

- 107 Assessments by teachers at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level of attainment was well below the national average, but the proportion of pupils reaching higher than the expected level was close to the national average. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and higher than the expected level were both well below the average for all schools and below average in comparison with similar schools. The results were below those in both English and mathematics and the results in science in 1999. Since the last inspection, results in the national tests have improved steadily, broadly following the national trend but have remained consistently well below the national average.
- 108 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the standard expected nationally, but not quite as low as indicated by last year's teacher assessments. Pupils know that matter exists in three different states. They understand that materials have different characteristics and that these determine their suitability for use in a range of common household articles such as pans, kettles, television sets, bowls, etc. They recognise that heating materials sometimes results in a change of state, such as ice turning to water, and sometimes results in a permanent change such as baking a cake. They successfully link infant with adult animals and recognise a force as a push or a pull.
- 109 Pupils make at least satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 and higher attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils develop their natural curiosity and learn to make clear observations. They begin to develop their vocabulary through identifying key words to describe their observations, but generally they do not develop confidence in using technical terms when talking about their work. They begin to carry out simple investigations. For example, pupils in Year 1 investigated how the gradient of a ramp influenced how far a toy car would travel after leaving the ramp. The investigation was carefully structured, but no actual measurements were made of the distance travelled and results were described in qualitative terms only. However, the investigation was very well developed to illustrate the importance of the use of seat belts by strapping a toy figure into the car with a rubber band and bringing the car to an abrupt halt. The message was clearly received by pupils. Higher attaining pupils were able to develop their work in investigations to discuss the results more fully.
- 110 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment remains below expected standards but is rather better than indicated by last year's national test results. In lessons and written work, pupils generally show sound knowledge and understanding. However, their ability to recall and apply their knowledge in discussions is limited. Their language skills are not well developed for their age and these limitations adversely affect their performance in assessments. Pupils have sound knowledge of topics in the area of Life and Living Processes. They know about plant

structures, how seeds are formed and how they are dispersed. They recognise food chains, use keys competently to identify small animals and know how animals are adapted to their environment. Knowledge and understanding in the areas of Materials and of Physical Processes are more variable. For example, pupils' understanding of electrical circuits is generally good, but their appreciation of how forces operate and how they are measured is less secure.

- 111 Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2 but higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently to reach their full potential. This is seen particularly in the area of investigations. Pupils generally recognise how to set up a fair scientific test. For example, an investigation set up by the teacher into the permeability of different soil samples was well analysed by all pupils. However, in many investigations there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and not enough importance is given to accuracy of measurements or the presentation of data. For example, in an investigation into the effect of exercise on pulse rate, only one measurement of pulse rate was made and the results were not presented in any graphical form. Thus higher attaining pupils are not encouraged to develop the questioning of the reliability or validity of their results and conclusions. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are provided with suitably modified tasks in line with their individual education plans. They receive good support and encouragement from teachers and support staff to make satisfactory progress through both key stages and reach levels of attainment in line with their ability.
- 112 Pupils' attitudes to science lessons are generally good. Behaviour in lessons is good, particularly when pupils are actively involved in discussions and the lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Pupils are attentive, they respond well to questions and generally respect the code for answering. They settle quickly on the set tasks and maintain good concentration. They work well together in group activities, sharing the work and ideas well.
- 113 The quality of teaching overall is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, which resulted from poor planning and pupil management during an activity session. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, but there are occasional indications of insecurity, for example, in the area of forces and electrical circuits. Teachers plan lessons well with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils at the start of the lesson, and progress is reviewed at the end. Teachers plan a good variety of activities designed to stimulate interest and produce effective learning. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 3, pupils first revised their knowledge of the structure of teeth and of healthy eating in a brisk and well-directed brainstorming session. They then watched an amusing but very well focused 'Charlie Brown' cartoon video on cleaning teeth which they very much enjoyed. Each pupil was then provided with a new toothbrush, toothpaste and two plastic cups and they proceeded to clean their teeth following the guidance given in the video. The effectiveness of their efforts was then checked using disclosing tablets. The pupils learned a great deal from the lesson about teeth, diet and oral hygiene in an entertaining and well-structured manner.
- 114 Teachers prepare graded tasks to suit the needs of all the pupils in their classes, making good use of individual education plans for those pupils with special educational needs. For example, in a mixed age Year 1/2 class, the teacher and support assistant set up an imaginative exercise for pupils to investigate the light reflecting properties of various materials. The pupils were then given a variety of worksheets to record their observations and conclusions. All pupils were challenged at a level appropriate to their ability and language skills. Teachers identify key words in each topic and are careful in their use of language. However, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged or challenged to develop their own language skills in developing answers or extending written work. The range of pupil investigations is good, but teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on the development of skills in measurement, or in the presentation and interpretation of data collected. For example, graphical skills are generally under-developed, as is the use of computers. Pupils use the Internet to seek information, but this is not selective. For example, pupils obtained information on the life of Pasteur from the Internet, but it was then not edited in any way to extract key points.

- 115 The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has identified and prioritised a number of strategies for raising standards. A thorough audit of the curriculum has been carried out and a new scheme of work is being developed, integrating the proposals of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority with a commercial scheme to produce an integrated programme for both key stages. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are good with assessment at the end of each unit of work. The information obtained is also well used to review the curriculum and to set targets for the subject, but its use in setting targets for individual pupils is still in the early stages of development. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are regularly monitored but the systematic monitoring of teaching has not been carried out. The development of the co-ordinator's role in supporting staff generally and particularly in areas where there is evidence of deficiencies in subject knowledge, would contribute considerably towards the further raising of standards. The school devotes an unusually low proportion of the available time to science. This means that learning is insufficiently detailed and practical experiences are not underpinned by sufficient depth of analysis.

ART AND DESIGN

- 116 By the age of seven pupils are achieving at the expected level of attainment. Work at an appropriate level was seen of collage, decoration of models, painting, texture of materials, portraits and patterns. There was much use of art in other subject areas as pupils illustrated work or linked art with writing in displays. Pupils in Year 2 produced a convincing image when drawing from real life. They used charcoal pencils effectively to represent the skeleton of a salmon, a squid and a perch. They 'tried out' their ideas on a piece of paper before committing to the picture and most pupils managed to capture the essential features of the fish, with eyes, scales, bones and markings represented accurately.
- 117 It was not possible to make a judgement about attainment at the age of eleven because of the time-tabling arrangements which meant that little art and design was being taught during the time of the inspection. However, an analysis of work on display shows that pupils throughout the key stage have a wide variety of experiences. There is much use of art and design in other subject areas. Papier-mâché was used for masks, sketches of plants were done for science, poems were illustrated for English and Viking brooches were made in history. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 designed printing blocks from a polystyrene surface and used their designs to create a design on fabric that the whole class contributed to. The result was a very effective piece of fabric design and the finished product impressed the pupils. Years 5 and 6 pupils designed containers and decorated them with paint. The variety of containers reflected the different uses that the pupils had intended for them. Their designs showed an awareness of strength, and were painted with a feel for the finish of their product.
- 118 Teaching at Key Stage 1 is very good and at Key Stage 2 it is good with some that is very good. Objectives and tasks were made very clear in a lesson for Year 2 pupils. The teacher had prepared well and gave a strong and positive explanation of the activity as she explained the techniques of drawing from real life. As a result, the pupils studied the fish objectively and attempted to draw what they saw rather than what their brain told them the image should look like. In a Year 3/4 class, strong positive teaching used humour and a good revision of the process to date so that objectives for the design and making of printing blocks were clearly shared. The lesson then proceeded at a good pace that maintained a sense of purpose as the teacher spoke to each pupil and influenced the course of their thinking about their design effectively. The process of designing, making, printing and evaluating was managed well, with pupils taking turns at the printing base whilst others evaluated designs or considered improvements.
- 119 The co-ordinator has only been leading the subject since October, but is making a strong impact. Improvement is seen in the standards of the pupils' work and in the teaching of the pupils as measured by the quantity and quality of work on display. There is now a two-year cycle of provision to meet the needs of the mixed age classes and the majority of teachers are gaining in confidence in the subject. However, there is still some lack of confidence evident. Timetables show art to be inconsistently time-tabled across the school and the lack of sufficient

resources in Key Stage 2 means that there are occasions when art and design lessons do not involve the whole class. The standards found in the report from the last inspection have been maintained. The fact that the school now has a capable and enthusiastic co-ordinator puts it in a position to go on to improve.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 120 Due to the timetable arrangements it was only possible to observe one lesson in design and technology during the inspection. The following judgements on attainment are made on the basis of the lesson observation, viewing samples of pupils' work on display around the school, a portfolio of photographs of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with that seen nationally, but attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is below average and the programmes of study of the National Curriculum are not covered fully.
- 121 Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have satisfactory design and making skills and have sound experience of working with paper, card and various textiles. They mark out and cut materials quite accurately and assemble their models using glue, paper fasteners and stitching. In Year 1, pupils constructed a simple moving picture incorporating a lever mechanism, using paper fasteners for the joint. More enterprising pupils also incorporated a corded mechanism for the operation. They also designed a model of a room in a house, based on a small cardboard box. Items of furniture were made to scale from card and the whole object decorated to produce an attractive end product. Pupils in Year 2 made hand puppets and a small, wheeled vehicle using a variety of materials. Pupils take care with the detail of their models and are quite critical when assessing their work. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress through the key stage.
- 122 The scheme of work for Key Stage 2 does not have a clear programme for the development of an adequate range of skills. This is mainly due to the shortage of a suitable range of materials such as wood and plastic, and a sufficient number of tools and workbenches for pupils to develop their construction skills to appropriate levels. Pupils experience working with pulleys, gears and construct simple hydraulic mechanisms based on the use of plastic syringes, but the range of experiences is limited. The school has only a very limited range and number of suitable construction kits which could greatly assist pupils in their design skills and enhance their understanding of more complex mechanisms. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their design skills through the key stage. Pupils in Year 3 designed and made sandwiches and also a variety of packaging for the finished product. They also designed a poster for a new chocolate bar and its matching wrapper. The principle of reinforcement of joints is well understood by pupils. In Year 3 they apply the principle to their models of bridge structures designed to take a specified load. In Year 6 pupils identified a number of examples of reinforcement in the design of a small tent, such as at the corners and along important seams. They also studied the efficiency of various fastening mechanisms such as zips and velcro in various areas of the design. The quality of the finished products in Key Stage 2 is below the standards found in most schools, due to the restricted range of materials available.
- 123 Pupils' attitudes to the subject in the one lesson observed, a Year 6 class, were very good. They were very committed to the task in hand, designing and making a model fairground ride incorporating a small electric motor. They were able to discuss aspects of the design and its construction clearly and were constructive in their analysis of the problems they had encountered. They worked very well in their groups on the project, sharing the work and freely exchanging ideas.
- 124 The quality of teaching observed was good and teaching is good in both key stages. The teacher had good subject knowledge and clear objectives were identified which focused on the design elements of the project and set pupils clear tasks. The pupils were given good support and the work was generally of a good standard.
- 125 The development of the subject in the school has been hindered by the lack of investment in materials and resources and the lack of clear direction from a suitably qualified and experienced co-ordinator. The current scheme of work is largely dictated by the constraints of resources and, as a result, pupils' progress is limited, particularly in Key Stage 2. Design skills are well developed but would also benefit greatly from the availability of a range of construction kits suitable for use in both key stages. Pupils' work is accurately assessed and detailed written comments are given which give guidance for future development. Since the last inspection,

there has been insufficient development in the subject. The issue of teaching resources identified, then, has not been properly addressed.

GEOGRAPHY

- 126 It was only possible to observe two geography lessons, both in Key Stage 1, during the inspection. On the basis of these observations, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils, the standard of attainment by pupils is judged to be broadly in line with national expectation at the end of both key stages.
- 127 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make a sound start in the use of simple maps. They walk around the local area and construct simple sketch maps with the key features marked and they work out simple routes to and from school and home. They use atlases well and are familiar with the map of Britain and its position in relation to Europe. They make a study of a small island community and use this to develop their mapping skills. They link features from a pictorial representation of part of the island to a map. They construct a map of their own imaginary island and use simple symbols to locate features such as buildings, hills, woods and a harbour.
- 128 In Key Stage 2, pupils' map skills become quite well developed. They use maps of different scales, are able to use co-ordinates competently to locate places and to use standard symbols. The school makes good use of its link with a nearby rural school for pupils to make comparisons between the two communities in terms of employment, land usage and transport facilities. Pupils in Year 5 undertake an extensive study of a village community in India. Maps are used well to locate the village and to plot air and sea routes to India. Climate data for Britain and India are collected and presented effectively in bar charts. The study makes a considerable contribution to pupils' awareness of a different culture. Pupils have a sound awareness of environmental issues. For example, pupils in Year 6 have clear views on the advantages and disadvantages of motorway developments and show sensitivity in considering both sides of a proposed commercial development of a green-field site in a nearby village. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of physical geography, such as river profiles, are less well developed.
- 129 Pupils' attitudes to their work are generally good. In the two classes observed, the pupils were attentive, responded well to questions and settled quickly on the tasks, maintaining a good rate of work. The quality of the work produced by older pupils reflects their commitment to their studies.
- 130 The overall quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory. Both lessons were based on the study of the island community. The lessons were well structured, with clear objectives, and suitably graded tasks ensured that pupils of all abilities were effectively challenged. In one lesson, extension work was also available for those pupils who finished their task quickly. Teachers made good use of the final plenary session to review a selection of pupils' work and groups and individuals were given suitable praise for their efforts. Teachers' organisation of pupils and their activities is good and the role of support staff is clearly identified.
- 131 Since the last inspection, the level of attainment has improved, particularly in Key Stage 2, where there is now much more consistency in the development of geographical skills. The current co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time, but full audits of the curriculum and teaching resources have been carried out. The current scheme of work is based on the proposals of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and will ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study when it is fully in place. In Key Stage 1, the work in geography is linked with history and, where possible, develops themes from literacy. In Key Stage 2, the subject has adequate timetable time and the development of key skills is satisfactorily planned. Good use is made of visits in both key stages to enrich and extend pupils' learning.

HISTORY

- 132 Only a limited number of lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are made from these lessons, discussions with the co-ordinator, talking to Year 5/6 group of pupils, an analysis of work completed in the last term and displays across the school.
- 133 Overall standards in history are satisfactory at the end of each key stage. Pupils have learned about the past historical events in different periods. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding about various important personalities who contributed to historical events, for example, Florence Nightingale, who cared for the soldiers in the Crimean War. They know that she was known as 'the lady with the lamp'. They also learn about their own families and the locality. This gives them an understanding of their backgrounds and introduces them to the concept of the passage of time.
- 134 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have studied most of the units of the history curriculum, including Anglo-Saxon and Tudor monarchs, Greek civilisation and Victorian Britain. They are interested in the past and effective discussions extend their learning and their understanding of Victorian life styles for rich and poor children. They learned about poor children's conditions in Victorian times, for example, sleeping rough on the street with little food to eat and poor health and hygiene provision. They have a sound factual knowledge of different historical periods but a limited understanding of the differences in the ways in which facets of the past impact upon the present.
- 135 Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with ability. Older pupils have limited access to information and communications technology to further their research and investigation work. Literacy skills are promoted satisfactorily through the history curriculum. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the school. The main emphasis is on teaching facts. Over-directed teaching in some lessons hinders pupils' ability to develop investigative skills. The use of research and individual investigations, including the use of information and communications technology, is underdeveloped. Resources, books and photographic and video resources are adequate. There is a need for more artefacts and materials such as photographs for studying the local area.
- 136 The co-ordinator has only had responsibility for the subject for a few months and has a positive overview of the subject. The school is aware of the need to review the existing policy and schemes of work, and to develop an assessment policy which will record pupils' progression across the key stages systematically.
- 137 The sound standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils enjoy their learning in history and the school is in a position to improve further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 138 Pupils at the age of seven are achieving the expected standards in information and communication technology. However, pupils at the age of eleven are below the expected standard and this is a decline in standards since the last inspection. The current range of curriculum opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 is incomplete and does not cover the full programmes of study of the National Curriculum. There is little use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subject areas. Furthermore, there is no use of sensing and control equipment to make things happen or to monitor events and pupils do not write directly onto the computer. Opportunities to develop and change their writing by using the editing facilities of the word processing software are restricted. However, the school has plans in place to correct these deficiencies.
- 139 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make frequent use of information and communications technology in their lessons. Pupils in Year 1 are confident and capable in using information and communication technology to produce images, such as a butterfly, and add an associated sentence. Other pupils controlled the movement of a programmable toy by giving instructions for it to move forwards and backwards and turn to the left or the right. In Year 2, pupils used a database to find out about different types of owls and their habitats as part of a structured learning experience and they accurately described all the necessary steps needed to gather the

information. Other pupils in Year 2 worked freely at word processing as they wrote sentences into the computer. They changed their writing and moved around the screen to make corrections.

- 140 Pupils in Key Stage 2 have regular time-tabled access to computers in the information and communication technology suite. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils designed and printed statements for use in assembly. They selected appropriate styles of print and made the size of the print large enough to be seen from a distance with different colours used for effect. Year 5 pupils made a plan of the classroom using a graphics program. They drew rectangles at an appropriate size to represent cupboards and desks and selected colours to use for the furniture and the background. Early spreadsheet skills were used by Year 6 pupils whilst locating cells and placing information. They altered cell width and sorted a simple list into ascending and descending order. Pupils accessed the Internet during a lunchtime computer club and browsed various sites. Most of this work supported the learning of information and communication technology skills. A collection of word processing by Year 6 pupils showed an ability to use different styles and colours of text, but the work was a fair copy of writing that had already been corrected. There was little evidence of pupils using information and communication technology skills to support learning in other subjects and this is a weakness of the school's provision.
- 141 The teaching of information and communication technology skills is good at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, teachers have the confidence to include information and communication technology opportunities in many lessons and teach information and communication technology skills through time-tabled use of the computer suite. Good learning took place in a lesson for Year 1 pupils when they gained accuracy of control in the use of the mouse. The teacher had explained the task well and used time effectively to allow the pupils to select images and text successfully and to then print the results. Teachers at Key Stage 2 develop pupils' information and communication technology skills through the use of the computer suite, but opportunities are not often included in other lessons. Very good teaching of a class containing pupils from Years 3 and 4 shared clear objectives with the pupils and used questions well to revise previous work. A clear outline of the task meant that pupils were able to work with confidence and two groups of pupils with special educational needs co-operated well and produced their own design of a robot. Good support and encouragement by the teacher meant that all pupils were creative in the use of the 'Paint' software and used the 'tools' well to achieve a choice of designs within the time limits set by the teacher.
- 142 The co-ordinator for information and communication technology was not in school during the inspection and some of the documentation for the management of the subject was not available. The headteacher recognises the need for further development in the subject. The new resources in the information and communication technology suite have only been available since January and classroom units are to be linked to the Internet and to the main server unit in the near future. This will then support the better use of information and communication technology in other subject areas. There are plans for further training for teachers in order to improve levels of confidence and resources to deliver the control and sensing requirements of the curriculum are being identified. The room that contains the information and communication technology suite is small and cramped so that some class groups cannot all work together, and this has a limiting effect on teaching and learning. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision of information and communication technology since the last inspection. Teachers have worked hard to develop their skills and the resources for teaching and learning have been considerably improved.

MUSIC

- 143 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Key Stage 1 and sound progress in Key Stage 2. Attainment is in line with that normally found at the end of each key stage. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. The programmes of study of the National Curriculum are now covered and pupils in both key stages benefit from a carefully designed curriculum which gives them a good range of experiences.

- 144 Whole school singing is satisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 tend to shout and this results in insecure pitch. When the tune is high, they tend to be flat. Pupils in Key Stage 2 sing more musically and with some awareness of rhythm and dynamics. The co-ordinator recognises that there is a need to teach singing technique and has plans to re-form the choir in order to develop singing in the school.
- 145 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the basics of musical notation and know, for example, that a crotchet is one beat while a quaver is half a beat. They quickly identify the combinations of crotchets and quavers which will represent the rhythm of the names of different animals, for example, that 'elephant' will be two quavers followed by a crotchet, while 'lion' is two crotchets. They successfully combine together a succession of animal names in their own 'compositions' and beat the rhythm of their competitions, using drums, triangles and chime bars successfully. There was a good awareness of the need to keep together. The criticism in the report of the last inspection that there was no opportunity for composition in Key Stage 1 has been met successfully.
- 146 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in composition have improved well. There is a good knowledge of musical notation and an awareness of the importance of volume and pitch. Pupils understand the significance of bar lines and that music can be divided into groups of different numbers of beats. They know that orchestral instruments are divided into four groups and have a basic understanding of how different instruments produce different sounds. Their learning was enhanced by a visiting musician who demonstrated how sounds are produced on the violin and oboe.
- 147 The quality of the teaching observed during the inspection was good overall in both key stages. This good teaching produces a good level of interest and concentration from pupils, who enjoy their music making. This concentration and interest was reflected in the pupils' fascination at the impact of a full orchestra when visiting a concert given by the Halle orchestra. This made a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Learning in music is enhanced for some pupils in Key Stage 2 who have an opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Sixteen pupils are learning keyboard and another eight are learning guitar.
- 148 Teachers have a secure level of subject knowledge and understanding. Lessons are well planned to enable pupils to develop their skills systematically. Charismatic teaching engages the pupils' interest and imagination so that they work with good effort and enthusiasm. As a result of this effort, they are receiving a sound education in music in both key stages. A strength is the way in which teachers in both key stages manage their pupils' behaviour. The degree of interest created was such that this appeared to be almost effortless. Resources for learning and support staff are used well to promote progress in learning.
- 149 The management of the subject has recently been taken over by a new co-ordinator. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is developing sound ideas to improve the subject throughout the key stages. There is some specialist teaching by the co-ordinator in Key Stage 2 and this is improving provision. Resources for learning are adequate, but there is only one music trolley for both key stages. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in music is underdeveloped. There are no ethnic instruments to support multi-cultural education. However, there have been good improvements in the subject since the last inspection and the school is now in a good position to improve further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 150 Standards of attainment are average at the end of both key stages, although there are examples of above average attainment in the younger years of Key Stage 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. In swimming, most pupils swim the required 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2. The satisfactory attainment at Key Stage 2 is an improvement on the last inspection, when progress in Key Stage 2 was judged to be unsatisfactory. During the inspection, dance was observed in Key Stage 1, and gymnastics,

games and dance in Key Stage 2.

- 151 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have satisfactory control when following their teacher in a sequence of movements, and some are capable of good co-ordination between arm and leg movements. They show a good ability to follow taped instructions and remember a sequence of different movements well when they are put together at the end of the 'car journey'. They successfully move forwards, backwards and sideways and have a good understanding of walking on tip-toe. They are sensible in their use of space and have a good awareness of the need for safety.
- 152 By the end of Key Stage 2, dance movements have developed well and pupils are capable of some imaginative responses to musical stimuli. However, in an unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 2, learning was below average in the time available because the pupils' behaviour meant that too much time was wasted. A very good lesson for Year 3 resulted in above average attainment. Pupils develop a good sequence of movements when travelling along a bench and on to and off a table. They were imaginative in the sequences they created, jumped and landed with good control, executed good forward rolls and had a very good awareness of the need for a good final position at the end of the exercise.
- 153 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. There was very good use of evaluation of the previous week's lesson to suggest ways in which pupils could improve their performance. The lesson was well planned to build up pupils' skills systematically. Instructions were very clear and effective in helping pupils to improve. Excellent class management in a difficult noisy space resulted in a very good level of concentration and effort. This resulted in good progress in learning.
- 154 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 varies. In one lesson it was unsatisfactory because a temporary teacher's control of the class was insecure. In a second lesson, the quality of the teaching was good and, in a third, it was very good. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In the good lesson, the lesson was effectively planned and organised, and there were very good suggestions for improvements in technique. The very good lesson was characterised by the very high level of expectations for pupils' conduct and effort. The very effective class management was rooted in the excellent relationships between the teachers and his class. Very good organisational strategies resulted in well-motivated pupils making very good progress in their learning. When pairs of pupils were asked to demonstrate, the rest of the class appreciated and respected their efforts and spontaneously applauded them. The teacher's evaluations, both during the lesson and back in the classroom, were positive and he used praise well. An example of his high expectations came when he told two pupils to 'use their learning time well' instead of standing and waiting.
- 155 The subject is well resourced overall and benefits from good hard play areas and an adjacent playing field. Learning is enhanced by some external coaching in soccer, cricket and lacrosse. Pupils experience competition in soccer, swimming and netball. A residential visit is planned for May, which will enable Year 6 pupils to experience outdoor and adventurous activities. It is also planned to form a gymnastics club for Year 2 pupils in the summer term and to offer opportunities for water sports activities for Key Stage 2.
- 156 The subject has improved well since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. This is because of improvements in the overall quality of teaching. The school is in a good position to build on this improvement and go on to improve further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 157 Because of time-tabling restraints, only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both in Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on these lessons, an analysis of pupils' written work, displays and talking to pupils and teachers. Pupils' attainment is in line with expectation for their age at the end of each key stage. The sound standards found at the last inspection have been maintained.

- 158 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a basic knowledge of the Christian religion. They understand the symbolism of the cross and know that the Bible is the holy book of Christians. They visit the local church and are able to identify some of its key features and their purpose. They understand that stained glass windows were originally used to convey biblical stories to people unable to read. They know about the Christmas story and appreciate the wonder of the story through a visit to the church's crib. They understand the key importance of Jesus and know some of his teachings through the parables, such as "The Lost Sheep". They recognise the significance of Remembrance Day, of personal sacrifice and the symbolism of the poppy.
- 159 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a deeper knowledge of Christianity through stories of events in the life of Jesus. They are familiar with the structure of the Christian year and of such festivities as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. They acquire a deeper understanding of faith through learning about the difficult concept of the Trinity. They write short prayers in which they reflect on aspects of their own lives, for example in writing "Thank You" prayers. They apply their understanding of Christianity to various moral issues in a topic on "That's not Fair", when they express views at their own level on many conflicts in modern society. Pupils also learn something of the basic beliefs and festivals of Islam. They study the structure of a typical mosque and compare it with that of a church. In Year 6, they learn more about Judaism and of its major festivals.
- 160 Pupils display positive attitudes to the subject and behaviour in lessons is good. They listen well to teachers and respond very positively to questions, although they often need prompting to develop their answers and their recall of key words. They work well at the tasks provided for them and produce written work of a satisfactory standard for their age.
- 161 In the few lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are planned to gain pupils' interest and to encourage them to express views. For example, with pupils in a mixed age Year1/Year 2 class, the teacher followed up a visit to the local church and used a series of very good digital photographs of their visit to develop questions about features in the church. The photographs stimulated a good level of interest and the ensuing discussions indicated that the visit had made a positive impact on the pupils. Questions are very well structured and used to encourage pupils to express their own feelings. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher skilfully developed the questions to stimulate pupils to say how they would show their care for those who looked after them. Their responses were then effectively linked to the story of Mohammed caring for his parents. Through their sensitive approach, teachers ensure that the subject makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 162 Curriculum planning is satisfactory and relates well to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has developed a good range of religious artefacts from all the faiths studied, supplemented by a good range of quality books. Opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths through visits to places of worship or listening to visitors talking about aspects of their faith are very limited.