

INSPECTION REPORT

Our Lady & St Gerard's RC Primary School

Lostock Hall, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119639

Headteacher: Mrs E Brotchie

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Bell
16413

Dates of inspection: 22 – 25 May 2000

Inspection number: 194395

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lourdes Avenue
Lostock Hall
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Postcode: PR5 5TB

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor K W Palmer

Date of previous inspection: 10 December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs D Bell	Registered Inspector	Art	What sort of school is it?
		Music	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Special Educational Needs	How well are pupils taught?
Mrs J Garland	Lay Inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr A Markham	Team member	Science	How well is the school led and managed?
		Information and communication technology	
		Physical education	
Mr G Morgans	Team member	English	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Geography	
		History	
		Equality of opportunity	
Mrs D Davenport	Team member	Areas of learning for children under five	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Mathematics	
		Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Our Lady and St Gerard's RC primary school is situated in the village of Lostock Hall on the outskirts of Preston. It is part of the Ampleforth Abbey Trust and is in the Diocese of Salford. The school serves a mainly residential area and its pupils, most of whom come from Catholic families, are admitted at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. On entry to the school their attainment, measured by a nationally approved test, is average for their age. The school occupies two sites and caters for 313 pupils aged 4 to 11 years, 152 boys and 161 girls. Since the previous inspection the school has had a new headteacher and there have been several changes of staff. Pupils are taught in 10 classes, 3 of which contain two age groups. Very few pupils come from the ethnic minorities and all pupils speak English as their first language. Twenty-two pupils (7.05 per cent) are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are 13.42 per cent of pupils on the register for special educational needs, one of whom (0.3 per cent) has a statement of special need. The free school meals figure and the special educational needs figures are all below the averages found nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Good leadership and management create a positive climate for learning and there is a clear determination to strive for even higher standards in all aspects of school life. The school knows its strengths. It also recognises the areas in which it could improve and is trying hard to do so. Because of good teaching, pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school has worked hard and very successfully to raise standards in science following the well below average results that pupils attained in the 1999 National Curriculum tests. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They achieve well and their behaviour is satisfactory. The school adds considerable value to pupils' education and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well and those currently in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Leadership and management are good and governors give good support to the school's work.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are hard working and care for their pupils.
- The good provision for children under five helps them to settle into school and gives them a good start in their education.
- There are good links with the parish and with the local community.
- Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above average and the procedures for checking it are very good.

What could be improved

- Consistency in implementing the school's new marking policy.
- Provision for personal, social and health education and for preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse Britain.
- The self-discipline of the small but significant number of pupils in several classes who find difficulty working individually or in a group when not directly supervised by an adult.
- Information for parents so that they know what their children are learning and how they are progressing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996. Since then, improvement has been good. The school development plan is now well constructed and teachers are clear about their roles as subject managers. The quality of teaching has improved because teachers are prepared to learn from each other in order to improve pupils' learning and systems are in place to check that they are effective in doing so. More opportunities are provided for pupils to pursue learning for themselves through, for example, individual and group work. However, a small but significant minority of pupils in several classes do not yet have the personal skills to use these opportunities well and when not well managed, they disrupt learning for others. Considerable improvements have taken place in science, information technology and design and technology and pupils now achieve good standards in all three subjects. The provision for the physical development of pupils under five has been

substantially developed with the construction of a secure outside play area and the provision of large play equipment.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	C	B	D
Mathematics	C	C	A	B
Science	C	D	E	E*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

When compared with all schools, the English and mathematics test results rose in 1999, reflecting the school's successful strategies to improve standards in these two subjects and especially in mathematics. In science, standards continued their downward trend. When compared with similar schools, the table shows that in 1999, the school's results were below average in English, above average in mathematics and very low in science, placing the school in the bottom 5 per cent of similar schools for that subject. The results for 11-year-old pupils have fluctuated since the last inspection and while the trend in English and mathematics has been above the national trend, science has been below it. Since September 1999, the school has considerably improved its science provision and teaching. **As a result, the standards of work of the pupils currently in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science.** The school has set appropriately challenging targets for the next two years and is on course to achieve them. The results for pupils aged 7 in 1999 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and teacher assessments showed that they were very high in science. The 1999 results show a sharp rise in attainment and reflect once again the school's determined efforts to raise standards. Throughout the school, standards are good in art, design and technology, history and information and communication technology. They are satisfactory in music and physical education. In geography, standards are good in the 5 to 7 age range and satisfactory in the 7 to 11 age range.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the majority are interested, eager to learn and keen to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Pupils behave well around the school but in some lessons, a small but significant number of pupils disrupt learning for others by not behaving as well as they should.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships with each other and with adults. The vast majority are responsible young people who see what needs to be done and readily offer to help their teachers, each other and those less fortunate than themselves through, for example, raising money for charity.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average and the majority of pupils arrive on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. In 3 per cent of lessons teaching is excellent; in 13 per cent it is very good and in 46 per cent it is good. Teaching is satisfactory in 32 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 6 per cent. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. There is now only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and there is much more good and very good teaching. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively and this helps pupils to achieve good standards in other subjects. Most lessons are well planned with due regard for the needs of pupils at different stages of learning, including those with special educational needs. In most lessons, there is a good balance of whole class, group and individual work and teachers transmit to pupils their own enthusiasm for what they are teaching. As a result, pupils achieve well, and become increasingly able to think and learn for themselves because they are taught where and how to access the information they need, for example in books, on CD ROMs and by using the Internet. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the common thread is that pupils' behaviour is not well managed. However, other factors are also present, for example, tasks are either too difficult or too easy and pupils are not always shown what to do or given enough ideas to work with.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met and there is good provision for children under five and for pupils aged 5 to 7. However, there is insufficient teaching about the dangers of drugs and there is no structured programme for personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Some targets are too broad, however, and the small steps in learning required to reach them are not clearly recorded.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is good. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to learn about their own culture but are not as well prepared for life in a culturally diverse Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and staff strive hard to ensure their well-being and success. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is good but there is no structured programme for monitoring their personal development. The school also needs to take more immediate action to minimise identified health and safety risks.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are very positive about the school and its headteacher. They fund raise enthusiastically, providing valuable resources for the school. They are keen to help in school and to act as escorts on school trips when they can. They are justified in their views that they do not receive enough information about what their children are learning or enough information about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has established a clear educational direction for the school, which is supported by the senior management team and shared by all staff. Co-ordinators now have clear roles in managing and monitoring their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors give good support to the school in its work. They are fully involved in all areas of school life and keep a constant check on pupils' attainment, progress and achievement. However, their annual report to parents, while including all statutory headings, lacks detail in some important areas.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and works hard to improve. There are now good systems in place for monitoring its performance that feed into a much improved school development plan and contribute to the clear educational direction it has set itself and to the improvement in standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school plans ahead well and allocates finances to identified agreed areas of priority. A rigorous check is kept on the effect of spending on

	standards particularly when, for example, extra staff are employed to help raise them as in science.
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There is a sufficient number of teaching and support staff in the school. Resources are satisfactory and the accommodation is adequate though cramped for some of the larger classes. However, the school makes the best use it can of its staffing, resources and accommodation. Governors understand and apply best value principles. The school constantly challenges itself to improve standards by comparing its results and its educational provision with those of other schools and it seeks to ascertain that it is getting value for money from its resources.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children make good progress • Behaviour is good • Teaching is good and all teachers, including the head are approachable • Their children have to work hard • The school works closely with parents and is well led and managed • The school helps their children to become more mature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work pupils have to do at home • More information about what their children are learning and how they are getting on • The range of activities offered outside of the school day

Inspectors agree with the parents’ positive views. However, behaviour is not always as good as it should be. In several classes, a small but significant number of pupils disrupt learning for others by shouting out and talking over the teacher or other pupils, or by generally being too noisy and not doing enough work. Inspectors found that there is a sufficient range and amount of homework set for pupils. They agree that parents could be given more information about what their children are learning. While the door is always open for parents to come in and discuss any concerns they may have, there are not enough formal opportunities for them to learn about or discuss their children’s progress. There is only one parents’ evening each year, for example and the pupils’ annual reports do not report consistently well on what the pupils can and cannot do, nor do they indicate how the pupils could improve their work. Inspectors also found that while there is a good range of sporting activities throughout the school year, other activities outside of the normal school day are not as regular, being related to specific events, for example, concerts and performances. Overall, however, the range of activities is satisfactory.

Some parents at the parents’ meeting expressed concerns about mixed age classes. Inspectors found that the school does its best to minimise the effect of these by employing extra part time staff for specific teaching, for example, in English, mathematics and science. Particular concern was expressed about the quality of teaching in the mixed Year 4/5 class. Inspectors found that the teaching is well organised in this class and that good account is taken of the differing levels of attainment and ages of the pupils when work is set.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The 1999 National Curriculum English test results for pupils aged 11 were above the national average and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in the tests was also higher than the national average. In mathematics, the results were well above the national average both at the expected levels and at the higher level. In science, the results were well below the national average at both the expected and higher levels. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was below average in English and above average in mathematics. In science, pupils' attainment was very low and placed the school in the bottom five per cent of similar schools.
2. The results for 11-year-olds have fluctuated in all three subjects over the last four years. In English, they were in line with the national average in 1996 and 1998 and above it in 1997 and 1999. Over the four years, however, the results have risen faster than the national trend in this subject. Between 1996 and 1998, average points scores in mathematics were close to the national average but rose in 1999 by considerably more than they did nationally. In science, standards rose from below the national average in 1996 to in line with the national average in 1997 but have declined steadily against a rising national trend since that time. This is because the school concentrated on raising pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by successfully implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Government funded booster classes have also proved effective in enabling pupils to attain better standards in the national tests.
3. Positive and determined action has successfully addressed the low standards in science. More emphasis is given to investigative work. Funding has been targeted to improve standards and used effectively to provide extra staff so that pupils can be taught in smaller groups and in their own year groups in Years 3, 4 and 5. Time for science was doubled in Year 6 this year to help the pupils benefit from the improved provision that they may have missed earlier in their school life. Teachers' planning has improved and their expertise has been raised through in-service training. The school now checks pupils' science work much more rigorously and acts swiftly to address any weaknesses. Realistic but challenging targets have been set for English, mathematics and science for the next two years and the school is working purposefully towards them. There is a clear determination to meet and if possible to exceed them. As a result, **the standards seen in the work of pupils currently at the end of Year 6 are good in English, mathematics and science and numeracy skills are very good.**
4. The results of the 1999 test results for pupils aged 7 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. All 7-year-old pupils reached the nationally expected level in reading and a well above average percentage achieved the higher level. In writing and mathematics, all but one pupil reached the nationally expected levels. In writing, the percentage achieving the higher level was close to the national average and in mathematics it was well above the national average. The reading and mathematics results are well above, and the writing results close to those of similar schools. Over the last four years, the performance of seven-year-olds in reading and writing was well above the national average and in mathematics, above the national average. Teacher assessments for science in this age group show that pupils' attainment in 1999 was very high compared to all schools and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. All pupils attained the nationally expected levels and the percentage attaining the higher level was in line with the national average. **The standards seen in the work of the majority of pupils in the current Year 2 class are above average in English, mathematics and science and a significant minority are attaining well above average standards in the numeracy element of mathematics.**
5. Children come to the school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Their attainment, measured by a nationally approved test, is average for their age. By the age of five, because of good teaching and provision, most exceed the nationally expected desirable learning outcomes for five-year-olds and achieve well in all six areas of learning. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
6. Pupils acquire good speaking and listening skills as they move through the school. Teachers ensure that they apply these well in all subjects in discussion work, when presenting their ideas to the class as in history lessons, and when evaluating their work and suggesting how to improve it, as is seen in art and in

design and technology. All pupils achieve well and make good progress in reading. Teachers develop in pupils an enjoyment of reading by introducing them to a wide range of texts, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Their learning is further enhanced as they are taught to use books, CD ROMs and the Internet to find information on a wide range of topics across the curriculum. The majority of pupils know and use a wide range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words and the displays around school provide a wealth of interesting and stimulating reading material for all pupils. Throughout the school pupils achieve well and make good progress in writing. Good emphasis on handwriting from an early age ensures that pupils write neatly and legibly. Pupils enjoy writing. They confidently do so for a range of purposes and take pride in their achievements. As they move through the school they learn to use correctly an increasingly wide range of punctuation and how to write in different styles for different purposes. The good encouragement and high challenge presented to pupils in the Year 1 class are vital ingredients in the high standards they achieve. Here, pupils learn to write well-constructed sentences. Their spelling is good and they use capital letters correctly. Pupils in Year 5 write letters to the Prime Minister in order to try and persuade him to support the idea of building new classrooms to replace the old ones on the Brownedge Road site. The letters are carefully planned to address the main issues and follow the good foundations laid in Year 2 where pupils write well set out letters to a visiting speaker thanking him for coming to the school. Throughout the school spelling is generally accurate and pupils make good attempts to spell new words. The displays around the school reflect the quality and variety of the pupils' written work and show the value that the school places on it in all subjects.

7. Pupils achieve well in mathematics as they move through the school. They achieve particularly well in number work. The mental mathematics session at the start of each mathematics lesson is conducted at a brisk pace and keeps pupils on their toes as teachers reduce the time pupils have to answer some challenging number problems. Pupils respond really well to these strategies and try very hard to produce the correct answers. By the age of seven pupils recognise the patterns of numbers using 2's, 5's and 10's and odds and evens and the majority can tackle numbers on a 100 square. They use a range of simple mental strategies for working out their answers and are able, for example, to double and halve simple numbers. They learn to use basic mathematical language such as 'greater than' and 'less than'. They can name and describe common shapes, solve simple problems using money, tell the time to the hour and half hour and order the days of the week, months of the year and the seasons. By the age of 11 pupils have a good understanding of how to use simple fractions, decimals and percentages, negative numbers and different units of measure. They plot co-ordinates accurately, recognise and measure angles and use a wide range of strategies in problem solving. They have a good knowledge of number, know their multiplication tables well and can find factors and multiples within these. Throughout the school pupils increasingly learn to think for themselves as they use a variety of methods to solve mathematical problems, often related to real life. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects, for example, science and design and technology, where pupils are taught the importance of accurate measurement and recording.
8. Pupils aged 5 to 7 have good scientific knowledge for their age and are developing sound skills in carrying out fair tests. For example, they learn about sound, electricity, animals' habitats, senses, materials, light and friction. Through these topics, they develop a good scientific vocabulary and learn to use accurately terms such as 'prediction' and 'opinion'. They become increasingly more competent at recording their findings accurately using labelled drawings, charts and diagrams as well as in writing. Because of the whole school approach to science and the increased emphasis on investigative work that has brought about improved standards, teachers of pupils aged 7 to 11 are able to build well on the firm foundation laid by the age of 7. They teach pupils about variables and as a result, pupils in Year 3 learn that they must keep all but one variable constant in order to carry out a fair test. This knowledge and understanding is put to good use as they test the absorbency of different materials and later investigate which materials are soluble and which are not. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils have a good understanding of forces and can devise their own carefully controlled investigations to find the most effective materials for a parachute as they test air resistance.
9. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls in any subject. However, test results show that boys do considerably better at this school than they do nationally. The school is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils and works hard to achieve this. The good provision and effectively targeted support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress in relation to their prior learning. Successful teaching and effective classroom support, including interaction

with their classmates, ensure that a large percentage of these pupils attain the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science in the national tests.

- Standards are good throughout the school and pupils achieve well in art, design and technology, history and information and communication technology. In the first two subjects, good curricular planning that emphasises the importance of preparatory design work and careful evaluation ensures that skills are taught progressively throughout the school. In history, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject highly motivates the pupils and produces enquiring minds that are keen to learn about the past. This has a very positive effect on standards in this subject. In information and communication technology, the good standards are brought about by improved access to computers and confident teachers who show considerable expertise. Standards in music are satisfactory and pupils achieve well. In physical education, standards are sound and achievement is satisfactory. Standards vary from year to year in both music and physical education. In music, good standards are reached in composing, performing, listening and appraising in the Year 3/4 and the Year 4/5 classes because pupils are taught to prepare, practise, perform and record their work and then to evaluate it and suggest how it might be improved. Opportunities to do this are limited by the practice of teaching the two Year 6 classes together and relying too heavily on a taped broadcast for singing. In physical education, not all teachers organise lessons well enough for pupils to improve their skills through sustained physical effort. In geography, pupils aged 5 to 7 attain good standards and achieve well because of the good opportunities afforded to them to gain first hand experience of their local environment and the challenges set for them to produce maps and plans with relevant detail. Pupils aged 7 to 11 attain satisfactory standards. While they continue to make good progress in mapping skills, an over reliance on inappropriate worksheets in some classes hinders progress in other elements of the subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- Pupils' attitudes to school are good and have been maintained since the previous inspection. They enjoy coming to school and talk about their lessons and the staff they work with in positive terms. Most are attentive, keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. They take pride in their work. The good standard of presentation in their books and the quality displays around the school helps them to realise that their work is valued.
- Behaviour overall is satisfactory. In the playground, when moving between buildings and at lunch times it is good. Good classroom management and a consistent approach to behaviour management in the reception class, the mixed reception/Year 1 class, in Year 1 and in the two Year 6 classes ensures pupils' good behaviour in all lessons. There is, however, a significant number of occasions in other classes when a minority of pupils engage in disruptive low level misbehaviour, for example, calling out in lessons, not paying full attention to the teacher's instructions, not doing enough work and being too noisy when working in groups. This was not found at the time of the last inspection. There were no incidents of bullying seen or reported during the inspection and pupils are confident that they know it would be dealt with quickly should it occur. There have been no exclusions in the past year.
- Children under five are well catered for through a carefully planned induction programme that involves their attending the pre-school group for three half days each week in the year prior to their starting school. By the end of the reception year, most children have exceeded the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes for personal and social education. As at the last inspection, they know how to take turns, to be polite, to share equipment and to listen to others.
- As they move through the school, pupils take care of their own and other people's property. Following the good role models set by the adults in the school, they are mostly polite, well mannered and respectful of other people's feelings, values and beliefs. Relationships within the school are good at all levels. Pupils are friendly towards each other and to all adults working in the school and they make visitors feel very welcome. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities given to them to enhance their personal development by willingly taking on additional responsibilities. Prefects work as an effective team to support the teachers throughout the day. The 'Prayer Partners' link between Year 6 and Year 3 has been well developed. Here older children support the younger ones during times of Confession, Confirmation and Holy Communion. Plans are well under way to develop further links between year groups so that all younger pupils are supported by older ones. Pupils organise their own charity events. Many of these arise from current world issues where there has been a national appeal for support. This shows that they are

developing an understanding of wider issues and of their roles as responsible citizens. The school supports pupils in this work and gives them the confidence to see initiatives through to a satisfactory conclusion.

15. More opportunities are now provided for pupils to become more independent in their learning through, for example, individual and group work. This is an improvement on the last inspection. However, a minority of pupils do not yet have the personal skills to use these opportunities well and their behaviour, when not being directly supervised by an adult, disrupts learning for others.
16. Attendance throughout the school is good and is above the national average. It has continued to improve since the last inspection, with very few unauthorised absences. Good levels of punctuality, both at the start of the day and in the majority of lessons, contribute positively to pupils' progress and to their achievement. Parents are happy with the positive attitudes and values that the school promotes and feel they have a beneficial effect on their children.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good. In 3 per cent of lessons teaching is excellent. In 13 per cent of lessons, teaching is very good and in 46 per cent it is good. Teaching is satisfactory in 32 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 6 per cent. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. There is now only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and there is much more good and very good teaching, which is having a significant impact on pupils' learning and progress and is enabling them to attain higher standards.
18. The teaching of children under five is never less than good and the high expectations to which the previous report referred have been maintained. The teachers know their pupils very well, have a good understanding of how young children learn and plan a wide range of stimulating activities, with an ongoing emphasis on language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. Although the children are taught in two classes, one a reception class and the other a mixed reception / Year 1 class, the way the teachers plan together ensures that all children have access to all learning activities. The good use of support staff ensures that they, too, are involved in the planning and have clear roles for improving pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are well established in this age group and the staff use the information they gain from assessment to plan the next steps in learning. They inject a sense of fun into learning that keeps the children highly motivated and eager to learn and make progress. The teaching of physical development has improved because of the greater emphasis now given to outdoor play.
19. The teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 is good in 46 per cent of lessons, very good in 18 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. In the 7 to 11 age group, teaching is good in 42 per cent of lessons, very good in 10 per cent and in one science lesson, teaching was excellent. In 35 per cent of lessons in this age group, teaching is satisfactory, and in 10 per cent, it is unsatisfactory. The last report found weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge in information and communication technology, design and technology and science. This is no longer the case. The teachers' knowledge and understanding in these subjects is now good.
20. Similar strengths and weaknesses occur in both age groups. A common feature in the vast majority of teaching is the teachers' enthusiasm for their subject, which engenders in pupils a love of learning and makes them want to succeed. Most pupils show interest in their work. They are familiar with the structure of lessons and respond well to the good teaching they receive. The majority of lessons are well organised. Good use is made of the three-part structure of whole class introduction, a middle section where pupils work individually, in groups or continue as a whole class, and a final whole class session where work is evaluated and suggestions made for further improvement, either by pupils or by the teacher.
21. English and mathematics teaching is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in these two subjects. Good attention is also paid to the teaching of literacy and numeracy in other subjects. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and use them well to plan their lessons. In both subjects, teachers build effectively on what pupils have done previously. For example, the beginning of letter writing in Year 2, where pupils write a simple letter of thanks to a visitor, is

extended well in Year 5 as pupils construct a carefully thought out letter to the Prime Minister about an issue in their school. In mathematics, improved teaching of numeracy skills has led to well above average standards in this aspect of mathematics. Pupils are constantly challenged to use number facts faster and to work out different ways of solving problems. For example, in a good lesson with pupils in the mixed Year 4/5 class, the teacher speeds up the 5-4-3-2-1 countdown to when all pupils should be showing their answers using their flashcards. The pupils respond very well to this and the healthy competition that arises greatly enhances their number skills and their enjoyment of the lesson.

22. Science teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teachers' improved knowledge and expertise, gained through in-service training, has led to a greater emphasis being placed on investigative work and on the process of prediction, fair testing and subsequent evaluation. Science work is well planned and organised and the impact on the pupils' learning is good. Pupils are taught how to conduct a fair test and by the time they leave the school they can work out how to set one up for themselves in order to test their hypotheses. This occurs in Year 6, for example, when they are set the task of testing air resistance on different materials in order to make a parachute.
23. Teaching is good in information and communication technology and satisfactory in music and physical education. In geography, the teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 is good and in history, the teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 is good. Insufficient evidence is available to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching in art or in design and technology and no history teaching was observed in the 5 to 7 age range.
24. Good planning and clear learning objectives are positive features in most lessons. Teachers keep pupils on task by writing the objectives for the lesson on the board and then referring to them at different times as the lesson proceeds. Skilled questioning draws from pupils what they already know, understand and can do and the questions are well targeted to give all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the opportunity to answer. Where teaching is very good, the teacher gives all pupils time to answer questions and express their opinions and then moves their thinking on by re-iterating what they have said, adding further explanation or asking further questions such as 'Have you thought about...?' or 'What did you find out when...?' This helps pupils in a Year 1 information and communication technology lesson, for example, to begin to understand how control technology works by examining a wide range of electronic toys. In design and technology in the mixed Year 3 /4 class, similar very good questioning helps pupils to talk about their work to the whole class and to evaluate their money containers and suggest how they might improve them. In this class, there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. They are well supported in this type of activity by well targeted questions and being given good time to answer them. The brisk pace in most lessons keeps pupils working hard.
25. Excellent teaching occurs in creative development (music) in the reception class and in science with pupils in Year 3. There are also examples of very good teaching in the following lessons:
 - information and communication technology in with pupils in reception and Year 1;
 - in English, science and art with pupils in Year 1;
 - in English with pupils in the mixed Year 3 /4 class;
 - in music with pupils in the mixed Year 4/5 class
 - in art and history with pupils in Year 6.

In all of the above lessons, the common features that make the teaching very good and excellent, and enable pupils to learn very effectively, are:

- a range of progressive, stimulating and, particularly in Year 1, imaginative activities that makes pupils eager to learn more
 - very effective management and organisation of the class and of pupils' learning, which result in a brisk pace that ensures pupils work hard and use all available time productively
 - enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge that are transmitted to pupils in a lively and interesting way and motivate them to give of their best
 - very precise instructions and guidance, which ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn, can see how they have improved and know what they need to do next to improve further
26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers are responsible for drawing up the pupils' individual education plans and, although some of the recorded targets are too general, good attention is paid to matching activities to pupils' needs in class. Where the targets are broken down to show the small steps in learning that these pupils need, it is clear that they make good progress. The

positive effect of the teaching is seen in the number of pupils with special educational needs who reach the nationally expected levels in the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11. Support staff make a valuable contribution to this progress and teachers generally use them well. Appropriate extension activities are planned for higher attaining pupils, including a pupil identified as gifted in the 5 to 7 age range, and help them also to make good progress. The evidence of this is seen in the higher than average percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests at the age of 7 and 11.

27. In the majority of lessons, pupils respond well to the good expectations teachers have of their behaviour and relationships between teachers and pupils are good. However, some teachers occasionally allow too much talking and do not always notice when pupils are not doing the task they have been set. The common thread in unsatisfactory teaching is that of teachers not managing the pupils' behaviour well enough. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in 4 lessons:
- an art lesson with pupils in Year 5 where the task offers little challenge to the pupils, leading to their becoming restless and noisy and achieving little;
 - a history lesson with pupils in Years 4 and 5 where, despite the fact that the teacher tries hard to use all the appropriate strategies, a small number of pupils continue to be noisy and engage in silly behaviour such as throwing rubbers, pencils and paper. This results in the lesson having to be stopped to deal with them and therefore disrupts it for the majority.
 - a design and technology lesson with pupils in Year 3 where the activity is too ambitious for the whole class to do at the same time;
 - a physical education lesson with pupils in Year 3 where the teacher does not ensure that all pupils listen to and carry out instructions.
28. Teachers assess and mark pupils' work regularly. However, marking is not consistent in showing pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The recently written good marking policy has not yet had the necessary impact on marking throughout the school and is an area for further development and monitoring. Teachers regularly set an appropriate amount and type of homework that effectively consolidates pupils' work in school or prepares them for work that is to come. A particularly good range of homework is used to further historical knowledge and understanding and this is having a positive effect on standards in history.
29. A small group of parents attending the meeting prior to the inspection expressed particular concern over mixed age classes and particularly about teaching in the mixed Year 4/5 class. Inspectors found that the school does all it can to minimise the effect of mixed age classes and, for example, in science, and in some mathematics and language work, it employs extra staff so that pupils are taught in either their own year groups or in ability groups. This has a positive effect on the standards they achieve by enabling them occasionally to be taught in smaller groups. In response to the parents' concern over the mixed Year 4/5 class, inspectors found that a new but very experienced supply teacher had recently taken over the class and is managing the class's learning well. Work is well planned to meet the needs of the different age groups and abilities in the class. Occasionally, however, the pupils do not give the attention they should to the teacher by continuing to talk when she is giving instructions or dealing with other pupils. She employs appropriate strategies to deal with this and pupils' behaviour is gradually improving. In lessons where it is good, the pupils achieve well.

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

30. The curriculum provided for children under five is good. It covers all the areas of learning and experience that are expected for this age group and prepares children well for the National Curriculum programmes of study. Good emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy and also on the children's personal and social development.
31. The curriculum for pupils aged 5 to 7 is good and for pupils aged 7 to 11 it is satisfactory. It complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum and is suitably broad and balanced. In the 7 to 11 age group, insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' personal, social and health education, including drug misuse and there is no policy to guide the teachers in this aspect of the curriculum. The governing body has a policy not to teach sex education. However, if issues arise they are dealt with in a sensitive and supportive manner emphasising family values within a caring school community.

32. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and achievement in mathematics and English. There are appropriate policies and guidelines in place for all other subjects of the National Curriculum. These provide a sound basis for planning and ensure that pupils' learning is continuous and that they make good progress as they move through the school. Long term planning provides an overview of the topics and units of study to be followed each year by each class and are clearly linked to the programmes of study.
33. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and access for all pupils. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, with suitable procedures in place for the identification and assessment of these pupils. The requirements of the nationally recommended Code of Practice for special educational needs are fully met. All pupils have individual education plans and most have the over-arching targets broken down into the small steps of learning required for the pupils to make progress. However, for a small number of pupils, the targets are too general and do not show the small steps that are required. For example, the general target 'to improve numeracy skills' appears in one file. In another file the same general target is broken down to say 'by improving (the pupil's) knowledge of number bonds +/- to 10', a much more achievable and measurable target.
34. The school offers a good range of extra curricular sporting activities including football, netball, hockey, rounders, cricket, short tennis, athletics. Pupils participate in cross-country running and competitive matches are organised against other schools. Although children enter chess tournaments and take part in concerts at different times in the school year, for example, the Cafod concert, there is little provision for creative or musical activities to take place after school. A good range of visitors to school and visits out of school enhance the curriculum. These include, for example, a Shakespeare Workshop to enhance literacy work, the Bug Science Workshop to further studies on mini beasts, and what the school describes as 'an unforgettable day' at the Millennium Dome. Pupils also take part in residential visits to Borwick Hall and Kingswood to develop a range of physical, personal and social skills. A small number of parents replying to questionnaire indicated that they did not feel that sufficiently interesting activities were provided outside of the normal school day. Inspectors found that the range is satisfactory.
35. The links the school makes with the community are good and contribute considerably to the pupils' personal development. The school is an integral part of the parish, and there are mutual benefits derived from this close partnership. Parishioners enhance the religious life of pupils by becoming prayer partners, and by generally supporting the school in its work. The school celebrates major events and religious festivals in the church, which is located in the middle of the site, and is symbolically at the heart of the school. The school also has good links with other primary schools in the area. They are mainly sporting in nature and result in matches and competitions being keenly contested and followed by pupils. The 'pre-school', which the school operates on the premises, is appreciated by the community and establishes a good initial link with parents. Good links are also evident with the local high schools through, for example, joint curricular projects in information and communication technology, design and technology, English and mathematics. Visits from staff at the main feeder high school helps to prepare pupils for their transfer to secondary education. The school also has effective links with businesses both through parents and through the local Training and Enterprise Council, with whom it is working towards the Investors in People award.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

36. The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is good. These two areas have improved since the previous inspection. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory and remains similar to that found at the last inspection.
37. Daily acts of worship make a positive contribution to spiritual awareness, reinforce the values and aims of the school and include time for prayer and personal reflection. Celebration assemblies, in which pupils are given recognition for their achievements out of school and their hard work and attitudes in school, publicly acknowledge the value of individuals and the contribution they make to school life. Spiritual development is further promoted through literature, art and music as teachers receive and show that they value pupils' ideas and give them time to reflect on how feelings can be communicated in different ways.

38. Staff consistently teach the principles of good moral behaviour. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, which is extended through the discussion of moral issues in class and assemblies. The school is an orderly community where children are polite, mostly well behaved and show respect for people and property. However in a small minority of lessons the behaviour of some pupils is inappropriate and results in less effective teaching and learning.
39. The provision for pupils' social development is good and is promoted through the good relationships that exist throughout the school. Older pupils are given the opportunity for residential experiences. Other trips out of school boost pupils' self esteem by giving them broader experiences of life and the confidence to adjust to different situations. Although there is no policy for personal, social and health education, their sense of responsibility and initiative is fostered through class and school duties. Older pupils are actively encouraged to show care and consideration for younger pupils and are well supported in their initiatives to raise money and to offer help for charity.
40. Cultural development is satisfactory. Provision for developing an understanding of pupils' own cultural and religious traditions is good. Visitors such as the White Fathers have talked to pupils about their missionary work in other countries. The school plans well-organised and appropriate activities that enrich pupils' cultural development, such as visits from theatre companies and visits out of school both locally and further afield. Some opportunities are also provided that broaden pupils' appreciation of other cultures through their study of art, history, literature and music and celebrations such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. However, pupils are not being sufficiently well prepared to understand and recognise the nature of society or the richness and diversity of cultures that exist in Britain today and indeed, that exist in their own local area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. Teachers know their pupils well and have sound procedures for monitoring both their personal and academic development. Attendance is monitored very well with the use of a computerised system.
42. Although the school does carry out some work on personal development, for example it makes sure that Year 6 pupils have ample information about the schools they are transferring to at secondary level, there is a lack of a structured personal and social development programme. This means that there is not enough guidance given to pupils on choices they might face as they grow up. Teaching about health education is limited and while there is some isolated work done with pupils in Year 6, there is insufficient teaching about the dangers of drugs throughout the school.
43. Behaviour in most classes is good and positive attitudes to work are celebrated in assemblies and in the school's newsletter. However, the positive behaviour policy is not always successfully applied and low level disruption and inattention sometimes slow the pace of some lessons. Parents are appreciative of the school's actions to prevent bullying and the good behaviour in playgrounds bears this out. Lunchtime supervisors and other support staff have specific roles and are friendly and caring towards the pupils. This inspires confidence and ensures a happy atmosphere at lunch and playtimes. In the case of minor accidents, first aid procedures, although clearly stated, are not always strictly adhered to. Child protection procedures are clear and known to staff. Health and safety risks need to be reassessed, however, especially in relation to the shared school and church grounds. Pupils are appropriately supervised as they move between the two sites. However, there is unrestricted public access to the church and bowling green and there are not enough clearly visible signs to alert car drivers to the presence of children as cars enter, reverse and leave the parking areas. In addition, parents are understandably anxious that there is no barrier to the staircase leading to the church basement. The school has also identified this as a hazard in a recent risk assessment but action has not yet been taken to address it.
44. The procedures for assessing pupils' work and recording their progress are satisfactory overall and are good for English and mathematics. In these two subjects and in science, good use is made of assessment information to plan what pupils need to learn next so that they can achieve more and reach higher standards. A revised policy has been written giving detailed guidance to staff on assessment and marking procedures. While these represent an improvement since the previous inspection, the recently written marking policy is not yet being consistently implemented throughout the school and few encouraging comments or advice on how to improve are seen on pupils' work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents are appreciative of the fact that their children like school and that they achieve a good standard of work. The school is felt to be approachable. Parents are invited to contact the school when they wish, and they are very positive about the staff and about the head teacher who makes herself personally available to talk to them.
46. A lively and well presented newsletter informs parents of what is happening in terms of events and news about successes in sporting and other areas. It also celebrates pupils' successes out of school and therefore encourages them and adds to their self esteem. Parents are involved in enthusiastic fund raising and support, which results in direct benefit to the school. The governing body's annual report to parents, however, while covering all statutory areas, fails to give sufficient detail in many of them, for example, special educational needs, school security and the school's response to the previous Ofsted report.
47. The quality of academic information given to parents is unsatisfactory. Inspectors agree with the small number of parents who expressed concern that one consultation evening at the beginning of the autumn term and a written report at the end of the year are not sufficient to inform them about their children's progress. The annual reports do not always report on pupils' progress or state clearly their strengths and the areas in which they need to improve. A similarly small number of parents feel that curricular information is not sufficiently detailed to enable them to make a real partnership with the school. Inspectors agree. They found that there is no regular system of informing parents what their children will be learning or of suggesting ways in which they can help their children to progress. For example, the school has not held meetings to explain the National Literacy or Numeracy Strategies to parents. Parents are, however, involved in the life of the school, including providing voluntary help in classes, and assist their children by hearing them read. Most of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed their satisfaction at the way in which the school is led and managed and with the information they receive.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher has set a clear vision for the school, which is shared by all staff and by the governing body. She has been instrumental in creating an effective senior management team, which provides her with good professional support. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are strongly committed to ensuring that pupils attain highly and achieve as well as they can in line with the school's aims, which are evident in all of its work.
49. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively and its overall involvement in the strategic management of the school is good. It manages its affairs efficiently through its committee structure. Governors are very supportive of the work of the school and they, too, have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Designated governors take a special interest in their area of responsibility and report regularly to the whole governing body. All governors are kept well informed through the headteacher's regular written reports and they gather further information from their visits to the school to check on its work. The chairs of the finance and building committees meet regularly with the headteacher to review the budget and check on how the school is dealing with the organisational problems presented by having two sites. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. However, some aspects of its annual report to parents are lacking in sufficient detail.
50. The school monitors its performance effectively. The analysis of test and assessment results informs decisions on how it will move forward and there is a strong commitment to raising standards further. The analysis also examines the school's performance in comparison with other schools. The head, the two deputy headteachers and the subject co-ordinators check the quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science and all co-ordinators monitor pupils' work and teachers' planning. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and are committed to improving standards in them. Class teachers also undertake their own self-evaluation linked to this monitoring process and the feedback they receive from it. The school has good procedures for staff performance review and appraisal and these are being used effectively to support the development of teaching. All teachers have targets that are supported through release time and attendance at appropriate in-service courses. Targets from review meetings are linked to the school development planning process and inform staff development plans. This results in a

systematic approach to school improvement planning and ensures that all staff are involved in developing the work of the school. The school development plan is a comprehensive document that includes timescales, financial costs, and the personnel responsible for actions and links monitoring and evaluation to criteria for success. Very good improvement has taken place in these areas of the school's work since the previous inspection and this contributes in great measure to the clear educational direction and to the improvement in standards. Relationships are good. There is a happy, supportive atmosphere that lays important stress on equality of opportunity for all.

51. Financial planning and management are good and the school is efficiently run. The governors have a high level of financial expertise and are fully involved in the drawing up and monitoring of the budget. There is a prudent approach to managing the budget and an appropriate long-term view is taken. For example, the present surplus in the budget is earmarked as a cushion for extra staffing to meet the need to cater for classes under thirty in the 5 to 7 age range and for the further development of computer provision. Governors understand and apply best value principles and the school constantly challenges and compares the provision of all resources with regard to the effect they have on standards. Monies allocated for specific purposes are used effectively and all funding is spent in accordance with the priorities identified in the school development plan. An indication of this is the effective way that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented and the increased resources in terms of staffing and scientific equipment made available to meet the need to raise standards in science. In the most recent financial audit, the school was complimented on its efficiency and the few recommendations made in it have been carried out. Day-to-day administration is very effective and good use is made of information and communication technology in this work and to manage the budget and monitor pupils' attendance.
52. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. The headteacher and one of her deputies are managing this area temporarily as they train another teacher to take over the role. The school makes efficient and effective use of the funding it gets for special educational needs and adds to it to provide further support for pupils in terms of staffing and resources. A measure of its success is that the majority of special educational needs pupils make good progress and attain the nationally expected standards in English and mathematics. Governors are appropriately involved in special educational needs. They are knowledgeable and keep a watchful eye on the school's provision and on the progress of pupils on the register. There is a good policy in place. However, while reporting that there is a policy, governors fail to report adequately on the success of it in their annual report to parents.
53. There is an adequate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. Good arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers and other teachers new to the school ensure that they quickly settle into the established routines. Resources for learning are satisfactory. They are well stored, well organised and easily accessible. The school has a library in each of its two buildings and they are used appropriately to enhance learning. The information and communication technology suite is situated in the annex building and, although small in size, is well used and reflects the school's hard work and determined effort to raise standards in that subject. It is equipped with only six computers, which is barely adequate for the size of some groups but the school manages it well and maximises its potential. The split site nature of the school is managed well and does not have an adverse effect on the curriculum. However, while pupils are adequately supervised as they move between the two sites, health and safety risks need to be reassessed in relation to the shared school and church grounds, public access and the movement of cars around the church and bowling green areas. The school itself is well maintained and high quality displays create an attractive and pleasant learning environment for pupils. However, several classrooms are too small for the number of pupils because class sizes are large. This causes problems in the Year 5 class, for example, because in art, pupils do not have sufficient room to work with large pieces of paper and a significant minority find it hard to exercise self-discipline when required to do so. The school nevertheless makes the best use it can of its accommodation, including its spacious and attractive grounds.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, governors and all staff should:

- i) Check that the new marking policy is being implemented consistently so that pupils are clear about what they are good at and what they need to do to improve their work.
(Paragraphs: 28,44,71,79)
- ii) Make better provision for personal, social and health education by establishing clearly the school's policy and procedures for teaching pupils about the choices they have to face as they grow up, including health education and drugs education.
(Paragraphs: 31,42)
- iii) Improve pupils' skills in managing their own learning and behaviour when working without the direct supervision of an adult by:
 - continually reinforcing with all pupils the personal and social skills they need to do this, for example, not talking while the teacher is talking and working quietly when they are on their own or in small groups
 - checking that all planned activities are neither too easy nor too difficult and that the classroom organisation chosen is sufficiently well matched to the task in hand
 - providing teachers who have difficulty with these aspects of classroom management with the opportunity to observe teachers who do them well
 - giving a greater focus to these aspects when monitoring teaching(Paragraphs: 12, 27, 38, 43, 88, 92, 97, 113)
- iv) Improve the range of information for parents so that they are better informed as to what their children are learning and how well they are progressing, and provide more formal opportunities for them to find out about and discuss their children's progress.
(Paragraphs: 46, 47)

Other weaknesses not included above but which should be considered by the school - paragraph numbers are given in brackets:

- increase the opportunities for pupils to learn about the richness and diversity of the different cultures that exist in Britain and in their own area (40)
- investigative work and the use of information and communication technology in mathematics and to produce spreadsheets (76, 106)
- the use of too many worksheets in geography that impede the progress of higher attaining pupils (97)
- take more immediate action to minimise identified health and safety risks (43, 53)
- the organisation of music in Year 6 (109)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	13	46	32	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	313
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	96.5
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	25	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	16
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	42	41	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	98 (88)	98 (86)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	42	41	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	98 (88)	100 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	19	29	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	17
	Girls	23	22	15
	Total	40	40	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (67)	83 (57)	67 (57)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	17
	Girls	22	23	22
	Total	40	42	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (73)	88 (72)	81 (68)
	National	68 (63)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.24
Average class size	31.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	104

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	501878
Total expenditure	482270
Expenditure per pupil	1541
Balance brought forward from previous year	33021
Balance carried forward to next year	52629

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

26.5%

Number of questionnaires sent out	313
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	29	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	1	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	40	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	39	14	4	0
The teaching is good.	63	34	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	13	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	30	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	34	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	48	42	8	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	24	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	41	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	46	11	1	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. The provision for children under the age of five is good. The children attend school full time from the September before their fifth birthday. The initial assessments undertaken using a nationally approved test indicate that most children start school with average levels of attainment in all six areas of learning. In the year prior to entering reception, most children attend the school's pre-school unit on a part time basis. The vast majority also attend other forms of under-fives educational provision, for example, nurseries and play groups. The current number of reception children on roll necessitates a group of eleven older children in this age group working in a class with Year 1 pupils. However both groups of children have equal opportunities and access to the curriculum because the teachers plan carefully together at this stage. Very few children are still under the age of five. The majority are working on the National Curriculum programmes of study in all subjects and within level 1 in English, mathematics and science.

Personal and social development

56. Children make good progress in their personal and social development and by the age of five, they exceed the nationally expected desirable learning outcome in this area. They settle very quickly into the routines of school life and a happy and industrious atmosphere is created for them. They know the staff well and relate openly and confidently to adults. They gain experience of working with others, and can take turns when playing games and working on the computer. They undress themselves for physical education lessons, leave their clothes in tidy piles on their chairs and dress again quickly at the end of the lesson. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have clear expectations of good behaviour. They are well organised and give clear instructions that enable children to work productively.

Language and literacy

57. By the age of five children attain standards in language and literacy that are above those expected of children of the same age and progress is good. Through interesting and well structured activities children soon become confident in expressing themselves and listening carefully to others, for example, describing the toys they have bought at the 'Bring and Buy' Sale. They enjoy listening to stories, talk freely about their content and understand that words and pictures carry meaning. Children make good progress in reading. The quality of teaching is good and results in children knowing the sounds and the names of letters, recognising a range of common words and being able to read simple texts accurately and fluently. Children are also taught to recognise patterns in words and can write their names and simple sentences with increasing accuracy. They become competent readers in their reception year because good strategies are used to build their confidence.

Mathematics

58. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and exceed the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. Teaching is good and well planned activities in the 'supermarket', such as the counting and sorting of objects and the good variety of toys and containers in sand and water play all contribute well to children's mathematical progress. Information and communication technology is used to consolidate mathematical concepts such as drawing symmetrical objects and children gain appropriate mouse control as they do so. Addition and subtraction of numbers to 5, 10 and 20 are consolidated and children are able to count in 5's and 10's to 100. They confidently and accurately use the language of mathematics such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than' and can accurately name simple mathematical shapes such as a circle, a square, a triangle and a rectangle.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. In knowledge and understanding of the world children exceed the standards expected for their age and make good progress. They are taught well and through going on walks and studying photographs, they learn about their school environment and the local village. Their knowledge of the world is extended

through a study of Africa and they learn to recognise features of living things by studying mini beasts and plants. Children confidently talk about what they have learned and show good levels of understanding. They record their findings through observational drawings, pictures, collages and simple models.

Physical development

60. By the age of five children make good progress in physical development and achieve the standards expected for their age. There is a good range of provision for children in this area. Activities for cutting, sticking, rolling and threading promote children's fine motor skills and there are opportunities for children to climb and build in a safe environment. There is a variety of wheeled toys including bicycles, scooters and tricycles regularly available for children to use in the enclosed play space and they use these competently. An excellent playhouse, built by a parent, is used well for a wide range of role-play activities. Good teaching ensures that children achieve well in dance, where they are developing a range of body movements and demonstrate satisfactory body control, use of space and response to music. They show that they can travel in different ways, for example, skipping, hopping and jogging. There has been a significant improvement in this area since the last inspection as a result of the construction of the outside play area and the provision of large play equipment.

Creative development

61. In creative development children exceed the standards expected at the age of five and make very good progress as a result of the good quality teaching they receive. They have many opportunities to draw, paint and make objects. They enjoy model making and use a variety of media including modelling dough. They show good manipulative skills and make good progress in learning to think for themselves as they select colours and cut and paste fabrics for collage and camouflage to produce pictures in the style of Henri Rousseau. Children actively participate in music lessons and excellent teaching keeps them highly motivated and working hard in this subject. An excellent range of progressively challenging activities extends the children's experiences of singing, of recognising and repeating sound patterns and of playing instruments in time to music.

Teaching and curriculum

62. Children under the age of five receive a broad and balanced curriculum that contributes effectively to the good progress they make. Teaching is always at least good and there are examples of very good and occasionally excellent teaching. Planning is thorough with clear learning objectives and activities are well matched to the needs of all children. The reception teachers work well together. Their knowledge of the children and of how young children learn is good and they demonstrate a high level of commitment in their work. Classroom support assistants and other helpers make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Assessment and recording strategies are well established and are used effectively to monitor children's progress and inform the next steps in learning thus enabling children to make good progress and achieve well.

ENGLISH

63. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds show that pupils' attainment is above the average for all schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is also above the national average. When compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected levels is below average. Over the past four years the results have fluctuated, being at the national average in 1996 and 1998 and above it in 1997 and 1999. Over the four years, however, the results have risen faster than the national trend. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls but the boys' results were above the national average for boys indicating that boys do better at this school than they do nationally. **The standards seen in the work of the majority of pupils in the current Year 6 classes are above average and pupils' achievement is good.**
64. The 1999 test results for pupils aged 7 were well above the national average in reading and writing. All 7-year-old pupils reached the nationally expected level in reading and a well above average percentage achieved the higher level. In writing, the percentage achieving the higher level was close to the national average. The reading results are well above those of similar schools and the writing results are broadly in

line with those of similar schools. The reading results fell from above to in line with the national average between 1996 and 1998 but rose sharply in 1999. The writing results have remained consistently above the national average over the past four years although they fell between 1997 and 1998. **The standards seen in the work of the majority of pupils in the current Year 2 class are above average and pupils' achievement is good.**

65. The school has adopted challenging but realistic targets for literacy for 2001, which reflect the continuation of the good pace and challenge seen throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and they make good progress in relation to their individual needs and the language targets set in their individual education plans.
66. Pupils acquire good speaking and listening skills as they move through the school. Six-year-olds can talk confidently about visits they have made outside of school. They are able to recall details and recount events in sequential order. By the age of 7, almost all pupils speak fluently and with growing confidence. They include sufficient detail of relevance and interest in their speech to hold the attention of the listeners. Verbal description is further enhanced between the ages of 7 and 11 as pupils gain increasing vocabulary skills. By the age of 11, most pupils engage in discussions and debates and show by their answers to questions that they are listening carefully to what others are saying and forming their own opinions about what they hear. This is particularly evident in Year 6 history work where pupils talk confidently to the rest of the class about what they as individuals have found out in relation to the topic they are studying.
67. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in reading throughout the school. Most pupils have a positive attitude to reading, which helps them improve their word recognition and gives them confidence in using appropriate strategies to read unfamiliar words. They are able to use phonics to help them work out the beginnings of words and are good at using contextual clues, such as pictures and comprehension, to help gain confidence in reading. They are also supported in learning to read by looking at a good range of words used in the excellent displays around the classroom. They show enjoyment of the large range of fiction and non-fiction books that are set out in each classroom. Teachers of pupils aged 7 to 11 build well on this good start and by the time pupils leave the school, the majority read with accuracy, fluency and understanding. They make good use of the school library for finding information on a range of topics and understand the procedure for finding a particular book to support them in their learning. Good use is being made of information and communication technology to extend their reading skills. The Internet is now having a positive impact with regard to finding information. A large number of pupils also use the local library to obtain books. The older pupils have definite views on the type of books that they like and dislike. They can discuss their favourite authors and particularly like poetry and stories by Roald Dahl. The displays around school provide a wealth of interesting reading material for all pupils.
68. Throughout the school pupils achieve well and make good progress in writing. Good emphasis on handwriting from an early age ensures that standards are very good throughout the school. By the age of 7, pupils are able to join their letters and write legibly, forming letters of a consistent size. The formal structure to the handwriting sessions and the good examples that teachers set as they write on the board assist in raising standards. Pupils enjoy writing. They confidently do so for a range of purposes and take pride in their achievements, using full stops and capital letters accurately and forming sentences correctly. The written work in the Year 1 class is of a particularly high standard. Here, encouragement and challenge are the vital ingredients. Between the ages of 7 and 11, appropriate attention is given to punctuation, grammar, phonics and writing in different styles for a variety of audiences. Pupils in Year 5, for example, write letters to the Prime Minister in order to try and persuade him to support the idea of building new classrooms to replace the old ones on the Brownedge Road site. The letters are carefully planned to address the main issues. The quality of letter writing follows the good foundations set in Year 2 where they recently had a reply to letters they had written to a visiting speaker thanking him for coming to school to talk about insects. All classrooms have displays that support pupils with their writing. This helps pupils to structure their stories and is having a positive effect on standards. The displays around the school reflect the quality and variety of the pupils' written work. A regular spelling programme is having a beneficial effect. Spelling is generally accurate and pupils make good attempts to spell new words.
69. The quality of teaching is good. Overall, teaching is very good in 20 per cent of lessons, good in 40 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. In the 5 to 7 age range teaching is very good in 25 per cent of lessons and good in 50 per cent. In the 7 to 11 age range, teaching is good in 33 per cent of lessons and

very good in 17 per cent. Teachers are well versed in the structure and requirements of the literacy hour. They plan their work carefully, explaining objectives and tasks clearly to pupils. Most demonstrate good subject knowledge and expertise as they use the hour imaginatively to extend pupils' range of interests. For example:

- In Year 1 pupils are given the opportunity to ask each other questions about their stories in a very structured and interesting format.
- In the mixed Year 3 / 4 class, the use of information and communication technology, well-prepared resources and teacher enthusiasm enhances the quality of the lesson.
- In Year 6 pupils are constantly challenged on word meanings and usage and are well motivated by the teacher's skilful use of encouragement and praise.

70. Questions are usually well used to guide and extend learning. In the best lessons, there is a marked sense of shared interest and pleasure in the work, as teachers and pupils read, explore and discuss texts. The capacity for personal study is being effectively nurtured throughout the school and in the majority of lessons pupils respond well to the tasks set. In the best lessons there is good pace, challenge and a sense of fun, all of which help to develop positive attitudes to the subject and elicit good behaviour from the pupils. They enjoy the shared text work and most sustain concentration well in individual and group activities. In most classes, pupils' behaviour is managed appropriately but the best examples occur in Year 1, in the mixed Year 3/4 class and in Year 6. Here, pupils work well together and are mostly very supportive and appreciative of the efforts of others. The teachers' use of learning support assistants is usually very effective. The assistants know their pupils well and make a significant contribution to good relationships and progress in the lessons. Homework is used effectively to enhance pupils' reading and writing skills.
71. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has built up an appropriate range of resources for the literacy hour, with some excellent choices of Big Books for shared reading. The English policy is a helpful document and the good use of assessment, and the monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work enables the co-ordinator to provide relevant support for teachers. However, the recently written marking policy has not yet had time to bring about a consistent approach to marking pupils' work.
72. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they reflect on, discuss, read and write about the different issues that affect their own lives and those of others. There has been good improvement in standards and in the provision for English since the previous inspection and literacy skills are reinforced well in other subjects. Statutory requirements are met.

MATHEMATICS

73. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in mathematics for eleven-year-old pupils show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests was also well above the national average. Pupils' performance is also above average when compared with similar schools. Between 1996 and 1998, the results were close to the national average. There was therefore a sharp improvement in results in 1999, when they rose much more than the national trend, reflecting the school's hard work and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. **The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is above the national expectation, and a significant number of pupils are reaching well above average standards in numeracy.**
74. The 1999 test results in mathematics, for seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well above the national average and the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests was also well above the national average. Mathematics results were above average in 1996 and 1997 but fell to below average in 1998. The 1999 results show a very sharp rise in attainment, again as a result of the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and a determined and very successful effort on the part of the school to raise standards of numeracy. **The attainment of the majority of pupils currently at the end of Year 2 is above the national expectation, with a significant minority of pupils attaining well above average standards in numeracy.**
75. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school. In Year 1, good teaching ensures that they build on their experiences in the reception class and become confident in the addition and subtraction of numbers to 20. Pupils in Year 2 use numbers to 100 and can find the difference between numbers by counting on from

the smaller to the larger number. By the age of seven pupils have covered an appropriate range of mathematical experiences. They recognise the patterns of numbers such as 2's, 5's and 10's and odds and evens and the majority can tackle numbers on a 100 square. Classroom support assistants help lower attaining pupils to make good progress by using a 25 number square and being asked to add and subtract higher numbers suitably stretches higher attaining pupils. Pupils have developed simple mental strategies for working out their answers and are able to double and halve simple numbers. Teachers ensure that they understand simple mathematical language such as 'greater than' and 'less than'. Pupils can name common 2 and 3 dimensional shapes and describe, for example, how many sides they have. They can solve simple problems using money, tell the time to the hour and half hour and order the days of the week, months of the year and the seasons.

76. Pupils in Year 3 recognise and use patterns in numbers to work out calculations in different ways and they can use pie charts, block graphs and pictograms to record information. Year 4 pupils learn how to tackle problems involving fractions while Year 5 pupils are able to solve problems using ratio and proportion. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of number. They know their multiplication tables well and understand factors and multiples. They competently use simple fractions, decimals and percentages, negative numbers and different units of measure. They plot co-ordinates accurately, recognise and measure angles and use a wide range of strategies in problem solving. However, investigative work is limited and the use of the computer in mathematics is underdeveloped.
77. As they approach the end of Year 6, pupils begin a 'Bridging Unit' in conjunction with the local secondary school to extend their learning and prepare them for the next stage in their education. They respond well to the motivating teaching and brisk pace of the lesson and to the good challenge this unit offers as they consolidate their understanding and use of inverse operations, for example, by using multiplication to check answers arrived at by division. All pupils respond positively to the subject and particularly enjoy the highly motivating mental calculation activities prepared for them. This has a significant impact on their progress in numeracy skills. They learn to think for themselves as they use a variety of methods to solve mathematical problems, often related to real life. They also respond well to the many opportunities provided for them to discuss their activities. They willingly share resources and work equally well both in groups and independently. Pupils take pride in their work and the standard of presentation is consistently good across the school.
78. The quality of teaching is good. It is always at least satisfactory and in 50 per cent of lessons it is good. In the 5 to 7 age range teaching is good in 67 per cent of lessons and in the 7 to 11 age range, it is good in 42 per cent of lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are fully conversant with the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy, which they use well to plan their lessons. Their planning is detailed and lessons have clear learning objectives that teachers share with and explain to the pupils, often writing them on the board so they can refer to them during the lesson. A good range of activities is prepared that meet the needs of all pupils. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs receive good support from classroom support assistants. This enables them to make good progress in this subject. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace as teachers use question and answer techniques well to challenge pupils to think and learn for themselves and to apply their previous learning in new work. Relationships are good and most pupils behave well. However a small minority in several classes lack concentration, talk while instructions are being given and some teachers do not manage this well. This hampers not only the learning of the pupils concerned but also that of other pupils. An appropriate range and amount of homework is set to enhance pupils' numeracy skills by, for example, requiring them to learn their tables and to become more familiar with basic number facts and patterns. Numeracy skills are also used well in other subjects, for example, science and design and technology, where pupils successfully apply their measuring skills.
79. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator monitors teaching, checks teachers' planning and pupils' work and gives constructive feedback to teachers. Assessment procedures are good. Teachers assess their lessons on a daily basis and these evaluations are used to inform the next stages of pupils' learning. A portfolio of work is maintained for each pupil to check their progress. However, the school's recently written good marking policy is not yet being implemented consistently across the school and few written comments help pupils to see where their work needs to be improved. A whole school portfolio, assessed to National Curriculum levels, is used to guide teachers' expectations. In addition to the statutory tests and assessments the school uses a range of other commercial tests to assess attainment in mathematics and all results are carefully analysed to identify and address any weaknesses.

Pupils are organised into ability groups for some mathematics teaching in the 7 to 11 age range and this enables them to make good progress at their own level. Statutory requirements are met.

SCIENCE

80. The results of pupils aged 11 in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools they were very low, placing the school in the bottom 5 per cent of similar schools. The percentage attaining the higher level was also well below the national average. Standards in science rose from below the national average in 1996 to in line with the national average in 1997 but declined steadily against a rising national trend since that time. The school has taken positive and determined action to redress this situation. More emphasis is being placed on investigative work and funds have been targeted to science. Extra time has been made available and extra staff have been employed to enable mixed age classes to be separated into single age classes so that they can receive improved provision in smaller groups. Teachers' planning has improved and their expertise has been raised through in-service training. The school now checks pupils' work much more rigorously and acts swiftly to address any weaknesses found. **These strategies have been successful and the standard of work seen in the current Year 6 classes is above average.**
81. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1999 teacher assessments were very high when compared with both the national average and the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was broadly in line with the national average. Pupils' attainment was similar in all aspects of science. **The attainment of pupils in Year 2 this year is again higher than the national expectation.**
82. Pupils aged 5 to 7 have good scientific knowledge for their age and are developing sound skills in carrying out fair tests. Very good teaching enables pupils in Year 1 to investigate sound using their voices and musical instruments. They respond well, showing excitement and enthusiasm, which the teacher channels well, as they learn how their voice boxes move when they use their voices to make different sounds. Pupils develop a good scientific vocabulary and learn to use accurately terms such as 'prediction' and 'opinion'. In Year 2, a range of well-planned and progressively demanding activities develops pupils' ability to make and test predictions as to whether an electrical circuit will work or not. They create circuits to light a bulb and give good explanations as to why a battery is necessary and why the bulb will not light if there is a break in the circuit. The majority of the class are able to complete a worksheet showing different circuits, reflecting attainment beyond the expectation for their age. Displays of work show coverage of a wide range of topics including animals' habitats, senses, materials light and friction. A visit by the 'Bug Man' resulted in exciting work by Year 2 pupils on minibeasts that shows good skills in hypothesising, testing and evaluation of results. By the age of 7, pupils' achievement is good in all aspects of science.
83. Teachers of pupils aged 7 to 11 build well on the good foundation in the younger age group. In addition to the work pupils undertake in lessons, work in their books and on display around the school shows that there is good coverage of the science curriculum and that standards are continuing to improve. Pupils in Year 3 are aware of the need to keep all but one variable constant and measured as they carry out with extreme care a rigorous experiment to test the absorbency of different materials. They explain their results clearly and confidently. Pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of solutions and learn about which materials are soluble and which are not. In a Year 5 class pupils could explain the orbit of the earth and moon and show a developing understanding of the different stages in the moon's cycle. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate good investigative skills. They have a good understanding of forces and work well in groups to develop an experiment to test the most effective materials with which to construct a parachute. They carry out experiments in a careful and controlled way and can explain their results well with a good understanding of the need to control variables accurately to ensure a fair test.
84. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching is good in 67 per cent of lessons, very good in 11 per cent, excellent in 11 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. The excellent teaching occurs in the 7 to 11 age group and teaching is always at least good in the 5 to 7 age group. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and this improvement is a significant factor in raising the attainment of pupils, particularly between the ages of 7 and 11. All lessons are planned well. Activities are challenging and teachers make

very clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. They use resources well and their good subject knowledge enables them to support and develop pupils' learning very effectively. The carefully controlled use of body sounds in a very good Year 1 lesson successfully develops in pupils an awareness that in order to create a sound something has to move or vibrate. The imaginative use of a 'Mrs Mop' character in an excellent lesson with Year 3 pupils effectively introduces to pupils the idea of determining which type of paper is most effective at absorbing liquids in Mrs Mop's work as a cleaner. This results in pupils giving avid attention to the adult and to the class teacher, who explains the experiment clearly and develops pupils' knowledge further through good questioning that draws out and extends what they already know. The skill of the teacher is evident in how well the resources are prepared while the detail of the experiment is left to the pupils, thereby developing their skills in controlling variables and ensuring that the test is fair and accurate. The pupils' excitement, enthusiasm and total absorption in the task results in their being able to think and explain their testing clearly and to suggest how they might improve the test. Good teaching in Year 6 enables pupils to develop their knowledge and deepen their understanding of fair testing. Skilful questioning and carefully directed discussion result in pupils examining the resistance of air as they carry out well-organised experiments designing parachutes and test their hypotheses as to which would be most effective. The good teaching motivates pupils to work hard. They are keen to find answers to the problems set, demonstrate very positive attitudes to the subject and achieve well. They enjoy being challenged to think for themselves and to engage in the practical investigative activities, which the school has made a strong component of their work. In all age groups, teachers ensure that pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well in science as they record their work in writing and in pictures, using clearly labelled diagrams, and learn the importance of accurate measurement when they are carrying out scientific investigations. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are well supported and make good progress in scientific knowledge and understanding.

85. Management of the subject is good. The school has worked hard to develop science provision and raise standards of attainment. There is a clear policy and scheme of work that covers all aspects of the National Curriculum. The improvement in teachers' subject knowledge and their use of investigative work has been well supported through in-service training sessions and regular discussion at staff meetings. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' progress by examining teachers' planning and pupils work. A limited amount of observation of teaching has been carried out and the co-ordinator has a good awareness of the quality and range of work presented to pupils and the standards being attained. There is a determined approach to raising standards. Assessment procedures are sound. Optional National Curriculum tests are used to assess pupils' learning and progress and the results are analysed to identify and address any weaknesses. Effective guidance for teachers includes a portfolio that contains examples of work at each level in all attainment targets. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

ART

86. It was possible to see only a limited number of art lessons during the inspection and therefore an overall judgement on the quality of teaching is not possible. Good links with design and technology mean that within topics, pupils are successfully enabled to work across both subjects, while the learning in each subject is clear in teachers' planning and in the different outcomes in the pupils' work. Displays around the school and a scrutiny of pupils' work in sketchbooks and in the school's art portfolio, combined with photographic evidence of past work show that pupils achieve well and standards are good. Pupils experience a broad range of worthwhile activities in all areas of this subject. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
87. From the age of five, pupils learn to select and use a wide range of materials and to work with different media in projects that successfully link art with literacy and design and technology. A creative approach to teaching colour mixing using coloured glasses means that pupils in Year 1 investigate shades and tones before mixing colours for themselves. They develop a good colour vocabulary as they learn about the links between primary and secondary colours. Between the ages of 7 and 11, pupils are successfully taught how important it is to investigate the work of other artists, to research and plan their work and to record their ideas in their sketchbooks and in design briefs. They enjoy this work and most also use their literacy skills well, labelling their designs clearly, listing the materials and media they intend to use and why. They confidently discuss and evaluate their own and each other's work using vocabulary appropriate to the subject. In Year 6, pupils are successfully taught how to develop an initial idea through several different media. This is clearly seen in a very successful project on shoes, which begins with a study of van Gogh's

painting of his boots and includes a study of shoes through the ages. This leads to pupils' detailed observational drawings of shoes from memory, from direct observation and ultimately from imagination. In a very good link to design and technology, pupils design and make leather moccasins decorated with different patterns that native Americans used, before finally designing and making their own 'fantastic' shoe. They are highly motivated by this work and demonstrate very positive attitudes to art. From an early age, pupils make sound use of information and communication technology skills by using specific art programs to create pictures.

88. The quality of teaching is very good in Year 1, the only lesson it was possible to see in the 5 to 7 age range. Three lessons were observed in the 7 to 11 age group, one in Year 5 and two in Year 6. In the two Year 6 lessons, teaching was good in one and very good in the other. The teaching was unsatisfactory in the Year 5 lesson because the work is not demanding enough to sustain pupils' interest and their behaviour is not well managed. In the good and very good lessons, teachers demonstrate a secure understanding of the subject and have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Through a good balance of skilful questioning and direct guidance, they help pupils to think and learn for themselves by experimenting with different media to see if their designs and the media / materials they have chosen will work. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, a pupil asked the teacher whether the particular paint he wanted to use would work on leather. Instead of giving a 'yes' or 'no' answer, the teacher directed him to try it out on a small piece of leather and come back with the answer for himself. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and they are well integrated into all art lessons. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development and a sound contribution to their cultural development. However, there are few planned opportunities for pupils to study art from different cultures. Pupils are particularly well challenged in this subject as, at the end of the summer term, they undertake the current GCSE project at their own level as a bridge to their work in secondary school. Photographs of past projects indicate that they attain good standards in this work, which is displayed at the local high school.
89. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator checks teaching through examining teachers' planning and the quality of pupils' work and offers advice and guidance where necessary. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and planning is well under way to prepare the school for the revised National Curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. During the inspection week no lessons were seen in the 5 to 7 age range and it was possible to see only two lessons in the 7 to 11 age range that were specifically planned as design and technology lessons. It is not possible, therefore, to make an overall judgement on teaching. Good links with art mean that within topics, pupils are successfully enabled to work across both subjects, while the learning in each subject is clear in teachers' planning and in the different outcomes in the pupils' work. A scrutiny of pupils' work and examination of teachers' planning indicates that pupils achieve well and standards are good.
91. From Year 1, appropriate emphasis is given to developing pupils' skills in designing, making and evaluating through a variety of assignments linked, in particular, to literacy topics. In a Year 1 project on houses, pupils first make houses from construction blocks. They then go on to design a model house of their own, select the materials they will need, decide on how to make it and can confidently discuss what works and what does not. Good teaching of cutting and joining skills enables pupils in Year 2 to plan and make a pig mask from card and to attach a nose and a length of wooden dowel. Pupils aged 7 to 11 are provided with good opportunities to develop these skills further using a wide range of materials and tools. For example, pupils in Year 3 make plates from clay as part of a topic on the Romans, which is successfully linked to history and art. Pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class demonstrate good sewing skills as they design and make money containers with a range of fasteners including zips and press-studs. Pupils in Year 6 use leather punches and other sharp instruments safely to make leather moccasins as part of a topic on shoes. Through the teachers' very effectively targeted questioning, pupils become better at evaluating their products. In the mixed Year 3/4 class for example, they confidently suggest how they might improve their products by, for example, using a different fastener or by modifying their original design to ensure that money would not fall out. In Year 6, they evaluate their work as it progresses and can justify the reasons for the changes they make. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in technological activities and make good progress. All pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills in this subject as they label diagrams, prepare design briefs and learn to measure their work accurately.

92. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good in one and unsatisfactory in the other. In addition, in Year 6, while pupils work on the art part of their topic on shoes, it is clear from the good links the teachers make to their previous work that they are effectively taught the skills required to design, make and evaluate artefacts. Teachers' planning is good. Teachers clearly identify what resources pupils will need to do their work. This helps pupils to be well organised and to think for themselves as they select from the range available to them, according to their designs. The teachers' clear explanations and instructions keep pupils working hard, foster good attitudes to learning and ensure that pupils behave well. In the good lesson, effective classroom management and organisation ensures that pupils work well collaboratively, allowing others to express an opinion and listening to advice. In the unsatisfactory lesson with pupils in Year 3, the task is too ambitious to be undertaken by the whole class at the same time because pupils have different levels of manipulative skills and the teacher cannot give sufficient help to all pupils who need it. This results in pupils who grasp the concept quickly, some because they have done it before, having to waste time waiting for others to catch up. Pupils in this large class then become restless, their behaviour is not well managed and opportunities are missed to extend their skills.
93. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has successfully introduced the scheme of work devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to ensure the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills. This has raised teachers' confidence and provides a good range of ideas for them to use in their teaching. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the outcomes are used to plan for future learning. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, especially in the area of design.

GEOGRAPHY

94. Standards are satisfactory in the 7 to 11 age range and pupils' achievements are sound. In the 5 to 7 age range, standards are good and pupils achieve well.
95. By the age of 7 pupils have benefited from the good range of worthwhile learning experiences gained during fieldwork and can recognise different types of settlements in the school's immediate environment. Map reading skills are very well developed and even the youngest pupils can follow and draw their own plans and maps. For example, pupils in Year 1 can draw a map from school to Dr Barnado's identifying different features they would pass on the way. Class photographs are well used to draw pupils' attention to changes in the local environment in recent years. Year 2 pupils use holiday brochures to find out what travellers need to know about different countries prior to setting out on holiday. A record is kept of 'Barnaby Bear's holidays' to Florida, Germany and Crete as he 'goes on holiday' with the teachers and the pupils. Geography is made fun in this age group. The pupils enjoy the subject and work hard to develop their skills. They use their literacy skills well. The quality of their written work is very good and they confidently discuss their work with the teacher and with other adults.
96. The good foundation in mapping skills continues into the 7 to 11 age group. In Year 3 pupils learn how to use map symbols and keys effectively when making their own plans of an imaginary place. They are good at interpreting aerial views. The teacher adds challenge to this work by using photographs of areas on the school site taken at different angles and asking pupils where they are. Map work is further extended during field trips to Kingswood and Borwick Hall Activity Centres in Year 6. In Year 5 pupils study rivers and the water cycle focusing on the uses of water and conservation. Year 6 pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of St Lucia. This topic is well presented and shows evidence that pupils understand the differences in transport, weather, agriculture and everyday life in the island's environment. Links with a school in New York State using e-mail reflect the growing confidence in the pupils' use of information technology. At present, however, there is an over reliance on inappropriate worksheet in some classes, which hinders progress.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although the teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 is good. All lessons are appropriately planned with clear objectives. However, in both age groups, the work in pupils' books indicates that all pupils are expected to do the same work. This and the use of too many worksheets result in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Little account is taken of pupils' different abilities, although some extra help is provided in the 5 to 7 age range. The teaching of map work and of features in the local area is particularly strong and some excellent displays show how well pupils learn the knowledge and skills associated with this work. The majority of pupils show a keen interest in their lessons and pay close attention to their teacher when discussing the theme of the lesson. However, when working on their

own or in groups, noise levels often rise too much and pupils are not always as well managed as they ought to be. In the best lessons, for example in Year 1, where teaching is highly motivating, pupils work quietly and their behaviour is very good. They are attentive and keen, and always willing to respond to questions posed by the teacher.

98. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed but is already beginning to monitor work throughout the school. There is a very good policy. Geography features on the school development plan and appropriate measures are in hand to prepare for changes in the revised National Curriculum. Standards have improved in the 5 to 7 age group since the last inspection and have been maintained in the 7 to 11 age group.

HISTORY

99. Because of the organisation of the school's timetable, no history lessons were seen in the 5 to 7 age range. However, an analysis of pupils' work, inspection of the teacher's planning and discussion with teachers and pupils reveals that history is thoroughly taught and pupils achieve well. They experience a good range of worthwhile learning activities in this age group. By ordering events and by making distinctions between their own lives and those of others in the past, pupils develop a good sense of chronology.
100. Pupils aged 7 to 11 achieve well because good, enthusiastic and often highly motivating teaching in this age group enables them to build on the work they did when they were younger. Teachers and pupils share an enthusiasm for this subject. In most lessons, pupils listen attentively, are keen to learn and respond positively to the wide range of well planned historical experiences that develop their understanding of what it was like to live in a particular age. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils develop good factual knowledge in studies related to Greek, Roman and Tudor times. Time lines support pupils' sense of chronology and enhance their numeracy skills as they answer questions such as 'How long ago since..?'. Good links are made with art and with design and technology as pupils design Roman plates and Greek vases based on their historical knowledge and understanding. The study of history in Years 5 and 6 is made particularly exciting for the pupils as they learn about the changes that took place in Lostock Hall with the coming of the railways. They demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding, gained from studying a range of historical documentation from which they sift information in order to draw their own conclusions about the changes. The 'museum' of artefacts ranging from 1940 – 1980 is at the heart of a very detailed study undertaken by pupils in Year 6. Pupils work co-operatively to research their work in history, consolidating their literacy skills as they use books and the Internet for information gathering as well as interviewing parents and grandparents. Pupils are eager to contribute to discussions and share ideas. Listening skills are particularly well developed and the majority of pupils are attentive. In one lesson, however, with pupils in the mixed Year 4/5 class, a small number of pupils find it difficult to concentrate, cause the teacher to stop the lesson to deal with them and therefore disrupt the lesson for others.
101. The teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 is good. Teachers usually make the learning of history appealing, sharing their interest with pupils and often arousing eager curiosity. Subject knowledge is good and the effective use of a suitably wide range of resources helps pupils to know more about the past and to learn for themselves the skills required for effective research into earlier periods and lives. Homework is used very effectively in this subject to consolidate what pupils learn in class and to help them find more information to extend that learning.
102. Subject management is good. An effective scheme of work is in place and plans are already well under way to review this to take account of the revised National Curriculum orders. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of what is happening in history throughout the school and of the standards in pupils' work. Resources are satisfactory and the local area is well utilised to raise the pupils' awareness of British history and to make the subject more meaningful. A large number of visits are arranged to local places of interest and museums. These include, for example, the Tardy Gate Mill, Tram Road (Railway Study), Salford Quays to look at a replica of the Golden Hind, The Science and History Museum in Manchester, and Borwick Hall. Standards in history have improved since the last report when they were judged to be satisfactory. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Pupils aged 7 and 11 attain good standards and all pupils achieve well in this subject. Pupils in Year 1 develop good keyboard skills and learn to control the mouse correctly. They create pictograms when gathering data on their favourite pets and good use is made of databases to investigate animal habitats. Word processing skills are used to write stories and letters and to support the development of skills in grammar by the correct use of capital letters and full stops. Pupils also create pictures using an art program. They begin to develop an understanding of how important it is to follow a sequence of instructions accurately by studying how electronic toys work. Year 2 pupils develop their word processing skills and can edit and change text when writing stories. Work on display indicates that they are also learning to communicate through the use of e-mail.
104. Word processing skills are further developed in Years 3 and 4 as pupils are taught how to change fonts, edit their work and align text properly to improve the appearance of letters and pieces of prose. Pupils add an artistic element to their work by importing and editing pictures. They confidently gather information by searching a database and using the Internet to find out about Ancient Greece. By the end of Year 6 pupils use the computer effectively to draft and edit their stories and know how to add pictures using the school's digital camera. Pupils in Year 6 use databases to obtain information on jobs in the locality in 1861 as part of their history topic and also to create glossaries of information for other pupils. They have set up a school web site and can use the Internet very competently. Pupils develop their skills in control using a series of instructions to direct an arrow round a route and have experience of video conferencing with the class next door.
105. The quality of teaching is good in both age groups. It is very good in 14 per cent of lessons, good in 43 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 43 per cent. The way teachers make the objectives of lessons clear to pupils is a strength that enables pupils to develop their skills and understanding confidently. Teachers plan their lessons well to ensure that pupils make regular use of information and communication technology. They diligently check what pupils are doing at the computers during group sessions and intervene well to ensure effective learning. Many teachers have good skill levels and are confident in their teaching of groups and individuals. For example, in Year 1 the teacher develops in pupils a good understanding of control technology by using small electronic toys to teach pupils that machines and devices are controlled through following a sequence of instructions. In Year 6, the teacher confidently and knowledgeably explains the process for downloading information from the Internet and shows pupils how to create files and folders for their work. Pupils enjoy the subject and respond well to the enthusiasm and confidence shown by their teachers and work productively in lessons. This is also due to the good relationships that teachers establish with them. Pupils are very eager to work on computers and to use other information and communication technology devices. They work well together when sharing equipment and support each other's skill development.
106. The subject is managed effectively by the two co-ordinators, who monitor work through examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work and discussions with colleagues. Assessment procedures are sound and teachers keep appropriate records of pupils' progress. These indicate good coverage of all aspects of the subject with the exception of the use of spreadsheets, which requires further development. Resources are adequate and well used. Each classroom has at least one computer and a small suite of computers has been established in the building that houses the Year 5 class and the two Year 6 classes. This enables the teachers to ensure that all pupils in these two classes have regular times at the keyboard in order to practise their skills and to acquire new ones. It has a positive impact on standards and enables information and communication technology to be used across the curriculum. The location of the computer suite in the annex building does create some difficulties in organisation and time allocation for pupils in the Lourdes Avenue site. The school successfully overcomes these difficulties by employing a part time teacher to work with groups of younger pupils who are timetabled to visit the suite on a regular basis.
107. The school has made good improvements in both standards and provision since the last inspection. Good attention is now given to all aspects of the subject. Pupils of all ages are now developing a wide range of skills and are confident in their use of computers. Teachers' knowledge and skills have been improved as a result of in-service training sessions and the effective support provided by the two subject co-ordinators.

MUSIC

108. Standards in music are satisfactory. Listening, composing, performing and appraising are well integrated in most lessons and pupils are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities that enable them to achieve well in all of these aspects as they move through the school. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
109. Five and six-year-old pupils can clap a variety of rhythms, keep a beat and follow instructions. They are successfully taught to listen carefully and to understand terms such as 'tempo', 'dynamics', 'rhythm' and 'beat' as they play rhythm games requiring a high degree of concentration. By the age of 7 they can compose using repeated patterns and a combination of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Skilful question and answer sessions enable them to evaluate their compositions and they begin to reflect on mood and purpose as they discuss what worked and what did not. This work is extended in the 7 to 11 age group as pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class begin to suggest how their imaginative and well-structured compositions might be improved. They do this sensitively by making constructive comments and helping others. They show good initiative as they appoint group leaders and decide how and when to use different instruments to obtain the desired effect. They begin to interpret musical symbols and notations. In a very good lesson on texture the teacher in the mixed Year 4/5 class very successfully leads pupils through how the various layers of sound are built up in a well-chosen extract of steel band music. In Year 6, the practice of the two classes singing along to the tape of a radio broadcast inhibits progress and dulls pupils' enthusiasm. The highlight of the lesson is when pupils learn to perform a rap in four parts by using their voices as the accompaniment and leads to four girls composing their own rap at home and performing it to the rest of the class the following day. Throughout the school, pupils sing in tune and know a suitable range of songs and hymns. However, in one assembly, the accompaniment was pitched too low for the singing of a hymn and the singing was less successful here. Pupils behave well in all music lessons.
110. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory. In one lesson in each age group, teaching is good and in one lesson in the 7 to 11 age group, very good. Teachers make sure that pupils understand what they are to do and transmit an enthusiasm for the subject that motivates pupils and develops good attitudes to music. Most lessons move along at a brisk pace because they are appropriately planned and structured to make good use of the time available and to keep pupils working hard. They include good preparation activities, time for pupils to practise and improve their work, and whole class sessions where teacher and pupils can discuss, evaluate and suggest improvements. Good attention is paid to consolidating pupils' literacy skills as teachers insist on correct musical vocabulary. They make good links to work done in the literacy hour by, for example, composing music to accompany poetry in the mixed Year 3/4 class. Numeracy skills are also enhanced as pupils count beats and recognise and sequence patterns in pieces of music. Opportunities to use information technology in music are still somewhat limited, however. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into all music lessons and make good progress. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development and satisfactory contribution to their cultural development. While a good range of opportunities are provided for them to hear and perform Western European music, there are few planned opportunities for them to learn about music from other cultures.
111. Subject management is satisfactory and work is under way to adapt the present scheme of work to meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. A positive feature of this is the good use made of assessment in the Year 2 and the mixed Year 3/4 classes. Here, pupils' compositions are recorded either in writing or on tape for use in the next lesson so that their learning is continuous as they evaluate and build on what has gone before.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Standards are satisfactory in this subject and pupils' achievements are sound. In Year 1 dance, pupils create good sequences of movements in response to a taped radio programme, responding well to the different moods and rhythms conveyed in the music. By the end of Year 2 pupils know the importance of exercise and are successfully taught why they have to warm up at the start of a lesson. In both gymnastics and dance, pupils aged 5 to 7 show a good awareness of working in space, changing direction and using different levels when performing sequences of movements. They control their movements well and travel in a variety of ways. Pupils in Year 2 can balance a small ball by themselves and develop the skill further when working with a partner. As they dance, most pupils in the Year 3 class perform their movements competently. They can hop and skip, change direction at a given signal and respond effectively to the

music. The majority of pupils have a good sense of balance but do not use space effectively and are not always reminded to do so. Teaching in the lesson is unsatisfactory because the teacher does not ensure that all pupils listen carefully to instructions. A significant minority continue to talk while the teacher is talking and some become too noisy, lose interest and make little progress. Swimming is taught to pupils in Years 4 and 5 and most pupils gain their 25 metre certificates during the year.

113. The teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 is satisfactory. Teachers of this age group support the improvement of individual pupils through clear and positive feedback during lessons. They are confident in their knowledge of the subject and give instructions in a calm but enthusiastic manner. As a result pupils make sound progress, enjoy the challenges set for them and most work hard to improve their performance. Throughout the school, planning is sound and appropriate emphasis is given to the development of skills. Insufficient teaching was seen in the 7 to 11 age group to make an overall judgement.
114. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra curricular sporting activities. All have the opportunity to play football, netball, hockey, rounders, cricket, short tennis, athletics and participate in cross-country running and aerobics. Competitive matches are organised against other schools in netball, football and rounders and athletics. Two residential visits are organised for pupils in Years 5 and 6. These develop pupils' skills in a range of adventurous activities including orienteering and abseiling. The school has developed good links with Manchester United and Preston North End football clubs and both boys and girls benefit from the coaching that takes place.
115. Management of the subject is satisfactory. There is a clear policy with a strong emphasis on the progressive development of skills. Clear guidance is given to teachers with regard to assessment procedures and the resources available. Both are satisfactory. The previous inspection found attainment to be satisfactory with the exception of dance. The school has successfully improved standards in dance and maintained standards in other areas of physical education.