

INSPECTION REPORT

MYTHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Little Lever

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105190

Headteacher: Mr Brian Essex

Reporting inspector: Mr Keith Edwards
(OFSTED No: 21190)

Dates of inspection: 18-21 September 2000

Inspection number: 192365

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 Year
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mytham Road Little Lever Bolton Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr William Earnshaw
Date of previous inspection:	17 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Keith Edwards (OFSTED No: 21190)	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it?
			How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements.
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Graeme Norval (OFSTED No: 9624)	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Christine Balson (OFSTED No: 23958)	Team inspector	English	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Religious education	
		Equal opportunities	
Michael Huggins (OFSTED No: 27490)	Team inspector	Information technology	
		Geography	
		History	
Kevin Johnson (OFSTED No: 18370)	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Foundation Stage	
		Art	
		Design and technology	
Morag Thorpe (OFSTED No: 15236)	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Music	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	
		English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mytham Primary School is located in Little Lever, an urban village on the outskirts of Bolton. Industry in the area has declined in recent years and unemployment has risen. The pupils are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, although the percentage of parents with higher education qualifications is well below the national average. Families in the immediate area of the school live in a mix of council and privately-owned property.

The school is oversubscribed. Mytham, with currently 381 pupils on roll, is larger than most primary schools. Most of the pupils live in the village of Little Lever. Eighteen per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is close to the national average. Currently, almost all of the pupils are white and almost all come from homes where English is the first language.

The range of ability in each class is broad. Most of the children have attended a nursery or playgroup prior to admission to the school. The attainment of pupils on entry is average. There are 58 pupils on the school's register for special educational needs. Four pupils have a statement of special educational need.

The pupils are taught in 14 classes in their own age groups. Pupils are admitted into the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. There are 16 teachers employed in the school on a full-time basis; neither the headteacher nor his deputy has a full-time class teaching commitment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that provides very good value for money. The quality of teaching is good. Results in national tests in English and mathematics are consistently above those achieved by eleven-year-old pupils in similar schools. The school benefits from very good leadership that ensures a clear educational direction and which has secured the position of the school in the heart of the community.

What the school does well

- By the time they leave school, the pupils achieve standards in the core subjects that are above average.
- The provision for the children in the reception classes is very good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and it enables the pupils to make good progress.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff is very good.
- The pupils enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is good.
- The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school deserves its good reputation within the community and many parents are involved in school life.

What could be improved

- The provision for aspects of the pupils' personal and social education.
- The quality of marking and the use of assessment information to match the work set more closely to the range of abilities within each class.
- The use of information technology to support learning across the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since then it has made good progress and is well placed to continue to improve. It has successfully improved its management structures through redefining the roles and responsibilities of senior staff and through making key appointments when vacancies have occurred. The school has made a substantial investment in its resourcing for information technology and this has resulted in improved standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Furthermore, the school has successfully introduced the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and standards are continuing to rise in

English and mathematics year-on-year by the time the pupils leave school. The pupils now experience a good curriculum with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage in the reception classes and the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. These strengths reflect a good improvement since the previous inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	B	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	A	A	A	
Science	B	C	B	C	

At the age of eleven, the pupils' results are above the national average in English and science; in mathematics, standards are well above the national average. Inspection evidence supports the view that standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. The pupils' achievements are well above those of pupils attending similar schools in mathematics and above in English. In science, their achievement is broadly similar. Standards are improving year-on-year in Key Stage 2 and the school consistently meets the challenging targets it sets for its eleven-year-old pupils. Furthermore the pupils achieve high standards in their work in music and physical education by the time they leave school. Standards in information technology and religious education are average.

In the reception classes, the children make a very good start and most pupils achieve the learning objectives for five-year-olds. At the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils achieve high standards in reading. However, in writing, mathematics and science, although almost all pupils attain the expected level, only a few pupils achieve higher standards. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and has taken steps to address the needs of the higher attaining pupils. Throughout the school, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported and enabled to reach their potential in literacy and numeracy. The pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the core subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes are good overall; most pupils are keen to come to school and respond well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and show respect for property.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school are very good; the pupils work and play well together. Their personal development is good; pupils respond well to the opportunities that are available for them to take responsibility and extend their interests.
Attendance	Attendance rates in the last academic year exceeded the national

	average. The school is maintaining the good standards reported in the last inspection.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
69 lessons seen overall	Very 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. In 96 per cent of the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better. Sixty-one per cent of the teaching was good or better with 16 per cent judged to be very good or excellent. The few unsatisfactory lessons were found in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching for the children under five, which gives particular emphasis to the language and social development of the children, is very good. The quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is good. This high quality teaching enables the pupils to make good progress in most subjects. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and this help to ensure that the pupils make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by well-focused teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all of the pupils. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education and is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. There are weaknesses in the pupils' personal, social and health education; the school does not fully meet statutory requirements with regard to its sex and drugs education policies and with regard to the daily act of collective worship.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very good. All of the pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Individual education plans are extremely detailed and relevant to each pupil.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision is good and the pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' personal development is good overall. The staff provide good role models and school rules are well observed. The pupils' social and moral development are well promoted. The provision for raising the pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring the pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. The school carefully monitors the progress of each pupil, but is inconsistent in its use of assessment information to match the work set to pupils of different abilities.

The school has cultivated a good working relationship with the parents. The parents' contribution to the pupils' progress through their support both at home and in school is very good. The community holds Mytham Primary in high regard and the school is oversubscribed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and senior staff are very good. As a team, they provide a clear sense of educational direction and their work strongly supports the pupils' progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils almost all of its statutory requirements and provides good support for the school. The governors work hard to ensure that the school maintains its standing in the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school includes success criteria in its improvement plan and has established clear priorities for development. It has taken very effective action to meet its targets, particularly with regard to raising standards and enhancing its resources and accommodation.
The strategic use of resources	The school has a clear strategic view of future developments. Its educational priorities are very well supported through its financial planning. The school considers its new appointments very carefully and is an effective trainer of new personnel.

There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best • The teaching is good • Their children are making good progress • Their children like school • The school is well led and managed • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons • Information about how their children are getting on

The parents overwhelmingly support the work of the school. The substantial majority endorse each aspect of school life and report that their children enjoy school. A small minority of parents expressed a concern that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. This opinion is not supported by evidence from the inspection. Inspectors judge that the information provided by the school is satisfactory and find Mytham to be an effective school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The children's attainment covers a wide range on entry to the school but it is average overall. The children respond well to the teaching in the reception classes and the quality of learning is good. They make good progress in their personal and social development. The children rapidly settle into work routines in pairs and groups, share resources and quickly establish good relationships with their friends and the adults who work with them. By the end of the reception year, the children are beginning to read, turning the pages of books correctly and recognising words. Many children write their name and are forming letters well. They are beginning to understand number and use mathematical language such as "more than" and "less than". They make good progress in their physical development and show agility in their movement.
2. The National Curriculum Key Stage 1 assessments for 1999 indicate that pupils' attainments were well above the national average in reading and below in mathematics. In writing, standards were close to average. These standards reflect the comparison to the achievements of pupils in similar schools. Provisional results for tests this year show that the action taken by the school has resulted in improved scores in writing and mathematics. An analysis of the pupils' work across the curriculum indicates that standards are in line with the national average in mathematics and above average in English. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively supported and helped to make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment and achieve standards which are in line with the national average in most subjects at the end of Key Stage 1.
3. The National Curriculum assessments for eleven-year-olds in 1999 indicate that standards were above average in English and science and well above in mathematics. An analysis of the school's 1999 performance data indicates that the pupils' achievements were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and broadly similar in science when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are above average in these subjects. This represents a significant success for the school.
4. Although test results for eleven-year-olds at Mytham have fluctuated over the last four years, particularly in Key Stage 1, standards are improving in the core subjects by the time the pupils leave school. This is mainly due to the structure provided by the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the more effective teaching. The school consistently meets the targets set for its eleven-year-old pupils. The school's careful monitoring of the teaching in the daily literacy and numeracy lessons to evaluate their effect demonstrates that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
5. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above average in speaking and listening. They have a good command of language and by the time they leave school, most express themselves confidently. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in this element of English. Teachers modify their questions to take account of their abilities. The pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and they confidently participate in discussions.
6. Pupils make good progress in reading in the infant department. The sharp decline in standards, as measured in national tests between 1996 and 1998, has been arrested. By the time they leave school, they demonstrate a good range of skills. These include skimming text to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. Their reference skills enable them to research information, although there are too few opportunities for the pupils to use these reading skills independently.

7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their reading and in writing through appropriately focused strategies to meet their specific needs. An additional factor to this good progress is the effective support they receive from classroom assistants and from the well-briefed voluntary helpers. These pupils benefit from detailed individual programmes to improve their reading skills. The good quality of teaching contributes significantly to their rate of learning.
8. Writing standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1. Although progress in the acquisition of writing skills is good in reception, this has not been maintained consistently as the pupils move through the key stage. However, the school has made writing a priority area for action to rectify weaknesses in this element of English with some success. The pupils' handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, and punctuation are improving. There are some examples where the pupils are using their newly learned skills to extend their writing in other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' attainment in writing is above the national average. Pupils write well in a range of forms with a good understanding of grammar.
9. By the time they leave school standards in mathematics are above average. This represents good progress in Key Stage 2 as standards at the age of seven are close to average. The school has successfully introduced the Numeracy Strategy and is now well placed to continue to improve. The pupils are responding well to their numeracy lessons and the emphasis on mental mathematics. They are making good progress in calculations involving tables and measurement. The pupils make good progress in acquiring and using an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They are skilled in collecting data but do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects.
10. The pupils make satisfactory progress in science at Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven standards are close to the national average. The younger pupils engage in practical investigations and can classify materials according to their properties. They respond well to the good quality teaching in Key Stage 2 and make good progress. By the age of eleven standards are above average. The pupils engage in investigations and apply sound scientific methods to their conclusions. They have a good depth of understanding and use their knowledge to make valid predictions in their experiments.
11. By the time most pupils leave the school, their understanding of information technology is in line with national expectations. Although the teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities to use computers to support learning, very good use is made of the recently established computer suite and the skills of the part-time information technology tutor to extend the range of expertise of the Year 2-6 pupils. Furthermore the pupils now have many opportunities to experience control technology, to access the Internet for information and to use information technology for modelling.
12. The pupils' attainment in religious education is average at the end of both key stages. By studying a carefully chosen series of themes the pupils learn about Christianity and acquire a knowledge and understanding of its origin, the bible and its content. They also learn about the other principal religions of the world.
13. The pupils' achievement in history and geography is satisfactory in both key stages. These subjects are supported by schemes of work and field visits that stimulate the pupils' interest. Standards in art and design and technology are supported by clear schemes of work and standards are close to average. Pupils achieve well in physical education and music. Their achievements in both subjects are well supported by opportunities to join with pupils from other schools in competitive and celebratory events. The pupils sing with enthusiasm and clarity and this makes a strong contribution to their sense of belonging to their school community.
14. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated and make good progress. The higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged in most classes in English and mathematics, but more could be done to match the work set more closely to their abilities in other subjects. The attainment of boys and girls is broadly similar in the core subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Attitudes to the school are good overall. The majority of pupils are keen and eager to come to school, and this was confirmed at the parents' meeting and their response to the questionnaire. Pupils show an interest in school life, and are involved in the extra-curricular activities the school provides, for example netball and football. Visiting speakers enrich the opportunities open to pupils, for example that of a local Imam.
16. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and show respect for property. No evidence of graffiti or vandalism was seen anywhere in the school buildings. Pupils form good relationships with each other, their teachers, and other adults, and are dependable as monitors for a range of duties at playtime and dinnertime. Some of these tasks involve caring for the younger pupils, and this is carried out responsibly and well. There was no evidence of bullying or racist behaviour during the inspection week, however there was some evidence of sexist role models when a teacher chose only girls to read the witches' parts in Macbeth despite enthusiastic offers from boys.
17. Most pupils are able to reflect on their actions and the impact they have on others. This was reinforced during an assembly with the theme of "We all need each other." Pupils are taught to respect other peoples' values and beliefs, especially during their studies of other faiths in religious education.
18. Attendance rates in the last academic year exceeded the national average. The school is maintaining the good standards reported in the last inspection. Punctuality is good for the great majority of pupils. A small number of pupils arrive after the start of the morning session but before the registers are closed.
19. There have been no exclusions during the previous academic year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. At the time of the inspection, three well-established members of the teaching staff were on maternity leave and had been replaced by temporary teachers. However, the overall quality of teaching is good and it enables the pupils to make good progress throughout the school. In 96 per cent of lessons the teaching was satisfactory or better. Sixty per cent of teaching was good or better with 16 per cent judged to be very good and occasionally excellent. Only four per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory and this was found in Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement on the ten per cent noted in the last inspection. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and this helps to ensure that the pupils make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
21. The high quality of teaching noted in the reception classes at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The staff work very well as a team and successfully integrate the children into the welcoming atmosphere of the reception classrooms. They set challenging and interesting tasks, which are well linked to the early learning goals. At the time of the inspection, the reception teachers had planned a range of stimulating activities based on the theme of "The Three Bears". Their planning shows a good awareness of the recent national revisions to the curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage and the staff clearly understand the needs of young children. They have high expectations of their quality of work and behaviour. All members of the team place a strong emphasis on the use of good quality language. This enables the children to achieve well in reading and speaking and listening as they progress through the school. They, more than any other age group within the school, encourage the children to work independently and to make choices in their work.
22. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently good and builds successfully on the children's achievements in the Foundation Stage. The teachers' planning is well structured and lessons have clear learning objectives. The planning takes account of the range of ability of the

pupils in each class. The literacy and numeracy hours are taught effectively. Support staff and parent helpers are involved in the planning and provide good support for individuals and small groups of pupils. For example in a literacy lesson in Year 1, support staff help the pupils to understand the idea of sentences in group work; in other lessons they guide pupils individually when working on the computer. Throughout the infant classes, the teachers make skilful use of questioning to challenge the pupils' level of thinking and have high expectations of the pupils' achievement. In almost all lessons the pace of learning is good.

23. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good overall with occasional lessons where the teaching is very good or excellent. This enables the pupils to make good progress in most subjects. The teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this to good effect when dealing with questions posed by the pupils. They plan a stimulating range of activities and use a range of teaching methods. This motivates the pupils and ensures that they remain interested in their work. This is particularly true of literacy and numeracy lessons where several lessons were good. An example of very successful teaching, characterised by high expectations of pupils' behaviour and endeavour, was evident in a Year 4 physical education lesson. The teacher shared the target for the lesson at the start and this gave the pupils a focus. The expectations were high and praise was used effectively to boost the esteem of the pupils and to encourage higher achievement. Plenary sessions are used effectively in many lessons to reinforce what the pupils have learned and to clear misconceptions. In most Key Stage 2 classes the behaviour of the pupils is well managed, although in one Year 5 class the discipline lacks the rigour to ensure that the pupils remain on task throughout each lesson. Other lessons are impaired by a sufficient lack of challenge and pace and so the pupils' learning does not build successfully on what they already know and understand.
24. In most classes, the teachers use the pupils' work to create interesting displays and to set good examples of what can be achieved. They plan their work successfully to ensure that the pupils' learning in one subject supports their work in others. For example, pupils in Year 6 use their skills in measuring to support their work on the solar system in science. In Year 4, the pupils need to use their knowledge of changing materials to support their experiment to determine the most suitable milk for making butter.
25. Although the teachers plan carefully to link different subjects to support learning, the potential of information technology is often neglected. Homework is used well throughout the school to support learning but information technology is not. Furthermore, many lesson plans lack specific learning objectives for groups of pupils of different ability. The most successful teaching occurs when teachers assess effectively whether their pupils have understood the work and achieved their target and then give them appropriate work to follow on. This occurs in classes in Key Stage 1, where the teachers carefully assess what individuals and groups of pupils have learned each day and modify their lesson plans accordingly. In less successful lessons, the pupils are required to cover more work at the same level rather than more complex ideas if they finish the original task. Marking is not always sharply focused and there is often no expectation that the pupil should revisit the work. In the best examples, the teachers have marked the pupils' work so that they know exactly what they need to do to improve.
26. Pupils with English as an additional language are enabled to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good and often, very good progress through the effective support they receive in class. These pupils are identified early and intervention plans are put swiftly into effect. Their individual education plans are relevant and show step-by-step learning programmes. These are evaluated on a daily basis and progress reports are discussed with those involved with these pupils. Very good liaison is maintained between support staff and teachers so that everyone is aware of each pupil's needs to ensure continuity and progression in their learning. The teachers successfully modify questions in lessons to meet these pupils' specific needs. These pupils participate in plenary sessions to share and to celebrate their work with others.

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

27. The pupils experience a good curriculum with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage for children in the reception classes and the planning for pupils with special educational needs. These strengths reflect a high level of improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in the infants and juniors have a broad, balanced and enriching curriculum which meets statutory requirements for the teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has recently increased the amount of taught time for pupils in both key stages and lessons begin promptly. The curriculum is enhanced by a good programme of visits related to many of the subjects being studied by the pupils and an equally good programme of extra-curricular activities.
28. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented in both key stages and the curriculum planning provides greater consistency between year groups. The yearly and half-termly plans are suitably detailed. Literacy and numeracy are integrated well into other subjects. For example, in science the pupils know a wide range of scientific vocabulary and realise that the recording of scientific experiments requires a different style of writing. In physical education, the pupils listen carefully to instructions and respond well. Numeracy is effectively used in science, especially in bar graphs, charts and measurements. However, there are insufficient opportunities for extending this to line graphs and independent recording.
29. There is an equally high level of consistency in curriculum planning within each year group and the yearly and half-termly plans are appropriately detailed in all other subjects.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, both in the level and use of specialist support, effective links with outside agencies and parents, and the use of specialist equipment. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are very well met, and this ensures that they have equality of access to the curriculum. Individual education plans are extremely detailed and relevant to each pupil. The planned objectives are clear and reflected in the activities planned and specialist equipment used. Exceptionally good examples of the active involvement of the special needs assistants were observed during lessons, particular strengths being their shared involvement with pupils during the teachers' introduction to the literacy lessons and the inclusion of their notes in the teachers' records. However, this level of planning is not consistently good for either gifted and talented pupils or higher attaining pupils, apart from in the literacy and numeracy hours.
31. The school has recently developed a detailed curriculum for information and communication technology that refers to the development of skills and to the use in other subjects. There are good resources for information and communication technology. However, during the inspection week, although there was very effective teaching from the non-teaching specialist, there were insufficient opportunities in class for pupils to either practise and refine skills or apply them to other subjects. The resources have recently been bought and the school has effectively used the resources from the National Grid for Learning and Local Education Authority support.
32. The school provides a good range of homework activities which successfully enhance pupils' learning. This is particularly good in literacy and numeracy but inconsistent in science, although where science homework is planned it is of an exceptionally high standard. These findings reflect parental views about homework.
33. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits, especially those associated with history, geography, science and sport, and some pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in residential visits. Some displays in school of pupils' art work reflected the value of a visit last term to the Lowry Exhibition and the Museum in Manchester. Although the school nurse, a local librarian and a sports personality, and parents and friends visit the school regularly, there are fewer other visitors to school.
34. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, especially music and sport. These include football, netball, chess, rounders, athletics, choir and rehearsals for drama and music productions, and fishing. They provide good opportunities for pupils to work in different groups and with pupils of similar interests and to extend their experiences beyond the classroom. Pupils

also have frequent opportunities to be involved in team sports against other schools. They take part in community events such as the Bolton Music Festival and school performances, especially Christmas celebrations and Harvest Festivals and to establish good links with the parents.

35. The school has satisfactory community links, particularly in sport, music and English. Good examples include the one-week's coaching by members of Bolton Wanderers Football Club, links with sporting agencies and the local cricket club, and the involvement of senior citizens in concerts.
36. An unsatisfactory aspect of the curriculum is the provision for pupils personal, social and health education. Although there is a sex education policy, it is not developed into a progressive scheme of work and the scientific content of health education is not well reflected in pupils' work. However, physical education enhances pupils' knowledge of the need for exercise and the need for warming up and calming down exercises. The governors are aware of the unsatisfactory provision for drugs education in terms of detailed curriculum plans and this is being addressed by the senior management team.
37. The curriculum positively promotes pupils' intellectual and physical development and in these aspects prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and adult life. The school is well respected in the local community, including the nearby comprehensive school, because of the high standards achieved by 11-year-old pupils, and this reflects the good curriculum planning.
38. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall, and this has maintained the standards achieved in the last inspection.
39. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. As in the last inspection daily acts of worship make a sound contribution, although opportunities are missed in some assemblies for encouraging a deeper emotional response. The school currently fails to carry out its statutory duty to ensure that all pupils, except those whose parents exercise their right to withdraw their pupils, attend a daily act of worship. Pupils are frequently withdrawn for additional teaching in English and mathematics.
40. The quality of provision for the moral development of pupils is good. Pupils are encouraged to develop concepts of right and wrong from an early age. Good opportunities are taken in circle time with younger pupils to discuss issues and come to decisions. School rules are known and followed by pupils. The behaviour policy is well understood by the pupils and almost all of the teachers maintain good standards of discipline. Reasons for good behaviour are clearly explained, and praise is well used in the majority of classrooms. Support systems are well established in Key Stage 1 and a merit system at Key Stage 2 celebrates good behaviour and attitudes.
41. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The emphasis on the development of those skills in the pupils' early stages in the school has a major impact on good relationships. Staff provide good role models. Assemblies provide sound support. For example, the theme for one week was friendship, consideration and inter-relationships. The planting of the John Hardman memorial tree and the placing of a plaque also helps to remind pupils of others. Older pupils take responsibility for acting as monitors round the school, and have the opportunity to attend an outdoor activity weekend. However, strong teacher direction and discipline limit the opportunities for pupils to exercise initiative. Pupils are involved in local community events such as the Little Lever Schools' Carol Concert and the Little Lever Gala, and fundraising events like the collection for Derian House Children's Hospice. Pupils participate in a range of sports and games that provide opportunities for developing social skills and taking part in inter-school sporting competitions
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound overall, and pupils from a variety of cultural backgrounds are well integrated. There is good provision to extend pupils' knowledge of their own region as part of their curriculum work in such subjects as English, history, geography, art, music, and religious education. Pupils visit a range of places in the area. For example, Year 2 visit the Lowry Museum at Salford to look at paintings, Southport as part of their work on geography and to look at red squirrels, and Bolton Museum to find out about Ancient Egypt. All

pupils from Year 2 upwards visit Little Lever Library. There are good links with the community, especially the police, and pupils meet visitors from the area. For example, Year 3 has a link with Bolton Wanderers, and last year an artist in residence provided drama workshops. The school places less emphasis on the preparation of pupils for their future role in a multi-cultural society but provision here is sound. In their study of religious education, pupils visit the Halliwell mosque, a Hindu temple in Bolton and a Jewish Exhibition Museum. There is an opportunity to study French in Year 6 and through Le Club Francais. The study of music from a range of cultures enhances both their cultural and multi-cultural development and good teaching consolidates this.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and welfare. The policy is due to be reviewed shortly. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection and has established appropriate links with Social Services. The programme for training for all new staff and up-dating for all staff, to include learning support and mid-day supervisors, is not fully up-to-date.
44. Satisfactory health and safety procedures are in place. Certain aspects, such as annual risk assessment, are not yet formalised and built into the school development plan. The recently appointed governor for health and safety matters brings a wealth of relevant and recent expertise. The local authority policy contains advice on procedures for the use of force and restraint should they ever be necessary. There are adequate facilities for the treatment of any injuries. The medical room is used extensively for other purposes but is appropriate for use by pupils awaiting collection. Parents are made aware of any health concerns.
45. During an inspection of the premises, the stationery cupboard, also containing foodstuffs, was found to have an asbestos external lining on the door of an internal switchgear cupboard. The school had reported this to the appropriate authority during the previous academic year. Following discussion with the headteacher and health and safety governor, the cupboard has been emptied and closed.
46. Parents maintain that their children are well supported and that the school will respond to any pupil or parental concerns. Evidence from the inspection supports these opinions.
47. The procedures for monitoring attendance and lateness are very good. Class teachers complete registers accurately and promptly. Administrative staff support class teachers well by completing entries for pupils who arrive late. The education welfare officer is involved when necessary.
48. Good policies and procedures support the overall good behaviour. Regular staff know and apply the procedures well, including the use of awards and sanctions. Learning support staff and mid-day supervisors understand and use the procedures well and contribute to the school's orderly atmosphere. Parents report that one incident of bullying in the previous year was well and sympathetically controlled. Evidence from the inspection indicates that there is little evidence of bullying and procedures are in place to deal effectively with any incidents.
49. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development helps to promote good standards of learning. The school has effective procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development and improving behaviour. The teaching staff know their pupils well and have a good picture of their strengths and weaknesses.
50. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Baseline assessments begin from the time pupils enter the reception classes and provide a firm foundation of information on which to build the teaching of early learning goals. The school meets statutory requirements in recording and reporting pupils' progress. Annual formal assessment of mathematics and English, including numeracy and literacy, is carried on throughout the school, and all staff follow well-established procedures in recording results in a standardised format. Further testing of English and mathematics is carried out in the early spring to check on progress.

51. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory. The two assessment co-ordinators have established effective procedures to monitor progress in English, mathematics and science. The tests are used to show whether pupils are making appropriate progress and to identify and target groups of pupils who demonstrate capacity for improvement. Some such pupils are given effective and focused help by the deputy headteacher. The detailed analysis of the National Curriculum tests enables the school to track pupil progress and compare the achievements of boys and girls. This is beginning to inform action to raise standards, and identify aspects of the mathematics and English curriculum which need more reinforcement. A current weakness is the inconsistency between teacher assessment and the results of national tests. Assessed work is not regularly and consistently moderated with other teachers to further improve the reliability of teachers' assessment skills.
52. The procedures for placing pupils on the special needs register are effective and consistent. Assessment of the needs of such pupils is well carried out. Their individual education plans have specific targets and these are referred to regularly by teachers. These targets are regularly reviewed and the pupils' progress is carefully assessed.
53. The use of assessment information to match the work set in lessons for the different ability groups, particularly the higher-attainers, requires further development. The use of assessment information to assess whether pupils have understood the work and to inform the follow-up teaching of pupils of different abilities is generally sound in English and mathematics. Even here, however, an example was seen of all pupils in one Year 6 class working on the same worksheet on verbs, even though they were of widely differing abilities. In most other subjects, especially at Key Stage 2, practice is inconsistent. Some teachers do not assess pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills sufficiently effectively to provide more challenge for able pupils, or to set work in lessons which is more clearly differentiated. On-going assessment is not consistently used to modify and change short term planning. In written marking of work, some teachers provide very limited feedback, and marking lacks a sharp focus. In the best examples seen teachers have marked pupils' work so that marking clearly identifies the subject skills or understanding pupils have achieved, and shows pupils exactly what they have to do to improve. There is currently no marking policy to help improve standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. There are some very strong features in the school's partnership with parents. A significant majority of parents responding to the questionnaire feel comfortable in approaching members of staff with questions or concerns. Inspection evidence indicates that this view is accurate. A very small number of parents were unhappy with the closeness of the link between the school and parents. This view is not substantiated by inspection evidence.
55. The school receives very strong support from a small but dedicated committee at the centre of the Parents' Support Association (PSA). Many parents attend functions organised by the committee. Substantial sums of money are raised to benefit the school and its pupils. The sums raised are far in excess of the average for similar organisations, ranging recently between £8,000.00 and £10,000.00 per year. The money is spent after close consultation between the headteacher and committee members. Members of the PSA have the right of veto and have exercised it when they feel that money could better be allocated to other projects. Parents provide welcome assistance to class teachers on a regular basis, particularly in Key Stage 1.
56. The quality of information to parents is satisfactory. There is a home school agreement and a homework policy. Reading diaries are used in all year groups and contain parents' and class teachers' comments. Newsletters are published monthly and each term include information about the curriculum and topic work. Annual reports comply with statutory requirements. However, as commented upon after the last inspection, they still do not focus sufficiently upon what pupils need to do to improve their work. Parents have one formal meeting to discuss their children's progress. If they wish to discuss the content of their child's annual report, this can be arranged.

57. The annual governors' report to parents complies with statutory requirements in all but one aspect. It does not contain the school's targets for Key Stage 2 assessments, which the governors recently amended, upwards. The prospectus does not contain specific information about alternative provision for pupils withdrawn from religious education and collective worship. One pupil was regularly observed sitting, unsupervised, in the corridor outside the school hall.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The school benefits from very good leadership. The headteacher has vision, drive and determination. He maintains a good overview of the work of the school and is sensitive to its standing in the community. The governors and staff work well together and provide a clear educational direction. The school development plan, drawn up in consultation with staff and governors, clearly defines a programme for further improvement. These educational priorities are supported by shrewd financial management, including a planned overspend.
59. The headteacher and the newly appointed deputy complement each other well. They have clearly defined roles and use their skills effectively to motivate their colleagues to strive for higher standards. The management structures, which have improved significantly since the last inspection, foster a strong team spirit that is based on a commitment to achieve further school improvement. The headteacher is particularly effective in attracting additional funding into the school and in ensuring that the budget is wisely spent. Funding has been strategically allocated to ensure that the pupil/adult ratio is maintained at a favourable level. This has resulted in pupils receiving quality support from support staff that has contributed to their progress. For example, an additional member of staff has been employed on a part-time basis specifically to support the pupils using the recently established computer suite. Standards in information technology are clearly rising as a result.
60. The school is successful in meeting its aims. There is a positive, caring ethos that promotes high standards of academic attainment and personal development. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are happy in school and share its values. Results of national tests are monitored by gender to ensure that all pupils enjoy equality of opportunity and are reaching their potential.
61. The school has successfully addressed the issues arising from the last inspection. Furthermore, it has been particularly successful in raising standards of attainment in English and mathematics by the time the pupils leave school. There has been a significant improvement in the numbers of pupils who are achieving the higher grades. At the age of eleven, the pupils attain standards in these subjects that are above those pupils from similar schools. Mytham consistently meets its targets for attainment in national tests.

62. The high quality of curriculum planning is an improvement compared with the findings of the previous inspection and reflects the parents' views. The headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators have accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum of the school and used their findings to guide future reviews and amended planning. Detailed plans are in place by all curriculum co-ordinators to update their subject plans to include Curriculum 2000.
63. The school has successfully introduced the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. It has added structure to its curriculum and refined its assessment procedures to assemble detailed information about each pupil's performance. However, it has yet to ensure that this data is used consistently to match the work set more closely to the different ability groups within each class and to build successfully on the pupils' prior attainment.
64. The school has made good progress in developing and implementing clear strategies and criteria for monitoring teaching and learning. Senior members of staff have undertaken training and guidelines have been produced to guide classroom observation. This is having a good impact on the quality of teaching and learning particularly in literacy and numeracy, where good practice has been shared.
65. The governing body provides good support. It meets almost all of its statutory requirements and has an efficient committee structure and these meet regularly. The governors' annual report for parents provides clear and useful information about the life of the school. The governors are committed to school improvement. There is a named governor who plays an active role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and the roles of literacy and numeracy governors have been allocated. Governors are actively involved in the recruitment and selection of new members of staff and have achieved a good balance of expertise and experience. Appraisal procedures are used to improve practice and there are effective arrangements to mentor newly appointed members of staff.
66. The school's financial procedures are very efficient and effective. The school has systems that can readily provide accurate financial information to guide the headteacher and governors in making their spending decisions. The most recent auditor's report for the school contained a few minor recommendations, which have been acted upon. The school seeks best value for money by comparing prices and evaluating the quality of its purchases and the services that are provided. The school provides very good value for money and is well placed to continue to improve.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. The headteacher, staff and governors should now:
 - (a) further develop the monitoring of teaching to share good practice. The focus should be the use of assessment information to match the work set more closely to the range of ability within each class, especially the higher attaining pupils (paragraphs 25,53, 63,113)
 - (b) ensure the school's marking policy is consistently applied to enable all of the pupils to improve their work (paragraphs 25, 53, 105)
 - (c) take steps to ensure that the school fully meets all statutory requirements especially with regard to the provision of sex and drugs education and compliance with the daily act of collective worship (paragraphs 36,39)
 - (d) improve standards in information technology by ensuring that the teachers plan more opportunities for the pupils to use computers in lessons (paragraphs 11, 25, 31).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	15	45	35	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	381
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	67

Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	58

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	28	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	22	21	22
	Total	50	49	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (86)	98 (81)	100 (79)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	28
	Girls	22	21	22
	Total	50	49	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	98 (89)	100 (93)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	28	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	42	44	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (89)	81 (84)	83 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	17	17	19
	Total	36	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (92)	67 (95)	72 (95)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	6
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	374
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	145

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	648513
Total expenditure	665443
Expenditure per pupil	1757
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9139
Balance carried forward to next year	-26069

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	270
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	34	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	27	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	37	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	44	8	0	3
The teaching is good.	73	27	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	47	12	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	36	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	22	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	47	7	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	27	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	32	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	34	19	0	12

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

68. Children under five complete the Foundation Stage of their learning in the two reception classes. The majority have attended a local nursery unit or playschool prior to their entry into Mytham. Most have reached the stage of social and emotional development expected of their ages when they begin school. Baseline assessment by the reception teachers indicates that standards in language and mathematical development are also broadly average on entry to school.
69. Children respond well to the very good provision planned for them. Teachers and nursery nurses work as a highly effective team, to provide exciting and relevant experiences in all areas of learning. Consequently children make good progress so that they are fully prepared and confident to approach the National Curriculum.
70. Positive links are established with parents. All are supportive of the school. There are opportunities for parents to learn about aspects of the curriculum and ways in which they can support their children at home.
71. The foundation year's staff have fully embraced the revised curriculum for children under five. The children's progress is systematically and carefully monitored throughout. The high standard of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

72. The children are happy to come to school. Feedback from parents indicates that children talk enthusiastically about their day and appear to have settled well to daily routines. This is borne out by the way children show positive approaches to their work and to developing relationships within the classroom. All approach adults confidently, share fairly and play happily alongside or with others. All are making good progress towards achieving the targets set for them.
73. Children are encouraged to listen well and to respond appropriately in discussion. For example, during circle time they know that they take turns to speak. They show respect for each other when working in groups. Children confidently select and try new activities such as tracing numbers and letters or painting.
74. Adults work enthusiastically as a team and their caring approach instils confidence in the children. This leads to children becoming more readily involved in their tasks and ultimately to their acceptance of more responsibility, for example when selecting or tidying up equipment.
75. The quality of teaching is very good. The personal development of the children is carefully nurtured. The reception year staff plan effectively to ensure all children have opportunities to develop socially and emotionally.

Communication, Language and Literacy

76. The children enjoy listening to stories. A real sense of wonder was created in one lesson when the teacher began to explore the contents of a story sack which were then used during the reading of *The Bear and The Picnic Lunch*. The children were enthralled, and enjoyed the added challenge of supplying key words during the story. Story books are a feature of the classrooms and readily accessible.
77. The quality of teaching is very good. Children are encouraged to express their ideas clearly, for example when describing to others what a sponge feels like when learning about their sense of touch. Teachers talk to children continually to promote conversation and consequently language development. They question children about what they do, or ask for example, "Why do you

think?"

78. Letter sounds are taught well by teachers and nursery nurses. A good range of interesting methods is used to encourage interest and achievement. For example a small group of children was fishing for plastic letters in a water tray in order to make up simple words which are meaningful to them such as bear or three. Most children know how books work. They turn pages carefully and understand that print conveys meaning. Some children attempt to write their own names, while others trace or use paint to practise letter formation.

Mathematical Development

79. Mathematical skills are taught very well and activities are carefully planned, being based on accurate assessment of prior skills. Standards currently meet the expectations for the ages of pupils. Almost all are in line to achieve or exceed the early learning goals.
80. Most pupils count up to ten objects and are beginning to recognise written numbers. Stories such as *The Three Bears* are used very effectively to consolidate understanding of number as well as nursery rhymes and songs. Activities where children match sets of objects to the correct number, or sort and match coloured teddy bears which they dig from the sand tray, provide interesting learning opportunities. Most know the mathematical names triangle, square and circle. Opportunities to empty or fill containers with sand or water develop the children's early understanding of measures.
81. The teachers and nursery nurses encourage positive attitudes. Activities are purposefully linked to current themes. By talking to children, teachers encourage them to think about what they do. This helps children's understanding and moves their learning on.

Knowledge and Understanding of The World

82. The children's levels of understanding of the world around is broadly average when they begin reception classes. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to explore things around them. A focus during the inspection was exploring their sense of touch. For example children experience the smoothness of clay and water and the roughness of a dry sponge. Teachers questioned children, encouraging them to say what it felt like.
83. Children use a range of tools and construction sets to gain a better understanding of how things work. They experience materials such as playdough and wet sand which they can mould into different shapes. Computer skills are developed well through the use of simple programs that challenge children's control of the mouse. Control toys such as "Roamer" enable children to enter a program and control movements for example, when sending it to reach the *Three Bears' Cottage*. Story books such as the "Bear Hunt" are used effectively to develop children's understanding of directional language and as a starting point for their exploration of the outside environment.

Physical Development

84. The teachers and nursery nurses make best use of available space for children's play and physical development and the quality of teaching is good. Both classes have timetabled sessions in the school hall. Although the range of outdoor play equipment is limited pending the completion of new accommodation, what is available is used well. Consequently children make good progress. They show good control of their bodies when they run, hop and skip. The children are aware of others around them and use space well. They keep their balance well when changing speed and direction. Teachers participate well in planned activities. This provides a good model and encourages children to work more purposefully. Language opportunities are used well, for example when children were taught the names of the body parts they use during the lesson.
85. In the classroom children handle implements such as pencils brushes and modelling tools

confidently and explore and shape malleable materials.

Creative Development

86. Children have reached appropriate stages of development for their ages and are well placed to reach the early learning goals. Teachers ensure that children can select from a good range of media to explore colour and texture in their creative work. Children demonstrate appropriate control when making bear collages with furry material and glue. Drawings and paintings show increasing observational skills and confidence when applying colour.
87. The children sing tunefully and respond well to loud and soft parts in the melody. The Three Bears' Cottage, provides good opportunities for role play, and children are extended in this area by their interaction with adults who support them by taking on one of the roles.

ENGLISH

88. Overall standards in English are above average by the time the pupils leave school. The quality of learning is good. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs receive appropriate support and are enabled to make good progress.

Speaking and Listening

89. By age seven, pupils have good standards of speaking and listening, which are above the national average. They speak clearly, ask questions, follow instructions, sequence events and have a good vocabulary. They appropriately alter their speech according to the context and audience. Most pupils express themselves clearly and confidently when sharing their ideas. For example, in English when talking about poetry, and comparing different rhyming words. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils communicate fluently, express their ideas confidently and adapt their form of speech to their audience's needs. For example, when talking about Macbeth they are able to speak from a character's point of view. Pupils use standard English and grammar correctly. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Reading

90. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils attain good standards in reading, which are well above the national average. During guided reading time, pupils read shared text together, accurately and fluently. Phonic knowledge is developed more in reception and Year 1 and this reflects the impact of the literacy hour. The most able pupils read with fluency and expression, and talk confidently about books, authors and characters. They explain how to find a book in the library. The least able pupils are uninspired by high proportion of very old reading scheme books and rely heavily on help when unable to read unfamiliar words.
91. By the end of Key Stage 2, nearly all pupils attain standards which are above the national average. The most fluent readers pronounce complicated words correctly. Pupils compare books and authors; discuss plots and characters and express opinions about how the story influences the listener. They use a variety of texts both fiction and non-fiction. Pupils use their reading skills well across other subjects of the curriculum. For example, they spend time using the local library to research subjects for their homework. They use a thesaurus to identify key words such as comedy, tragedy, and farce. Most pupils in both key stages including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

Writing

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards in writing which are in line with the national average. Most pupils in Year 2 form letters accurately, spell many words correctly and express themselves clearly. They successfully identify nouns, and verbs. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use joined handwriting effectively. Their spelling is largely correct and stories have a good range of

vocabulary and a sequence of events. Stories and poems read to pupils have begun to influence their own style of writing. For example when learning the conventions of writing poetry, rhyming couplets and verse many pupils use dictionaries successfully to find unknown words. In writing about punishments given to "the boys," their response to the story is relevant, interesting, and well punctuated. They use capital letters, full stops, and question marks, and sentences form a sequence.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' attainment in writing is above the national average. Pupils write in a good range of forms and good use is made of punctuation, paragraphs and speech marks. Examples of this can be found in the writing Year 5 pupils produced on characterisation, and the writing of "Blurb," to interest other readers in a book. Pupils' skills in writing are developing well across some subjects. For example in religious education, Year 4 pupils write about Moses and The Ten Commandments, and the Five Pillars Of Faith in Islam. They show good progress in their writing when using computers to consolidate their knowledge of double consonants in spelling words.
94. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to their learning are good and sometimes very good. Their behaviour is good and they work hard. They settle quickly to the tasks set, concentrate well, and are proud of their work. Pupils have very good relationships with their teachers. They enjoy the literacy hour, particularly the discussion with adults and other pupils.
95. The quality of teaching is good, overall. In 47 per cent of lessons teaching was good or very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and clear objectives for pupils' learning. They manage pupils' behaviour well; establish good relationships and value pupils' contributions. The best lessons are characterised by teachers providing challenging introductions and maintaining a lively pace. For example, in Year 1 vocabulary work, the teacher uses very good resources and questions to challenge and improve pupils' knowledge and use of the common words. In year 4, following work on revising features of a play script, the teacher uses individual whiteboards to involve all pupils in writing past and present tense verbs. Teachers consistently give pupils positive encouragement but fail to identify areas for development when marking work. They often use effective questioning to assess pupils' levels of understanding. However they do not use the information gained to support future learning.
96. The school has made a good start to the National Literacy Strategy and the potential for development is good. However, considering the pupils' prior attainment, some of the work lacks challenge for the more able pupils. Weekly plans for the literacy hour are satisfactory although they lack consistency. The co-ordinators are committed to raising standards, especially in writing through monitoring the teaching of English. This process is at an early stage of development. No regular moderation of work takes place, neither is there a portfolio of exemplar work in order to ensure consistency across age groups. The co-ordinators are aware of the need to challenge the high attaining pupils and have recently written an action plan to ensure that school-based concerns, especially those relating to writing and the exclusive use of a published scheme, are addressed.
97. The pupils' literacy skills are well-incorporated into science and this is reflected in their accurate use of scientific vocabulary, their ability to follow instructions and discuss their observations, and answers to written questions. While pupils understand that recording of experiments is a different format for literacy, there are insufficient opportunities for them to independently record their findings. Good use is made of books in science for research skills.
98. Resources for English are satisfactory overall, although the prescriptive use of the published English scheme, limits pupils' progress. Although the library has benefited from additional resources in the last year, the accommodation and provision are unsatisfactory especially at Key Stage 2. There are insufficient books of good quality and it is little used. The library co-ordinator has worked hard to catalogue all the existing library stock onto the Dewey system and has created a useful guide to enable pupils to find information independently.

MATHEMATICS

99. The work seen during the inspection confirms that standards at the age of eleven are above average. At Key Stage 1, standards are broadly in line with expectation currently but there are signs of improvement, particularly in the numbers of pupils likely to attain a higher than average level. The school has identified the need to improve attainment for more able pupils and positive measures are now in place. For example groups of pupils are targeted for extra tuition. Assessment results are carefully analysed to identify areas of weakness in the pupils' knowledge and skills, and a more challenging curriculum is planned to extend those able to attain higher levels.
100. Pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of numbers. For example they count on and back in tens from a given number. They show a clear understanding of number patterns when using a 100 square to add or subtract 10, 20 or 30. They know number bonds to 20 and mentally calculate addition and subtraction problems. Pupils know properties of shape, and the language of measurement such as heavier, lighter and longer, shorter.
101. Pupils in Year 6 already have a good understanding of place value, using numbers up to 6 digits. They use a range of mental and written methods to solve problems. For example in one lesson pupils solved division problems by subtracting multiples of the divisor, breaking the calculations down into simple processes. Pupils make reasonable estimates of results by rounding numbers to 10, 100, or 1000. They know the multiplication tables and understand that answers to division problems can be checked by using the inverse process.
102. Number skills are taught well throughout the school. The pupils learn a good range of strategies to complete written and mental calculations. They explore number patterns and learn their multiplication tables well. On the evidence of pupils previous work however there is less emphasis on mathematical investigation of shape and measure and of data handling, particularly in the practical application of those skills in other areas of the curriculum. Although numeracy skills are appropriately used for bar charts and measurement, particularly in science, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to independently record their findings numerically. Information technology is used mainly in Key Stage 1 to consolidate number skills. Its use, however, does not feature strongly in mathematics planning throughout the school.
103. Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. They work hard and are eager to do well. This reflects the confidence and enthusiasm of the teaching particularly since the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy.
104. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the lessons seen over 60 per cent were good or better. However, there was a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Where teaching is strongest, good classroom routines have been established, so pupils know what is expected of them. Lesson objectives are clear and manageable so pupils know at the outset what they are to learn. Good relationships with pupils instil confidence and they are eager to do well. The teachers' expectations are high. Their questioning is challenging, and activities are prepared which brings out the best from all ability groups. Consequently all pupils gain new knowledge and skills at a good pace. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, lessons do not start promptly because of the pupils' restlessness and noise. Learning objectives are not clear, so pupils do not have specific targets for achievement in the lesson. Behaviour becomes increasingly disturbing, with many pupils off task. As a result, learning for the majority is unsatisfactory because they do not make enough progress.
105. The subject is managed well by the two co-ordinators who have worked hard to implement a revised scheme which reflects the demands of the Numeracy Strategy. Good analysis of Key Stage 1 assessment data has resulted in positive action to improve standards. This good use of assessment data is not evident throughout the school. In some classes more able pupils are given more work at the same level, rather than more challenging work based on accurate

assessment of their abilities. Marking is inconsistent. At best teachers' comments are evaluative and help pupils towards new targets. Such examples however are scarce. For the most part marking consists of a tick, and does not show how improvements can be made.

SCIENCE

106. Standards in science are good overall but higher at the end of Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection.
107. At the end of Key Stage 1, particular strengths are in the pupils' understanding of living things and in their knowledge of materials. They know the main external parts of the human body, physical features of a wide range of animals and identify the main parts of flowering plants. They identify a wide range of materials and describe and classify them accurately in terms of texture and colour. They know whether materials are manufactured or natural. However, they do insufficient investigations especially concerning reversible and irreversible changes. They are not being sufficiently challenged by the tasks presented and this is reflected in the lesson plans which outline a clear objective and related activities but do not include more challenging work for the higher attaining pupils.
108. At the end of Key Stage 2, the school's policy on withdrawing the higher attaining pupils for a weekly science lesson has a positive impact on their attainment, not only because of the small group but because the teaching gives an excellent level of challenge in investigations. This enhances the pupils' confidence and results in very high levels of attainment and excellent qualities of learning. The unsatisfactory element is the fact that in the whole class lessons observed the level of challenge for these pupils was unsatisfactory.
109. At this key stage, many of the pupils are already working at a level usually expected of pupils about to leave the primary school. Their strengths lie in their well-developed skills in understanding food chains and use of accurate vocabulary in terms of predators and prey. Their knowledge of physical features of many plants and animals is well applied to using keys and grouping and classifying living things. They understand similarities and differences in the main stages of life cycles of animals and flowering plants and accurately describe the process of metamorphosis. They understand the processes of evaporation and condensation, apply this knowledge to the water cycle and to how mixtures of soluble and insoluble substances can be separated. At the end of the key stage pupils know the planets of the solar system. Throughout Key Stage 2 the investigations associated with plants and animals are good, especially in observing, making comparisons and predicting. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities independently to identify the essential features of fair tests and investigate independently. They are aware of safety issues concerning electricity.
110. Overall, pupils make good progress; it is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good in most classes at Key Stage 2. Good progress is consistently made in Years 4 and 5 but the quality of work and progress is inconsistent between the classes in Year 6 in terms of the investigations planned and the level of independent work. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the high quality of support and suitable tasks.
111. The pupils are interested in science, they enjoy the lessons and answer questions enthusiastically. Most pupils concentrate well and use reference books effectively when finding out new information.
112. The quality of teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. The teachers' planning is clear, relevant to the topic and relates well to most of the pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain the purpose of each lesson clearly. They organise their resources well and ensure that pupils complete the tasks given. Teachers organise pupils well and this ensures that all activities are completed, that pupils work conscientiously and acquire a good level of scientific knowledge. Additional planning and very good use of classroom support and additional resources ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress

in relation to the targets set for them and in science generally. The teachers maintain the pupils' interest by lively discussion and the range of information given. Effective use is made of a wide range of visits to enhance pupils' scientific understanding. The additional teaching for the higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 has a very positive effect on attainment and rate of progress and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection.

113. Common weaknesses in lessons include the lack of more challenging work for higher attaining pupils and insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations. Although pupils work in groups in most lessons, they are involved in the same activities most of the time. This reflects the fact that the pupils' previous skills and individual levels of understanding are not taken sufficiently well into account when planning lessons. The teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is significantly below the test results and this reflects some inaccuracies in knowledge of pupils' levels of achievement. There are insufficient opportunities to use information and control technology in either research or recording. Homework is not given on a sufficiently regular basis but when used it is very challenging and impacts on the pupils' understanding. While investigations are planned for each aspect of science, there is an emphasis on observation to the detriment of the pupils' devising their own experiments. However, where excellent levels of challenge are given pupils take responsibility for their own learning and the dynamic rate of questioning resulted in excellent levels of investigation and use of data. Pupils use their reasoning skills very well and have a detailed understanding of their levels of success and the teachers' expectations. Pupils' work is always marked regularly and pupils are praised where necessary but there are insufficient comments which encourage pupils to achieve higher standards of presentation or increase their rate of working.

ART

114. At the end of both key stages standards are in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. There is a systematic approach to the teaching of skills such as observational drawing and printing techniques that are developed well as pupils progress through the school. For example Year 2 pupils' charcoal drawings of natural objects show good observational skills. Year 3 pupils attempt more complex drawings of peacock feathers with pastels. Year 5 pupils produce commendable still life drawings based on the work of Harmen Steenwyck, which showed their understanding of line, tone and textures.
115. The works of well known artists such as William Morris, L.S. Lowry and Matisse are used effectively to inspire new ideas. Year 6 pupils for example studied William Morris designs before attempting their own drawings in that style. They then develop their skills by making clay tiles showing similar designs.
116. Work displayed around the school demonstrates that pupils explore line, pattern and shape appropriately. Collage materials and paint are used sensitively, showing pupils' understanding of how to mix colours in order to gain the best effect.
117. The subject is led satisfactorily. The current scheme offers useful guidance to help teachers' planning but it has not yet been revised to meet the most recent requirements. The co-ordinator ensures that good resources are maintained. There are also plans to create an 'art trail' around the school, in order to heighten interest and awareness. There are no arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress.
118. In the lessons observed, teaching overall is good due to careful planning and good organisation of resources. The chosen activities interest the pupils and motivate them to work with care and they strive to produce their best work. The use of 'art buddies' in a Year 2 lesson was an effective strategy because it encouraged pupils to observe their friends' work critically, checking for details, and discussing how it might be improved.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with the national expectations. The school has maintained standards since the previous report. The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure pupils gain appropriate experiences in designing and making. Recently published national guidance is used effectively to support teachers' planning, though currently this does not fully take account of the most recent National Curriculum requirements.
120. At Key Stage 1, the pupils experiment with different materials, types of scissors and adhesives. Year 1 pupils draw simple pictures of the models they plan to make. By the end of the key stage, pupils construct models with simple mechanisms such as axles and wheels, as well as learning about food hygiene when making biscuits.
121. Early skills are developed appropriately in Key Stage 2. Year 3 pupils for example successfully made butter - linking the process of changing materials to what they learn in science lessons. Older pupils work with textiles and make their own musical instruments. Pupils learn to handle tools safely. Their use is well demonstrated in the pinewood nesting boxes made by those in Year 6.
122. In the lessons seen, teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons well, and organise resources to enable pupils reach the lesson objectives. In a Year 6 lesson for example, pupils were able to disassemble toy vehicles to see how they worked, prior to designing their own motorised models. As a result designs were more realistic and practical. Good relationships are established, which results in pupils working more confidently at sharing ideas and evaluating their work.
123. Effective co-ordination of the subject ensures that a good stock of resources is maintained. Monitoring of pupils' work provides an overall view of standards. As yet however there are no systems in place which allow pupils' skills to be assessed in order to monitor and support progress.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with that found in most schools nationally. Pupils, including those with special needs, learn effectively and make progress at the expected rate for their age and ability. The school has maintained the standards achieved by pupils at both key stages during the last inspection.
125. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are developing mapping skills, can follow simple directions, and recreate a route after listening to a story. They are able to place railway lines, station, roads, bus stops and roundabouts appropriately on the town plan. They have sound knowledge about housing in the area, and can compare it with housing in other countries. They know some geographical features in the locality. For example, most pupils have a working knowledge of local streets and can recognise differences between them. When they examine photographs of different housing types they can discuss them and observe differences in their design. More able pupils are able to discuss and confidently identify detached and semi-detached houses, terraces, flats and bungalows. They can record their work through drawing or by writing simple sentences.
126. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils make observations and write about their geography study using appropriate vocabulary, although they have few opportunities for extended writing. They understand the impact of natural disasters such as drought in the Sudan, volcanoes in Hawaii, or floods in Mozambique on the lives of people in the region and can discuss them sensitively. Most pupils can use an atlas and gazetteer effectively, recognise a range of mapping symbols, relate countries to continents, and capital cities to countries.

127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Organisation and discipline are generally good. In some lessons teachers provide insufficient challenge and expectations are too low. In one lesson seen, for example, the teacher briefly revised earlier work, and all the class then did the same mapping activities. Teachers generally display good subject knowledge, although the quantity and quality of presentation of pupils' work showed significant variation from class to class. Relations within the classroom are generally good, and this is a notable feature of lessons seen. Pupils particularly enjoy opportunities to learn when teachers provide first-hand experience, such as the trip to Southport in Year 2. When discussing their work, pupils display positive attitudes towards geography, and are enthusiastic about their work.
128. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic leadership in developing the subject and is clear about its future direction. She has worked hard to ensure that the Key Stage 1 curriculum has been updated and modified to fit the new Curriculum 2000, and has now begun to work on Key Stage 2. She is keen to encourage all, instead of just some, teachers to make better use of the potential of information technology to raise standards in geography.

HISTORY

129. In the last inspection, standards of attainment were in line with national expectations at the ends of both key stages. The quality of teaching was sound. The school has maintained the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils in the previous report.
130. At Key Stage 1, standards are satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils use common words and phrases relating to the passage of time and sequence events and artefacts from the past. They talk confidently about famous people they have studied, such as Christopher Columbus. They produce imaginative writing to show that they understand that life was different in Victorian times. They have good knowledge and understanding about the life of Florence Nightingale and can create a character profile of her. They know why she went to the Crimea, and can recognise the changes that have taken place in hospitals since then. They answer questions about her well and delight in explaining what they have learnt.
131. Pupils at Key Stage 2 maintain satisfactory progress over time. By the age of eleven, they have a satisfactory chronological understanding and talk confidently about centuries, decades, and dates, although not all can sequence the periods of history they have studied correctly. In Year 4 they visit Chester to find out about the Roman legionary fort at Deva, and examine artefacts and interpretations of history there to deepen their understanding of the Roman army. Older pupils listen to stories about the Second World War, and learn about bombing raids, their effects, and response to them. They have a good knowledge and understanding about the period, of events like the holocaust or people like Anne Frank. They study film evidence from the period to answer a range of questions about housing after the war and can ask sensible questions based on the evidence they have studied. They develop their research skills, mainly through text books and reference books, but also CD ROM and the Internet. They can communicate their findings effectively. They have fewer opportunities to ask and answer questions about sources of information such as written documents of the time or printed sources, paintings and photographs.
132. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the good lessons, the work is well planned, and careful questioning helps pupils to develop their historical inquiry skills and their understanding of chronology. Where teachers indicate what pupils are going to learn, and provide well-focused questions before listening to a historical story or watching a video, this has a positive effect on standards. Some teachers have adequate historical knowledge, but are less confident in the teaching of historical skills and approaches, and do not base their planning on the full range of history targets laid out in the National Curriculum. So they make less use of first-hand experience such as visits, film, photographs and pictures, and the handling of real evidence from the past. Where this is done well, teachers' expectations are generally higher, there is more challenge and variety in the work, and this leads to much more rapid acquisition of skills. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is associated with unfocused planning and poor class control and management, leading to the misbehaviour of some pupils.

133. The history policy and scheme are planned to be reviewed over the next term to meet the needs of Curriculum 2000. The co-ordinator's role is currently limited to informal consultation with teachers and the purchase and care of resources. The subject is generally well resourced. Currently there is insufficient guidance about the development of historical skills, and this impairs the pupils' attainment and progress.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

134. In the previous inspection the quality of much of the equipment for information technology was poor, which had a limiting effect on progress and attainment. The school has recently improved its stock of modern computers and set up a small computer suite in a dedicated room which can house small groups of pupils. This is having a clear effect on pupils' progress. Pupils now achieve sound standards in information and communications technology at both key stages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when the standards achieved by eleven were below the national expectation, and progress made at Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of what they have learnt although many still have insufficient opportunity to practise their skills to enable them to be fast and confident keyboard and mouse users. Special needs pupils, especially at Key Stage 1, are well supported. For example, one Year 2 child had dedicated use of a computer, and, with support, was able to work well on an English task.
135. Year 2 pupils can use word-processing software. Most can type in text for invitations to a Mothers' Day assembly, using space bar, capitals, return key and back space keys, and a given word list. They are confident users of control technology. For example, they can use Logo to draw two-dimensional shapes and can follow instructions. They can collect data about favourite fruit and record results on a data handling program. In geography, they are able to draw a computer-generated map of their own area, using a mouse to drag schematic buildings and street furniture to where they want it, and saving the resultant map. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their ability.
136. By the age of eleven, the pupils know how to save, retrieve and alter documents and files. They use the computer to search the Internet for information about the books they have read, write carefully word-processed book reviews, and can illustrate them using images from a clip-art gallery. The work is of a good standard and one of the pieces of work produced won a Bolton-wide competition. They know how to use e-mail and can send and receive it. They know the various tool bars and can navigate their way round a text, although the keyboard skills of many are quite slow. They can use a range of CD ROMs to find information, for example to search for information about Britain since 1930. Their use of data handling is above the level expected for their age. They can complete spreadsheets, use formulas to find the totals of rows and columns, and can explain a range of potential uses. Their work in control technology is not so extensive, and is at a level lower than expected at their age. This is because currently the school lacks the equipment to teach this strand in sufficient depth, although equipment has been ordered to remedy this.
137. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the computer suite, where modules of work are carefully structured. Children work through the modules following clear instructions, and are given good support from the learning support assistant, working under the overall direction of the curriculum co-ordinator. Inefficient use is made of information technology in the majority of classrooms. Pupils are given limited time in the classroom to practise their skills and teachers rarely provide direct teaching of computer skills to pupils working at the computer. This means that pupils, especially those without access to a computer at home, make slower progress than they could. Assessment records are kept in some classes but assessment is not regularly used in planning to target pupils needing further teaching and consolidation of skills. When pupils have hands-on experience they work with real intensity and focus, and can work well co-operatively. They speak enthusiastically about their work and show very positive attitudes to their learning.
138. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has good knowledge and experience. A well-

thought out and detailed action plan has been produced. He has worked hard to bring up standards of provision and teaching. The school is aware that some teachers still need further training to extend their expertise and build the confidence to extend pupils' learning and deliver higher levels of teaching. This is in the process of being provided through in-service training.

MUSIC

139. Standards in music throughout the school are good. At the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils sing tunefully and accurately, maintaining a steady beat and their singing matches the style of the music very well. They play a wide range of musical instruments well maintaining their own rhythms when other pupils play others. Pupils know the names of most instruments they play such as tambour and claves as well as the more unusual ones such as cabasas, maracas and guiros. They listen to music from an appropriate range of cultures and styles and also recognise and name some orchestral instruments. Pupils explain how sounds are produced and those in Year 2 read pictorial scores and are beginning to understand note values.
140. Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2 and build on their earlier skills with the result that at the end of Key Stage 2 they improve their singing, especially in terms of accurate pitch, good rhythmic awareness and dynamic range and extend it to singing in two parts. They develop a high level of understanding about how musical styles and instruments are used to communicate moods and effects and compare and contrast different types of music. Pupils realise that changing the dynamics and pace of music also changes the impact and suitability of the music for different occasions. Pupils play a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and read and create musical scores. Standards in music are further enhanced by the wide range of extra-curricular activities and performances.
141. Learning throughout the school is good. The pupils make good progress in their ability to read scores, maintain a steady beat and create music using compositions involving different aspects of the voice and musical instruments. Pupils concentrate well, think creatively and discuss how the compositions can be improved. These activities culminate in a high quality performances where pupils use both instruments and a wide range of vocal sounds, rhythms and styles to good effect.
142. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the high level of support from the teachers, the special needs assistants and the use of specialist equipment where necessary. This ensures that they can take a full part in all activities. Higher attaining pupils achieve well because of the planned opportunities to extend their skills.
143. The pupils' attitudes to music are very positive. In the majority of musical activities, pupils are extremely well behaved and keen to succeed. They are confident in discussing a wide range of music, especially European classical and also contemporary music. The standard of work reflects good teaching, especially in the level of knowledge and understanding, well-planned lessons and good resource organisation. Music lessons have a good creative element built into the planning and the quality of teaching contributes to the level of attainment and quality of learning.
144. Another strong contributory factor to the quality and range of music is the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator in both curriculum planning, guidance and organisation and auditing of resources. Music has a high focus at Mytham School because of the many occasions where large numbers of pupils are involved in concerts, especially the Nativity and Christmas concerts, Harvest and Easter celebrations, and participating in the Bolton Music Festival. The existing curriculum is well planned, especially in progression, and gives good support for the non-specialist teachers. There is a wide range of tuned and untuned instruments and sufficient resources for pupils to listen to and appreciate music from a appropriate range of historical periods and styles. However, there are insufficient opportunities to teach pupils about the richness and range of music from Asian and African cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. Standards in physical education throughout the school are good, particularly in the development of skills in games, gymnastics and dance throughout Key Stage 2. The level of attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is above that expected for 11-year-olds. Standards of work seen are good and pupils are making good progress in all aspects of physical education. During the inspection a high level of progress was observed in dance, gymnastics and some games lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress because of the high level of support, appropriate tasks and the level of teacher involvement. This is a good feature of the school's commitment to positive inclusion of all pupils.
146. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make a wide range of body shapes including twists and stretches, and manage many movements well. They transfer their gymnastics skills very effectively to creative dance and one example of high attainment was the creation of a dance composition to Brontosaurus Stomp. Pupils use their high quality gymnastics skills and creativity in planning a range of movements focusing on monsters. Their high quality of movement, control, composition and awareness of space enhanced this good composition and pupils concentrated well and listened intently to the music. Pupils are aware of the movement of individual parts of the body and move well from stillness to gradual awakening and onto movement at an increased pace.
147. No athletics or swimming lessons were observed during the inspection. However, pupils in the previous Year 6 achieved high standards in swimming, the majority swimming more than 25 metres and using a range of strokes with appropriate awareness of safety requirements.
148. During games lessons in Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress in learning the necessary skills, especially defending, attacking, dribbling and passing with accuracy. They are aware of the space available and positions of their own teams and those of the opposition. When guarding and marking they carefully consider what could be used to their own team's advantage. Pupils have high levels of agility and pace and are able to maintain this throughout the lessons.
149. Another strength is the quality of warming up and calming down exercises and pupils' understanding of the necessity of these exercises in terms of breathing, muscles and preparing the body for exercise. There are many contributory factors to pupils' success in physical education. One is the school's commitment to all aspects of physical education and enthusiasm for it. Other factors are the richness of the curriculum planning, good resources especially the recent purchase of up-to-date gymnastic equipment, and good accommodation which is well used. The recently appointed co-ordinator has very well considered and realistic ideas for developing the subject.
150. The majority of pupils have very positive attitudes towards competitive sport and physical education. They enjoy their lessons and behave well even when they are not immediately supervised by the teacher. In most lessons pupils are purposeful, well motivated, and well organised. The pupils in one Year 6 games lesson take advantage of the opportunities to organise themselves; they have a good sense of fair play and understand and abide by the rules.

151. The high quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 2, contributes well to the pupils' attainment and progress. The teachers have good subject knowledge and their personal skills and enthusiasm make a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Where teachers have very good skills, these are reflected in very high expectations of pupils and very good demonstrations. Lesson plans are clear and teachers organise pupils very well. A high level of emphasis is placed on teachers and pupils being appropriately dressed for physical education and this is reflected in all lessons.
152. In all physical education activities the safety arrangements are very good both in the hall, where the recently purchased gymnastics equipment is well used, and in the playgrounds and on the spacious field. Physical education contributes very effectively to pupils' personal, social and health education. It is very well enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially in football, netball, and athletics. The pupils also benefit from good community links, including those with a nationally known football club, the local cricket club and links with local schools. The accommodation is effectively used and the resources are organised effectively, easily accessible and efficiently used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. By the end of both key stages attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of both key stages, the pupils' factual knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths is satisfactory. They retell details of well-known bible stories such as the "Good Samaritan" and relate this to Jewish traditions. Many pupils, particularly in Years 2 and 4 have a good understanding of the impact made by religion on the way people live; for example, they compare the passover with the present day Christian worship of communion. The quality of pupils' presentation of work is satisfactory and there are examples where sequences of lessons allow pupils to gain a clear insight into the topic being studied.
154. Throughout the school pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning. They listen well, are enthusiastic and show interest in the subject. Pupils show respect for one another and their different beliefs.
155. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons proceed at an effective pace and teachers have clear learning objectives. In the best lessons, teachers subject knowledge is satisfactory, they plan thoroughly so that there is appropriate work that challenges and motivates the majority of pupils; a good example being where Year 3 pupils discuss "Manna" and how Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. The teachers' questions, with clear prompts, enable pupils to make satisfactory progress and lead to improved understanding. Less successful lessons are where insufficient strategies are employed to maintain pupils' interest especially for some of the Year 4 pupils. The school successfully uses the agreed scheme of work.
156. The subject co-ordinator is temporary, pending the return of the permanent co-ordinator. Resources are adequate. Artefacts and posters are easily available. The school recognises that resources need augmenting; however finances are not likely to be identified in the foreseeable future.