

# INSPECTION REPORT

St. Mary Magdalen's Roman Catholic Primary School  
Brighton

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique Reference Number: 114541

Headteacher: Mrs S McFarlane

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Reporting inspector: Philip J H O'Neill

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707277

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Spring Street Brighton BN1 3EF
Telephone number:	01273 327533
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body of St Mary Magdalen School
Name of Chair of Governors:	Rev. Martin Gosling O Praem
Date of previous inspection:	10 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> June 1996

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English, geography,  
physical education.

Mathematics, design and  
technology, information  
technology, history.  
Science, art, music.

### Aspect responsibilities

Attainment and progress, quality  
of teaching, leadership and  
management, efficiency of the  
school, equal opportunities.

Attitudes, behaviour and  
personal development,  
attendance, support and  
guidance, partnership with  
parents and the community,  
staffing, accommodation and  
resources.

Special educational needs,  
curriculum and assessment.

Provision for children aged  
under five, provision for pupils'  
spiritual, moral, social and  
cultural development, English as  
an additional language.

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

**Paragraph**

### **MAIN FINDINGS**

- What the school does well**
- Where the school has weaknesses**
- How the school has improved since the last inspection**
- Standards in subjects**
- Quality of teaching**
- Other aspects of the school**
- The parents' views of the school**

### **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**1 - 8**

- Characteristics of the school**
- Key indicators**

### **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

#### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

**9 - 31**

- Attainment and progress**
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
- Attendance**

#### **Quality of education provided**

**32 - 62**

- Teaching**
- The curriculum and assessment**
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
- Partnership with parents and the community**

<b>The management and efficiency of the school</b>	<b>63 - 87</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	
<b>Staffing, accommodation and learning resources</b>	
<b>The efficiency of the school</b>	
<b>PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS</b>	
<b>Areas of learning for children under five</b>	<b>88 - 97</b>
<b>English, mathematics and science</b>	<b>98 - 129</b>
<b>Other subjects or courses</b>	<b>130 - 178</b>
<b>PART C: INSPECTION DATA</b>	
<b>Summary of inspection evidence</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Data and indicators</b>	<b>180</b>

## MAIN FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The quality of teaching is good overall, with a high proportion of very good teaching at Key Stage 1 and for the children who are under five.
- Standards in art are above average for 7 and 11 year-olds.
- Pupils, including the pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils, make good progress in most subjects.
- The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy is effective.
- It provides a friendly, caring environment in which pupils feel secure and it has good links with the local community.
- It fosters good behaviour.
- It makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- It provides a good ethos for learning and encourages good attitudes to work and good relationships.
- It makes very good provision for the children who are under five.
- It offers good support for the pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- It manages the funds available to it well.

### · WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. Standards of attainment remain too low in English, mathematics, science, information technology, geography across the school, and in history at Key Stage 2.
- II. Absence levels are too high and the school does not take sufficient action to address this.
- III. Teachers do not plan from a clear assessment of what the pupils already know.
- IV. The school does not comply with the requirement for the appraisal of all teachers.

**The weaknesses are outweighed by the strengths but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school**

### · HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has responded satisfactorily to the previous inspection, particularly the issues raised about curriculum planning and provision for the pupils' cultural development. The response to the inspection has been accelerated under the present Headteacher, who has translated what needed to be done into precise actions. Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history are lower than those noted at the previous inspection, whilst standards in design and technology and music have improved. The progress towards the targets set for improvement has been monitored carefully, with some involvement of the governors. Apart from the key issues raised, the school also addressed other issues raised throughout the report on the previous inspection. The school has in place the systems, the quality of leadership, the planning and the vision to secure further good rates of continued development. It has begun to set and meet realistic targets for improvement. The high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, noted at the previous inspection, and subsequent high turnover of staff have been decisively confronted and the pupils no longer experience constant changes of teacher. However there are still some uncertainties about staffing. Although the roles of the co-ordinators have been strengthened, their responsibility for monitoring teaching is not fully developed.

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· **STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

<b>Performance in</b>	<b>Compared with all schools</b>	<b>Compared with similar schools</b>	<b>Key</b>
			<i>well above average</i> <i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i> <i>B</i>
English	E	D	<i>average</i> <i>C</i>
Mathematics	E*	E	<i>below average</i> <i>D</i>
Science	E	E	<i>well below average</i> <i>E</i>
			<i>Very Low</i> <i>E*</i>

The standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 in the National Curriculum tests are indicative of very significant improvement, particularly in mathematics and science. Pupils in most years are now making good progress in their work. The children who are under five are working towards the expected standards for their ages and, by the time they are five, the majority have reached, and a few have exceeded, the expected standards in the six designated areas of learning. The evidence of the inspection shows that pupils aged seven and 11 reach below average standards of attainment in English, mathematics, and science and standards that are well below average in information technology. In history, 11 year olds reach below average standards of attainment and both seven and 11 year old pupils attain well below average standards in geography. Pupils' attainment at the ages of seven and 11 years is average in design and technology, music, physical education and in history at the age of seven. In art, both seven and 11 year olds' standards of attainment are above average.

· **QUALITY OF TEACHING**

<b>Teaching in:</b>	<b>Under 5</b>	<b>5 – 7 years</b>	<b>7 – 11 years</b>
English	Very good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Very good	Good	Good
Science	n/a	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Very good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The overall quality of teaching for the children who are under five is very good. Of the 11 lessons where these children were observed, the quality of teaching was very good in eight and good in three. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1. Of the 16 lessons seen at this stage, teaching was excellent in one, very good in three, good in ten and satisfactory in two. At this stage, teaching is very good in music, good in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology and physical education; it is satisfactory in history and unsatisfactory in geography. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Of the 30 lessons seen at this



stage, one was excellent, five very good, 11 good, 11 satisfactory and two unsatisfactory. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good in English, mathematics, science, art and physical education; it is satisfactory in design and technology, history, information technology and music. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory.

· **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Good. The great majority of pupils behave well in lessons and on the playground. They are friendly and cooperate effectively with each other and they are polite to each other and to adults.
Attendance	Attendance is below average. The rate of unauthorised absence is well above the national average. Procedures for improving attendance are unsatisfactory.
Ethos*	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to work, relate well to each other and the school is committed to the pursuit of high standards.
Leadership and management	The Headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, provides clear leadership. There are too few opportunities for leaders of subjects to carry out their responsibilities. There are weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development in some subjects. The governing body is beginning to work more effectively with the school.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced overall. The pupils for whom English is an additional language are well-supported. There is a good range of visits and extracurricular activities. Teachers do not plan from a clear assessment of what pupils already know.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision overall for pupils on the register of special educational needs and for those for whom a statement of special educational need exists.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils. Children are encouraged to recognise the value of each individual and to care for each other. There has been an improvement in the provision for pupils' cultural awareness; this is now good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There is an appropriate number of qualified staff. Arrangements for professional development are satisfactory, although the requirements for the appraisal of teachers are not met. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. However, there are insufficient resources in design and technology, geography, history and information technology and the accommodation for Year 4 is unsatisfactory.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

· **THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

**What most parents like about the school**

- V. It is easy to approach the school when there is a problem.
- VI. The values and attitudes that the school promotes.
- VII. Their children like school.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- VIII. The quality and amount of information to parents.
- IX. The quality and consistency of the work that the children are given to do at home.
- X. The rapid changes in staffing and the amount of supply teaching.

The inspection findings confirm the parents' overall positive view of the school. The parents' anxieties about the changes in staffing are clearly justified by the evidence of the inspection related to the recent history of staffing changes. However, these anxieties are no longer fully justified as the high turnover of staff has ceased and most of the staffing problems have been resolved. The judgement of some parents that the information they receive from the school is insufficient is also justified. The questions raised about homework are partially justified in that there are some inconsistencies in practice amongst the teachers.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The governors, Headteacher and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve still further the provision the school makes:

**Further raise standards in English in all years by:**

- XI. ensuring that all teachers teach the skills of word recognition;
- XII. encouraging all pupils to extend the range of books they experience;
- XIII. identifying and disseminating the good practice that already exists.

(see paragraphs 97- 100 and 106)

**Further raise standards in mathematics by:**

- XIV. identifying and disseminating the good practice that already exists, particularly that related to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- XV. monitoring planning

(see paragraphs 110-113 and 118)

**Raise standards in science by:**

- XVI. encouraging pupils to make relevant predictions when conducting experiments;
- XVII. ensuring that teachers plan for a progressively challenging science curriculum as pupils move through the school.

(see paragraphs 119-122)

**Raise standards in information technology by:**

- XVIII. making more frequent use of the available equipment;
- XIX. ensuring systematic coverage of the Programmes of Study;
- XX. extending the range of equipment available;
- XXI. providing opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching of the curriculum.

(see paragraphs 129-132, 84 and 135-137)

**Raise standards in geography by:**

- XXII. addressing weaknesses in the co-ordination of this area;
- XXIII. appointing a co-ordinator for this area;
- XXIV. providing all the pupils with a progressively challenging and worthwhile curriculum in geography;
- XXV. improving resources in this area.

(see paragraphs 150-152, 38, and 34-36)

**Raise standards in history in Key Stage 2 by:**

- XXVI. addressing weaknesses in the co-ordination of this area;
- XXVII. improving the breadth and depth of what is provided;
- XXVIII. ensuring that what is provided in this key stage builds on what the pupils already know and understand.

(see paragraph 159)

**Improve the levels of attendance by:**

- XXIX. involving parents in the implementation of a school policy on attendance;
- XXX. following up absences more rigorously;
- XXXI. implementing even more thoroughly the procedures for monitoring attendance.

**(see paragraphs 29, 30 and 54)**

**Improve the use of assessment across the school by:**

- XXXII. developing reliable assessments of attainment and progress;
- XXXIII. using all the assessment information that is available in order to see more clearly the rates at which individual pupils are progressing in their work;
- XXXIV. extending the good practice that already exists in the Nursery and in the Reception class.

**(see paragraph 44)**

**Meet statutory requirements for the appraisal of all teachers.**

**(see paragraphs 67 and 77)**

*In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.*

**Further address weaknesses in teaching and consolidate good practice by:**

- XXXV. setting targets for improvement for individual teachers that focus in more detail on teaching skills;
- XXXVI. identifying and sharing the good practice in teaching that exists within the school;
- XXXVII. improving the skills of teachers who have difficulties in classroom organisation and the management of the pupils' behaviour.

**(see paragraph 36)**

**Further improve the management of the school by:**

- XXXVIII. ensuring that the exercise of roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators are more clearly focused on the monitoring of teaching and learning. **(see paragraphs 63, 68, 118, 136, 142, 42 and 84)**

XXXIX. **Provide appropriate training for all teachers in matters relating to child protection. (see paragraph 56)**

XL. **Include in the prospectus all the items required by law. (see paragraph 59)**

XLI. **Address the health and safety concerns raised in the report. (see paragraph 57)**

XLII. **Address the weaknesses in the support provided for the Nursery teacher. (see paragraphs 75, 80)**

XLIII. **Address the difficulties created by the dual responsibilities of the school administrator. (see paragraph 71)**

- **INTRODUCTION**
- **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School is situated in the centre of Brighton. The main school building is over 25 years old. The school is closely surrounded by houses, flats, shops and the parish church of St Mary Magdalen, which forms a boundary of one of the two playgrounds. The school serves not only the local parish, but also the local community and the wider area of Brighton. The immediate catchment area contains much temporary and bed-and-breakfast accommodation and an increasing number of homeless and asylum-seeking families are passing through the school. St Mary Magdalen is now unique in the Catholic diocese of Arundel and Brighton in being an urban, multi-cultural, multi-faith primary school.

2. As a consequence of the nature of the intake, numbers on roll show some fluctuation, particularly at the beginning of an academic year. There are 182 pupils on roll, which is smaller than most other primary schools nationally. In addition there are 50 pupils in the Nursery. Thirty-one per cent of pupils are on the special educational need register. A statement of special educational needs exists for five pupils. The percentage of pupils who come from homes where English is not the first language at 36 per cent is very high, as is the percentage who come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Forty-nine per cent of pupils, excluding the Nursery pupils, are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Numbers of boys and girls in the school are broadly equal.

3. The school has seven classes and a Nursery class. Children enter the Reception class in the autumn term of the year in which they are five. However, there are significant numbers of pupils who are admitted to the school during the academic year. Pupils generally enter the school with below average levels of attainment.

4. Significant changes to the school since the last inspection include the appointment of a new permanent Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. In total, five members of the teaching staff have left, including the co-ordinators for English, mathematics and information technology. In the same period, eight new appointments were made. The Chair of Governors and most of the governing body have been elected since the last inspection.

5. The school's aims are:

- to help the pupils to understand that each person is uniquely created and loved by God;
- to respect the pupils' worth, to value their contributions to school life and to care for their individual needs;
- to establish in the pupils an awareness of their true dignity as children of God and to encourage them in their respect and tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life;
- to develop self-disciplined, questioning pupils with a growing understanding of Christian responsibility both towards themselves and others;
- to deepen each child's experience of the Catholic faith so that the Gospel values of trust, love, peace and justice become part of their lives;
- to celebrate and embrace the diversity of cultures, faiths and languages which are a unique characteristic of the school community where there is warmth, respect and co-operation between children, staff, parents, governors and the wider community;
- to provide every opportunity to realise every pupil's individual potential and achieve personal academic excellence;
- to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which pupils develop the confidence to become independent learners.

6. In the context of these aims, the school's priorities have been to raise standards of attainment, improve the quality of teaching and address the problem of high turnover of staff.

7. More specifically, the school development plan has focused on the development of literacy, numeracy and information technology.

## 8. Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	97/98	10	11	21

8. National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4	3	5
	Girls	9	9	7
	Total	13	12	12
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	62 (75)	57 (68)	57 (93)
	National	80 (80)	81(80)	84(83)

8. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	57 (93)	57 (93)	57 (82)
	National	81(85)	85(83)	86(85)

.....

1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	97/98	13	9	22

8.	<b>National Curriculum Test</b>	English	Mathematics	Science
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	4	6
	Girls	6	1	2
	Total	11	5	8
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	50(67)	23 (56)	36 (72)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

8.	<b>Teacher Assessments</b>	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	6	6
	Girls	5	2	1
	Total	10	8	7
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	45 (67)	36 (61)	32(72)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: 1997/98	Authorised	School	6.0
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	3.0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

### 8. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	1

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	32
	Satisfactory or better	96
	Less than satisfactory	4

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Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

8. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

8. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

8. **Attainment and progress**



1. The overall standards reached by the age of five are average in English and mathematics. Pupils reach below average standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of 7 and, by the age of 11, reach standards that fall below average in English and mathematics and are average in science. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in English and science, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were well below average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was very low in comparison with the national average, whilst the proportion reaching the higher levels was well below average. Comparing the averages of the school's test data with the attainments of all schools, attainment in English and science is well below average, whilst, in mathematics, it is very low. When these averages are compared with those of similar schools (schools which have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), they show that attainment in English is below average, whilst attainment in mathematics and science is well below average. Taking all three subjects together, the performance of pupils aged 11 is well below average for their age group nationally and in relation to what is achieved in similar schools at the age of Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history are lower than those noted at the previous inspection, whilst standards in design and technology and music have improved.

2. Trends in attainment over the last three years show that attainment in English, mathematics and science has been erratic but consistently well below average. However, there is evidence of improving standards in the pupils' current work and in lessons. This is confirmed by the recent high level of attainment in the National Curriculum tests. Overall, girls' standards of attainment on leaving the school are higher than those of boys. The school has set feasible targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science and is now making significant progress towards them. The quality of teaching has been greatly improved in most classes and the improved stability in staffing is clearly beginning to drive standards upwards. The school serves a very transient population and this leads to erratic results in the national tests and teachers' assessments.

3. The inspection of lessons and of pupils' work shows that 11 year olds reach below average standards in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in information technology is well below the standards usually found at the age of 11 years. Standards in literacy and numeracy are below the expected levels for this age.

4. Pupils at the start of the current Year 6 show below average attainment in English, but are now making good progress. A high proportion of pupils in this year experience English as an additional language in their homes and a significant proportion are deemed to have special educational needs. Most pupils speak confidently and with a satisfactory range of vocabulary in informal settings and in the more formal presentation of ideas by the age of 11, when speaking and listening are average for their ages. Pupils listen to one another in discussions, but rarely elaborate their ideas or provide reasons for their point of view. At this age, pupils read a satisfactory range of books for information and for pleasure, but too few attempt books with a complex narrative structure and attainment is below average overall. A significant minority of pupils reach low standards in reading. Standards of writing are well below average. Pupils write for a limited range of purposes and readers. Handwriting is good, letters are well formed and spelling is generally accurate. The teachers' strong emphasis on the quality of presentation leads to neat work by many pupils.

5. In mathematics, pupils at the beginning of Year 6 achieve below average standards, but they are now making good progress as a result of good teaching. Pupils develop their own strategies for problem-solving and demonstrate average skills in using all four operations in whole numbers and decimals. They identify congruent shapes and orders of symmetry, calculate areas of simple shapes and work out the area of both regular and irregular shapes. They represent data in a variety of charts and graphs. There is little use of computers to extend mathematical concepts.

6. In science, standards attained by 11 year olds are below average. Pupils understand the concept

of a fair test. They represent the results of observation and experiments, using graphs. They recognise why some materials are more suitable than others in the construction of buildings. Most pupils successfully make an electric circuit and test materials for their conductivity. Several pupils understand the differences between solids, liquids and gases and can explain the terms evaporation and condensation. Some pupils make generalisations about physical phenomena, but several do not understand about the causes of physical processes. Few make accurate predictions about the outcome of experiments.

7. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in English, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or higher was well below average in reading and writing and very low in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also well below average in reading and writing and close to the national average in mathematics. In the assessments conducted by the teachers at this age, the proportion reaching the expected level was well below average in reading and very low in writing and mathematics, whilst that reaching beyond the nationally expected level was well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. In science, overall attainment in the teachers' assessments was very low for the proportions reaching the expected level and well below average at the higher levels. When the average level reached by seven year-olds is compared to that attained by all schools at this age, pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics falls well below average. Over the last three years, attainment has remained well below average in English, mathematics and science. The most recent test results show no improvement over the previous years. Girls attain much higher standards than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. The difference in lessons between the attainments of boys and those of girls is similar to that found nationally. In lessons and in work seen, seven year olds' attainment is better than that revealed in the tests in English, mathematics and science. In information technology, pupils fall well below the expected level of knowledge and skill. Standards in literacy and numeracy are below average.

8. In art, 11 year old pupils produce well executed drawings of Brighton Pavilion, demonstrating above average technical skill. In their work on fairground models, pupils show average skills in designing and making. Well below average standards in geography are revealed in the pupils' limited knowledge of the human and physical features of areas beyond their own. In history, pupils' knowledge is below that found in most other schools at this age; pupils' chronological knowledge is weak as is their understanding of historical enquiry. In music, pupils show average standards in their singing and composing. In physical education, 11 year olds create and refine simple sequences in dance and gymnastics and demonstrate overall average skill in all activities. Most pupils swim 25 metres unaided.

9. On the evidence of lessons and work seen, in English, seven year olds' oral skills are average; they listen and respond to the teachers' questions in lessons. They are confident in informal conversations with their peers and with visitors to the school, adjusting their language appropriately. They read and discuss with understanding a limited range of books. Although handwriting is average for their age, pupils are slow to engage in writing and lack confidence, especially when they attempt to tackle more extended pieces. In mathematics, most pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of place value and of numbers beyond a thousand. They use standard measures accurately and represent their findings in investigations using simple graphs. In science, pupils conduct simple experiments exploring the effects of exercise on the body and the insulating properties of different materials. They use little of the appropriate technical vocabulary and pupils do not make relevant predictions about the outcome of their experiments.

10. In art, pupils aged seven work imaginatively in the style of Monet, whilst in design and technology, they fix and shape simple materials. In geography, pupils understand some of the main features of their own locality but are unable to compare these to other similar places. In history,

pupils at this age demonstrate little sense of chronology. They have limited skills in information technology. In music, seven year olds have a good sense of rhythm as they sing. In physical education, pupils link and repeat actions in dance and gymnastics, throw, pass and catch balls accurately.

11. The children who are under five are working towards the expected standards for their age. By the time they are five, the majority have reached, and a few have exceeded, these expected outcomes in the six designated areas of learning. Children are constantly stimulated and encouraged to explore, investigate and develop their skills in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development through the provision of challenging and exciting activities both in the Nursery and the Reception class. The lively and well-managed provision for the youngest children is a strength of the school. The children who are under five rapidly establish confidence and skill in all areas of learning.

12. The rate at which pupils progress in their work through both key stages is now good. Of the 11 lessons observed where the children who are under five were being taught, progress was very good in four and good in seven. In Key Stage 1, of the 16 lessons seen, progress was very good in two lessons, good in nine and satisfactory in five. In Key Stage 2, of the 30 lessons seen, progress was very good in three, good in 12, satisfactory in 13 and unsatisfactory in two. The school is beginning to recover from a history of changes of staff that had had a very negative impact on the attainment and progress of most of the pupils. The evidence from previous attainment in national tests and from teachers' assessments does not represent the current state of affairs, where greater stability in staffing and significant improvements in the quality of teaching are already having a strong impact on the rates at which pupils are now progressing in their work. From below average attainment on entry to school, pupils establish a good rate of progress in the Nursery and in the Reception class. In Year 1, pupils continue to make good advances in most aspects of their work. The clear development of knowledge, understanding and skill is sustained in Year 2. Progress slows down in Year 3 and accelerates through Years 4, 5 and 6. The rates at which pupils progress in their work are clearly linked to the quality of teaching. This is particularly evident in the work produced by the pupils at the end of the previous summer term, where the impact of a history of changes of teacher and unsatisfactory teaching show themselves in the slow progress over time made by many pupils in both key stages.

13. The children who are under five make good progress across all the areas of learning and they are particularly quick to grasp basic number facts and the beginnings of reading. They are working towards the expected standards for their age and, by the time that they are five, many are on course to reach the expected outcomes in language and literacy, and most are on course to do so in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical development. They are on course to exceed the expected learning outcomes with regard to their creative development and in their personal and social development. These children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language and the higher attaining pupils, make good progress. In some individual cases, progress is particularly rapid.

14. In Key Stage 1, progress is now mainly good in lessons, although the progress of many pupils has been slowed down in Year 1 during the previous years. Progress, at this stage, is good in English, mathematics, science, art, music and physical education; it is satisfactory in design and technology, history and information technology. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 in geography. In English, good progress is made in the development of confidence in speaking and listening and in linking their increasing use of language to their writing. Pupils are slow to extend the range of their reading. In mathematics, pupils develop an increasing facility for handling numbers in approximating to the nearest ten or 100. In science, pupils develop steadily in their understanding of the basic principles of experimentation. In art, pupils extend their skills in using

different media and, in design and technology, they learn to handle a greater range of materials. Pupils are slow to acquire geographical knowledge, as they have not had sufficient breadth in what is provided. In history, pupils are slow to acquire even a limited awareness of life in the past. Pupils make good strides in the development of musical understanding, whilst in physical education, there is good progress in pupils' capacity to develop imaginative sequences in dance and gymnastics.

15. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good in English, mathematics, science, art and physical education; it is satisfactory in design and technology, history, information technology and music; it is unsatisfactory in geography. Good progress in English is seen, for example, in Year 5 when pupils explore the way that an author uses language to create mood and atmosphere or in Year 4 when they prepare weather forecasts for presentation to the class. In mathematics, good progress results from the good work in basic concepts and, for example, in Year 5, where pupils are provided with very good opportunities to apply their knowledge of measurement. In science, pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils, steadily build up their confidence in the observation and recording of data. Occasionally, there is good progress in art where the pupils are taught the basic skills of handling paints, pencils and brushes, evident, for example, where they were working in the style of Monet to produce their own compositions. In design and technology, pupils steadily acquire familiarity with more sophisticated equipment. In geography, pupils are slow to extend their earlier work on the environment to a more mature grasp of the features of different settlements. The pupils' understanding of chronology develops slowly. Pupils make significant progress in music when they practise and refine their singing in choir practice, singing rounds and demonstrating a good sense of rhythm when they sing in assembly. In physical education, pupils quickly develop a good range of ideas to explore motifs in dance and to link movements in gymnastics.

16. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils, is good in both key stages. Pupils who are on the register of special educational needs and who are withdrawn from lessons for special support make good progress in most aspects of the work they cover. The pupils for whom a statement of special educational need exists make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. This is due to the good specialist teaching that they receive. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also progress rapidly in their confidence in spoken and written English. The progress they make is rooted in the quality of specialist language support they experience both in lessons and through withdrawal from lessons for special help.

#### **24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

17. Pupils, including children under five, demonstrate good attitudes to learning, behave well and contribute well to the community life of the school. The school has been effective in maintaining these standards since the previous inspection.

18. In lessons, pupils show interest and enthusiasm for learning, listen carefully to instructions and mostly settle well to tasks set. Pupils concentrate well and become fully involved in their work or activities. They co-operate well with one another and work effectively without close supervision. During the literacy hour in Year 1, for example, the teacher was enabled to work closely with a small group of pupils, whilst the rest of the class quietly continued with the task set. During whole-class discussions, pupils listen very carefully to each other, contribute ideas and demonstrate good levels of tolerance and understanding. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils made good use of the whole-class discussion during their individual attempts at writing an in-depth interview. The youngest pupils show good levels of interest and enthusiasm, and are beginning to learn to persevere with tasks rather than move between activities. Homework is regularly completed by most pupils, further demonstrating their good attitudes to learning.

19. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, trustworthy and courteous. In lessons, this ensures that the teachers' time is fairly distributed amongst all pupils. On some occasions, pupils become rather restless and noisy, particularly towards the end of the session. In the main, this minor difficulty is overcome by teachers deploying interesting diversions that swiftly restore pupils' attention. Pupils show respect for their teachers and other adults in school and form good relationships with them and their fellow pupils. The result is a pleasant, positive learning environment in which pupils are happy and confident. In the playground and dining hall, there is a relaxed, sociable atmosphere. Pupils report little unsatisfactory behaviour or bullying and that any instances were dealt with effectively by staff. There has been one permanent exclusion in the last year.

20. Pupils show respect and tolerance for one another and relate well together. Racial harassment is rare and pupils from all ethnic groups work and play well together. Pupils' personal development is good. They are keen to be involved in classroom duties and routinely offer to help. Year 6 pupils, for example, take their duties at assembly seriously and carry them out in a mature manner. There is no school council or forum in which pupils can become more involved in the daily routines of the school. Pupils make little independent use of the library. Further opportunities for pupils to be able to take the initiative and set some of their own tasks is an area for development which was noted in the last inspection report and there has since been little improvement.

21. Children who are aged under five show good attitudes to learning and are happy and secure in their surroundings. They listen attentively and concentrate well. They establish effective relationships with other children and their teachers, demonstrated by the way in which they are willing to join in and take turns and cooperate in shared activities. Children behave in appropriate ways and know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They clear away sensibly after their activities and respect the classroom environment.

## 29. **Attendance**

22. The attendance rate at school is below average and has fallen since the last inspection. Rates of authorised and unauthorised absence are high. Authorised absence is also adversely affected by a small number of pupils who take lengthy holidays in term time to visit relatives overseas.

23. Punctuality has been a persistent problem. The school has recently introduced a system of recording the details of latecomers and providing an incentive scheme for the class with the highest level of punctuality. Currently, this is proving an effective method of reducing lateness.

31.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **31. Teaching**

24. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and very good for the children who are under five. This represents a very significant improvement on the previous inspection where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in one quarter of the lessons. The most significant improvement is in the quality of planning by which the teachers ensure that what they teach builds more clearly on what pupils already know. Of the 57 lessons seen in this inspection, two were excellent, 16 were very good, 24 good, 13 satisfactory and two unsatisfactory. Weaknesses in teaching occur mainly in Year 3. There are significant strengths in teaching across the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and occasionally very good. Literacy and numeracy are taught every day and the time is well used to sustain the pupils' good progress in these areas. The literacy hour is securely established and teachers work well together in sharing their skills. The use of the structure of the literacy hour is already producing significant benefits for the pupils' use and understanding of language. The quality of teaching has been seriously debilitated by the many changes of staff over the last four years and this was a justified concern voiced by the parents.

25. The overall quality of teaching for the children who are under five is very good. Of the 11 lessons where these children were observed, the quality of teaching was very good in eight and good in three. Teachers' knowledge of the six areas of learning of the children's individual stages of development is good. They have a clear view of what young children need in order to progress in their learning. The teachers provide a good range of experiences including activities such as role-play, jig-saw assembly, pattern-making and computer tasks. These activities provide children with effective opportunities to advance their manipulative skills and their personal and social development through sharing and co-operating with others. Particularly good is the way that the pupils' informal language is channelled into organised discussion and the first attempts at word recognition and writing. The use of picture cues and the storyboard is particularly effective in familiarising the children with books and stories. The teaching of writing is good and pupils are led at an appropriate pace to the beginnings of independent writing. There is good attention given to the progressive development of physical control and accurate letter formation. Teaching staff have a good rapport with the children; a firm but friendly manner is apparent, but discipline is well kept. Time is used effectively. Lessons start promptly and an appropriate pace is maintained throughout. The resources are imaginative, well organised and are used to their best advantage to advance children's progress. The provision for outdoor play for the Reception children is somewhat limited but the Nursery children benefit from the planned approaches in this area. Teachers preserve clear records of the children's attainments and they use constructive guidance and encouragement to help the children advance in their work. The teachers meet regularly to review the work and to provide children with consistent classroom routines. They encourage children to take their books home and share them with parents and this has a very positive impact on their learning.

26. The beginnings of mathematics are taught well by providing opportunities for the recognition of shapes and then of numbers leading to the simple ordering of numbers on a number line. Pupils are sensitively introduced to living things and the world around them and they are taught to be curious and responsive to what they see and hear. They are taught well to explore the world of sound and colour and to respond to music through simple dance sequences, rhymes and songs. Teachers provide unusually good opportunities for the physical development of the children and support them effectively in practising and refining their basic skills. The teachers and other adults relate well with the children and enable them to feel confident and secure. They are provided with a very

secure start to the day and have been effectively taught gradually to take responsibility for collecting and returning equipment and for taking care of their belongings and those of their peers.

27. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1. Of the 16 lessons seen at this stage, teaching was excellent in one, very good in three, good in ten and satisfactory in two. At this stage, teaching is very good in music, good in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology and physical education; it is satisfactory in history and unsatisfactory in geography. Teachers have a good knowledge of what they teach in all subjects, except in geography, history and physical education where it is satisfactory. They generally set high expectations for attainment, plan well and use a good range of different ways of organising lessons and of using time and resources. They manage pupils well and generally channel their energies into productive work. In most lessons, teachers use time and resources well to maintain the pupils' interest and the pace of lessons is usually lively, through the presentation of progressively challenging activities. Overall, the quality and use of day-to-day assessment are satisfactory: they are very good in art and music, good in English and science and satisfactory in all other subjects, apart from geography, where they is unsatisfactory. Homework is generally used satisfactorily but there are some inconsistencies in practice.

28. The strengths in teaching at this stage are evident, for example, in art when the pupils draw a portrait using light and shade. The teacher built on the skills acquired in the previous lessons, demonstrated shading techniques very effectively, circulated amongst the pupils as they worked and provided them with clear and effective support in their work. The pupils were skilfully managed to ensure a good pace of work. The pupils were intensely engaged in the task and made good progress as a result of the sharp pace to the lesson and the quality of the teacher's interventions. There were many other lessons exhibiting similar features. There are no significant weaknesses in teaching in this key stage.

29. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Of the 30 lessons seen at this stage, one was excellent, five very good, 11 good, 11 satisfactory and two unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, art and physical education; it is satisfactory in design and technology, history, information technology and music. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory. At this stage, teachers have a good knowledge of what they teach and set satisfactory expectations for attainment. Good planning of lessons is revealed in the skilful presentation of progressively challenging activities in many subjects: this is a striking feature of much of the teaching across the school. A further strength is the range of methods used to manage the pupils as they carry out their activities. Time and resources are used well and pupils are provided with some clear indications of how they are progressing in their work and of how they might improve their work. Homework is used satisfactorily in most subjects to support pupils' learning. Weaknesses in teaching in this key stage arise mainly from inefficient classroom organisation and unsatisfactory management of the pupils' behaviour. This characterised the less successful lessons in Year 3. The most effective teaching was evident, for example, in a Year 4 lesson when the pupils prepared a script for a weather forecast to be delivered to the class in the role of television weather forecasters. The lesson had a lively pace as a result of the teacher's preparation of a sequence of challenging activities and the use of progressively more challenging questions. This led to increased confidence in the pupils' formal use of language and their knowledge of how it can be harnessed to communicate particular messages.

30. The quality of the teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils, is generally good. There is good support in lessons and the pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for special help are taught well, with some very effective work on reading and comprehension of texts. The pupils for whom a statement of special educational need exists are provided with good specialist teaching. The pupils for whom English is an additional language are

also taught well by skilfully-targeted specialist teaching, with the result that they are quick both to establish confidence in their oral and written work and to overcome the barriers to learning caused by the specialist language of the different subjects.

### **38. The curriculum and assessment**

31. The curriculum is broad, relevant and mainly balanced, except in that pupils are not offered sufficient worthwhile experiences in geography. It successfully promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and generally prepares them well for secondary school. The overall teaching time, which was below recommendations at the last inspection, now meets recommendations. The time given to subjects is broadly in line with recommendations. It is low for geography and art in Key Stage 1. It is high for physical education in Year 4, to allow for swimming. The curriculum makes an effective contribution to the educational standards achieved by all pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all subjects and shows an improvement on the previous inspection, where information technology and design and technology did not meet requirements. Sex education is taught in line with the policy agreed by parents and governors. An appropriate policy for drugs education is in draft form for consideration by governors. The school has now introduced a clear policy for health education, which is taught effectively as part of personal and social education.

32. The school has worked hard to raise standards in English mathematics and science but has been frustrated in its efforts through the many changes in staffing. With the current greater stability in staffing, the pupils experience greater continuity in teaching and standards are now rising. The arrangements for the literacy hour and numeracy hour are successfully in place. The literacy hour has been developed through a concerted effort by all teachers and pupils experience a wide range of language activities. This shows itself in the quality of some of the writing and in the progress being made in the pupils' written work across the curriculum. The National Numeracy Strategy has been developed effectively and pupils are becoming steadily more confident in the use and application of number across the different subjects. New equipment is being put in place for information technology and this is already resulting in improved curricular provision, including access to the Internet in Year 5, although the facility for e-mail is not yet in place.

33. The curricular provision for children under five is very good in the Nursery and in the Reception class. It is effectively based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes recommended for children of this age. An effective scheme of work provides very good guidance for planning for progression, and the curriculum prepares the children well for the National Curriculum. Daily planning is very good. A secure area adjacent to the Nursery classroom is provided for freely accessible outdoor play and this is used well.

34. The school provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is as an additional language have full access to a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs. Appropriate targets are identified in individual education plans.

35. The issues on planning raised by the last inspection have only recently been addressed. There are now policies and schemes of work for all subjects except art. An agreed planning format is now in place and teachers' medium term planning for the teaching of the curriculum is detailed and well thought out. Daily planning is good and expected learning objectives are sufficiently defined to enable clear assessments of attainment to be made. Overall long-term planning now takes account of what has gone before and what will follow. It is now making clear how pupils' learning will be progressively developed from year to year. The school has not been closely evaluating and monitoring the consistency of work across the years and this shows in the unevenness of attainment in relation to pupils' ages in the different years.



36. The extracurricular provision offered by the school is good. There is a good range of clubs during the year to offer opportunities to pupils to develop a range of interests. These include a homework club and clubs for football, netball, athletics, cricket, dance, recorders, gardening and choir. There are teams for football, cricket and netball, which enjoy a satisfactory level of success in inter-school competitions. The clubs are well attended by both boys and girls. There is a residential visit, from which no pupils are excluded because of cost, and this makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning.

37. Although there is still no school policy for assessment, the arrangements have much improved since the last inspection. The school has recently adapted national guidelines for most subjects and a common format is being put in place to ensure agreed procedures for assessment and recording. There is a satisfactory range of assessment procedures in place, which provide valuable data on a regular basis. This resulting data, however, are not well used to inform planning. There are no coherent arrangements for using the assessment information. There is little by the way of analysis to identify areas for development and set targets for improvement, and information is not always passed on to teachers. Only now is the school beginning to establish collections of work which exemplify the standards reached by the pupils.

38. Assessment arrangements for children under the age of five are very good and inform planning very well. Entry profiles give good guidance to the needs of children and assessments are detailed and specific. The baseline assessments, which are carried out in the Reception class, are also given in the children's mother tongue language where there is a problem with understanding English. Information from early assessments is recorded and used to plan the next stage of learning. There are many useful records, which document developing strengths and weaknesses. This very careful assessment, based on regular observations, ensures that the curriculum for children aged under five is closely based on the needs of these children and provides for very good progression both within the Nursery and the Reception class.

39. There are satisfactory procedures in place for the identification of pupils with special educational needs, but they are not always used effectively to distinguish between pupils with special educational needs and those with general low attainment. The resulting targets in the individual education plans are not sufficiently specific to allow clear assessment of pupils' progress. The procedures for assessing pupils with English as an additional language are good and inform planning well.

#### **47. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

40. The school makes very good overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Although no specific judgement was made, the provision was positively recognised during the previous inspection. Cultural aspects of the school's work, seen as insufficient in the previous inspection, have been further developed and the issues arising have been successfully addressed. Teachers provide very positive role models for the pupils and implement all appropriate aims and policies well. The school has a very positive caring ethos, which informs all activities and relationships. As a result, pupils acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding to equip them to become confident members of the school community. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are equally valued and take a full part in the lessons, activities and experiences which are available in the school.

41. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Spiritual awareness is fostered and developed by a carefully planned programme of collective worship which is true to the school's Catholic foundation and allows pupils time to reflect on and consider the texts, hymns, stories and prayers and their responses to their own experiences. The religious education programmes provide

a very structured approach to the enhancement of pupils' spiritual growth. Pupils develop a growing understanding of different faiths, sometimes by first hand experience when they talk to other children in the class. There are many opportunities for pupils to reflect on issues that are of deep personal concern to them. In reflecting on the suffering of earthquake victims, for example, the teachers invite the pupils to reflect on and be thankful for the security they experience in their homes. They are helped to explore the mysteries of nature revealed in their work in science. In assemblies, they are encouraged to celebrate the beauty of the world in their hymns and prayers. Within lessons, there are very good opportunities for pupils to listen to pieces of music and appreciate works of art and literature. Teachers value the responses which children make and give time for them to enunciate their thoughts, for example, some of the pupils have considered what they would take if they had a short time to leave their homes as a refugee. They have thought about the moods that a piece of music suggests when it represents an old man talking to his granddaughter and they have looked at how dashes of paint can suggest a field of waving poppies when they learn about Monet's work. They have watched sunflowers growing in the environmental area and have represented them in paintings and drawings. In science, they have experienced a sense of wonder when observing bean shoots.

42. The school's very good provision for the moral development of the pupils includes clear expectations of behaviour, which are reflected in the high standards of self-discipline seen during the inspection. Teachers have worked hard to put in place clear procedures to support the development of pupils' moral understanding. The distinction between right and wrong is reinforced during acts of worship and in class discussions. Positive school rules, which have been agreed with pupils, are consistently applied but the emphasis is always on encouraging pupils to act on principle and not as a result of the constraint of rules. During acts of worship, the teachings of Jesus form the basis for subsequent actions and opportunities exist for pupils to apply the codes of conduct, inherent within their own faiths, to their everyday lives. In lessons, teachers take great care to explore moral issues and to encourage pupils to consider, for example, how unkind words can hurt others. There is positive reinforcement of 'good deeds' once a week during an assembly when actions are rewarded and marked by adding a leaf to the celebration tree. Through curricular areas and within the religious education programmes, pupils are able to explore personal, local and global issues.

43. There is very good provision for promoting social development. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their actions, to show kindness and consideration and to accept and value differences in others. The school is a well-ordered happy, caring community where each child is acknowledged as an individual. Teachers build warm supportive relationships with pupils and endeavour to give them a sense of achievement. Pupils themselves want to do well and are encouraged by rewards and praise. There are very good opportunities within the religious education syllabus for pupils to explore their developing awareness of relationships and commitment to others. Pupils are thoughtful about the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and have worked to provide money to send to a school in Ethiopia. They have equipped a science laboratory and a library there. They also raise money for CAFOD and the Catholic Children's Society and make a contribution with their harvest gifts to the shelter for the homeless. The school encourages older pupils to take responsibility by helping with the acts of worship, overseeing younger children in the Nursery and carrying out classroom tasks. Pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated into the school community. Social development is promoted within lessons when pupils work together in science or music and have to reach decisions with a partner. Social development is also promoted by extracurricular activities when pupils participate in sporting activities.

44. The weaknesses identified in the school's cultural provision in the previous inspection have been addressed and pupils are now well prepared for living in a multicultural and multi-faith society.

The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils' own heritages are recognised and parents have been welcomed into the school to share their family experiences, for example, life in a Muslim home. Another parent has shared the celebrations of Divali with the pupils. During the inspection, one of the acts of worship was about recognising and appreciating the uniqueness of individuals. Pupils from around the world held up signs in their own language, which said 'Welcome', but there are few displays around the school that focus on various customs and festivals. History and religious education lessons provide information for pupils on the richness of different cultures and give pupils a good understanding of how people live today in different countries and did so in the past. Within music, art and English lessons, pupils learn about their own cultural heritages. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language see examples of their written language on captions and in books where translations have been sensitively added for them. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils listened to a piece of music from the Lebanon. This was familiar to some pupils in the class and also introduced a dimension to those who had not experienced it before. The school has held a Victorian day and visits have taken place to Brighton Pavilion and to the Booth museum. Visiting musicians have shared European music with the pupils and a grandparent has shared her experiences as a child during World War II when she was an evacuee. These experiences have extended the cultural and multicultural awareness of all the pupils.

45. The provision for promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children aged under five is very good. They learn to pray and reflect on what they have done. They are sensitively encouraged to know right from wrong, for example, when deciding a story is made up or true. Social development is promoted through free choice of activities and learning to take turns and share during collaborative play. Children are confident enough to take the register to the office, as they are encouraged to develop independence. Cultural development is promoted through the bilingual activities and the sharing of stories. Children learn about the routine of the school day and story times provide a rich source of traditional influence.

### **53. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

46. The school provides effective support and guidance to pupils. This provision has been maintained since the last inspection and concerns expressed then about the lack of appropriate written procedures have been addressed appropriately. Staff know pupils well and support their individual needs. Good relationships between teaching and support staff and pupils ensure that they cope confidently with everyday life in school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Assessments made by external professionals are used well. The school is currently improving assessment procedures to provide accurate information about pupils' academic progress, which has not been available to date.

47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are unsatisfactory. Absence levels are high, authorised absence is above the national average and unauthorised absence is well above the national average. The school does not have an attendance policy and registers are not closely monitored. Punctuality has been a persistent problem but recent monitoring and incentive schemes are proving to be successful.

48. The procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are good. The school is successful in creating a climate of good behaviour and tolerance of others. Staff are consistent in their application of the behaviour policy, school rules are generally obeyed and the result is that behaviour is good. Bullying or harassment is rare. Where incidents do occur, staff deal with them appropriately.

49. The school complies with local child protection procedures. There has been no recent training

regarding child protection. With a high percentage of staff new to the school, training needs exist in addition to child protection information in the staff handbook for new or supply staff. Overall, the school's provision for the health and safety of pupils is satisfactory. There are appropriate arrangements for dealing with accidents and two members of staff are trained in the provision of first aid. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy, but no written risk assessment has taken place and this was noted in the report on the previous inspection. The temporary hut currently used by Year 4 is unsatisfactory due to unsafe windows and poor ventilation. The flooring in all toilets is porous and emits an unpleasant odour. There is no sick bay and pupils have no comfortable place to rest when ill. The school has no shower for the youngest pupils who might still be incontinent.

50. Induction procedures for children who are aged under five and arrangements for the various intakes are good. There are opportunities for parents and children to visit the school and a system of home visits takes place early in the autumn term. Reception children are able to play in the Infant playground, which is secure, and they feel accustomed to the 'big school'. There are good links with the secondary schools to which the pupils transfer at the age of 11. Nursery children have their own designated area which is secure, but it is not large enough for wheeled toys or climbing apparatus. However, the Nursery children make use of the Infant playground and the hall for physical activities and outdoor play.

#### **58. Partnership with parents and the community**

51. There is a satisfactory partnership between parents and the school. Many parents are helped to support their children at home, for example, with reading at Key Stage 1, and this has a positive impact upon standards in English and other subjects. Some parents help in school and with after-school activities and with transport to sporting fixtures. There is an association of parents and teachers that organises social events for families and raises funds for the school to the benefit of all pupils. There are encouraging signs that more parents are becoming involved in the work of the school. However, numbers attending important meetings such as parents' consultation meetings, are low.

52. Some parents are not happy about the quality and amount of information they receive and the lack of information about their children's progress. The school does provide satisfactory written communication in the way of newsletters and termly curricular information. The school has recently devised a helpful Home School Agreement with the help of parents from each class. Translations are not made of written communication to parents for whom English is an additional language. The school prospectus does not give parents information about their right to withdraw their child from religious education lessons and acts of collective worship. The end of year report does not always clearly indicate attainment and progress. The inspection team found the parents' concerns to be partly justified. The last inspection highlighted similar concerns. The school has recognised the need to continue to seek ways to improve communication with all parents and is already taking some appropriate action.

53. The pupils benefit from the close links the school has with the community. Harvest gifts are collected and the school supports many charitable organisations. The pupils sing carols at a local home for the elderly and elderly residents visit the school for the Christmas performance. The local priests are regular visitors to school and pupils also go to church from time to time. Older pupils are involved with the Brighton Festival Children's Parade and also take part in, and recently won, a Safety in Action competition. Two local businesses have been particularly supportive in that they have worked with the pupils to produce an excellent nature area and an exciting playground for Key Stage 1. All these links support the work of the teachers and make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.

54. All parents and guardians of children who are aged under five are invited to a well-organised welcome session before their children start school. Information is provided through leaflets, which are very helpful, and guidance is given on preparing children for school. The co-ordinator is building up good contacts with local playgroups. Teachers are available to parents for simple worries and queries at the beginning and the end of the day when children are brought to school and collected and these arrangements work well. There are also more formal useful arrangements for parents to attend open days and consultation evenings.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **62. Leadership and management**

55. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. There has been considerable success in meeting the school's aims which follow from the commitment to Christian principles, whilst embracing the cultural diversity of the school. At the time of the previous inspection, the governors were deemed to have been insufficiently involved in key aspects of the school's work, particularly those related to the oversight of the curriculum. After the inspection, a new governing body was formed. The governors and the Headteacher, in the context of many difficulties, set about defining more clearly the ways that they could best fulfil their mutual responsibilities. The school had had a history of serious instability in staffing. There was a high turnover of teachers, which led to some parental disaffection and justified anxiety about the progress that their children were making in some classes. The leadership of the school was further weakened by the difficulties experienced, through constant changes in staff, in building up a team of teachers capable of developing and monitoring the curriculum, improving the quality of teaching and establishing greater continuity in the pupils' learning across the years.

56. Following the retirement, through illness, of the former Headteacher, the school was led by successive acting Headteachers. The current Headteacher, appointed following the previous inspection, set about establishing a clear and sustained commitment to the raising of standards and the improvement of the quality of teaching. The governors, too, have sought to engage more effectively with the school and have built up steadily an awareness of how best to exercise their responsibilities. The recent appointment of a Deputy Headteacher has further strengthened the management of the school. The school is now more securely placed to overcome the anxieties of parents about their children's progress and the negative perception of the school amongst prospective parents, which is no longer justified. There is an acknowledged need to strengthen further the involvement of all the governors and to provide those teachers with monitoring responsibilities with sufficient time to carry out their role.

57. The management of provision for the children who are under five in the Nursery class and in Reception is very good: it is clearly documented and carefully monitored. The teachers in these classes work very effectively as a team and thus ensure that the children grow progressively in the development of their skills and confidence. There have been weaknesses in the management of the Junior and Infant stages that have now been mostly overcome by two recent appointments. The co-ordination of provision for the early years is very good and gives a very clear direction for this stage of development.

58. The work of the school is supported by appropriate documentation approved by the governing body. The school places strong emphasis on sustaining equality of access for all pupils to the full range of the curriculum. This shows itself in the quality of provision for the pupils with special educational needs and in what is provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language. The cultural diversity of the school is managed to the advantage of all children. The measures taken to raise standards are effective in most areas, and the overall good quality of teaching now established is having a marked effect on the levels of attainment achieved by the pupils and the rate at which they progress in their work as they move through the school.

59. Development planning is good. Developments are rooted in a systematic analysis of the school's central needs, which have been many. Not all staff have been involved in establishing the school's objectives and in agreeing to them. However, appropriate and challenging priorities have been established and feasible targets defined. Indications as to how success will be identified have been clearly delineated, particularly in the school's attempts to confront some remaining weaknesses in teaching. Overall, the school is now better placed than it has been for years to accelerate its development and raise standards of attainment further. This is particularly evident in the management of the implementation of the literacy hour and the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers have worked well together in establishing clear links across the years in the development of language and number work.

60. The Headteacher has evolved a style of leadership that balances the need for change with the importance of sustaining a strong community of teachers and has led the school well since her appointment. She has taken decisive action where required, but, despite her best efforts, has much to do to nurture the support of parents. She is very accessible to pupils and supports teachers effectively in their work. There is satisfactory delegation of responsibilities to the different curricular areas and the teachers work with a clear sense of common purpose. The monitoring and implementation of policies are satisfactory overall. The monitoring of teaching has been effective in most cases. A few teachers continue to experience difficulties in the management of lessons. These weaknesses have not yet been effectively addressed, but much has been done to improve the quality of teaching. The governing body brings to the exercise of its responsibilities a satisfactory level of relevant expertise, including experience in the world of business and finance. Its contribution to supporting and monitoring the management of the school's finances is now much more effective than at the time of the previous inspection. Governors have not yet formed a clear strategic view of the school's development but are steadily moving away from over-reliance on the Headteacher in the exercise of their distinctive responsibilities. Since the last inspection, the governing body has ensured that statutory requirements are met, apart from those relating to the appraisal of all teachers and some minor matters relating to the contents of the prospectus.

61. The management of the curriculum is satisfactory. The teachers have worked hard over the last few years to develop the level of documentation needed to ensure that what is taught is at the appropriate level for all year groups. Their commitment, dedication and hard work are a marked feature of the school. The management of subjects is good in English, science and physical education; it is satisfactory in mathematics, art, design and technology, information technology and music. Geography and history are unsatisfactorily led. The support and monitoring of teaching and curricular development are at least satisfactory in most subjects but there are weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and curricular development in art, geography, history and music and in development planning in mathematics, art, geography, history and music.

62. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs, temporarily undertaken by the Headteacher, is good. The governors have ensured that provision for pupils with special educational needs is clearly directed towards the needs of the pupils concerned. Governors receive good information from the special educational needs co-ordinator. This puts

them in a strong position to report to parents in the manner required by law about how funding and resources are deployed. The management of what is provided for the pupils for whom English is an additional language in the home is also good and liaison between the school and the Local Education Authority in matters relating to these pupils' needs is particularly good. Teachers and visiting staff plan well together.

63.The ethos for learning in the school is good. The teachers ensure that the distinctive Christian and Catholic climate of the school informs its life, whilst embracing its rich cultural diversity. A striking feature of the school is the way that pupils from differing faiths play, work and pray together in a relaxed and caring way. The governors and the teachers work hard to sustain a climate where all pupils are secure and happy and are free to celebrate their diverse cultural heritages.

64.Daily routines are well established and sustained by an effective school office. As one person is concerned both with financial management and dealing with visitors to the school, there is insufficient emphasis on the importance of greeting visitors to the school and managing parental complaints and anxieties. This does not make for effective communications beyond the school, a matter that must be of concern to a school where the public perception of its work is unjustifiably negative. However, communications within the school are clear and effective. The staff are fully informed about, and aware of, daily routines and emergency procedures. Standard procedures, particularly those related to health and safety, are clearly delineated in a helpful staff handbook.

65.The school has responded satisfactorily to the previous inspection, particularly the issues raised about curricular planning and provision for the pupils' cultural development. The response to the inspection has been accelerated under the present Headteacher, who has translated what needed to be done into precise actions. Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history are lower than those noted at the previous inspection, whilst standards in design and technology and music have improved. The progress towards the targets set for improvement has been monitored carefully, with some involvement of the governors. Apart from the key issues raised, the school also addressed other issues raised throughout the report on the previous inspection. The school has in place the systems, the quality of leadership, the planning and the vision to secure further good rates of continued development. It has begun to set and meet realistic targets for improvement. The high proportions of unsatisfactory teaching, noted at the previous inspection, and subsequent high staff turnover have been decisively confronted and the pupils no longer experience constant changes of teacher. However, there are still some unresolved uncertainties about staffing. Although the roles of the co-ordinators have been strengthened, there remains further development of their responsibility for the monitoring of teaching.

73.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

66.Overall, staffing, accommodation and resources have a satisfactory effect upon the quality of education provided and educational standards achieved. This is particularly evident in the quality of the teachers' involvement in the development of the literacy hour and the National Numeracy Strategy. There is sufficient expertise to develop further literacy and numeracy across the school.

67.The school has experienced considerable staffing difficulties in recent years. Eight new teachers have joined the school in the last two years and five have left. Additionally, during this period, many vacancies have been filled on a temporary basis. This has resulted in disruption for pupils in some cases and progress has been slowed down for some pupils. The Headteacher and all class teachers, with the exception of one member of staff on sick leave, have been in school for less than three years. Two permanent posts are currently filled by temporary staff. Parents expressed their concern about the rapid changes in staffing and the amount of supply teaching. These concerns were found to be justified by the inspection team. However, the school now has a generous allocation of staff with sufficient knowledge and expertise to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the areas of learning for children aged under five.

68.The school employs six classroom assistants who provide additional support for pupils with special educational needs. Their skills are generally well matched to meeting the needs of the pupils. However, there are insufficient appropriately skilled Nursery support staff or administrative staff. The consequence of this lack of skill is that valuable teaching and support time is lost for pupils.

69.The report on the previous inspection noted a need to allow co-ordinators to manage subjects more effectively. This has slowly improved and most subjects are now managed satisfactorily. However, co-ordinators' roles, in some subjects, remain insufficiently focused on monitoring teaching and learning.

70.Staff development is effectively co-ordinated. Good levels of support are available to new staff. In-service training is planned and further training that is well matched to the school development plans is being offered. This is a marked improvement on what was noted in the previous inspection. Formal appraisal does not take place but annual job profiles are drawn up. Effective targets matched to the school development plan are set.

71.The accommodation is adequate for the number on roll and for the curriculum to be taught effectively. Outside, pupils are able to enjoy a well-designed Key Stage 1 playground and an environmental garden for Key Stage 2. There is no school field or lawn for pupils to relax and play. There is very limited play space outside for children aged under five. The classrooms are spacious and bright except for the Year 4 classroom, which is unsatisfactory as it is unattractive, the windows are faulty, ventilation poor and the roof leaks. The flooring in toilets throughout the school is porous and emits an unpleasant odour. The school has commenced a programme of redecoration and refurbishment and the buildings are mostly well maintained and reasonably clean.

72.Overall, the school is satisfactorily resourced. The previous inspection noted a poor school library and this has been much improved since. Many old or out-of-date books have been removed and, as a result, the library stock is low. The new library positioned at the end of the hall is not yet well used by pupils. Good quality books have been purchased to supplement the literacy hour programme. Most subjects are satisfactorily resourced, except for history, geography, design and technology and information technology. History, geography and information technology were highlighted in the last inspection as being unsatisfactory and having negative effects on teaching and learning. In history, satisfactory use is made of museum loans, but few subjects make sufficient use of resources in the locality.



73. Teaching staff for children who are aged under five are well qualified, experienced and knowledgeable about their needs. Support staff vary in their capability. Some are exceptionally hardworking and particularly helpful to children who are learning English. In the Nursery, however, the appropriate support is not always offered to meet the needs of such young children. The accommodation for children who are aged under five is suitable and is attractively displayed. Good attention is given to the arrangement of the room to enable children to have areas for specific learning.

74. Resources for the children who are under five are satisfactory. The early years co-ordinator works hard to supplement items to enable children to have a breadth of experiences.

82.

## **82. The efficiency of the school**

75. Overall, the management of the school's resources is satisfactory. The quality of financial planning to support educational development is good. The level of financial expertise in the governing body has been improved considerably in recent years. This puts it in a strong position to interpret financial systems and to support the school in effective budgeting. A six per cent carry forward targeted on impending building work has been astutely built up over three years. The governors' involvement in the management of the school has ensured that priorities are clearly identified in the school development plan and that budgeting is linked appropriately to the most urgent developments. Targets set for the further development of the school are clearly costed. A similar picture was noted at the previous inspection. The governors are supplied with a good level of financial information to support the exercise of their responsibilities. The finance committee meets regularly and keeps track of expenditure.

76. The Headteacher, who is acting as special educational needs co-ordinator, supported by a designated governor, ensures clear accounting for funding for pupils with special educational needs. The governors have made sure that the funding designated for provision for pupils with special educational needs is efficiently directed. The reports to parents on how this funding is deployed are sufficiently detailed to provide a clear picture of how funding and resources are directed to the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

77. The school makes good use of teaching and support staff and teachers' expertise is appropriately used across the school. Support staff for pupils with special educational needs are effectively deployed and this shows itself in the good rate of progress that these pupils make in all aspects of their work. The school makes satisfactory use of the learning resources at its disposal, apart from computers, which are under-used. The library is under-used; pupils tend to use the books available in their classrooms. The use of the accommodation is satisfactory. There is limited outdoor accommodation but it is managed well to ensure the safety of the pupils. The skilled provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is well deployed through good collaboration between the class teachers and the teachers who support the development of language. The use made of support in the Nursery class is not good. The co-ordinators of subjects are not used well as their roles are not always clearly focused on monitoring the work of their colleagues.

78.The efficiency of financial control and school administration is satisfactory. Some minor procedural matters raised by the auditors have been effectively addressed. The day-to-day management of finance is undertaken by an effective finance office. Arrangements by which the manager of finance also acts as receptionist are unsatisfactory, in that it is not possible to focus adequately on the needs of those who come to the school with anxieties and queries. The computerised financial management system is used satisfactorily. The system allows for easy access to the current state of finance and supports efficient spending on resources.

79.Pupils enter the school with below average standards of attainment and well below average socio-economic circumstances. A very high proportion of pupils are non-fluent speakers of English. Most pupils establish and sustain a good rate of progress in the development of what they know, understand and can do. Standards of attainment are beginning to rise. The pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language in the home progress at a good rate. The pupils experience a high proportion of good and very good teaching. A small pocket of teaching remains unsatisfactory. The cost of educating each pupil is higher than that found nationally in primary schools as the school does not have its full complement of pupils, but the overall costs of running the school remain the same. Taking all these judgements into consideration, the school provides satisfactory value for money. It is beginning to provide good value for money in some aspects of its work, particularly in the quality of teaching.

87. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

87. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

80.Children enter the Nursery attaining standards that are below those found in most children of their ages nationally. The majority of children make good progress in all the areas of learning and most are on course to meet the requirements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time that they are five and to exceed them in creative development.

81.The school admits children into the Nursery when they are three years old. Children are admitted into the Reception class at the beginning of the school year after they are four. These arrangements enable children to benefit from part-time education in the Nursery and full-time education in the Reception class. The previous inspection findings were that children in the Nursery received a positive start to their education. Their attainment and progress were good for all the areas of learning in relation to their stages of development. Their skills in listening and speaking, together with those of observation and concentration, were developing well and their response to learning was good. These findings are in accord with those of the present inspection. A comprehensive early years policy has been developed and all the Desirable Learning Outcomes suggested for this age are being addressed. Topics are planned to provide a structure and are relevant to the children's experiences. Induction arrangements are very good and a policy of pre-school home and school visits enables children to feel welcome and secure when they begin their education. The quality of teaching is very good and children make good progress. The teachers are committed and enthusiastic. They have positive relationships with the children and encourage their personal and academic development by allowing them to make choices and take responsibility.

82.There is a good emphasis on the early skills associated with language, literacy and mathematics. Good use is made of bilingual support to help the children whose first language is not English and there is recognition of other cultures and traditions with captions displayed in Arabic alongside English. The teachers endeavour to make the classrooms attractive and reflect the work that children are producing. The outside accommodation is small for the Nursery children but its convenient location enables them to use the area on a daily basis. The hall and playground provide opportunities for both the Nursery and Reception children to develop physical skills and to learn to use large toys in social situations. Although the Reception children have access to the enclosed Infant playground area, they do not have a designated area for their own use. Resources are satisfactory but there is no climbing apparatus especially for the Nursery children to use.

## **90. Personal and social development**

83. The progress made in social and personal development by children in the Nursery and Reception class is good and most exceed the standards that are expected by the age of five. The teaching of this aspect is very good. Children are encouraged to consider others, take responsibility for their own equipment, dress themselves and visit the toilet satisfactorily without supervision by adults. This is demonstrated in the way in which they are willing to join in, hold up visual aids in a story session and cooperate in shared activities. A good example of collaborative work occurred, for example, when two children worked on a computer program, which showed a story sequence. The task required them to decide when to move on to the next screen page; they sensibly took turns to operate the mouse. Children understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, for example, they learn to keep quiet when others are speaking. They help to clear away after their activities when asked and treat the classroom environment and outdoor play area with respect. The activities are well organised by staff, but, occasionally, the outcomes are predetermined and do not allow children sufficient freedom to select the materials to be used. Children realise they are part of a larger community when they learn to say prayers, handle religious artefacts and, at a later stage, attend acts of worship in the school.

## **91. Language and literacy**

84. Many children have limited vocabularies and several have difficulty in expressing themselves in English when they enter the Nursery. They make good progress in language and literacy because of the very good quality of the teaching, which focuses on the development of key skills. This good work continues into the Reception class. Over half of the children are likely to meet the required standards by the time that they are five.

85. In the Nursery, children learn to listen to stories such as 'I see Brown Bear' and 'The flying man' and follow the text with the teacher. Some stories are also told in Arabic in such a way that all children can participate. They learn that stories have a beginning, middle and ending and wait for their turn to go out with the appropriate picture of characters as they appear in the story. The teacher also encourages children to develop their listening skills by recording the stories on tape. In the Reception class, children enjoy stories such as 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and this also forms the basis for stimulating children to write. Children learn to talk about events in their lives out of school and respond to questions when they are engaged in practical activities. Role-play activities are carefully planned, for example, a baby clinic is set up, and children practise using language in these pretend activities. Most children know that words and pictures carry meaning and several realise that English print is read and written from left to right. They look at books and tell the story from the pictures. Older Nursery children easily find a card showing their name written on it. Reception children recognise many initial sounds and the higher attaining children learn to pick out simple words in the text. All children show enjoyment when handling books. To promote their skills in visual recognition, activities such as jigsaws and lotto games, where children describe the expressions on photographs of faces and find a matching card, are used to good effect. Guided reading sessions, especially where there is time for discussion, allow children time to predict what they think will happen and discuss the response of the characters in stories. Children in the Nursery take books home on a weekly basis, while in Reception, children take books home daily. A reading record book has spaces for comment by whoever hears the child read and these are used well. Children display varying degrees of manipulative control when trying to form letters but many make concentrated efforts for their ages. Letter formation is taught in a structured way and children are taught how to position their work and hold a pencil. They are encouraged to make marks and produce drawings, which signify meaning. With the support of adults, they sometimes dictate a caption and see their comments written down, for example, when they are making books about themselves or want to write about their pictures of creatures under the sea. Later on they

tackle 'pretend writing' for themselves, sometimes using the initial sounds or blended sounds they have learned to begin the words and they produce attempts at spelling that show that they know many letter sounds. Writing for different purposes in this emergent way is encouraged by the use of a wide range of appropriate resources.

### 93. **Mathematics**

86. On entry to the Nursery, children's skills in counting and number recognition are weak for their age. They make good progress in mathematics as a result of very good teaching and a good proportion are on course to meet the expected levels by the age of five and to achieve the expected standard. A comprehensive range of practical equipment enables the children to sort objects, for example, according to size or colour, count and recognise numbers. Practical art activities prepare children for early work on shape and space when they learn to position items in a collage, for example, and use the terms 'above', 'next to', and 'below'. Number songs and rhymes help them to count forwards and backwards, for example, five green bottles and five speckled frogs. They make sets of animals and higher attaining children learn to add one more and take one away. They explore numbers in play situations by using telephones, calculators, money and cash tills and learn the appropriate mathematical language. When involved in sand and water play, they learn the beginnings of capacity when they decide if a container is full. Older children in the Reception class understand the concepts of 'more than' and 'less than'. They carry out addition to six using dice and identify shorter and longer snakes. Higher attaining children can say how many more counters they need to make ten. They also realise that, when they have a set of objects, the last one, which they count, reflects the number of objects in the collection. A few children show advanced skills and calculate in their heads up to 20. Resources re-inforce the more formal learning, for example, children enjoy participating in number bingo, cutting out circular shapes and sequencing patterns on pegboards. They learn to refer to items, such as first, second and third, learn about pairs of objects when they find shoes to dress a doll and consider size when they hear about Big Billy Goat Gruff.

#### **94. Knowledge and understanding of the world**

87. Many children have limited first hand experiences and knowledge of the world around them when they enter the Nursery. Their attainment is well below average in this respect but progress is good and a good proportion of the children are on course to attain the nationally expected standards by the time they are five. The teaching is of a high standard and children explore natural objects with magnifying glasses and magnets and learn about the properties of materials of the play equipment around them. They investigate light sources with torches and kaleidoscopes and recognise different colours linked to the theme for the week. During the inspection, 'red' was featured in the Nursery and objects that the children were going to use were chosen because they were red. They observe changes in the weather and the growth of beans and learn about the needs and characteristics of a baby when one is brought on a visit. Their knowledge about living in a multi-cultural society is developed through close contact with children who are bilingual and others who are learning to speak English. They visit a shop and learn about different fruits and vegetables and enjoy preparing to have a picnic in the playground. Older children know how to make jelly and observe what happens when hot water is added to the cubes and how the liquid changes when it is in the fridge. They find ways of recording how many marbles a boat will hold before it will sink and their skills in observing, predicting and classifying are further enhanced when they record their findings about different leaves. The early years' curriculum provides good opportunities for children to participate in structured play with large building blocks and other constructional equipment where a purpose is set at the outcome. Children learn about the materials which are used for building a house and study photographs when they represent them in clay. They make good use of information technology and learn to operate programs that reinforce their literacy, mathematical, and artistic skills. Most are adept at using a mouse and accurately point to items on the screen.

#### **95. Creative development**

88. By the time that they are five, attainment is above what would be expected for children of this age. They make rapid progress in this aspect of their development. The quality of teaching is very good. Children show obvious enjoyment when working creatively. The quality of the work is enhanced by the intervention of adults and the specific teaching of skills as was seen when Reception children discovered how to use clay. From the examples of portrait work by the Nursery children on display, they have obviously received help in close observation of their subjects before tackling the drawings, but their versions are original and the standard is particularly high. They paint with cotton buds, toothbrushes and food colouring in addition to the usual paint and brushes. Several know about primary colours and techniques when stippling, folding and making layered pictures. They discover whether it is possible to chalk on top of paint or collage. They use play dough and apply tools to it and develop their own ideas when working with wet sand. They make very good observational drawings of fruit and plants, print with apples and their hands and create underwater creatures. Reception children show particularly high attainment in their study of the artist Mondrian. They paint very effectively in his style, then produce pictures based on straight lines which they have observed in and outside the classroom. They design a troll for the picture about the Billy Goats Gruff and decide how to make 'grass'. Although there are excellent examples where children have been encouraged to select materials and produce their own versions of a theme, there are few pictures in the early years' classes where children have been free to paint from their own memory or imagination. Children's aesthetic appreciation is further developed through music. They encounter rhythm, pitch and tempo and enjoy joining in action songs and rhymes. Individual children were seen to be very skilled in identifying and copying rhythms made by others behind a screen. They respond well to 'Traffic Lights' cards and observe when to stop and continue their musical activities.

## **96. Physical development**

89. Children are on course to achieve the expected standards for five year olds. On entry to the school, several children have difficulty with pencil control and handling small pieces of equipment when positioning items in small world play, or joining construction equipment together. Many activities are chosen to help children to strengthen their skills and rapid progress is made. The quality of teaching is very good. Children have opportunities in the Nursery to play outside and use the Infant playground area for wheeled vehicles and for balancing on logs in the adventure area. They build with bricks, make castles, walls, bridges and ramps. They enjoy climbing in and out of large plastic containers and pretend that they are on different forms of transport. There is sufficient equipment for almost all the children to use bicycles, tricycles or small wheeled vehicles; these experiences aid co-ordination. They also use the hall for developing skills with small apparatus. Many children in both Nursery and Reception roll a hoop and several show good control for their ages. They manipulate hoops with great skill. Reception children are timetabled to use the playground area and work with large toys once a week. This limited access does not enable the children in this class to have continuous practice at negotiating toys and developing co-ordination. They do, however, participate in physical education lessons in the hall and use all the apparatus. Many extend and improve their fine manipulative skills when cutting out, using pencils, pasting, threading beads, drawing and painting and kneading play dough and clay. When using computers, they also practise fine control of movements when using the mouse and directing the cursor.

## **97. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **97. English**

90. Overall attainment of seven and 11 year olds is below average. In the 1998 tests for 11 year olds, a well below average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard; the proportion exceeding that standard was also well below average. Taking the average National Curriculum level reached, the performance of pupils was well below the national average. Over the last three years, the average level reached by pupils has been well below that found nationally. Girls outperformed boys. In comparison with 11 year olds in similar schools, an average percentage of pupils reach the expected Level 4, whilst a well below average proportion attain the higher Level 5. Taking the average levels reached at this age, the school achieves standards that are below average in comparison with those reached by most similar schools. There is evidence of improved standards in the 1999 tests, but accurate national comparisons are not yet possible. This improvement can be traced to the very good quality of teaching experienced by the pupils.

91. On the evidence of lessons and work seen, the pupils at the start of the current Year 6 show below average attainment, but are beginning to make good progress in their work due to the improved quality of teaching. There are many pupils in this year who experience English as an additional language in their homes and a significant proportion have been identified as having special educational needs. Pupils' competence in speaking and listening is as good as that demonstrated by most pupils at this age nationally. Most speak confidently and with a satisfactory range of vocabulary in informal settings. In the more formal presentation of ideas, for example, in the literacy hour where they present their ideas to the rest of the class, pupils use an appropriate range of vocabulary. They listen carefully to one another in discussions, but rarely elaborate their ideas or provide reasons for their point of view. At this age, pupils have extended the range of books they read, but too few attempt books with a complex narrative structure and attainment is average overall. However, there is a significant minority of pupils who reach low standards in reading. Pupils are diffident in explaining the characters they encounter in the books they are

reading. The overall standard of pupils' writing is well below the level found at this age nationally. Pupils write for a limited range of purposes and readers. They are good at drafting and correcting their work, using dictionaries. Handwriting is well developed, letters are well formed and spelling is generally accurate. The good standard of handwriting results from the teachers' clear focus on practising basic skills of letter alignment. The regular practice of the basic letter shapes and the strong emphasis on the quality of presentation show themselves in the neat work produced by many pupils.

92. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in reading, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and that reaching the higher levels was well below the national average. In the tests in writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard was well below average and that exceeding it was below the national average figure. In the assessments conducted by the teachers at this age, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was well below average in speaking and listening and in reading. Attainment in writing was very low. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 or above was well below average in all aspects of English. In comparison with similar schools, the proportion of seven year olds reaching the expected standard in the reading tests was below average, whilst in writing, it was well below average. Comparing the school's attainment of the higher grades, standards are below average in reading and average in writing. Considering the average National Curriculum level reached by pupils in the tests, the performance of pupils in reading and writing was well below average for all schools. Girls out-performed boys in both reading and writing. Over the last three years, the performance of pupils in the national tests has been well below average in reading and in writing and preliminary indications from the 1999 tests do not show any improvement.

93. In lessons and in work seen, the attainment of seven year olds is well below national expectations and accords with that reached in the tests and teachers' assessments. However, many of the present Year 2 pupils are beginning to reach standards much closer to the average for their ages in reading, writing and in speaking and listening. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and one another and give reasons for their answers when invited to do so. In the literacy hour, for example, they explore the text being studied and are confident in explaining their work to their peers. They plan, redraft, edit and refine their own writing, using dictionaries and thesauruses, but write for a limited range of purposes and readers, with most reaching well below average standards for their ages. One of the strengths of the school is the overall quality of handwriting and the consistency with which the teachers support the pupils in practising



letter formation. Standards of spelling are below the levels typical for the pupils' ages. Few pupils read fluently and expressively, but most have a satisfactory range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. Overall standards of reading are below average. They discuss the books they read, but only the higher attaining pupils explain their preferences and compare and contrast characters from different books. Pupils use non-fiction books effectively to research their topics. There is limited use of information technology other than for very basic word-processing.

94. Pupils use language effectively across the curriculum, for example, they write simple accounts in history and use some of the appropriate language in recording their work in science. They develop their ideas through the many good opportunities for speaking and listening. They read reference books to support their work in most areas of the curriculum. This is particularly evident in history in their work on Victorian England. In mathematics, pupils' use of language through mental, oral and written work, particularly during the introductory and concluding activities, makes a positive contribution to their development of literacy skills.

95. The overall rate at which pupils progress in the development of language skills is good in both key stages but there is considerable unevenness across the years. This is rooted in the pupils' recent history of significant variations in their experience of teaching and of the curriculum. The pattern revealed in the pupils' previous work is as follows: pupils entered the Nursery with below average levels of literacy and quickly acquired confidence in the development of the beginnings of reading and writing, but in Reception, progress was slowed down to an unsatisfactory rate. Thereafter, pupils' attainment and progress did not recover due to the high level of unsatisfactory teaching, as noted in the previous inspection, which slowed them down in the development of their work as they moved through the school. The evidence from the inspection of lessons and from the scrutiny of the pupils' more recent work reveals a very different picture. The quality of teaching has radically improved across the school and is beginning to show itself in the good rate at which pupils are progressing in the development of their competence in language.

96. Children in the Nursery and the Reception class make rapid gains in the development of confidence in language where, for example, they start to sequence a story from picture cues. In retelling what they hear, they show a high level of skill for their ages in working out the possible direction that the story will take. Handwriting is developing at a rapid rate as pupils move through Years 1 and 2, with most pupils beginning to establish neat and regular letter shapes before the age of seven. Standards in reading are slow to develop due to the

unsatisfactory teaching of initial sounds in Key Stage 1. The current Reception children sustain the good progress established in the Nursery and are good at sounding out letters and some familiar words. The range of opportunities for pupils to discuss and share what they read, particularly in the literacy hour, is supporting good progress in Years 1 and 2. In Year 1, pupils have started from generally low levels of literacy for their ages but are now building their literacy skills through focused work on word recognition and a few now read with fluency, sounding out unfamiliar words. At the time of the inspection, these pupils were being taught by a temporary teacher and arrangements for the future teaching of this class have not yet been settled. Current Year 2 pupils have had many changes of teacher but have now settled down to a new appointment and some very good teaching. Already, the pupils' reading skills are becoming more refined and interest in books is developing. The standard of reading is also improving through some good teaching of phonics. Current Year 3 pupils have had the most debilitating history of changes of teacher and of unsatisfactory teaching so they have made a weak start. They continue to make unsatisfactory progress in reading and writing as they lack very basic skills in phonics and word recognition. The work they now are given does not take sufficient account of their low levels of basic skill. Pupils in Year 4 are quickly recovering from a weak start and, again, good teaching is leading to rapid advances in reading, writing, punctuation and spelling. In Year 5, pupils' knowledge of narrative form is rapidly extended through the emphasis on how an author uses language to create mood and atmosphere and some very good work in drama extends the pupils' speaking and listening skills. The present Year 6, although coming from a history of underachievement, are now making good progress through well-structured lessons with a sharp focus on basic skills.

97. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good in both key stages. This is due to the quality of support provided for them in lessons and through the teaching of small groups withdrawn from lessons for special help. There is some very good use of phonics and pupils are encouraged effectively to sound out their words. Higher attaining pupils generally make good progress in relation to their previous attainment through the provision of tasks that are sufficiently difficult. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language in the home make good and often very good progress in the development of their confidence in English. This is as a result of the skilled support they receive and the quality of planning between the class teachers and the visiting teachers. There is an effective emphasis on pupils' listening

skills and on high expectations for attainment for all lower attaining pupils.

98. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good in both key stages. They behave well, follow class rules and expected routines and remain focused on their work. In the literacy hour they adapt well to extended periods of whole-class teaching and group work. Throughout the school they sustain a good rate of work in lessons. This was particularly evident in the work in drama in Year 5 and in Year 4 where pupils prepare a scripted weather forecast and present their forecasts to the class in the role of real weather forecasters. The pupils and teachers relate very well to one another. Pupils listen to the views of others and, as they get older, show a growing sensitivity to the need to provide reasons for their points of view. In all lessons pupils are good at taking turns and, as they move up the school, they make good use of opportunities to work independently. They take responsibility for their own learning by seeking out resources for their topic work, using the library effectively.

99. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages. The teaching of drama is very good and makes a significant contribution to the development of literacy. Teachers have a good knowledge of English and of how to teach it and plan effectively together. They have already established confidence in managing the literacy hour and make sensible adjustments where appropriate. High expectations for attainment are revealed in the way that teachers provide a progressively challenging sequence of language activities and ensure that pupils at all levels of attainment are appropriately challenged, using a good range of strategies to engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Although pupils have not been accustomed to producing extended pieces of work, teachers now plan for more extended writing and for a wide range of purposes. Currently there is insufficient emphasis on poetry. There is some particularly good teaching in the plenary session at the conclusion of the literacy hour where pupils are provided with opportunities to structure their ideas for formal presentation to their peers. This was a particularly strong feature of work in Year 4 where, for example, pupils engaged in role play exercises in the presentation of their ideas. The very structured approach to the development of handwriting is a strong feature of teaching in Year 6. Pupils are generally managed well and lessons have a good pace, moving smoothly from one activity to the next. Teachers make effective use of assessment in lessons and are good at making clear to pupils how well they are attaining and how they might improve their work. Homework is used satisfactorily, but there are some inconsistencies in practice. There are weaknesses in the teaching of Year 3. There is

insufficient awareness in this year of the pupils' levels of attainment, particularly their low level of understanding of the sound and spelling system, with the consequence that that they have difficulties in reading and spelling accurately. Lessons also are not well structured and pupils are unsure about what is expected of them.

100. The children who are aged under five are very well taught both in the Nursery and in the Reception classes. They participate in work with their older peers securely and make good progress in establishing the foundations of language. The teaching of the younger children was clearly effective, for example, in a lesson where the teacher worked with the children on the structure of the story and used a story board to good effect. Consistent classroom routines and expectations for behaviour were a real strength of this lesson and resulted in the pupils taking responsibility for behaviour and for the pace of work. Another marked feature of this lesson, and of similar lessons, was the skilful way that pupils at all levels of attainment were included to the full extent of their competence. Good teaching in Reception also leads to an growing grasp of how to recognise words through the application of phonic knowledge. The teacher's use of an imaginative mixture of exposition, open questioning, explanation and illustration is the key to the rapid advances made by the pupils in their understanding of stories and books.

101. Assessment is used well to inform future planning of the curriculum. English is well led and the development of the subject is now being given a clear direction. The co-ordinator is new to the post but has already established a good working relationship with all the teachers. The management of the introduction of the literacy hour and the provision of the appropriate training have set the school on course for further steady improvement in standards of literacy across the years. Realistic targets for improvement are set and met.

102. Overall standards for seven and 11 year-olds in English were judged to be average at the last inspection, although reading skills were deemed to be weak. Standards in handwriting were judged to be too low and there was little evidence of drafting and redrafting. The previous inspection drew attention to the insufficient use made of information technology. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have been seriously affected by significant instability in staffing. The school has taken decisive action on this front and there is now greater evenness in the quality of teaching across the school with the consequence that the troughs and peaks in attainment across the different years are less extreme. Weaknesses in the management of the reading policy, identified in the previous inspection, have now been addressed effectively. The

previous inspection noted inconsistencies in the school's approach to the teaching of spelling but there is now greater common understanding and effective practice in the teaching of spelling in most lessons. The school places more emphasis now on the use of drafting and redrafting.

#### 110. **Mathematics**

103. An analysis of the 1998 national test results for 11 year olds shows the percentage of pupils reaching the national expectation was very low in comparison with the national average, and the percentage reaching Level 5 was well below the national average. Performance was also well below average when compared with similar schools. This showed a lowering of standards from 1997. The results of 1999 tests show a very significant improvement, with 79 per cent attaining Level 4 compared with 23 per cent in the previous year. Although national comparisons are not yet available this would indicate above average performance.

104. Inspection findings indicate that pupils at the beginning of Year 6 are still below average, but they are now making good progress as a result of good quality, focused teaching and they are on line to attain broadly average standards. A scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils develop their own strategies for problem-solving and demonstrate average skills in using all four operations in whole numbers and decimals. They identify congruent shapes and orders of symmetry. They find areas of simple shapes and work out the area of both regular and irregular shapes and collect discrete data and represent it in a variety of charts and graphs. The present Year 6 pupils place positive and negative numbers on a number line and explain their decisions and also use standard forms of long multiplication. They are working in line with the numeracy framework guidelines for Years 5 and 6 and this is having a positive impact on attainment. There has been little improvement in the use of computers to extend mathematical concepts since the previous inspection, when the use made of computers was deemed to be unsatisfactory.

105. In the 1998 national tests for seven year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching the national expectation was very low and the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. When compared with similar schools, attainment is well below average for pupils attaining the national expectation, but well above average for those exceeding it. Although no national comparisons are yet available the 1999 results show that standards remain low and that the percentage exceeding the national expectation has reduced. Boys are attaining well below girls. Inspection evidence supports this analysis but indications from the present Year 2, who are making good progress, are for standards to rise but remain below average.

106. By the age of seven, pupils recognise and use simple relationships and discuss their work using mathematical language. They complete number squares and are beginning to understand place value of digits and arrange numbers to 100 in order. They understand the language of addition and subtraction and count on and back in tens and measure using standard measurements of length and know the names and properties of two-dimensional shapes. Their knowledge of three-dimensional shapes is not secure. In the Year 2 class pupils count, order, add and subtract numbers to ten and some to 20. A significant minority has recall of number facts to ten, but many are still reliant on the number line. Only a few confidently double or understand near doubles.

107. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily across the curriculum. They draw plans in geography, use measurement in design and technology, science and physical education and work with timelines in history.

108. The previous history of many changes of teacher and unsatisfactory teaching noted in the previous inspection has held back the progress pupils that made from a very good start in the Nursery and in the Reception class. In the lessons seen during the inspection, progress is good at both key stages. This is a result of more sharply focused teaching in line with the numeracy framework. During the week of the inspection, pupils were concentrating on number. In Year 1, pupils develop their skills with number at a good rate and, in Year 2, they show increasing confidence when working within ten and 20 and speed up their mental recall. In Year 3, pupils make satisfactory progress and consolidate their number skills at a steady rate. Pupils make good progress in Years 4 to 6. In Year 4, they are increasing their skills in counting money and working out change. In Year 5, they are successfully extending their understanding of multiplication through tasks well matched to their attainment levels and are using a spreadsheet to display data. They build on this in Year 6 and develop an efficient standard method for multiplication. In all classes, pupils make good progress in developing their mental recall. Pupils with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and those for whom English is an additional language make progress in line with that of their peers, as teachers and support staff have a good awareness of their needs and provide appropriate tasks and support.

109. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy mathematics and are enthusiastic learners, who work well and behave sensibly. They work co-operatively in group work, have positive relationships with each other and the staff, persevere in their work even when they experience difficulties and have good concentration spans. Pupils are eager to apply their mathematical knowledge to real-life settings such as shopping.

110. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. It is never less than satisfactory and is good and better in two-thirds of lessons. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is very good. In all lessons, work is well planned against the numeracy framework. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they show skill in questioning pupils to extend their thinking and understanding. They manage pupils well, provide an appropriate balance between whole-class and individual teaching and plan appropriate grouping arrangements. In the best lessons, there is a very good working environment, where teachers set high expectations and move pupils on at good rate. They use mathematical terminology well and work hard at extending pupils' vocabulary.

111. The subject is satisfactorily managed by the deputy headteacher in a holding role until a new appointment is made. Planning is not satisfactorily monitored, with the consequence that there are no established systems in place for knowing the standards across the school. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to the full range of the mathematics curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Planning for progression in the pupils' learning is satisfactory and effective assessment procedures are in place, which inform future planning against the numeracy framework. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when only the tests at the end of the key stages provided assessment information. Resources for the subject are adequate but little use is made of information technology.

## 119. Science

112. Analysis of the 1998 national tests for 11 year olds shows that the percentage of pupils who reached Level 4 and above, and Level 5 and above, in science, was well below the national average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with that of similar schools, it shows that overall standards are well below average. Compared with similar schools, the performance of pupils who reached Level 4 and above was well below average but the percentage of pupils who attained Level 5 and above was broadly in line with the average. Standards over the last three years indicate a fluctuating pattern with a sharp rise in attainment in 1997 followed by a steep drop in standards to 1996 levels in 1998. From 1996 to 1998, the performance of boys in science was very low in comparison with the national average, while the performance of girls was better but still well below the national average. The most recent test results for 1999 indicate a significant improvement with 83 per cent of pupils attaining Level 4 and above compared to 36 per cent the previous year and 21 per cent reaching Level 5 compared to five per cent in 1998.

113. The findings of the inspection are that, by the end of Key Stage 2, the standards attained are below the level of the national expectation. This varies from the findings of the previous inspection where standards were judged to be generally average, but there was underachievement particularly amongst the higher attaining pupils. By the age of 11, pupils have an understanding of the concept of a fair test. They draw and interpret graphs to show the results of seeds growing in different conditions and accurately refer to measurements to record the height of a bean shoot over two weeks. They recognise why some materials are more suitable than others when they are used in the construction of a house. Most pupils successfully make an electric circuit and test materials for their conductivity. They demonstrate their conclusions by discovering whether a bulb or buzzer will work when the circuit is complete. Several pupils understand the differences between solids, liquids and gases and explain the terms evaporation and condensation. Some make generalisations about physical phenomena, but several have misconceptions about the reasons behind physical processes. There are weaknesses in the use of prediction based on their own scientific understanding.

114. Analysis of the national 1998 teacher assessments for seven year olds shows that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was very low in comparison with the national average and at Level 3 and above, pupils' results were well below the average. Compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, at Level 2 and above, the results are well below average; at Level 3 and above, they are below average. The most recent assessments for 1999 show that 56 per cent of pupils entered reached Level 2 and no pupils attained Level 3. These results are broadly similar to those of 1998 when 57 per cent attained Level 2 and above and five per cent reached Level 3.

115. In lessons and work seen, the standards attained by seven year olds are below expectations. The previous inspection judged standards to be generally average, but there was significant underachievement. By the age of seven, pupils engage in investigating and testing simple theories when led by the teacher, but their skills in observing changes and drawing conclusions are not well developed. They have limited scientific vocabularies. With support, they experiment to find out what happens to their bodies during and after exercise, investigate pulse rates and know that exercise causes muscles to develop. They have some knowledge of foods that are essential for healthy growth, identify the properties of materials which are suitable for clothing in different weather conditions and understand why shadows appear. A small percentage of pupils understand what happens when substances are heated and cooled.

116. During the inspection, a high proportion of pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and others who are learning English as an additional language, were seen to make good progress in developing skills of prediction, planning

fair tests and learning to form conclusions based on evidence. The two teachers in Key Stage 1, one of whom is new to the school this term and the other who is covering for a member of staff on sick leave, have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Effective discussion forms an important part of lessons and the work is challenging and is pitched at a level which extends pupils' knowledge and skills. For example, Year 1 pupils successfully sequence the changes from birth to adulthood and gain good information about changes associated with stages of growth. Pupils have very good opportunities to consolidate what they learn and to share their developing understanding with the teacher. The work in Year 2 is similarly purposeful and challenging so that, within a well-planned structure, pupils acquire facts about the body and the function of the heart based on first-hand experiences. From the scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils, it is evident that progress has been too slow in the past.

117. The pattern of progress varies in Key Stage 2, although it is good overall. Progress in acquiring scientific skills and gaining knowledge is unsatisfactory when the work is not suitably planned to challenge pupils at all levels of attainment. Rapid progress occurs when resources are well managed and pertinent questioning by the teacher leads pupils to form conclusions and record their findings. Good examples were seen when Year 4 pupils added sections to their electric circuits and tested which materials would conduct electricity. Several were beginning to explain the reasons for their findings by the end of the lesson but many found this difficult. Similarly, Year 5 pupils developed skills in forming a hypothesis when they experimented to show the presence of air within substances. In both these lessons, the teachers expected a high work rate and fully involved the pupils in analysing what they had discovered. Progress is sometimes limited by the pupils' ability to write and speak English fluently to explain their findings. The use of information technology to support the subject is not sufficiently developed, but there are several good examples of consistent progress when pupils have the opportunity to apply their numerical skills when they measure height and volume and record their measurements in tabular or graphical form.

118. Pupils across the school have good attitudes to their work. They listen attentively, settle down to work quickly and show interest in what they are doing. Concentration and perseverance are well sustained, including when working independently. Behaviour and relationships are good. Pupils help each other and work well together. This was particularly noticeable in Year 5 when pupils worked in pairs and used magnifying glasses to observe the changes to substances. On this and similar occasions, they share equipment and support one another in their work. Their well-focused activity leads to rapid advances in their otherwise low levels of observational skills. Throughout the school, pupils take a pride in their work, organise themselves efficiently and show initiative when collecting the resources they require.

119. The quality of teaching is good overall in both key stages. In the previous inspection, teaching was mainly satisfactory but there were shortcomings in teachers' knowledge, inefficient use of time and a lack of challenge in the work provided. Evidence suggests that these aspects are now being addressed, but some of the improvements in the quality of teaching are very recent because of staff changes. During the inspection, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 was consistently good but the quantity of work in Key Stage 1 has been too small in the past, expectations have been too low and there has not been sufficient focus on enabling pupils to test and draw conclusions. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching varies from being very good to unsatisfactory. Good elements include clear explanations to aid understanding and suitable support for pupils with special educational needs. Sometimes, there is more challenging work for higher attaining pupils. Unsatisfactory elements include weak knowledge, slow pace and missed opportunities to provide a plenary session to help pupils to consolidate their learning. In general, teachers are not using the assessment information that they gain in lessons to help them to plan future work and some pupils are revisiting work that they are already able to do.



120. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. A new scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has been introduced and this ensures that scientific areas are covered systematically. It also gives appropriate emphasis to investigative and experimental science, which was a weakness in the previous inspection. The scheme has not yet had time to become fully established. The management of the subject is good and is tackled with commitment and enthusiasm. The co-ordinator has developed her own expertise but has had few opportunities to monitor and support the teaching of science. The last inspection also identified the lack of time allocated to this aspect of the role. The co-ordinator has made a thorough analysis of the development of the subject, has audited resources and has provided tracking forms for the assessment of pupils' progress. A good attempt has been made to review the data linked with the national tests and assessments. Resources are satisfactory but there are implications for further resourcing as the new scheme gets underway. The subject's contribution to literacy is variable, as pupils' skills in writing accounts of experiments, making hypotheses and explaining their conclusions orally are not extended in some classes.

121. Science makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development when they organise and share resources during investigative activities.

## **129. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **129. Information technology**

122. There were only limited opportunities to observe direct teaching of lessons. Evidence is taken from these lessons, observations of pupils working on computers, a scrutiny of a very limited amount of previous work and discussions with pupils and staff.

123. The standards reached by both seven and 11 year olds are well below the national expectation and pupils have made poor progress over time. The report on the previous inspection noted that the requirements of the National Curriculum were not being met and that standards were low. Until very recently, there is little evidence that this was addressed. The school has now introduced national guidelines, which cover the requirements and pupils are beginning to make steady progress from a very low base.

124. By the age of 11 years, pupils' attainment is overall well below the national expectation. It is broadly in line in communicating and handling text, but is below average in handling and communicating data and in controlling, monitoring and modelling, where the school has not provided sufficient opportunities for pupils to build systematically on their skills. Most pupils, by this age, show an awareness of the reader when using text for a variety of purposes. They use a variety of fonts, colours and sizes, and import clip-art and borders. However, they have few opportunities, across the curriculum, to use these skills. Although many pupils have access to the Internet and e-mail at home, other than Internet access in Year 5, they do not yet have the facility to use these at school. The use of data handling is not well developed and they have not been given sufficient opportunity to control events, sense physical data or explore patterns and relationships with the aid of information technology simulations or models. Only this term have pupils in Year 6 learned to program a controllable toy at a very basic level.

125. By the age of seven, pupils generate and communicate ideas using text and pictures. There is some pleasing work by the previous Year 2 on using an art package to produce work in the style of Joan Miro. However, they have had little opportunity to enter and store information, to give direct commands to control movement or to work with simulations. Teachers report that the pupils have had limited previous opportunities to work with information technology.

126. Pupils are now beginning to make at least satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding across the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. For example, in

Year 1, they are beginning to use control and, in Year 3 are acquiring the basic skills of word-processing such as shift, space, delete and edit. In Year 4, pupils make good progress in learning to use the spellchecker and organise their work in folders. In Year 5, pupils make good progress in using a spreadsheet program to display data and in using the Internet to research Victorian toys. In Year 6 pupils use a controllable toy for the first time and are learning basic commands. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make progress in line with their peers. There is a lack of awareness of the skills that many pupils bring from computer use at home and, consequently, these skills are not built upon or used to support other pupils' learning.

127. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and enjoy working with computers. They work sensibly and show good co-operation when working in pairs at the machines. They show appropriate independence and persevere well when faced with difficulties, for example, when retrieving files or formatting text.

128. Just two lessons where direct teaching of information technology took place were observed. Teaching in the Year 3 lesson seen was satisfactory and in the Year 4 lesson, it was good. In both lessons, the work was well planned against new national guidelines and instructions to the pupils were clear. Other evidence shows that teachers have good levels of skill and understanding in the subject. All but one member of staff are proficient and regular personal users of computers and all are competent within the range of software allocated to their class. When pupils are working on computers, teachers show good awareness and intervene appropriately. Overall, computers are used insufficiently.

129. The co-ordinator took over responsibility last term and is now satisfactorily managing the subject. She has written a new policy and has produced a realistic development plan. She has put in place national guidelines to ensure that the subject is taught systematically and a new and helpful assessment system which assesses pupils' skills has been implemented.

130. The number of computers in relation to the number of pupils is below average and some systems are now in need of up-grading. New, more up-to-date equipment is arriving and more is planned. Pupils have access to the Internet in Year 5, but the school has no access to e-mail. The school has a scanner but no digital camera.

138.

## **Art**

131. Judgements have been made from observation of lessons and from displays and evidence of pupils' past work. Standards in art are above what is expected of 11 year olds and seven year olds, especially in colour-mixing and observational drawing. These findings are in agreement with those of the previous inspection. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce detailed drawings of Brighton Pavilion. They use pencils with precision and create tone and texture by using a variety of techniques, for example, by applying different pressures and using dots and cross-hatching. Pupils examine the work of William Morris and produce complex representations of plants. They develop a theme based on close observational studies of peppers and produce successful drawings, collage and three-dimensional work exploring the different effects of colour and medium. By the end of Key Stage 1, they apply the techniques of Monet, based on his picture of a field of poppies, to their own compositions. The standard of drawing, as demonstrated by the work on bicycles, is particularly high. Pupils' knowledge about how to mix colours and produce subtle shades is well developed as was shown by their work based on the 'Dazzle' computer program. Although there are some good examples of printing and using papier-mâché techniques at both key stages, these skills are not so evident.

132. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who attain higher levels, make

consistently good progress in acquiring skills in drawing and applying paint across the school. They make clear gains in knowledge about the work of artists but not all teachers engage pupils in applying these techniques to their own compositions. Some limitations in the art curriculum with regard to the development of skills in using three-dimensional materials and textiles lead to variable progress in these elements in different classes. The time that is allocated to the subject on some timetables also influences the rate of progress. Reception children make a good start when they learn how to use clay to make a house and apply decoration by using various tools, and paint in the style of Mondrian. Year 1 pupils are similarly encouraged to look carefully and honestly represent what they see when they produce portraits or paint in the style of Miro. Rapid progress continues into Year 2 when Monet is studied. Year 3 pupils experiment with different types of pencils to produce very detailed drawings of plants, while Year 4 and 5 pupils study the work of Van Gogh and William Morris. They continue to improve their drawing techniques when representing a close up of an eye or an intricate Victorian design.

133. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They work with enthusiasm and purpose and apply themselves well. They are friendly and courteous when discussing their work and enjoy taking responsibility when given the opportunity. Year 1 pupils, for example, work productively with a partner when they work on portraits, using charcoal, and consider how light and shade fall across each other's faces after examining similar work by Modigliani. At all ages, pupils sustain interest in their work and try to make use of suggestions given to help them to improve it. Behaviour in lessons is consistently good and pupils readily prepare the tables, share resources and clear away.

134. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Examples of good teaching are evident where there is clear subject knowledge, expertise, high expectations, strong organisational skills and the ability to demonstrate techniques without stifling originality. The work on display is of high quality and indicates that pupils are being taught the correct techniques and given the chance to reflect on their work. Teachers vary in their use of sketchbooks. In some classes, these are well used but, in others, they do not indicate that pupils are able to develop their own ideas from memory or imagination.

135. Art is satisfactorily managed. The co-ordinator is new to the role but already has a clear view of the subject's development. In her own teaching of the subject, she demonstrates expertise but there are no opportunities to monitor the teaching of art through the school and support members of staff who are less confident. There is no policy or scheme of work to ensure that consistency and continuity occur in the planning. This situation has not improved since the last inspection. Skills for development are outlined in the medium and short term plans and provide the basis for a broad and balanced curriculum. Forms of assessment do not always indicate the differences between pupils and few teachers use the information gained to inform the future development of programmes of work. Resources are satisfactory. There is a good range of painting and drawing media but only a basic selection of books, posters and prints for pupils to study the work of artists.

Some good opportunities arise for pupils to experiment with computer generated art and to devise their own work resulting from it. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, are adept at comparing their own art techniques with the brush and fill tool on the computer.

#### **143. Design and technology**

136. Judgements are made on the evidence of lessons and a scrutiny of a very limited amount of previous work.

137. Pupils, at the age of seven and 11, attain broadly average standards for their ages. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. Work on fairground models, which include a motor and a switch, from the previous Year 6 shows improved knowledge and understanding of mechanisms and structures. In the current Year 6, pupils show appropriate knowledge of a range of materials

and explain, for example, how slippers are made. They mark out and cut and shape materials and make a paper prototype as part of the design process.

138. Pupils in Year 2 show careful pictorial design in their work on wheels and axles. They know there are lots of different kinds of vehicles for different purposes.

139. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress overall in both key stages. In Year 1, they make good progress in planning a fruit salad and developing their technical language. Year 2 pupils develop their designing and making skills in their work on axles and, in Year 3, they make satisfactory progress in extending their understanding of packaging. Year 4 pupils, in their work on designing and making a money container, build steadily on previous work in identifying how to design a product for a specific purpose. In Year 6, pupils make steady progress in considering the restrictions of materials and fitness for purpose in their work on slippers.

140. Pupils enjoy design and technology. They enjoy working collaboratively and in teams and enjoy problem solving and working practically. They show an interest in the task and work safely and sensibly, concentrating on the task in hand.

141. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In Year 6, it is good and, in Year 1, it is very good. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of designing and making and plan their work well against the recently introduced national guidelines. Lessons are well managed and appropriate resources are generally provided. In Year 1, the teacher employs very good strategies for engaging the pupils' enthusiasm and develops very good cross-curricular links with science, when considering the properties of ingredients for a fruit salad. Excellent questioning extends pupils' thinking and understanding and develops significantly their scientific and technical language.

142. The subject is managed effectively while the school awaits the appointment of a new co-ordinator. The curriculum is now planned in line with published national guidelines to ensure appropriate attention to both designing and making. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. Resources are unsatisfactory in that the range of materials, for example, in Year 6, limits pupils' opportunities to exercise choice.

## **150. Geography**

143. There were limited opportunities to observe lessons during the inspection. Where it is reasonable to make judgements, these are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, interviews with staff and pupils and analysis of resources and planning documents.

144. By the age of 11 years, pupils attain standards in geography that are well below average for their age. Pupils describe some of the human and physical features of their immediate area but they know little about other locations in the United Kingdom. Although they have some knowledge of Egypt and Greece based on their topic work, they have a limited knowledge of life in other countries. Many describe some of the principal archaeological remains in the valley of the Nile but do not have any knowledge of the impact of settlement along the banks of the river, though they describe some of the features of the Cuckmere river estuary. They use a very limited range of geographical vocabulary but have engaged in the collecting of information from different sources to support their topic work.

153. Seven year olds have well below average levels of geographical understanding and skill. Although they describe some of the features of their immediate locality and use some geographical vocabulary, they are unable to describe contrasts between different localities. Pupils describe some of the changes in the locality but are unaware of their significance. They have some knowledge of the impact they have on the environment and about the importance of protecting it. They are not confident in recognising landscape features on a photograph.

145. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, make unsatisfactory progress in geography in both key stages. The children in the Nursery and Reception make a good start in the development of basic geographical understanding when they talk about their homes and where they live. After this, however, the pupils make slow progress in the extension and application of these basic skills.

146. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. In the two lessons seen in Key Stage 2, the response of pupils varied with the quality of the teaching. During interviews with the pupils, they willingly talked about what they had learned and provided some lively accounts of their visit to the Cuckmere river valley.

147. Geography has had a low profile in the school, due to increased emphasis on literacy. However, this position is being remedied. This was evident, for example, in a Year 4 lesson where the pupils were exploring the causes and consequences of the earthquake in Taiwan and demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of why earthquakes occur.

148. From the limited evidence available, the indications are that the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory although some satisfactory to good teaching was seen in Year 4. The school has had much to do to address the effect that changes in staff have had on pupils' progress. Though the school has planned to follow a national scheme of work, there is little by way of guidance or support available in the school for the effective teaching of geography. The overall quality of provision has regressed since the previous inspection and standards have fallen.

158. The subject is unsatisfactorily led and managed. There has been little monitoring of what is provided. There is no formal assessment of geography. Resources, including computer software, are unsatisfactory.

159. The school has not responded adequately to the more flexible arrangements proposed for teaching the National Curriculum introduced in September 1998 and so has not provided sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their geographical skills and knowledge. The school is currently addressing this matter and there are already signs of improvement due to the overall improvement in the quality of teaching.

### 159. **History**

149. By the age of 11 years, pupils' standards of attainment are below average for their ages. A scrutiny of limited previous work shows last year's Year 6 to be below average and a limited range of work and discussions with present Year 6 pupils show below average knowledge, skill and understanding. They show confused knowledge and have little understanding of historical enquiry. Pupils have had limited opportunities to investigate topics and use a variety of historical sources and their chronological awareness is not well developed.

150. By the age of seven, pupils show average standards of attainment. They are beginning to use everyday terms pertaining to the passage of time and show an increasing sense of chronology. They show understanding and factual knowledge of major events and people in the past, such as Florence Nightingale.

151. Pupils are now making generally satisfactory progress across both key stages because of more focused teaching in line with recently introduced national guidelines and standards have started to

improve. Previous progress, particularly at Key Stage 2, was unsatisfactory as work set did not extend pupils or build systematically on previous learning.

152. In Year 1, pupils develop their understanding of then and now, and use old photographs of Brighton to develop their research skills. In Year 2, pupils show an increasing awareness of chronology and start to answer questions about the past using old photographs and portraits. In Year 3, pupils show average knowledge and understanding of the Romans in Britain and develop steadily their use of historical sources. In Year 4, pupils show clear evidence of progress in learning about the Tudor period and in identifying in simple terms the activities of a monarch. In Year 5, pupils make good progress. They develop their understanding of chronology and recognise the feature of poverty in Victorian times. They work at a particularly good rate and are informed by good teaching. In Year 6, pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about Greek myths and legends, but their understanding is not as well developed as in Year 5, where pupils show average attainment.

153. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They listen attentively and behave well. In the best lessons, they ask questions which show that they are thinking about their work and are keen to engage in historical enquiry. They work well collaboratively and sustain concentration over a significant period of time. Pupils with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and those for whom English is an additional language, make progress in line with their peers.

154. As no lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory. It is good in Years 4 and 6. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and have appropriate expectations of pupils. They plan their lessons, manage pupils well and generally make effective use of time and resources. In the good lessons, the teachers have high expectations and set interesting tasks, which are well matched to the needs of all pupils.

155. The curriculum is now systematically planned using national guidelines and this ensures progression in learning. This shows an improvement on the previous inspection when there was no scheme of work to ensure that pupils were taught history through the progressive development of their knowledge and skill. The quality and range of historical resources remain insufficient, although good use is made of loan facilities for artefacts.

## **Music**

156. By the end of both key stages, standards are average for the age of the pupils. This finding is in agreement with the last inspection in relation to judgements about Key Stage 1 but represents an improvement on the findings on standards found at the end of Key Stage 2. Insufficient time was allocated to the subject in Key Stage 2 and this is still the case. It was only possible to see one music lesson in Key Stage 2 during the inspection because of the organisation of the timetable. Evidence has been gleaned from teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and observations during acts of worship.

157. By the age of 11 years, pupils sing songs from memory, participate in rounds and control the phrasing by breathing appropriately. Most pupils can pitch notes accurately when an instrument accompanies them. They recognise that bars are composed of different beats and many identify pieces of music which are in waltz or march time. They carefully listen to detail and discuss their responses to music from different traditions. Pupils who are learning to play instruments have a good sense of notation and rhythm and observe notes accurately when singing or playing. By the age of seven, pupils investigate, select and arrange sounds to make an effect, for example, when accompanying a story. They recognise high and low pitched sounds and are beginning to make accurate comparisons and can also recognise instruments, such as a flute or recorder, from

listening to their sound. Higher attaining pupils can pick out ostinato rhythms and use the appropriate musical vocabulary.

158. The progress which pupils make in performing and composing varies according to the skills of the teachers. In the lessons seen in Key Stage 1, pupils make rapid progress in the identification of pitch, instruments and rhythms because of the strong teaching and the opportunities to apply their developing skills and knowledge. In Key Stage 2, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that progress is satisfactory overall. At times, lessons do not take place as planned, as there is insufficient time to complete the work. The scheme of work involves pupils in learning about music from other cultures and traditions when they learn Viking songs and hear about Aesop's Fables. Some of the rhythmical work in Key Stage 2 is not much further advanced than that encountered by pupils in Key Stage 1. During the inspection, pupils with special educational needs were seen to make good progress in Key Stage 1 but barely satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. This is also true of the higher attaining pupils.

159. Pupils make good responses. They are well behaved, show enthusiasm and are motivated when the teaching is lively and purposeful. They sing with enthusiasm especially when joining in with the repetition in Green Grow the Rushes O! Pupils enjoy following two parts in hymns during the acts of worship. Pupils show that they can be responsible and use their initiative when working in groups or choosing rhythms to demonstrate to others. They listen particularly well when identifying the number of beats in their names and are confident when speaking out in front of others and sharing their opinions about the mood, which an instrument, such as a cello, suggests.

160. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, it is very good, with some excellent features. At the time of the previous inspection, there was a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, and few teachers were confident in the subject. Little in-service training has been undertaken since then and there are significant training needs. New members of staff bring a good range of expertise and have the capability to raise standards and support colleagues in their work. In the best lessons, teachers quickly assess difficulties that arise, demonstrate their own musical understanding and teach accordingly by developing pupils' knowledge. They try to pick out key points on which to focus pupils' attention and extend their musical awareness and vocabulary. Lessons are carefully planned to include opportunities for performance and appraisal evident, for example, when Year 2 pupils use differently pitched voices to represent the three bears. In all lessons, there is good management of pupils and an effective balance of content taught. Lessons proceed at an appropriate pace, and positive relationships between the teachers and pupils characterise all lessons.

161. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has been newly appointed but has clear plans for the future direction of the subject. Developing skills are not assessed in a consistent way, which leads to annual reports containing information, which is too general. Resources are adequate when pupils use those that are centrally stored, but there are insufficient numbers to provide every classroom with a selection of tuned and untuned percussion instruments.

Music resources for listening purposes are satisfactory but staff supplement these resources with their own tapes and compact discs. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development when they learn to express their feelings, work together, share instruments and listen to music from around the world. Year 1 pupils, for example, were introduced to a Lebanese piece of music, which incorporated an oud, a cello and frame drums. A choir is convened when the school participates in a concert at the Dome theatre and the curriculum is enhanced by recitals given by the peripatetic teachers. There are adequate opportunities for pupils to learn to play an instrument. Around 14 pupils are learning to play the violin and a few pupils have tuition in the keyboard through private arrangements.

### **Physical education**

162. Current Year 6 pupils reach standards of attainment similar to those achieved by most pupils nationally for their ages. This accords with the judgement of the previous inspection. By the time they leave the school, most pupils swim unaided, competently and safely for at least 25 metres. They create simple sequences in dance and gymnastics. They practise skills in athletics and team games, putting them into practice in playing football, cricket and basketball in school leagues and against other schools. Pupils sustain energetic activity over a period of time and have a clear understanding of what happens to the body during exercise. They prepare for, and recover from, vigorous activity using the appropriate sequences of warm up and cool down exercises. In relation to their previous levels of skill, all pupils make good progress through the key stage and acquire greater refinement in the quality of their movement in gymnastics and dance and in their tactical awareness in games.

163. Seven year olds reach average standards in their work and make good progress. They repeat turning and rolling actions both on the floor and on small apparatus and show good control when balancing on the floor and on apparatus. They are adept at producing imaginative and expressive shapes and refine them and improve them through practice. In lessons, most of the pupils throw and catch balls accurately. Nearly all pupils have good basic techniques such as moving to catch the ball in team games. They make less progress in talking about their work and evaluating it. In Year 1, pupils lift and handle equipment and apparatus safely and they show an increasing capacity for following instructions. They quickly improve their control in balancing, jumping and landing. Pupils with physical disabilities make good progress in the quality of their work.

164. Attitudes to learning are good. Pupils show pleasure and enthusiasm for physical education and have a good sense of team spirit. They respond with enthusiasm and imagination to challenges offered in dance and gymnastics. Pupils practise, improve and refine their sequences and work supportively in pairs and small groups. Behaviour in lessons is mostly good, but in a small number of lessons a few pupils are self-conscious or reluctant to participate fully. Pupils usually work quietly with good concentration on tasks. Pupils in one lesson in Year 2 showed very good attitudes and self-control for their ages, particularly when working on large apparatus in gymnastic activities. In most lessons, they show respect for each other's space when moving around and work safely in activities. The great majority of pupils follow the rules sensibly in simple competitive games. Pupils enjoy talking about their work and evaluate performance sensibly, but have insufficient opportunities to do so.

165. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages with some very good and excellent teaching. Some of the best teaching is in Years 2 and 3 where the work is rooted in the teachers' good knowledge of the subject and in clear and consistently high expectations of behaviour and working practices. In Year 6, pupils give clear feedback on the quality of their performances in dance. In half the lessons, teachers have a good knowledge of what they teach and plan carefully a good structure that allows a warming-up activity and a calm activity at the end of the lesson. They demonstrate skills with proficiency and challenge pupils to concentrate and produce their best performance. Pupils are praised and are given opportunities to show others what they can do, and the pace of the lesson is such that time is used well. In less successful lessons, there is too much reliance on tape recordings, and, in others, the structure is too loose and the pace too slow. Assessment to determine pupils' skill levels is not developed but there is some clear feedback to pupils on their performances.

166. The provision for physical education is well led. The curriculum is enriched in Key Stage 2 by Saturday morning league games for teams of boys and girls. The support for teachers in areas in which they feel insecure is very good, for example, in teaching cricket skills.

167. Since the last inspection, when there were weaknesses in teaching, particularly in the pace of many lessons, there have been significant improvements. Pupils have more opportunities now to



practise and refine their work and lessons are not over-dominated by the teacher as was noted in the previous inspection.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **178. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

168. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of 14 inspector days in the school. Time spent observing teaching, scrutinising the work of pupils and checking their attainment by working with them during the inspection - 56 hours 45 minutes. 21 hours 30 minutes at Key Stage 1, 35 hours 15 minutes at Key Stage 2.

In addition, a further 20 hours 50 minutes were spent on other activities included in the list below:

Fifty-seven lessons or parts of lessons were observed as were a number of registration periods, assemblies, playtimes, lunchtimes and extracurricular activities;  
discussions were held with all teaching staff and some non-teaching staff;  
many pupils were heard to read and were questioned about their mathematical knowledge and understanding;  
a sample of the work of three pupils across the full range of ability in all year groups was inspected in addition to work examined during lessons;  
all available school documentation was analysed;  
attendance records, pupils' records kept by the school and teachers' planning documents were examined;  
the budget figures were inspected;  
discussions were held with pupils, parents and governors;  
a parents' meeting was held and the views of the six parents at this meeting and those of the 35 families who responded to a questionnaire were taken into account.

179.

### **180. DATA AND INDICATORS**

#### **180. Pupil data**

Unit/School	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	182	5	57	90
Nursery	25	0	11	0

#### **180. Teachers and classes**

**180. Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): 9.30

Number of pupils per qualified teacher: 19.6

**180. Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff: 7

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 138

**180. Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): 1

Number of pupils per qualified teacher: 25

**180. Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff: 3

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 40

Average class size: 26

**180. Financial data**

Financial year: 1997/98

£

Total Income 394373

Total Expenditure 394593

Expenditure per pupil 1861.29

Balance brought forward from previous year 24266

Balance carried forward to next year 24046

180. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 185  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 35

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	34	49	9	9	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	46	43	9	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	31	43	17	9	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	26	46	11	11	6
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	31	43	6	14	6
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	43	11	9	3
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	43	14	6	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	40	14	9	6
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	40	49	9	0	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	40	43	14	0	3
My child(ren) like(s) school	46	46	6	3	0

#### **180. Other issues raised by parents**

Six parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and eight parents made additional comments on the questionnaires. Parents are generally satisfied with what the school provides and appreciate the improvements in the quality of teaching and the school's response to the needs of their children. The inspection findings confirm the parents' overall positive view of the school. The parents' anxieties about the changes in staffing are clearly justified by the evidence of the inspection related to the recent history of staffing changes. However, these anxieties are no longer justified as the high staff turnover has ceased and most of the staffing problems have been resolved. The judgement of some parents that the information they receive from the school is insufficient is also justified. The questions raised about homework are partially justified in that there are some inconsistencies in practice amongst the teachers.