

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST ANNE'S AND ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Accrington

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119656

Headteacher: Mr M Dixon

Reporting inspector: Miss J Taylor  
4275

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 194396

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sandy Lane Accrington Lancashire
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Telephone number:	01254 233019
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Bernard Holden
Date of previous inspection:	10 – 13 December 1996

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19807	Keith Osborne	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Anne's and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is bigger than average, there are 353 pupils on roll. The school is situated in the south of Accrington and is a partner in a network of five Roman Catholic primary schools in the town. The children come from the two parishes of the churches of St Anne and St Joseph. Generally the attainment of the children on entry to the school is average. About 10 per cent of the children are eligible for free school meals and two pupils have English as an additional language. This is less than most schools. There are 29.2 per cent of pupils with special educational needs which is broadly average and 3 children have a special needs statement. The children enter the reception classes when they are four and most of them have attended local pre-school provision.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school with some very strong features. In Year 6 the children are making good progress and are reaching average or above average standards even though there is a higher than usual number on the special needs register. The standards in Key Stage 1 are improving. They have now reached the national expectations across the curriculum apart from writing. The standards in the Foundation Stage are average with the more able children attaining higher than average standards. The teaching across the school is good overall with very good and sometimes excellent teaching. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and the standards are improving as a result. He is supported well by the deputy, the teachers and the governors. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The ways of ensuring the children behave well, understand right from wrong and develop spiritually are very good. The children are cared for well and they have developed good attitudes to school.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and he is supported well by the governors, the deputy and other teachers with responsibilities.
- The teaching is good with very good and excellent teaching in about a quarter of the lessons.
- The children are learning more quickly than average and are making up lost ground.
- The curriculum is richer than usual with good opportunities for additional learning like Italian and good local studies.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards in writing are too low across the school but particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The standards in design and technology are too low in Key Stage 2.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The last inspection was in late 1996. Since then the school has made good improvements. The weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been given good attention. The quality of the resources is now good in almost all subjects and the resources are used well by the teachers to raise the children's standards. The standards in those subjects previously found to be too low are now average or above apart from aspects of design and technology. The curriculum coordinators have developed their subject knowledge and check the work in their subjects across the school. By looking at the teachers' curriculum planning and giving advice they are improving the teaching and learning. Although this is a good development, further improvements would raise the children's standards higher. There are sound systems for assessing the children's work in literacy and numeracy but there are no systems for identifying the National Curriculum levels reached by the children. The headteacher and senior staff have observed the teaching and provided advice for improvement but this was some time ago and needs further development. The headteacher, governors and senior staff are working well to improve the school. The school's capacity for further improvement is very good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	B	B	A	well above average A above average B Average C Below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	B	C	C	
Science	A	A	C	C	

In the national tests in 2000 the children reached standards in English that were well above average. Their standards in English were much higher than in the other subjects. The findings of the inspection are that English is still the strongest subject and the children's standards are higher than is typical, except in writing which is in line with the national average. This is because the teachers are becoming experienced at using the nationally recommended ways of working in literacy. In mathematics the children reached average standards in their tests but had reached higher standards for their age when they took their Year 2 tests. Their progress was too slow while they were in the junior classes. The present Year 6 are able to use a range of ways to work out answers in their heads but many are not confident or quick enough. In science the children reached average standards in their tests and during the inspection the current Year 6 were also reaching an average level. In Year 6 there is a higher number of pupils with special educational needs than usual but the school has maintained average or good standards for the children.

In the tests for Key Stage 1 over the past few years the children have achieved below average scores for reading and well below average scores for writing and mathematics. These standards were not high enough. These children achieved average standards when assessed on arrival into the reception class and their rate of achievement since then has been unsatisfactory. During the inspection the children in Year 2 showed above average standards in reading and average standards in mathematics and science. The children's standards in writing are still below average and this subject needs urgent attention. A typical number of children are now reaching the above average levels in all these subjects, apart from writing, and this is a considerable improvement since last year. The new approaches to organising the curriculum and to checking what the children are to learn has already improved the standards during the past two terms.

In history and physical education the children in both key stages are reaching above average standards. In information communication technology and geography they are reaching average standards. In art and music the infant children are average while the junior children are above average. In design and technology the children in Key Stage 1 are reaching average standards but in Key Stage 2 the standards are below average but the children are making up the lost ground at a good rate.

In the reception classes the children learn at a satisfactory rate and maintain their average standards with the more able children reaching higher than average standards. In reading, in both classes the standards are above average and the children have already made good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The children are very committed and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Children respond very well to school rules and play well together in the playground. No evidence of bullying was seen during the inspection
Personal development and relationships	Good. The children respect each other and work well together.
Attendance	Good. The rate of attendance is better than average although too many children do not report why they were away.

The school has changed the way it checks on the children's absences and this is improving the situation.

## 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. 'Good' means that the teaching is better than average.*

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. 26 per cent is very good or excellent, 35 per cent is good, 35 per cent is satisfactory and only 4 per cent is less than satisfactory. There are examples of very good teaching in all key stages and the teaching is strongest in aspects of English and mathematics. In these subjects, for the most part, the teachers show a clear understanding of how to move the children on. They plan work that is challenging for the children and skilfully help them achieve at least satisfactory standards, apart from writing in Key Stage 1. As a result the children are making good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2 and enjoy their lessons. Where the teaching is more ordinary most of the children make satisfactory progress but some could learn at a faster pace. In some cases the teachers showed that they could teach some subjects better than others and these strengths are linked to their own strong subject knowledge and high expectations. The support assistants give the children with special educational needs good support in lessons and small groups. Their work is planned to support the children's specific difficulties and as a result they are making good progress. The class teachers have not always identified clear targets for improvement for these children and their progress is slower in some class lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Rich opportunities are provided for children to extend learning. Sound, sometimes good in reception.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Specialist support for the children is good. In several other lessons support is sound.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional	The children learning English as an additional language understand and speak English to a satisfactory level and are making sound progress.

language	
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good provision for spiritual and moral development supported through strong emphasis on Christian attitudes. Good social development through, for example, personal development lessons. Sound cultural development but not enough opportunities for the children to become familiar with other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school takes very good care of children and monitors their personal development appropriately. The way the children's standards are checked and improved is satisfactory.

All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements and the staff plan interesting ways of teaching the curriculum. Italian lessons are provided and these are enjoyed by the children. Good quality extra instrumental music lessons are provided for some of the children. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but needs to adopt more of the suggestions from the nationally recommended curriculum for the early years. The teachers are already aware of this. The school cares for the children well and the procedures for checking and preventing bullying are very good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory for the Foundation Stage and good for aspects of literacy and numeracy in the rest of the school. The school has yet to assess the children's attainment and rate of learning according to National Curriculum levels. The school works well with the parents who offer strong support and have a positive view of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. Very good by the headteacher who has begun to help the teachers improve their lessons and raise standards. Strong support from the deputy. Teachers are clearer about how to help each other improve teaching in curriculum subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors provide strong support to the school. They work well with the headteacher. They recognise and check the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The curriculum plans are checked regularly by key staff and advice on improvement is given. The teaching is not checked often enough to ensure good work is shared across the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Money is tight but it is used carefully and has led to improved standards, for example, in reading and numeracy in Key Stage 1.

All staff and governors agree they want the school to continue improving and are prepared to work hard to make this happen. The principles of best value are applied well, seeking and comparing competitive costings and insisting on the lowest prices. Staffing meets the needs of the school well and classroom assistants are well qualified and provide good support. Accommodation is good, there are additional work areas outside the classrooms and these are used well. The school is very clean and well cared for. The resources for learning are generally good and help to improve standards.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The children like school.</li><li>• The teaching is good</li><li>• The school responds well to questions and problems</li><li>• The children are expected to work hard</li><li>• The school is led and managed well.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li><li>• The quality of information about how the children are getting on.</li><li>• The amount of work the children do at home.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with these positive views and also judges that there is an appropriate range of clubs that include choir, music, art, dance and sports. The homework system in place clearly supports the children's learning. The inspection findings show that the reports showing the children's attainment are too brief and do not always give parents enough information.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The children who are in the Foundation Stage attain above average standards in reading and mathematics and average standards in all the other areas of learning. The children enter the reception classes with average standards and they learn at a steady and sometimes good pace apart from the painting and drawing aspects of creative development where their progress is slower. They learn to read and understand numeracy at a faster than average rate. There is good provision for the higher attaining children and their standards are above average in both the reception classes.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1 the test results for the children aged seven have given a picture of below average standards for reading, writing and mathematics for several years. Sometimes the standards have been well below average. Not enough of the children have reached the higher Level 3 and too many only reached an early level. In science the teachers' assessments show that the children's standards are above average. The children have been entering reception with average standards and their rate of learning has been unsatisfactory during Key Stage 1. The school has recently extended the analysis of the children's test results and their recognition that these standards are much lower than they should be has caused concern. As a result there have been changes to the way the curriculum is organised and checked. This is already raising the standards.
3. During the inspection the current work of the Key Stage 1 children shows that their standards in reading, science and mathematics are now average. Writing is below average and not enough of the children are working at the higher levels. Too many are only reaching low standards. The children learn at a sound pace in the Foundation Stage and this is now maintained in Key Stage 1 for most subjects. The current Year 2 children have made satisfactory progress overall. Their standards have remained average since they were assessed in the reception class and standards in reading have risen. This is a significant improvement over recent years. It is due to the better organisation of the curriculum and the support given to the teachers by the curriculum coordinators. Writing is still below average and needs further attention. The children do not have enough opportunities to write at length in subjects like history and geography. At the time of the last inspection the standards in Key Stage 1 were above average in reading and writing and slightly above average in mathematics. Since then the standards have fallen but are now rising again. During the inspection the standards achieved by boys and girls were judged to be similar.
4. Over the last four years the test results for the eleven-year-olds have always been at least average and often above, sometimes they have been very high. A greater than average proportion of the children have reached the higher Level 5 in English and science and an above average proportion have reached the higher level in mathematics. The last group of Year 6 children to take the tests achieved slightly lower standards than usual and the results show that the children's rate of learning was slower than it should have been in mathematics. Even so the school exceeded its targets for the children to reach in the tests in 2000. The proportion of children reaching higher standards has always been greater in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. During the inspection the children's standards in Year 6 were above average in reading and speaking and listening and average in writing, mathematics and science. There is a higher than usual proportion of children with special needs in Year 6 yet in

all the subjects the pace of learning is good and the children are making good progress. They do not always achieve standards that are appropriate for their ability however especially in writing. Sometimes there is an overuse of worksheets and the children are not expected to write longer pieces of work in subjects like history and science. The improved management of the curriculum and the support from the coordinators is providing better learning opportunities and the standards are rising again. The standards are lower now than they were at the time of the last inspection and until recently, the school had not kept up with the pace of improvement typical in other schools. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls, which is also an improvement over recent years.

5. By the end of each key stage the children's attainment in information communication technology is average; they have an appropriate range of skills and a secure understanding. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average in both key stages. The children still do not use information communication technology sufficiently to support some of the other subjects. In design and technology the standards are average in Key Stage 1 but below average in Key Stage 2. The standards have improved, particularly in Key Stage 1 and the teaching is good. The children are learning at a fast rate but need to continue broadening their experiences before the standards in Key Stage 2 meet the national requirements. In physical education and history the standards are above average in both key stages. In art and music the standards are average in Key Stage 1 and above average in Key Stage 2. In geography the standards are average across the school. Since the last inspection standards have improved in art, music, information communication technology and history.
6. The pupils identified with moderate or specific learning difficulties attain standards that are below the national averages in English and mathematics. This is because the rate at which they acquire reading, spelling and writing skills is slower than average. Many pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in lessons. Occasionally, because the detail on their specific learning plans is too general and does not include relevant targets, the progress of a small but significant number is unsatisfactory. Where their specific learning plans include carefully drawn up targets and they are supported by well briefed and skilled learning support staff or when they are taught in small groups they make good progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. The pupils enjoy coming to school. They enjoy learning and are enthusiastic about their lessons. They express a range of clear opinions about the purpose of a Catholic school, including educational, religious, social and personal expectations. They take part in a wide range of team games and other extra-curricular activities, and volunteer to help keep the site tidy, especially in the autumn, when the leaves fall. During the inspection week the children's behaviour was very good overall and reflects the normal high standards that the school achieves. Bullying and harassment have been virtually eliminated. When occasionally children fall out with each other, they are made to think about the consequences of their behaviour, apologise to each other, and sometimes to write down how they intend to behave in future. There have been no exclusions from the school for more than two years.
8. Relationships are good, and the pupils understand that their actions affect others. The school encourages the children to evaluate their performance, for example in physical education lessons or mathematics, and to make positive criticisms. In history, for example, they think about the feelings of soldiers in the Accrington Lads Regiment as

they went to war in France and about the feelings of those left behind. The pupils define the rules for each classroom and Year 6 are proud of having included a rule that says, "There is no shame in failure, but there is in not trying." As yet the school has not implemented a formal system for allowing pupils to influence the operation of the school, for example through a pupil council. The range of opportunities to show personal initiative is satisfactory.

9. The rate of attendance is satisfactory overall. It has increased each year since the last inspection and is broadly in line with the national average for primary schools. The rate of unauthorised absences has reduced from just over 1 per cent to 0.5 per cent. This is a considerable improvement and is now in line with the national average. The well-kept registers for the Autumn Term 2000 indicate that there has been a further improvement. This is due to the school's efforts to remind parents of the need to restrict family holidays in term time, and also by trying to ensure that a written explanation is provided for absences. Most of the pupils arrive at school on time, but the late running of one of the school buses means that some of them arrive after the official starting time but before the registers are closed.
10. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes towards their work and enjoy good relationships with the adults who work with them. They are keen to learn and most concentrate to complete their tasks. Many pupils keep the class rules and are able to wait until the adult is available to work with them. Occasionally, individual pupils, usually identified as having emotional or behavioural needs, do not make the progress that they should. This is because the specific learning plan does not specifically address their particular needs and the identified tasks are too complex or inappropriate.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

11. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection it was satisfactory or better in ninety six percent of the lessons. Good quality teaching was seen in thirty five percent of lessons and very good or better in twenty four percent. This is a very good improvement on the previous inspection. Since then extra support and training have developed the teachers' confidence and expertise particularly in art, information communication technology and design and technology. The teaching in these subjects showed weaknesses during the last inspection. This quality of teaching is having a beneficial effect on pupils' attitudes and standards are rising across the curriculum, as the school is moving forward. Most of the teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding. More needs to be done to support the teachers in developing their skills through sharing some of the very good practice.
12. The quality of the teaching in the reception classes is always satisfactory and often good. The adults have secure knowledge of how children in the Foundation Stage learn. They carefully plan direct teaching sessions and provide play activities and are skilled at intervening to help the children develop their ideas and keep their attention. For example in the birthday party area the children have been helped to plan and act out having a party. Occasionally there is some over direction by adults that prevents the children from being independent, for example in art. The curriculum planning still relies too heavily on the Key Stage 1 style and needs to take greater notice of the nationally recommended curriculum for young children. The staff already recognise this. There are good relationships between the teachers and the nursery nurses and an effective teaching routine is in place. An appropriate emphasis is placed on the children's personal development.

13. In the infant classes the good or very good teaching accounts for over half the lessons and in the junior classes it accounts for sixty percent of the lessons. It is spread across all subjects and some teachers show particular expertise in some subjects and less strength in others. This overall rise in the quality of teaching is the result of a well managed teaching and learning policy and checking and responding to the teachers' subject planning. The recent implementation of the new assessment policy is supporting teachers well as they identify the pupils' achievements and use this information to plan more challenging work. This has begun to raise standards.
14. In the very good lessons the importance of the basic skills in subjects is understood and included in lesson planning. The teachers select well from a good range of resources and teaching methods and classrooms are efficiently managed. For example in an art lesson in Year 1 the children were introduced to a range of textiles and then expected to make individual choices. Skilled support staff are effectively deployed and good quality resources are used well to support the pupils' learning. The teachers are enthusiastic about their work and question the children effectively to determine whether they understand what is being taught. For example in a history lesson in Year 6 the teacher sensitively helped the children consider some emotional situations linked to the first world war. As a result the children were able to offer opinions and ask searching questions.
15. Where the teaching is satisfactory, time and resources are not managed so well, sometimes the lesson is not organised efficiently or the higher attaining children are not given challenging enough work. For example in science the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but some science investigations are over controlled. Only four percent of teaching was graded unsatisfactory. This was because the resources were not sufficiently prepared, the teachers' explanations were too long or there was no detailed planning to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.
16. The basic skills of reading and writing are taught regularly and effectively during literacy lessons. The staff in the Foundation Stage are good at teaching the early skills and, as a result, most of the children are working at a sound and sometimes good level. In Key Stage 1 these skills are generally taught soundly and the pupils' standards in reading mean that in all subjects their performance is supported by a developing understanding of written tasks. Writing is taught less effectively and there are too few children who can record their own information effectively. The basic skills are generally taught well in Key Stage 2 and this means that the children use their reading and speaking and listening skills appropriately to support their work across the curriculum. At both key stages there are insufficient opportunities for the children to apply their writing skills across the curriculum as a means of developing as confident writers. The basic calculating skills of numeracy are not always taught systematically. As a result the children are sometimes too slow or become confused when working out problems.
17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory but the quality of the specific learning plans is variable. When they are precisely written, with specific attainable yet challenging targets, the teachers use them skilfully to plan appropriate activities. In other situations, because there is no reliable guidance, the pupils do not make the progress that they should. The children with special educational needs are usually taught within their classes and are occasionally withdrawn for extra help. There is usually a suitable lower level of work for these pupils. Learning support assistants, working with small groups of pupils, make a very good contribution and pupils benefit from this help. The children with statements of special educational need receive good support. Support staff from external agencies provide helpful advice.

18. All of the teachers have good relationships with pupils. This adds considerably to the pupils' positive attitudes to the work. The teachers manage pupils well. They keep firm discipline and the pupils know what is expected of them.

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

19. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes the curriculum for information communication technology, design and technology at Key Stage 1 and art, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. The curriculum for design and technology at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. It would be improved and is likely to speed the children's progress if the skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject were taught within the context of a design and make task rather than separately. The school has successfully implemented the nationally recommended strategies for literacy and numeracy and is providing an effective programme of activities to develop the key skills of reading, writing and number work. All subjects now have detailed and useful appropriate policies and schemes of work. The termly planning is satisfactory and often good and the teachers provide interesting activities to interest the children. These are improvements since the last inspection. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of Italian lessons for all the children from Year 1.
20. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in reception classes is satisfactory. It is based on the Early Learning Goals and the Key Stage 1 curriculum. The curriculum is challenging for the children. The provision for language and literacy is good with sufficient emphasis given to speaking and listening. Personal and social development is provided for appropriately through the teaching. The provision for mathematics, physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is satisfactory overall. The children are provided with too few opportunities to use their outside area and resources to extend their learning.
21. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities which includes sport, music and art. The pupils in Year 6 take part in a useful residential visit to the Ribble Valley. A good range of visits to locations for learning and visitors to the school extends the pupils' experiences and enhances their learning. This enriches the curriculum. There is a good range of links with the community. The strong relationship with the churches forms the cornerstone of the school's work and its place in the community. The children have the chance to participate and demonstrate their skills in local sports events, quizzes and a music festival. Satisfactory links and transfer procedures ensure that the pupils are able to settle quickly into the next stage of their education. The school has a satisfactory provision for homework. The pupils are expected to read at home, to learn spellings, complete mathematical exercises and carry out occasional work that builds on work done in lessons. The curriculum in music is enhanced by a good programme of instrumental tuition.
22. The pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities organised by the school. The children's work is adjusted to respond to their particular needs and levels of maturity. All of the pupils from Stage 2 have written specific learning plans and those who are registered at Stage 1 are supported by an 'Expression of Concern' document. Some of the pupils with behavioural or physical disabilities do not have detailed care plans to help the staff monitor their behaviour or check, for example, that their hearing aids are working properly. These pupils work in small withdrawal groups for part of their English and mathematics and the work is matched well to their needs.

23. Equality of access and opportunity for the children is satisfactory. The teaching and non-teaching staff provide positive role models. A wide range of activities is provided which avoid racial or gender stereotyping. Both boys and girls are encouraged to be involved in all types of activities, including those pupils with special educational needs. There are short periods when pupils are withdrawn from lessons to attend instrumental tuition. The school makes arrangements to vary music lesson times to avoid the same part of a particular lesson being missed each week.
24. Provision for the children's personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs education is good overall. Health and drugs education are covered appropriately in science, and through the annual visit of a Life Education bus. The Year 6 pupils are clear about what constitutes good and bad drugs, "drugs are bad if you do not get them from a doctor." They know about healthy diets and the importance of exercise. They have well founded views about life and death. The school provides information about puberty to boys and girls in the last term of Year 6, but has realised that this may now need to be brought forward to meet the earlier maturity of some pupils. The governors have not yet resolved to teach sex education outside the National Curriculum science requirements, but have asked for the staff to present a proposed way of moving forward.
25. The standards of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school are good overall. The provision for the children's spiritual and moral development is very good. The provision for pupils' social development is good and the cultural aspect is satisfactory. The previous inspection reported that the school's spiritual moral and social provision was a strength of the school, and this is still true. The school has done well to maintain these high standards. The previous inspection also indicated that the cultural provision for developing children's appreciation of their own and other cultures was under-developed. While the provision for the children's knowledge of their own culture has been strengthened that of other cultures remains to be developed.
26. Spiritual development is very effectively promoted through the daily act of collective worship. The Christian ethos permeates the school day with regular prayers and each classroom has a focal point for Christian reflection. There are also opportunities during lessons for the children to be emotionally involved in their learning. For example, the beauty and clarity of a picture of a wild animal stunned some children. Year 1 children were amazed at the tiny size of a pupil's first baby clothes which he had brought to school to contribute to a class lesson on 'treasured things'. The strong and effective links that the school has with the churches make a very positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
27. The fostering of a moral code is very well developed throughout the school by an effective behaviour policy that is promoted and reinforced consistently. There are school rules and each class has a copy of their classroom rules, to which children have contributed. The rewards and punishments are fairly and consistently applied, and the emphasis is upon positive reinforcement of good behaviour. The pupils respond well to having their good work and acts acknowledged by their teachers, their peers and in weekly assemblies. The religious education and the personal and social education programmes are well structured to teach the children about moral issues, fairness and justice. Within the context of religious education lessons the children are given many opportunities to reflect upon good behaviour, and to apply Christian principles to their daily lives.
28. The provision for the pupils' social development is promoted and developed through a broad range of school activities. They are given opportunities to take on



responsibilities, such as helping in assembly, with jobs in class and around school and grounds. The Year 5 and 6 pupils act as school librarians. There is a school newspaper and the children provide the reports, the editorial and the management of the venture. The Year 6 pupils have the opportunity of participating in a residential visit. There is a wide range of school clubs for sports, art and music. These are popular and well supported. Year 6 pupils run stalls at Parish Fairs and fun days. The school choir contributes to parish events and performs at local festivals. Children represent the school in local quizzes. Each year the children are actively involved in supporting organisations through activities and functions to raise money for many charities, locally, nationally and for providing resources to under-developed countries. Many of these activities occur infrequently and usually involve only the older children. This aspect could be further developed as the pupils respond well when given opportunities to take on responsibility.

29. The school has made sound provision for pupils to develop their experience of their own cultural tradition through visits to the theatre and visits from peripatetic actors, authors and performing poets. Visits to locations for learning are included in the curriculum, such as museums, galleries, historical locations and geographical field trips. Opportunities are provided for pupils to examine works of famous artists, and appreciate the works of famous composers through lessons and assemblies. The children greatly enjoy the Italian lessons that form part of the curriculum from Year 1 onwards. They are gaining beneficial insights into another culture and religion through hearing tapes of songs, prayers and chants and the examination of clothes and artefacts. For example the Year 4 children benefit greatly from a contact with a Jewish School in Manchester. However most of the children's opportunities are generally drawn from the Western cultural tradition and the provision of opportunities to examine other cultures is less well developed. The school's resources for multi-culture and other world religions are thin. The pupils' opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding are limited and so the children's awareness of the range of cultures represented in our society is under developed.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

30. Welfare and child protection arrangements are good. The arrangements for inspecting the school to ensure that it is a safe environment for pupils are good. There is a regular programme of inspections by both staff and governors, resulting in detailed action plans. The children's day-to-day safety is ensured by the site manager, teachers, classroom support staff and mid-day supervisors. For example the pupils who travel home by bus are escorted and seen on to the correct vehicle very efficiently. The rules for entering and leaving the grounds using pedestrian paths are clear and all the children obey them. The school has made more efforts to improve road safety outside the school gate, in consultation with the police, but to limited effect. There are good arrangements for first aid, and all the staff are qualified to administer first aid at different levels. One teacher is also a qualified nurse, and co-ordinates these arrangements. Child protection procedures are good, with three designated teachers, and a recording system which makes sure that the headteacher is aware of any concerns. The arrangements for attending case conferences, when necessary, are effective.
31. The pupils' personal support and guidance are good. The very good home-school liaison system for reception pupils mentioned in the last inspection report has continued, and is valued by parents. Following recent bereavements one teacher now offers help for families faced with this. In class prayers, the children were asked to remember one boy's grandfather who had recently died, and to pray for their

- classmate and his family at the time of the funeral on the following day. This reflects the caring, Christian nature of the school. Where the pupils are unhappy or not doing as well as the school expects, this is recorded and appropriate action taken. In lessons, the teachers are aware of the pupils' individual needs, for example great concern was shown for a diabetic child who felt drowsy just before lunch time.
32. The children's attendance patterns are closely monitored. Where particular pupils fall below the target attendance rate of 90 per cent, the reasons are analysed and letters are sent home when necessary. The school realised that many absences were in fact for good reasons, but written explanations had not been provided. An official form is now sent home requesting explanations when parents have not sent a note. Appropriate further action is taken jointly with the Education Welfare Service. Good attendance is encouraged by making the school's expectations clear to the parents and pupils, and by following up absences promptly and regularly. The children's behaviour is also closely monitored, and the low numbers of pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable is due partly to the school's vigilance and insistence on high standards.
  33. The assessment and monitoring of the children's academic performance is satisfactory overall. There are some good procedures for English and mathematics developing. The procedures for the Foundation stage, special educational needs, science and information communication technology are satisfactory. There are no procedures for the foundation subjects and this limits the teachers' knowledge of how well the children are doing. The school collects the data from the baseline and national tests each year. Additionally, all the children in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 take annual literacy and mathematics tests and this data is also collated. As a result the school now has a considerable amount of information about the children and can identify their attainment at the end of each year. The school examines the data for general features and undertakes a detailed scrutiny to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each group of children. This influences the work provided for them and the support that some of them require to reach the standards expected nationally.
  34. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is satisfactory overall. Consequently, writing, especially in Key Stage 1, was identified as an area for development. Targets are set for class groups, these are half-termly in literacy and mathematics. Samples of the children's work linked to these targets are kept. This system is a good one. However, these samples are not yet assessed against the National Curriculum levels to ensure that children make sufficient progress each half term. As a result individual targets are not being set for individual children. In the foundation subjects, the National Curriculum levels reached by the children are not assessed. The next steps needed to move children to the next level do not feature in teachers' planning. Marking in the core subjects is generally good, although there are inconsistencies between classes.
  35. Although all of the pupils who are identified as having special educational needs have specific learning plans or 'expression of concern' documents, the quality of these is variable. A significant number identify targets that are too general to enable the teachers to assess pupils' progress and identify the optimum rate of learning they are able to sustain. There is some confusion regarding the purpose of a Stage 3 placement and a relatively large number of pupils are placed at this level. Those pupils with statements have their educational needs met according to the written requirements. The teachers accept full responsibility for the education of those pupils in their classes with special needs. The pupils' progress is reviewed termly after which adjustments are made to their targets.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

36. The parents' views of the school are positive. They feel that their children like coming to school, that the behaviour is good and their children are helped to become mature. They also think that the school is well led and managed, with good teachers and high expectations that pupils will work hard. Most of the parents feel that their children make good progress, but some parents are unhappy about mixed-age classes in case their children are held back. Some of the parents are not happy with the amount of homework, the quality of information about their children's progress, the partnership between school and parents and the range of out of school activities.
37. The school's links with the parents are good and include regular contact through newsletters. There is prompt contact when there are concerns about behaviour or attendance and appointments are readily made to discuss the parents' concerns. At the start of the day the children are escorted into the classrooms from the playground and this may contribute to the feeling of a few parents that the school does not welcome them. The parents give valuable help in classrooms. In a reception class a parent helps the pupils in several ways, including, for example, to write numbers on the computer screen. In Year 5 some parents help children to make biscuits. The Friends of the school organise a wide range of social activities for both the parents and the children. This helps to raise money for additional equipment for the school and to both subsidise trips out and pay for visitors to come to the school. These activities have included a bun week, mountain bike raffle, and a leavers' party. The parents help children with aspects of homework which include researching for topics, or by lending items for use in class, such as baptismal souvenirs.
38. The information provided for the parents, such as the school prospectus and the annual report of the governors, fulfil statutory requirements. The prospectus has recently been redesigned in a more friendly style. The annual reports on the children are brief and do not always contain sufficient information on each subject. They sometimes contain broad targets for improvement, but these are not sufficiently specific. Some of the parents feel that they would like to receive written reports earlier in the summer term, and to have an opportunity to discuss them fully with the class teacher. The class teachers have responsibility for informing the parents if the school becomes concerned about a particular pupil's progress. Every attempt is made to keep these arrangements informal. The parents of pupils with special educational needs meet the staff formally twice a year to receive a report on their child's progress. Not all of the parents have the opportunity to read the child's specific learning plan which might be changed termly.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

39. The good quality of the school's leadership and management has enabled the school to make a number of significant improvements since the last inspection. This is most noticeable in the clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the headteacher, governors and curriculum coordinators. This aspect was unclear at the time of the last inspection but now all work well together to improve the school. The headteacher, deputy head and lead teachers for English and mathematics have observed lessons and given the teachers advice on how to improve. This has improved the quality of teaching and as a result the pupils are making better progress and beginning to achieve higher standards in these subjects. The school is led very well by the headteacher. He has a very clear view of how to improve the school. He is highly skilled in developing the work of the staff, particularly the deputy head and the curriculum coordinators in improving the quality of the curriculum. The staff are

supported and encouraged to take on responsibility and feel trusted and motivated to carry out their roles. The deputy head is being given greater responsibility to check and improve the work of the school and she already provides very good support for the head and has a good overview of the school. The aims of the school are clearly apparent in its daily life and relationships at all levels are good. There is a genuine commitment to equal opportunities. Individuals are all valued and treated fairly, irrespective of their backgrounds or the difficulties they may have.

40. The school's procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work are good. This area was reported as a weakness at the time of the last inspection and has been significantly improved. Since then the co-ordinators have undertaken good quality monitoring of the teachers' planning which has improved the standards in some subjects. They work closely with the deputy to check how the teachers prepare the curriculum and give advice on ways to improve. This recent development gives a clear view of strengths and weaknesses across the school and has shown the senior managers where to focus next. The teachers do not yet identify National Curriculum levels as a means of supporting the pupils' attainment and progress in their subjects. This lack of an overview leads to some uneven progress across the school. An area for the development of the leadership and management is the need for the headteacher to re-start the programme to monitor and evaluate the teaching as a means of further improving and developing the staff. This has already been identified in the school improvement plan. There are some examples of very good teaching in the school which are not used as a means of improving the teaching of others who are less confident. The school development planning process is very good, focusing accurately on the right priorities to meet the needs of the school. Development of information communication technology, for example, is already raising standards in this subject. There is a shared drive for school improvement amongst the staff and the sense of team spirit and common goals is very strong.
41. At the time of the last inspection, the management responsibilities of the governors were unclear. This has now been resolved very effectively. The governors have a very clear knowledge of their role and make a good contribution to the running of the school. They fulfil their legal duties well and have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their well-organised committee structure means that they are able to play a very valuable part in shaping and ordering the school's strategic direction. The range and focus of the committees which have been set up and which feed into the main governing body enable the governors to work extensively to hold the school to account and to decide on its future development.
42. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator manages this area satisfactorily. She keeps all files and documentation up to date. The school operates a special educational needs register and fully complies with the guidance of the current Code of Practice. Teachers accept their responsibility for those pupils in their classes with special educational needs. However, their skills in writing specific learning plans are variable and the small amount of non-contact time allocated to the co-ordinator does not give her sufficient time to monitor and evaluate their use in the planning of teaching activities for these pupils. Good links have been made with many outside experts who help the school to make accurate assessments of some pupils and give valuable advice and support to teachers. A particularly successful initiative, which has raised the pupils' confidence and developed their skills, is the practise of using teaching assistants to work with small groups who have similar identified needs. These staff are skilled, well briefed, effectively deployed and make a good contribution to the education of pupils with special educational needs.

43. The school has a sufficient number of teaching staff to match the demands of the curriculum. They are all suitably qualified. There is a large number of good quality support staff who also make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. The staff have received training in the nationally recommended literacy and numeracy strategies and regular opportunities are given to attend other courses. Staff training has a high profile and new teachers are introduced well into the procedures of the school and receive clear guidance and support. Good monitoring systems help staff fit in quickly to the life of the school. The headteacher conducts professional development discussions with the staff and they receive clear targets which help them develop.
44. The school provides good accommodation for both teachers and resource management. It is spacious and all the additional rooms are used well. The premises are very clean and tidy throughout and are very well maintained by the cleaning staff.
45. During the previous inspection concerns were identified about the quality and range of some resources. In response, the school has improved and updated all categories of books in the library which are now of a good standard. Information communication technology machines and software have been upgraded and are now more reliable. The range of tools, equipment and other resources in art and design, and in design and technology have been extended to ensure that the full breadth of the curriculum is taught. Learning resources are of good quality in English, history, science, physical education and art. In all other subjects and curriculum areas, including the Foundation Stage and special educational needs the quality of the learning resources is satisfactory. They are sufficient, easily accessible and used regularly to gain pupils' interest, support learning and raise standards.
46. The school makes good use of its tight budget to help it achieve its objectives. The school development plan is costed carefully and the budget is well targeted towards the school's priorities. Recent major spending decisions can be seen to have made a positive impact on the school. The improvement of the information communication technology resources has already contributed to higher standards in this subject. Grants received by the school for specific purposes are spent wisely. Expenditure on the pupils with special educational needs provides them with good support that enables them to make satisfactory progress. Standards fund money gives all staff access to a wide range of professional development, linked in to the school's needs as set out in the development plan. Financial planning, administration and monitoring are managed well and the recommendations of the last audit report have all been attended to. The school pays good attention to the principles of best value in its use of resources and consideration of their impact on its work and through seeking reasonable costings when finding tenders.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. In order to maintain and improve the good standards already achieved by the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve the standards in writing particularly in Key Stage 1 by:
  - continuing to demonstrate writing during the literacy lessons to show the children how to improve; ( paragraph 67)
  - developing writing skills further through other curriculum subjects; (paragraph 4, 66)
  - providing more opportunities for the children to develop the skill of revising their work both on paper and the computer. (paragraph 67)
  
- (2) Improve the standards in design and technology particularly in Key Stage 2 by:
  - ensuring there are appropriately challenging targets to provide the children with opportunities to design and make artefacts according to their own plans; (paragraphs 5, 93)
  - learning the skills through designing and making artefacts rather than always learning the skills separately and then later using them. (paragraph 92 )

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important development points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- (a) Improve the progress of the children with special educational needs by:
  - providing training to help teachers write specific learning plans that include relevant targets which challenge and support the pupils; (paragraphs 6, 17, 42)
  - monitoring the use and effectiveness of these plans by observing and evaluating their use in lessons and planning. (paragraphs 10, 22)
  
- (b) Improve the mental mathematics teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring the children learn a wide range of calculating strategies. (paragraphs 16, 72, 75)

- (c) Further improve the quality of teaching by:
- monitoring the teaching and giving advice on how to improve further; (paragraph 40)
  - providing opportunities for the teachers to learn the very good teaching strategies from each other. (paragraphs 11, 40)
- (d) Continue to develop the assessment strategies by using the National Curriculum levels as a means of checking the children's progress and identifying future targets. (paragraphs 34, 40)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	22	35	35	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	353
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	35

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	105

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	19	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	10
	Girls	17	17	19
	Total	26	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (90)	85 (87)	85 (90)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	15	15
	Girls	17	19	19
	Total	27	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (85)	100 (92)	100 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	23	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	20	22
	Girls	16	16	19
	Total	40	35	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (85)	71 (82)	85 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	35	37	39
Percentage of pupils	School	71 (74)	76 (82)	80 (90)

at NC level 4 or above	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)
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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	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	305
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)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	29.4

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	24
Total aggregate hours worked per week	208

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	563194
Total expenditure	559421
Expenditure per pupil	1473
Balance brought forward from previous year	2507
Balance carried forward to next year	6280

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	353
Number of questionnaires returned	190

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	24	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	41	5	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	42	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	45	11	3	1
The teaching is good.	63	35	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	47	11	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	24	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	49	36	11	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	63	33	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	42	12	2	9

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

48. When the children come into the reception classes their overall level of attainment is average. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in both classes and leave reception with average attainment for their age in all the areas of learning apart from reading and numeracy which are above average. The more able children reach standards that are above average in most areas of learning. Communications, language and literacy and mathematics receive good emphasis and are supported through an appropriate range of play opportunities. The main factor in the children's good rate of progress has been the good teaching they receive from the teachers and nursery nurses. This could be improved further by identifying what the children will learn during their play activities and using adult intervention during these activities to help them learn what has been planned.
49. The reception children are in two classes and one class also includes some of the younger Year 1 children. The children have access to all the resources and opportunities typical for their curriculum and during parts of the day they move freely from one activity to another. The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned along similar lines for both classes with more structured teaching and learning for the older children. There is an appropriate balance of directed activities and opportunities for investigation and play although some of the lessons are timetabled according to the Key Stage 1 curriculum. This puts a strain on the organisation of the lessons as the children sometimes do not all have time to work with their teachers. The teachers in the reception classes work with small groups of children at more structured tasks teaching the children, for example, how to write or how to recognise shapes and numbers. This system works very well and the groups of children are taught at different levels according to their earlier learning.
50. There are satisfactory resources in both the reception classes and the children have an appropriate choice. Good use is made of the computers and of imaginative play areas like the birthday party space. There is a separate play area for the children in the reception classes where they can use large scale or wheeled toys. No work was planned for this area during the inspection and is generally under-used during the colder weather. The children spend playtimes with Key Stage 1 pupils, they are supported well at playtimes by the teachers on duty.
51. The staff keep appropriate records of the children's standards. There are annual reports made on the children's work in the areas of learning and a termly profile is written to show the children's personal development. There is no record to show how quickly the children learn and targets are not identified to help the children move forward. The staff assess the children as they move into the reception classes but again this information is not used to set further targets. The reception assessments are used as the children get older to predict how well they should achieve in their national tests.

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

52. This area of learning is given appropriate attention and almost all of the children are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The teaching in this area is good in both the classes. The children play by themselves or with others exploring the classroom. Most of the children work well together. They share the resources and talk to each other about their games. The staff work well to support and develop situations that show the children how to think of others. The children are able to dress and undress for physical education lessons and although this takes some of them a long time they are making good progress. Almost all of them understand how to deal with clothes that are inside out and how to store their clothes tidily. The children are interested in each other and play together happily. They co-operate well, for example, when using the computer.
53. The teachers give clear instructions and guidance to the children and use stories and activities to help them understand how to manage life at school. The children look after their own needs but also consider others. They are aware of the classroom rules and routines and are quick in responding to instructions and most show mature behaviour. For example, while the staff work with small groups the other children play with concentration and manage any small problems that arise. They share pencils and crayons and play together in the sand and water making up stories and events. The teachers expect the children to listen carefully and encourage them to contribute to lessons.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

54. The children are likely to achieve or exceed the expected goals in this area by the time they leave the reception class. Some of the more able children in reception have already reached these levels in reading. The staff are good at teaching this area of learning and help the children to make good progress. Many of the children in both classes have clear speech and are keen to talk about their activities. The staff encourage them to talk about their play and the more structured activities. They ask the children questions and give them the time to think about their answers. The children speak confidently to the staff and each other but many give answers that are too short. They speak in complete sentences and form their sentences properly. They use a satisfactory range of words to describe what they are doing and name objects.
55. All of the children are able to use the pencils to show their early writing skills. Most of them understand the purposes of writing and try to write their names. The more able children are beginning to write independently and can attempt very simple sentences when helped by their teachers. Almost all of the others know how to form several of the letters. The teachers work with small groups to teach the children how to form letters and how to try and write the words. They show the children and expect them to try to write for themselves. This method works very well and the children are learning at a fast rate. These lessons are interesting and the children are supported and encouraged to work hard. There are areas for the children to play write and these are used by some of the children but are not very inviting and were not seen to be popular during the inspection.
56. The teaching of reading is good and the children are reaching above average standards. The children respond well to books. They enjoy stories and listen to each other's replies to questions. They are able to relate to the events in the story and link stories with their own experiences. The most able children can retell stories using the

pictures and remembering some of the text. The children have their own reading book and join in group sessions to read with their teachers. They can also use the class library to look at a good range of books and spend some of their own time trying to read and telling each other stories. Almost all of the reception children can use the pictures to talk about the book and some of them can read the words accurately. They have favourite books at home and can recall the events in stories heard earlier.

### **Mathematical development**

57. The children's overall attainment in numeracy is good and they are likely to exceed the nationally expected goals in this aspect of mathematics. In the other aspects linked to measures, shape and space the children's attainment is average. The teaching of numeracy is good and as a result the direct teaching challenges the children well. Most of the children arrive in the school with average development in mathematics and they make good progress in numeracy and sound progress overall during the Foundation Stage. The children understand how to count and that the number changes as you add more. They are familiar with numbers and can recognise and often write them. They can count to quite high numbers and use numbers in their everyday talk about the work of the classroom. They have many opportunities to join in number and counting songs. During their play activities many of the children explore the mathematical resources such as bricks. The resources to extend their understanding of shapes, through printing or pattern making are used less. The teachers question the children and help them remember what was learned earlier. There are appropriate activities in the reception classes that support the children's understanding in mathematics.

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

58. The children's attainment in this area is satisfactory. The teaching is often good and the range of play resources show that this area is planned well. The children show a good understanding when using the computer and are able to control the mouse properly when making pictures and complex patterns. They can describe how they will stick collage materials to their pictures and use a good range of vocabulary when talking about the fruit they are chopping and sampling. Good learning comes from the discussions with the staff and the play sessions using ice in the water tray and playing at birthday parties. The staff draw information from the children through careful questioning and remind them about what has already been said. They discuss with the children where information can be found and help the children identify what they think when they hear certain noises, for example, alarms or weather noises. This helps the children understand that they react in different ways to the sounds because of their meaning.

### **Physical development**

59. The children have a satisfactory level of physical skills. They are active and use appropriate control. During their outside playtimes they move with awareness of space and avoid collisions well. They generally move with care and precision. During physical education lessons the children can use all the spaces available. They can quickly change direction when asked and they show appropriate balance and poise. The children show satisfactory skills in manipulating construction equipment and the buttons and fastenings on their own clothes as they get ready for a physical education activity or playtimes. They have learned to use the resources confidently and to control them carefully. As a result their collages, for example, are made carefully and attractively. The staff provide frequent opportunities for the development of physical skills and offer a good range of resources.

## **Creative development**

60. The children's attainment is sound overall and there are interesting and stimulating opportunities in both the classes for the children to use their imaginations as they play. The children are provided with small toys and pretend to talk for them. They are helped by the reception teachers to make party invitations, for example to a toy gorilla and try to write these down. There are art and craft activities available but these are limited during the week. The children do not have enough opportunities to paint or make patterns and collages using a good range of materials. As a result, the programme of art activities is limited in the scope it gives them for individual expression. The children concentrate well on the tasks and talk about them enthusiastically when the staff join them. The teachers and nursery nurses support the creative tasks appropriately. They ask questions and enable the children to increase their understanding of, for example singing in time in music.

## **ENGLISH**

61. Standards in English at Key Stage 1 are typical for seven-year-olds except in writing, where they are below the level expected nationally. By the time they are eleven the children's standards are higher than is typical, except in writing where they are in line with the national expectations. This is lower than those achieved in the national tests in 2000, because the current Year 6 have a larger proportion of children with lower ability or have special educational needs. Despite the larger number of lower attaining children, high quality teaching is ensuring that the children, especially in Key Stage 2, are attaining good standards overall. When they are seven and eleven, the children achieve higher than average levels in their reading. At seven the pupils' speaking and listening skills are slightly better than average and by eleven the pupils' skills are also higher than is typical. Standards in spelling and handwriting are good.
62. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well by good teaching. The children pay close attention to their teachers and listen with interest to other children. Speaking skills are also developed well. Most pupils are confident when asking and answering questions. The teachers expect the children to give extended answers and use careful questioning to ensure that the children can do this successfully. When reading aloud in their literacy lessons in some classes, the pupils have developed a dramatic and expressive tone to enliven stories and poems. This was seen in the Year 5 lesson on Roald Dahl's poem 'Cinderella', where all pupils reached very high standards in speaking.
63. Most pupils make good progress in their reading through both key stages. Standards of attainment in Year 2 have improved since the year 2000 results. Reading skills are successfully taught during the daily literacy lessons and through group reading sessions. By the end of Key Stage 2, the most able pupils read fluently, with confidence and expression. When necessary most children use a range of strategies which includes context and letter sounds to read unknown or difficult words. The older pupils use the contents, index and glossary lists in books successfully. Good teaching has ensured that when searching for information, for example, as part of their history lessons, the pupils are able to scan text quickly and effectively. The children with special educational needs are supported well through structured schemes and regular help. They are shown a variety of ways for reading unfamiliar words and most have a good understanding of how to use letter sounds.

64. Amongst the sample of children heard to read by the inspectors, the majority were confident and enthusiastic about reading. Many regularly borrow books from the town library. Older children are knowledgeable about books and nearly all the children have favourite authors. Although a love of reading is being developed well by the teachers, the classroom reading areas where children can browse and enjoy their reading are not very attractive. The school has, however, introduced two very good initiatives recently, one to encourage boys to read more widely and 'The Space Traveller 90 Club'. These have successfully encouraged children of all ages to extend their reading. The library provision has improved greatly since the last inspection. It is an attractive environment, well stocked with both fiction and non-fiction books. All classes are timetabled to use it weekly and it is used well. The teachers keep records of the pupils' development in reading. The best examples are detailed, evaluative and make clear what children need to do next to improve their reading. Some are less detailed and less useful. The system of recording reading progress is inconsistent across the school.
65. The standard of pupils' writing by the end of Key Stage 1 is below average, but is average in the reception classes and in Year 1. By the time they are eleven the pupils generally reach standards which are expected nationally. The school has rightly identified that writing standards need to improve across the school and have already made plans to remedy this, but more still needs to be done. More opportunities are needed for children to write at length in other subjects, such as history and geography. Sometimes the teachers' over use of worksheets inhibits the development of extended writing. Samples of marking in the pupils' books show that some of the teachers intervene well to help individual pupils to improve. Overall marking of the pupils' work is good, but there are inconsistencies in classes with pupils of the same age. The teachers provide a good range of purposes for children's writing. The younger children write instructions, for example on how to make a sandwich and the real story of Jack and Jill. The older pupils write play-scripts, poems and imaginative texts, for example an account of life 'Through the Eyes of a Pigeon'. The children also have good opportunities to provide articles and accounts for the school's newspaper. Regular spelling and handwriting practice ensures that pupils reach good standards as they move through the school. There are opportunities for children to rewrite work to improve their spelling and punctuation, but there are too few opportunities for them to develop their skills of drafting and revising their work on paper or the computer.
66. The quality of teaching is good overall although there are variations in the teachers' skills. Just over half of the teaching seen was good or better. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In Year 6 and Year 1, the teaching is excellent. In both these classes a love of reading is being instilled in the children. The teachers' enthusiasm is infectious; expectations of standards of work and behaviour are very high. The older children enjoy the humour of their work and do not want their lessons to end. The younger children explore the rich vocabulary found in the text like 'The Stone Lion'. In other good or very good lessons the teachers' subject knowledge is good, lessons are brisk, children are clear about what they are to learn and are enjoying it. The pupils pick up new ideas quickly and are confident learners. Skilful questioning, for example, in the lesson on the 'Iron Man' by Ted Hughes in Year 6, ensured that all the children took part in the discussion about how, when and why the 'Iron Man' arrived. The children gave interesting and thoughtful replies. When lessons are less successful, although still satisfactory, the pace of the lesson is slower, work is not sufficiently challenging for all of the children and the progress of the pupils is slower. The teaching of writing would be improved if there were more demonstrations of how to write as a means of showing the children what they need to learn next. The teachers do not show the



children how to review their work as a means of making it more interesting or accurate.

67. The children with special educational needs are supported well by additional staff within lessons and in small withdrawal groups. Most of the pupils have individual plans to develop their literacy skills, and the teachers give appropriate attention to these during literacy lessons. When the children are using their literacy skills during other subjects their individual targets are not referred to properly. As a result they make slower progress on these occasions.
68. The management of the English curriculum is good. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented effectively by a hard working coordinator. She is a knowledgeable teacher and provides a very good example for her colleagues. She is keen to promote improvements. Regular monitoring of teaching by her, the head teacher and local authority staff, together with the analysis of what pupils know and can do has raised standards in writing. Targets are set for year groups each half term. Although samples of work relating to these targets are kept, these samples are not yet checked to see that they match the National Curriculum levels expected for children of this age.

## **MATHEMATICS**

69. The standards reached by the pupils aged seven in the tests taken in the Year 2000, indicate that the results were well below those that are found nationally and well below those obtained in similar schools. The results are worse than those of the previous year because the children did not have enough opportunity to practice working out problems in their heads. The children's work and lessons seen during the inspection indicate that the results should be better this year and a larger number of children should obtain a higher level than last year. The children can remember their tables and know how to use, for example, doubling to solve number problems. However, the teachers still do not expect enough of the more able pupils and they under achieve. The standards reached by children aged eleven in the tests taken in the Year 2000, indicate that the results were close to those found nationally and in similar schools. This was also found to be the case during the inspection. The proportion of the pupils achieving a higher level (Level 5) was close to the national average. Since the time of the last inspection the standards achieved by the infant children have not kept up with other schools but the standards for the junior children have been maintained.
70. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by their class teachers and classroom assistants and make satisfactory progress in developing their basic skills in relation to their ability. During the inspection there was evidence of work being completed in all aspects of mathematics, including using and applying mathematics.
71. In most classes throughout the school, the children are now learning well. The teachers set interesting activities which the children enjoy doing and this results in them concentrating and working well during the lessons. For example, in Year 3 a very good task to create Carroll diagrams using numbers was devised by the teacher. This work was planned on three levels of difficulty and all the pupils were able to achieve their ability-related tasks. Occasionally all the pupils complete the same tasks and too little progress is made by the potentially higher attaining pupils because they are completing tasks that are too easy. In Year 2, the children are encouraged to explain how they work out problems in the mental session of the lesson and most use the correct vocabulary associated with number and time. This way of teaching the children is not used often enough across the school. As a result, too many of the children are

slower than they should be at mental calculations. The pupils in Year 6 are beginning to use and apply their mathematical skills in meaningful ways. They use a good variety of approaches to problem solving and some of them involve 'real life' situations. Many of the pupils know their tables and can round up large numbers to the nearest ten. The very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 enables them to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For example, they can add and subtract large numbers and understand the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals.

72. The quality of the teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent, with the majority being good or better and only one lesson unsatisfactory. Good teaching was seen throughout the school but the best teaching was in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 6. In these classes the lessons had good pace, challenging tasks were set for the pupils and the teachers had very good subject knowledge. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory, the pace of the lesson was slow and all the pupils completed the same task which resulted in the higher attaining children making insufficient progress. Good questioning is a strong feature of the teaching. The teachers use challenging and open ended questions to test the pupils' knowledge. These help to build on previous knowledge and help pupils acquire new skills and knowledge and make gains in their learning. For example, in Year 6 the pupils were using their knowledge of place value and extending this when multiplying decimals.
73. The teachers manage their pupils well which results in the children behaving well and sustaining concentration throughout the lessons. The teachers have built up very good relationships with their pupils. This enables the children to answer honestly but confidently in class situations. For example, in the excellent lesson in Year 1, a pupil was heard to say when looking at his worksheet, "I don't know how to do that one!" The teacher immediately dealt with the situation sympathetically. There is a good focus on pupils using and developing the correct mathematical vocabulary and explaining how they arrive at their answers in their calculations. For example, in a Year 2 class where the children were partitioning numbers, the class teacher constantly encouraged the children to explain their answers.
74. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented appropriately throughout the school. The teachers are familiar with it although there are some inconsistencies in the delivery of the mental arithmetic part of the lesson. Not all of the staff are skilful at delivering the mental tasks to enable all the pupils to take part because they use limited strategies and resources. Although what is identified to be learned in the lesson is written in the planning this is very rarely shared with the pupils when the lessons begin. In some lessons the plenary session at the end of the lesson is used well to correct any misunderstandings of what has been learned but this does not always happen.
75. Mathematics is being used to support learning in other subjects. For example, in geography the pupils learn about co-ordinates and compass directions in their map reading and in science the pupils were using bar graphs to record their pulse rates during various activities.

## **SCIENCE**

76. There are no national tests for science for the infant children but their teachers assessed them against expected standards. A high proportion of the children reached average standards although too few of the children reached the above average level. In last year's national tests for Year 6 a typical proportion of the pupils achieved average and above average results.

77. The children's standards have risen in the infant classes since the previous inspection. The curriculum is now better organised, the teachers are providing work for higher attaining pupils and continually involving them in scientific investigations. The improvement in the curriculum is particularly noticeable in Year 1. During the inspection many of these pupils were working at the average level for their age. This improvement is not as effective in Year 2. The potentially higher attaining pupils are not always expected to work at a higher level and sometimes they are given too much support. For example they are not challenged to make independent records of their scientific investigations.
78. During the last two years the school has given less attention to the teaching and learning of science and in the junior classes the pupils' standards have fallen. Almost all of the children in Year 6 are currently working at the average level. The school's target for the Year 6 tests in the spring is that 88 per cent of the pupils will reach average standards. There is a large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 classes and meeting this target would be a good achievement. Improvements to the curriculum have been made in Key Stage 2 with an appropriate balance between the acquisition of knowledge and the teaching of the scientific skills of investigation. In both the infant and the junior classes many of the pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are supported well. The way that the children work together in collaborative groups is very good and strongly supports their learning.
79. There is good documentation that ensures that all the programmes of study of the National Curriculum are covered. A recent improvement has been the introduction of termly planning that clarifies yearly programmes of work. This supports the teachers' lesson planning, enabling them to make careful provision for the wide range of abilities of the pupils in their classes. This is an improvement on the previous report. The involvement of the infant pupils in investigations is generally good, but in the junior classes it is not as well developed. When the pupils are involved in investigations they do not follow their own ideas because the teachers over direct them.
80. The quality of teaching in the infant classes is generally good, with a number of strengths which account for pupil's good progress. Most of the teachers have good scientific knowledge. Very good lesson planning ensures that pupils are challenged to predict what will happen, for example, when bread is toasted. The children register surprise to discover that the slice of bread has shrunk. Skilled learning support assistants, who are well briefed and deployed, effectively support the pupils when they are experimenting in small groups. They carefully supervise children when, for example, mixing ingredients to prepare dough or working in the water tank to investigate which objects float or sink. The adults skilfully intervene to question pupils about the work, raising questions. The pupils enjoy these investigative activities; they have very good relationships with the adults and collaborate well together. They take their turns and confidently talk about their findings to others. The teachers have high expectations and, where a small number of pupils in Year 2 are part of a class, the teaching takes account of their maturity to extend their thinking at the higher levels. Teaching in Year 2 is not always of this high quality. This is because, in some situations, whole class investigations are not fully planned or managed well. They are not open-ended to ensure that the potentially higher attaining children make the progress that they should. These pupils are restricted by the over-use of work sheets, which prevents them from developing their recording skills.

81. The quality of the teaching in the junior classes is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Year 5 classes. The teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. They give precise and accurate explanations that include careful questioning to help the pupils organise their knowledge and to check their levels of understanding. This ensures that the pupils gain appropriate levels of scientific knowledge. During the inspection the pupils were investigating a range of everyday powders and granules to determine whether they dissolved in water. The teachers had chosen to teach the whole class how to conduct the experiment and this limited the potential of the investigation. The pupils were developing their skills of fair testing but they were not posing their own questions. For example, a teacher informed the pupils that greater quantities of salt would dissolve in warm water. The children were not challenged to organise a fair test to investigate a prediction or a hypothesis.
82. Whilst the teaching of the oldest pupils promotes good levels of scientific knowledge as they revise for their national tests, it does not increase their understanding of investigation to the higher levels. The pupils are not systemically taught to apply mathematical skills to analyse results of their investigations. The children do not measure out quantities using appropriate metric units and the analysis of their work indicates that there was no systematic use of graphs to analyse results. The pupils enjoy their science. They work together safely and enthusiastically, often collaborating to ensure that the group tasks are completed. The teachers use scientific language well to ensure that the pupils become conversant with scientific terms and vocabulary.
83. The subject is managed well. The two co-ordinators meet regularly and they monitor the other teachers' subject planning. Recent innovations include an analysis of the previous year's national assessment scripts as a means of evaluating the teaching. This has helped to identify aspects of the subject that require further development. The co-ordinators do not evaluate the teaching. This prevents them from identifying the best practice and using it as a basis for improving the quality of the teaching across the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and these were both in infant classes. As a result the overall judgements on the standards reached by the children are based on their earlier work which is displayed in the school. This work is above average in Key Stage 2, and average at the end of Key Stage 1 although it is very good in Year 1. The standards are generally good across the school and the children's learning develops at a good pace. The children are able to use the media effectively and are taught in a systematic way to consider the design of their work. In both key stages they use sketchbooks well to practice pieces of work. The standards are higher than those seen during the previous inspection when the children's work was unsatisfactory.
85. The children in Year 1 use textiles well. They select from a range of fabrics to decorate small dolls and learn to identify the different textures of fabric before beginning simple weaving. Their understanding of different types of material is good. In Year 2 the children are learning to sketch natural objects using pencils. Many of them are unsure and lack confidence but as their work proceeds they begin to explore the shapes and attempt to extend their skills appropriately. Both year groups have made portraits of themselves and each other and these again show good standards for Year 1 and average standards for Year 2. Both year groups are learning at a good rate. The teachers are using the school's scheme of work and receiving the support of the coordinator. This is having a good impact.

86. In the junior classes the children have studied design using different types of paint and have made life studies in their sketch books. From year to year the tasks are appropriately developed and show increasing maturity in the work. For example, in Year 4 the children identify emotions linked to colours while in Year 6 this is taken further to link colours with facial expressions. This work shows an increased sense of design and demonstrates greater control of the resources as the children move through the school. In Years 3 and 5 the children have drawn winter scenes using crayons, paint and pastels. The work is good for the children's age and shows an increased understanding of movement and landscape as the children get older.
87. The teachers plan their lessons carefully to provide the children with a good range of art experiences and the planning shows they are extending the lessons into new areas. This has helped the children achieve well and learn how to use colour and shape to create an attractive and interesting effect. The children's work shows a good level of confidence and individuality in style. The tasks are challenging and the children have responded well.
88. The school has based its scheme of work on the voluntary national scheme. The lessons are planned well to teach specific skills and improve understanding over a period of several weeks. This is working well and the children are learning how to link their work by using a range of different media. The coordinator leads the subject well. She supports the teachers in providing a varied and challenging curriculum that builds on the children's skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The resources are good and have a positive impact on the children's learning. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

89. Standards in design and technology are in line with national averages at Key Stage 1 but below average at Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where standards were well below average throughout the school. At the time of the last inspection there were inconsistencies in the amount of time allocated to the subject. There was no scheme of work or policy, a lack of staff expertise, insufficient resources and some areas of the design and technology curriculum were under represented. All these matters have been energetically resolved by the present co-ordinator. Through his endeavours the school now has a sound scheme of work, based upon the national recommendations. There is a helpful policy and some excellent support materials. Additionally the coordinator provides advice and support to colleagues which is much appreciated. The subject is well led. The time allocated to the subject is appropriate and resources now match the subject's requirement. The improvements have taken place quite recently and the subject has developed well. The children have made good progress in both key stages but there is still some ground to be made up before the oldest children reach satisfactory standards.
90. Insufficient lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 to form a judgement on the quality of teaching. By looking at the pupils' previous work, discussing with teachers and pupils and scrutinising the medium term planning and the scheme of work indicate that standards of attainment are satisfactory and in line with national averages. The skills of designing and making are being taught securely and children are learning to understand the rules of hygiene and the need to use tools and equipment safely.
91. The skills are being taught successfully and the children demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding. There is too long a gap between the children learning

how to recognise and use the tools and having practical tasks to try out their skills while making something. The mix of skill teaching to support a making activity would be better for this age group. The teachers are keeping closely to the school's scheme of work and this shows that the coverage of the requirements of the curriculum will be met. In the first term of the school year the scheme focuses on food technology, and the pupils have been taught what hygiene and safety rules should be observed and how to handle food technology resources safely. The school has adopted a two-year rolling programme for its design and technology to cater for those classes that have two age groups.

92. In Key Stage 2 the children are learning at a fast pace and are quickly making up the gaps in their knowledge. However some inconsistencies still need to be removed. The children in Years 4, 5 and 6 are following a very similar programme of study that includes designing and making bread or biscuits. In each year group the children re-state the rules of hygiene, and the Year 6 pupils are still copying them from the blackboard. They are making good progress in individual lessons but there is less progress evident between the year groups. A scrutiny of the children's work and the observation of class lessons indicate that the overall approach to making products is being taught well. The skills of following a recipe and using correct methods are also well taught but the lessons are too prescriptive to allow the pupils to demonstrate their ability to design their own products. The pupils are taught to use tools and equipment successfully and safely, they are being taught how to evaluate familiar products, and they are learning how to make food products successfully by assembling materials. The pupils enjoy the subject greatly, they are very well behaved, very attentive and careful workers. Because of this and the effective teaching they make good progress.
93. The school has been teaching design and technology systematically and with the appropriate resources for only a short time. The teachers are now teaching the subject well and have the necessary subject knowledge.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

94. During the inspection no geography lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, and only two observed in Key Stage 2. These lessons, together with evidence obtained from speaking to teachers and pupils, looking at planning and analysing pupils' work, indicate that standards in geography are broadly average. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
95. In Key Stage 1 the pupils are learning to describe and make comparisons between places. They can, for example, name the countries of the United Kingdom and make reasonable attempts to locate places on a map. They can pick out countries and seas and can talk about some interesting features of their own locality. By the end of Key Stage 2, the children show a good understanding of places and how settlements differ. For example, they talk about the comparative advantages and disadvantages of living in a rural community and a city. They are developing confident geographical skills. For example, they use sources such as maps and photographs to help them understand the differences between places. They have some understanding of the water cycle and can locate places using compass directions.
96. In the lesson observed, the teacher had good subject knowledge and questioned the pupils well bringing out their previous knowledge of settlements and developing their understanding. The lesson was well planned and had good pace, keeping the pupils interested and involved throughout.

97. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and leads the subject well. She monitors planning and offers advice to staff. Resources were barely sufficient at the last inspection, but these have now been improved and are adequate to support the teaching.

## **HISTORY**

98. Standards in Key Stage 2 have been maintained since the last inspection and are higher than normally seen. This is the result of good leadership by the coordinator, imaginative use of the good resources by the teachers, and by visits to historical sites which has brought history alive for the pupils.
99. By the age of seven, the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past. This is helped by the use of time lines which chart events in their own lives. They know about the development of houses over time, and also compare old and new toys. Stories about past events, such as the Gunpowder Plot, give pupils deeper insights into life in the past. The pupils build on their early knowledge and skills well. The children in Years 3 and 4, for example, learn about how events, such as World War 2, changed people's lives. They handle artefacts from the past, such as early hot water bottles and curling tongs. They compare electrical objects of the 1930's with those of today. The older pupils know about life in Ancient Egypt and this work shows that the skills of historical enquiry are being developed well by skilful teaching. The pupils in a Year 4 and 5 class improve their learning effectively by formulating their own questions and carrying out research about aspects of the evacuation of children in 1939. In both key stages, the pupils' sense of time is developing well. They show this when they talk about their parents and grandparents and make comparisons between the past and present in their families.
100. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are planned well and very good use is made of resources, such as videos, CD-ROMS and artefacts borrowed from the local authority's museum service. The teachers are confident, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Interesting tasks are prepared which stimulate and encourage the children to find out things for themselves. Good use is made of primary source material such as school log books. The children were entranced when finding out that their school had received a large group of evacuated children from Salford in September 1939. All of this careful and thorough preparation by the teachers makes history real for the pupils and leads to high standards and good progress.
101. The subject is well led. Careful monitoring of the teachers' planning takes place through a useful list of learning objectives for each block of work. Work samples to match these objectives have been collected, but no analysis has yet been undertaken to check that the children are working at the expected National Curriculum levels. The coordinator has a good overview of the strengths and areas that need to be developed, such as assessment. Although many good examples were seen of pupils applying their literacy skills well, other opportunities for writing longer pieces of work are missed by, for example, the overuse of worksheets in some classes. The resources for history have been improved since the last inspection and are now good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

102. The previous inspection reported that standards were below national expectations for both key stages and that teachers lacked subject expertise. The children's standards are now satisfactory for both key stages and the teachers' subject knowledge is generally good.
103. The school has recently introduced a weekly class lesson for each class and the teachers have developed secure knowledge in information communications technology. The pupils are successfully acquiring the skills, knowledge and understanding to meet the national curriculum programme of study. The teaching is



good overall and effective use is being made of the class computer to demonstrate the various applications. The children's learning is supported by their interest and the close attention they pay during lessons. The teachers employ skilful questioning to ensure understanding and the pupils respond well to the invitation of showing the class what they can do.

104. The children in Key Stage 1 demonstrate that they are gaining appropriate skill in using the mouse and keyboard and can enter and edit text. By Year 2 they are loading programs and saving their work, and are beginning to explore the content of multi-media compact discs using menus and search engines. The teachers are following the scheme and policy closely so that the skills are being taught progressively and in some classes the children are being given appropriate opportunities to apply these skills to realistic tasks in other curriculum areas. However the application of information communication technology to the rest of the curriculum is underdeveloped. The children in Year 1 are taught how to open a program and use the material to support learning in English during the rest of the week. Some of the children have also used an art package successfully to produce self-portraits for use as a calendar. In Year 2 the pupils are using word processing successfully to write for a range of purposes, such as individual and class prayers, their news and personal information.
105. The school has recently appointed a co-ordinator for each key stage. They have been in post for only one term but their expertise, enthusiasm and leadership is already bearing fruit. The school now has an effective scheme of work based upon the national recommendations, and a clear policy. The co-ordinators have provided help in planning and classroom work. There is also some helpful guidance materials, such as the curriculum map for the school's software. The school has obtained a suitable range of generic software which staff are being trained to use so as to maximise the potential of the applications. New multi-media hardware has also been purchased and there is now a computer in each classroom. There is now an information communications technology lesson for each class each week.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

106. From Year 1, the children have a short lesson in Italian each week. Three lessons were seen during the inspection and there is not enough evidence to judge the standards the children reach. In each lesson the work was interesting and related to appropriate topics like the children's own appearance, colours and numbers. The children are encouraged to talk and develop a good accent. The older pupils, in Year 4 for example, have collected notes that they use well to give statements to the rest of the class. The children are able to understand the information given by each other and reply briefly.
107. The teacher, who visits the school daily, has a lively and friendly manner with the children. She is well organised and manages the children well although occasionally some of the children are inattentive. She plans the lessons well to challenge the children and she provides resources to support them. The majority of children respond well and are enthusiastic. They enjoy the lessons and are eager to contribute. This opportunity is unusual in primary schools and provides the children with a very good chance to learn an additional language at an early age.

## MUSIC

108. At the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils attain standards expected for their age, but the older pupils' standards are higher than is typical. The children enjoy their music lessons. The tuition provided by visiting specialist instrumental teachers and the music coordinator is very good. Recorders, flute, guitar, brass and choir ensembles enhance the provision for the older pupils. This enables the children to achieve well. The pupils aged eight to eleven who play musical instruments attain particularly good standards in their ability to read and play music. They perform confidently and have good opportunities to show their skills at local concerts, music festivals and the annual musical evening held in the school.
109. The younger pupils sing well they can sing in tune and keep to the rhythm. They can identify pulse and clap at the appropriate time. They are confident and volunteer to sing a solo. The pupils in Year 4 read simple notation and can maintain their own part, becoming aware of how the different parts fit together to achieve an overall effect. The older pupils are aware of the dynamics and tempo of music, such as, 'Walking in the Air' from 'The Snowman' by Raymond Briggs. They learn about traditional music such as 'Green Grow the Rushes O' and 'David of the White Rock'. Throughout the school the teachers develop the pupils' knowledge of musical vocabulary well. The skills of composing are less well developed.
110. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. The teachers ensure that pupils listen to a range of different music, although music from cultures other than western culture is less evident. The teachers follow a scheme of work that gives them confidence to teach the subject and ensures that skills are taught in a systematic way. They are well supported by the coordinator. In the best lessons, the teachers show good subject knowledge, tasks are chosen well to motivate and interest the children. Enjoyment and enthusiasm are shared by the teachers and the children and consequently attainment is higher and progress is quicker. Good links are made with the history curriculum, for example, in a Year 4 lesson where children create their own sounds to perform 'The Weavers' Song'. Since the last inspection, the standards attained by the older pupils has risen.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. At the time of the last inspection standards in physical education were judged to be good throughout the school. These standards have been maintained and are above those found in most schools. Dance, gymnastics and games lessons were observed. The pupils undertake swimming lessons in Years 5 and 6 and, by the time they leave the school, the vast majority of them achieve the national standard of being able to swim 25 metres.
112. The Year 2 pupils show good control of their bodies and have good awareness of space. For example, they can stop and change direction quickly and precisely without bumping into others. They know about the effect that exercise has on the muscles and understand the importance of warming up prior to starting skill practices. They practice and refine games skills of throwing, rolling and catching. Year 5 and 6 pupils can express themselves through dance and reflect the music in their movements. They respond appropriately and express their feeling, moods and ideas. For example, they worked well with a partner to demonstrate how a shop window dummy could become alive.

113. In the lessons observed most of the teaching was good. The teachers have good control and manage their classes well. Varied activities are planned to improve gymnastic skills, which are then transferred on to the large apparatus. Opportunities are given for collaborative work and for the pupils to demonstrate their skills to the rest of the class. These performances are then evaluated and so their own performances are improved. The pupils enjoy the lessons, are well behaved and respond well to the teacher's instructions. All the teachers pay attention to safe working practices.
114. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and leads the subject well. A good scheme of work is in place which supports a balanced programme of activities and ensures continuity and progression. The resources are good and provide pupils with equipment which is stored well and which is easily accessible.