

INSPECTION REPORT

ST RICHARD'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wilshire Avenue

Longsight

Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105544

Headteacher: Mr J A McHale

Reporting inspector: Robin Wonnacott
2787

Dates of inspection: 24 – 28 September 2001.

Inspection number: 194943

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wilpshire Avenue
Longsight
Manchester

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Appropriate authority: Manchester

Name of chair of governors: Rev Fr Michael Dever

Date of previous inspection: 19 May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2787	Robin Wonnacott	Registered inspector	Science Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
15522	Bernard Morgan	Lay inspector	N/a	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18346	Rod Bristow	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Foundation Stage Curriculum	How well is the school led and managed?
20368	Sue MacIntosh	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Geography History Equal Opportunities	N/a
20953	Jean Blunt	Team inspector	Science Art Design and technology Physical Education Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Richard's Roman Catholic Primary School is in the Gorton South Ward of the city of Manchester; this is south east of the city centre. There are 330 pupils on roll, between the age of three and eleven years. This makes it a large primary school compared with primary schools nationally. The majority of pupils live close to the school, a high proportion (70%) live in rented accommodation. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (49%) is well above the national average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language (5%) is higher than in most schools. Despite these two factors the school's results in national tests for eleven-year-olds are close to the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (48%) is well above the national average; this includes those with statements of special needs. At the time of the inspection, the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (0.6%) was below the national average; these include pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. When children join the Nursery at age three years, their attainment is generally lower than that typically found nationally for the age group.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The staff are committed and work very hard to improve further the quality of education provided for the pupils, and to raise standards even higher. As pupils move through the school they make good progress in developing their skills and understanding in all subjects, including English, mathematics and science. All pupils are included in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils who have special educational needs are provided with good support. In lessons, the support for pupils who have English as an additional language, although not always available is of a good quality. Overall, the teaching observed in the inspection was good. The school meets the needs of all pupils.

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, management in the school is very good. The school governors are actively involved in the management of the school and they have established secure procedures that enable them to hold the school to account for its actions. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in the key areas of English, mathematics and science show steady improvement. Pupils make good progress in learning as they move through the school.
- Overall the quality of teaching observed was good; in 16% of lessons it was very good. New national strategies for developing the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy have been effectively established.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning; they are interested and involved in their work. Pupils' behaviour is good and often very good. In lessons the good behaviour has a positive impact on learning.
- Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils work well together and show respect for each other's feelings.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and school

governors work well together to provide the school with a clear sense of purpose. Subject co-ordinators are playing an active role in raising standards in the school.

- Pupils are provided with an excellent range of out of school activities. These enhance their educational development.
- Pupils' skills in using computers are very well developed.

What could be improved

- Pupils need to be provided with more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in May 1997 when seven issues were identified that needed to be improved. The school has taken effective action to overcome the issues:

- Levels of attainment have improved in mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching has improved in the nursery and years 5 and 6 classes.
- Detailed and regular assessments of pupils' work and progress are undertaken.
- Other issues connected with fire drills and completion of registers have been successfully implemented.

The quality of teaching has improved considerably. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection. The standards attained by pupils have improved since 1997. National test results indicate that pupils have made good progress in their learning as they have moved through the school. At the time of the inspection, the results for the year 2001 tests in English, mathematics and science had arrived in the school; they show a further improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level (Level 4).

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	C	A
Mathematics	E	B	C	A
Science	E	A	D	B

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

As well as being compared with national results, the school's results are compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals; in the table above these are referred to as similar schools.

The year 2000 test results for eleven-year-olds in English and mathematics were in line with the national average. In science the results were below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the results for English and mathematics results were well above; in science results were above the average for the group of schools. When the results for English, mathematics and science are combined, the school's improvement in its results, in the last three years, has been above the national trend. Considering the relatively low levels of attainment when pupils enter the school the results indicate that pupils make at least good progress in their learning.

The school's results for the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds, in reading and writing, were below the national average. In mathematics, the results were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools reading results were above the average. Writing and mathematics results were in line with the average for the group of schools.

The school has set targets for improving its overall results in national tests. The targets for 2001 were exceeded in the latest tests; the results indicate that standards have improved from the 2000 tests.

The inspection occurred in the third week of the school year and so there was limited work in the pupils' books, for most subjects. However, an examination of the books indicates that standards in all subjects are broadly in line with those currently seen in similar schools. In Year 6, the higher attaining pupils generally reach a level of attainment higher than that typically expected for the age group.

Pupils enter the school with skills that are generally lower than those typical for the age group; for many pupils language skills are low. Teaching that is generally of a good quality and frequently of a very good quality, enables the majority of pupils to make at least good progress in their learning as they move through the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to work are very good. In lessons, pupils are keen to be involved in activities and they want to succeed. In the majority of lessons pupils respond well to teachers' effective use of praise.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, behaviour in the school is very good. In many lessons behaviour is very good. In the one lesson when pupils' behaviour was unsatisfactory it was well managed by the teacher. The unsatisfactory behaviour did not adversely affect pupils' learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES CONTINUED

Aspect	Comment
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good. The many out of school activities have a significant impact on this aspect of pupils' development. Relationships in the school are very good. In lessons, pupils work well with each other and share ideas and materials in a mature way.
Attendance	Attendance levels are close to those found nationally for primary schools.

In lessons where there is a positive relationship between the teacher and pupils, the pupils show very good attitudes to their work and they make good progress in their learning. During the school day, there are good opportunities for pupils to help in the day-to-day running of the school. Pupils show good levels of maturity.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

The inspectors visited the school over four days and observed 56 lessons. All teachers were seen teaching at least twice. Lessons where literacy and numeracy skills were being developed were observed in every class.

Overall, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons. In 16% of lessons (9 lessons) teaching was judged to be very good. Evidence collected from the teachers' planning records and from the pupils' books indicates that the teaching observed during the inspection was typical of that usually found in the school. For example, a scrutiny of the pupils' books from last year indicated that pupils' progress in learning was similar to that observed during the inspection.

Where the teaching was at its best the lessons were well planned and teachers used very good questioning techniques to help pupils think carefully about answers. As a result, pupils were encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils responded well to this approach and were confident to put forward ideas and make suggestions. When the teaching was judged as satisfactory, the work provided for some pupils did not take enough account of their past learning. As a result these pupils did not make the progress they were capable of.

Overall, good teaching was observed in English lessons where pupils were developing skills in reading and writing (literacy skills), and in mathematics lesson where pupils were developing their skills in numeracy.

In all other subjects of the curriculum the teaching observed was of a good quality, overall.

The school makes good provision for all the pupils. The provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is good, as is the provision for pupils with special educational needs.

As pupils move through the school they make good progress in their learning. The school had correctly identified the need to raise standards in information and communication technology; this has been successfully accomplished. Pupils now make good progress in this aspect of their education.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school gives appropriate emphasis to developing the pupils' skills in reading, writing and number work. The curriculum provided by the school is good overall but does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to take responsibility for developing their own learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, the management and provision is good. In lessons, pupils are well supported and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good. The school identifies pupils' needs when they join the school. Support is not always available but, when it is, it is used effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good. Opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are many and varied and appropriate.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures in place that ensure pupils' welfare. Procedures for child protection are good and well understood.

The school has rightly spent the majority of time developing the pupils' skills in English and mathematics and standards in these subjects have improved. An excellent range of out of school activities is having a positive impact on many aspects of the pupils' development. The Christian ethos and values that are central to the school have a major influence on the development of the pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding. Pupils show a high level of regard for the feelings and well being of their peers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management is very good overall. The headteacher is an excellent leader; he provides the staff with strong and effective leadership. The management team and subject co-ordinators are clear about their respective roles and carry these out efficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the school governors is excellent; they are totally supportive of the school. They have a sensible committee structure that enables them to carry out their duties in an efficient way. They have excellent systems that enable them to hold the school to account for its performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Test results in English, mathematics and science are thoroughly analysed. The data collected is then used to decide on priorities for future years. This approach has been used to very good effect to raise standards in English, mathematics, science and computer work.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, the school uses the different grants provided to very good effect. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is very effective.

The headteacher provides the school with clear and positive leadership. The staff are very hard working and provide the headteacher with valuable support. The headteacher and school governors have identified a set of appropriate priorities for the school's further development. The school uses its identified priorities exceptionally well to plan spending. Very good procedures are in place that enable the governors to evaluate the impact of their decisions regarding spending. The governors understand and use the principles of best value when making decisions regarding expenditure.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards are high and improving Their children are keen to come to school and learn; they like school. Teachers are very approachable and always make time for parents. The school encourages pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Parents judge that the school is helping their children to mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No items were identified that parents would like to see improved.

Parents returned 154 questionnaires. Fourteen parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector. In general, the evidence gathered during the inspection supports the

positive views identified by the parents. A small number of parents added written comments to the questionnaires regarding the provision of swimming in the school. The inspection team was satisfied that changes in arrangements were outside the school's control. The difficulties have now been overcome. The school provides parents with a good range of information.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- Evidence from the 2000 assessments for seven-year-olds indicates that the pupils' standards in reading and writing were below the national average, and in mathematics were well below the national average. Evidence from the 2000 assessments for eleven-year-olds indicates that the pupils' performance in English and mathematics was in line with the national average. In science, the standards were below national average. Children enter the Nursery with standards of attainment that are lower than those typically found nationally for this age. Evidence gathered during the inspection show that by the age of seven many pupils are attaining standards that are approaching those typically found nationally for the age group. Pupils have made good and at times very good progress through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This good rate of progress is maintained as pupils move through the Key Stage 2 classes.*
- The national arrangement for assessing pupils' attainment is based on a scale with eight levels. The target for seven-year-olds is Level 2 of the scale; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 3. The target for eleven-year-olds is Level 4; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 5. As well as comparing the school's results with the national picture it is possible to make comparisons with schools that are 'in a similar context', that is, schools which have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.
- When the school's results in the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds are compared with this group of schools, the results for reading show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard for seven-year-olds (Level 2) was above the average. The percentage of pupils attaining at a higher level (Level 3) was in line with the average. The results for writing show the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard for seven-year-olds was above the average; the percentage that attained the higher level was above the average. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils who attained the expected level was above the average; the percentage that attained at the higher level was well below the average.
- There are no national tests for science at age seven. In this subject the class teachers make an assessment of the pupils' attainment as they reach the end of Year 2. The 2000 assessments indicate that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was very high compared with the national average. The result put the school in the top 5% of schools nationally. The percentage attaining at the higher level was also very high. When compared with similar schools, the school's results show that the percentage of pupils attaining at the expected level was very high compared with results for this group of schools.

5. In the 2000 assessments for eleven-year-olds, for both English, mathematics and science, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was well above that of similar schools. In English the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well above the average for this group of schools. In both mathematics and science the percentage attaining the higher level was in line with the average for this group of schools.
6. The results for the 2001 tests for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds were available at the time of the inspection. These results indicate an improvement in the school's performance for both age groups. At age eleven there has been an increase in the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 4 in all subjects.
7. When the performance of boys and girls in the national assessment for eleven-year-olds is compared over the period of the last two years, the girls' results have been higher than the boys in all three subjects. The school has examined the data and recognises the need to take actions to improve the performance of the boys.
8. The inspection took place in the third week of a new school year. As a result there was only limited written evidence in the pupils' books. In order to assist the inspection team make judgements about the standards being attained by pupils, the school had retained a selection of work from the previous school year. This work, in combination with work from this school year, was scrutinised and used to make overall judgements about the standards being attained by pupils.
9. An examination of the last year's Year 6 pupils' work in English, mathematics and science indicates that the higher attaining pupils were on course to attain the nationally expected standard by the end of this school year. The standard of work seen suggests that the number of pupils capable of attaining the higher level will be higher than in the 2000 assessments. The information received about the 2001 results supports these judgements. Work in the books of the Year 2 pupils indicates that the majority are on course to reach the level of attainment expected of seven-year-olds. This represents a steady improvement in attainment.
10. The limited amount of work in the present Year 6 pupils' books for English, mathematics and science indicates that the majority of pupils should attain the nationally expected Level 4. However, work in the Year 6 books does not include evidence that indicates that pupils are provided with enough opportunities to develop a range of learning skills. For example, there is little work that has been produced as a result of pupils undertaking their own research using, for example, library books. Discussion with small groups of Year 6 pupils supported the judgement made by examining their work.
11. The standard of presentation of work in the books is good. Work in the books of the highest attaining Year 6 pupils is of a very good quality. Although teachers regularly mark the work, the quality of the teachers' comments about the work is too variable. At its best the marking provides pupils with clear advice about ways in which the work could be improved. For example, marking in a Year 4 English book pointed out to the pupil that his written work would be improved if he used people's names rather than using 'he and she'. The pupil took notice of the advice and the next pieces of writing

used children's names. On the other hand, too often the comments are of little value. For example, comments like 'Good work Brian' do not help Brian improve the standard he is attaining.

12. The school has undertaken a detailed analysis of its recent test results. This information is beginning to be used to make predictions about the school's future results. The data is being used to help teachers set targets for individual pupils, and there is some evidence to indicate that some staff have shared the targets with pupils. This approach needs to be consistent across the school.
13. An examination of the pupils' books indicates that pupils are attaining the nationally expected standards in all subjects. Although the school governors have decided to allocate extra teaching time to raising standards in English and mathematics, this has not had a detrimental effect on standards in other subjects. Careful teacher planning, together with learning opportunities offered outside the classroom, have had a significant positive impact on standards. For example, the residential visit for Key Stage 2 pupils has helped to raise standards in information and communication technology. The extensive programme of orienteering has helped pupils develop skills in map reading.
14. The governors set realistic targets for the percentage of pupils who should attain the nationally expected level for eleven-year-olds in the national assessments for 2001. The targets were appropriate and the evidence available at the time of the inspection indicates that the outcomes were higher than the targets that were set.
15. In reading and writing the majority of pupils make good progress. Standards are generally in line with those typically expected for pupils age eleven; pupils have made steady progress from low levels of attainment when they enter the school. A small number of higher attaining pupils are generally working at a level above that expected for eleven-year-olds; they too have made good progress. Progress in mathematics shows a similar picture. Many children enter the Nursery with few skills in number work. By the age of eleven the standards are generally in line with those expected nationally.
16. When children enter the school only a small number have any pre-reading skills and standards are lower than that typically found in the age group. As they move through the Key Stage 1 classes they make good progress in reading, so that by the time they reach the age of seven standards overall are in line with those expected nationally. A small number of higher attaining pupils have reached a higher standard. The steady improvement is sustained in the Key Stage 2 classes. As a result the standards attained by eleven-year-olds are in line with the national expected standard for the age group.
17. In number work (numeracy skills) pupils generally make satisfactory progress. Progress is often good in Key Stage 1. Many pupils join the school with little knowledge of numbers and how they operate. By the age of eleven the majority of pupils are attaining the expected standard. A minority of pupils can do quite complex calculations quickly and accurately. In most other aspects of mathematics pupils' attainment is close to the nationally expected standard. For example, they have a satisfactory understanding of the different properties of two-dimensional shapes.

18. The staff are making good use of the national guidance for teaching reading, writing and number work. The approach is having a positive impact on the pupils' standards of attainment. Progress in the Key Stage 1 classes is good, so that more pupils than last year are attaining the standard typically found nationally for seven-year-olds. The guidance is having a positive impact on standards in the Key Stage 2 classes.
19. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate for their age and ability. They make good progress in developing skills in reading and number work. In their early years in the school these pupils are well supported in lessons by adults who are clear about pupils' needs. Support staff provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their self-confidence in their learning.
20. Pupils who have English as an additional language are enabled to improve the standard of their work. The school is provided with limited support for this group of pupils; this support is used to good effect. Pupils who are new to this country are given small group or individual support and this enables them to develop some understanding of the English language quickly. As a result they are more able to take part in class lessons.

Pupils attitudes, values and personal development

21. *Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around school is very good. The school has a friendly and positive ethos, enhanced by the very good quality of relationships. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond well to the encouragement and praise given to them. Overall, attendance is unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, it is very close to the national average.*
22. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development; they are well supported by all adults. Children under five are encouraged and supported well when starting school. They respond well and settle quickly to school life and enjoy the activities provided. They are generally attentive and listen to adults. They are also developing the ability to listen to and share with each other.
23. Throughout the school pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work and share and co-operate well together. They enjoy learning particularly when the teacher challenges them. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson where pupils were learning about vibration they enjoyed the activity planned by the teacher and contributed well to a discussion about what they had seen. Pupils treat school property and resources with care. They are polite, courteous and respectful of each other and adults. They ask and answer questions readily, and show interest and enthusiasm in discussions about work and wider matters.
24. Behaviour in lessons is very good; this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Examples of very good behaviour were to be seen in classes across the school. As well as the pupils' own attitudes, the work of teachers and support staff contributed greatly

to this high standard. Typical of this approach was the work in a Reception class where the teacher established and maintained a calm atmosphere so that children were able to stay on task. Similarly, in a Year 6 science lesson pupils worked well together and developed their understanding of making a scientific investigation fair. Very little unsatisfactory behaviour was seen during the inspection. Where this did occur the teacher quickly identified the problem and ensured that the small number of pupils involved were brought back to concentrating on their work. Behaviour in and around the school at break and at lunchtime is invariably very good. Parents and other helpers made positive comments about the pupils' behaviour when they accompany them on school visits.

25. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of their personal development. All staff play a key role in this work by ensuring that individuals are included in all activities. Although the school does not have a formal programme of personal, social and health education, it does offer to all pupils much of the content of such a programme, including contributions from many external agencies such as the police and health professionals. Pupils gain a great deal through the school's very good contacts with the church and the parish community. The school's range of extracurricular activities is excellent, including the opportunities for residential visits which both parents and pupils value highly, these visits make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Where teachers provide opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for aspects of their learning, for example, through developing research skills, pupils respond well. However, opportunities for such an approach are far too limited. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The headteacher and staff provide good role models in promoting the values of the school and pupils respond well to their example.
26. The school's level of attendance is just below the national average. There have been improvements in attendance levels over recent times, for example, the level of unauthorised absence is better than that seen nationally. The school has worked very hard to bring about these changes and has effective procedures in place to address the issue of attendance. Registration procedures are handled well by teachers. In the main, pupils arrive on time; those arriving late are asked for explanations. Lessons and sessions start on time. This results in pupils settling to work quickly with no teaching time lost.
27. In the last year, no pupils were excluded. The school has successfully supported a number of pupils who have found difficulties in settling in other schools and are now pupils at St. Richard's. The school has good links with a range of professional agencies and these are used to good effect by the school. No evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. Parents and pupils express confidence in the school's approach to these matters should they occur.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

28. *Overall, the teaching observed during the inspection was of a good standard. In lessons where the Nursery and Reception children were being taught (Foundation*

Stage), teaching was judged to be satisfactory. In lessons where the Year 1 and 2 pupils were being taught (Key Stage 1), teaching was judged to be good. In lessons where the Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils were being taught (Key Stage 2), teaching was judged to be good. Evidence collected from the teachers' planning records and from the pupils' books indicates that the teaching observed during the inspection is typical of that usually found in the school.

29. There are twelve classes in the school. The Nursery and two Reception classes make up the Foundation Stage of education. Three classes make up Key Stage 1; there is one Year 1 class, one Year 2 class and one mixed Year 1 and 2 class. Six classes make up Key Stage 2. There are single age Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 classes; there is a mixed age class of Year 3 and 4 pupils and a mixed age class of Year 5 and 6 pupils. Although teachers teach their own class for most subjects, a system of grouping by prior attainment is used in mathematics in the Key Stage 2 classes; the pupils are divided into six groups, three groups of Year 3 and 4 pupils and three groups of Year 5 and 6 pupils.
30. During the inspection, fifty-six lessons or part lessons were observed. In total this amounted to just under forty-seven hours of teaching and learning. Teaching was judged to be very good in nine lessons, good in twenty-nine lessons and satisfactory in eighteen lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. This represents a significant improvement on that reported following the last inspection. Teaching of very good quality was observed in some lessons in all three stages of education.
31. Common strengths that were identified in the lessons observed where teaching was judged to be at its best were:
- the way teachers used questions to help pupils develop their ideas;
 - the teachers' expectations about the progress pupils would make in the lesson;
 - the teachers' understanding and knowledge of the subject;
 - the enthusiasm of the teachers, who provided pupils with high quality materials to help them learn.
- These strengths played a major part in the good progress made by the pupils.
32. In lessons where teaching was judged to be satisfactory, there were some common weaknesses:
- pupils were not provided with materials that sufficiently built on their past learning;
 - time was not used to best effect.
- As a result the progress made in learning was only satisfactory.

33. ***The quality of teaching observed in the Foundation Stage was satisfactory. In total, ten lessons were observed; this equated to over eight hours of teaching. In one lesson the teaching was judged to be very good; in four lessons it was good and in the remaining lessons teaching was judged to be satisfactory.***
34. The teaching observed in the Nursery class was consistently of a satisfactory quality, and in one lesson it was very good. The teacher is well supported by learning support assistants who are clear about their role and have a positive impact on the progress made by children. In a lesson where teaching was judged to be very good, the nursery teacher made very good use of a range of resources that were connected with her life; these included toys she had played with when she was a child. The children were enthralled in the work and made very good progress in developing early ideas about the past. In the two Reception classes the teaching observed was always satisfactory and often good. Where teaching was judged to be satisfactory the work provided for the children was often very complex and too many new ideas were introduced at once. In a lesson where Reception children were developing their ideas about writing a simple story, the introduction was too long and pupils lost interest in the work
35. ***Overall, the quality of teaching that was observed in the Key Stage 1 classes was good. In total, fourteen lessons were observed; this equated to thirteen hours of teaching and learning. In three lessons teaching was judged to be very good; in ten lessons it was good and in the one remaining lesson teaching was judged to be satisfactory.***
36. Very good teaching was observed in the Year 2 class when the teacher was developing the pupils' skills in art and design. The lesson was well planned and the clear structure in the sessions enabled pupils to make very good progress. By the end of the lesson pupils were using small pieces that had been cut out from a large picture, to develop their own pictures. Much of the work was of a high quality. In a Year 1 science lesson where pupils were developing their knowledge of the way sounds are created the teacher provided pupils with a very good range of resources, that they used with enthusiasm, to discover that vibrations made sounds. Pupils were excited when they saw rice jump when a drum was banged and could explain that this was caused by a vibration.
37. Good teaching was observed in all the Key Stage 1 classes and in a number of subjects including English, mathematics, science and physical education. In these lessons the materials provided for pupils were stimulating and the pupils were keen to be involved in the activities; they made good progress in their learning. In a Year 1 and 2 physical education lesson, pupils were asked to develop a range of movements. All the pupils made good attempts to develop their movements as the lesson progressed. The teacher provided good support for individual pupils.
38. In the Year 1 English lesson where teaching was judged to be satisfactory, the time was not used to best effect. The lesson followed on from the literacy lesson and the pupils were not clear about the purpose of the session. As a result their progress in developing new skills and understanding was limited.
39. ***Overall, the quality of teaching that was observed in the Key Stage 2 classes was***

good. In total, thirty-two lessons were observed; this equated to twenty-six hours of teaching and learning. In five lessons teaching was judged to be very good, in fifteen lessons it was judged to be good and in the remaining twelve lessons it was judged to be satisfactory. These judgements indicate a significant improvement in the quality of teaching for this age group compared with that reported in the last inspection.

40. Very good teaching was observed in English, mathematics and science lessons. In these lessons the work given to the pupils took account of past learning and enabled pupils to make further progress. For example, in a mixed Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson where the middle attaining pupils were developing their understanding of the process involved when numbers are multiplied by ten, the teacher used a number of effective teaching strategies. He was able to help the pupils understand that multiplication by ten involved moving numbers to the left. As a result of the effective teaching the majority of pupils could see the danger of 'just adding 0 to the number'.
41. Good teaching was observed in all year groups and in a range of subjects including English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The good teaching was always a result of carefully planned work that enabled pupils of all levels of attainment to make progress. For example, in a literacy lesson with mixed Year 5 and 6 pupils the teacher made good use of a video before helping pupils to explain the difference in the characters in the play. The pupils were motivated by the activity; as a result their behaviour was good and they made clear gains in their learning.
42. In the twelve lessons where teaching was satisfactory, some lacked the necessary pace to enable pupils to make progress with their learning. The second morning session is one and half-hours long. Much of this time is spent in activities that are connected with developing aspects of the pupils' skills in English. During the inspection the length of these sessions meant that many pupils lost interest in the materials provided, especially when they were not provided with a range of activities that would help them develop their learning further.

The teaching observed in English was good.

43. Thirteen lessons were observed where pupils were developing their language skills. Teaching was judged to be very good in two lessons; good in seven lessons; satisfactory in the remaining four lessons. The school is making good use of the new national strategy for raising standards in reading and writing. The best lessons are well planned by teachers and the pupils find the materials provided stimulating. In a lesson where teaching was very good, the Year 4 pupils were fully involved in the work provided and they made very good progress in a short period of time. The lesson went with a swing. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress in understanding how words could be used to connect sentences.

The teaching observed in mathematics was good.

44. Sixteen lessons or part lessons were observed in mathematics. Teaching was judged to be very good in two lessons, good in ten lessons and satisfactory in the remaining four lessons. A common characteristic of the very good teaching was the quality of the explanation provided by the teacher. For example, in a lesson of lower attaining Year 3 and 4 pupils who were starting to add three numbers together, the teacher explained the process very carefully. When it was clear that pupils had not understood the procedure the teacher went to great pains to make the explanation even more accessible. By the end of the lesson pupils were able to add three single digit numbers. The strategy of grouping the Key Stage 2 pupils by ability for mathematics is successful and is having a positive impact on standards. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop their strategies for solving problems. For example, when halving forty-eight most pupils in the middle attaining Year 5 and 6 class halved forty and eight; none halved fifty and then took one away from the answer. There was no attempt by the teacher to lead them into a more efficient way of solving the problem and this hindered their mathematical development.
45. ***Overall, in all the other subjects of the curriculum, the teaching observed was judged to be good. Very good teaching was observed in art and design and science.***
46. In science three lessons were observed where teaching was judged to be very good. In these lessons pupils were provided with opportunities that enabled them to think like scientists. For example, in a lesson where Year 5 and 6 pupils were exploring changes in materials, the teacher made very good use of a visitor who helped pupils understand that when cement was mixed with water to make concrete it was impossible to separate the two constituents. The pupils were enthralled by the process and soon came to realise the nature of this type of change.
47. ***The progress made by pupils as they move through the school is good. Children enter the Foundation Stage with low levels of attainment. They make good progress to reach standards close to those expected for five-year-olds when they transfer to the Key Stage 1 classes. The good progress is maintained in the Key Stage 1 classes so that many pupils are attaining standards close to those expected for seven-year-olds by the end of the key stage. A similar rate of progress is maintained in the Key Stage 2 classes so that eleven-year-olds reach standards that are typical for the age group, across all subjects.***
48. The inspection visit took place in the third week of the new school year. As a result there was a limited amount of work in the pupils' books. To help the inspection team make judgements about the standards that pupils were attaining, and to help the team make judgements about pupils' progress, the school had retained a selection of the pupils' book from the previous school year. Work in the pupils' books shows that over a period of time, they are developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects. Progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is particularly secure. An examination of the limited amount of work in the present Year 6 pupils' books indicates that, overall, the majority are on course to attain the nationally expected level (Level 4). Work in the books of pupils in Key Stage 1 shows that they make good progress in their learning.
49. The progress made by pupils is a reflection of the good quality of teaching. In just

over two-thirds of the lessons observed during the inspection, the pupils were judged to have made good or very good progress in their learning. Very good progress was observed in the Nursery class and in lessons where English, mathematics and science were being taught. The very good progress was a result of the way in which the lessons had been planned. Children were provided with stimulating materials and they showed excitement about their learning. In all the lessons observed pupils were judged to have made at least satisfactory progress.

50. During the inspection, the most effective learning occurred in lessons where the materials were both stimulating and matched to the pupils' differing levels of attainment. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson where pupils were exploring light using torches and mirrors, the highest attaining pupils were fascinated to discover that some papers let light through whilst other papers stopped the light. The lower attaining pupils were provided with opportunities to investigate the way a 'bendy' mirror changed the reflection, causing much excitement. By the end of the session it was clear that pupils had a better understanding of the scientific vocabulary connected with light, using opaque and transparent to explain differences.
51. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs generally make good progress as they move through the school. In the best lessons, pupils are provided with structured opportunities that enable them to build on their past learning.
52. Pupils who have English as an additional language are provided with limited individual support. When this is available it is well used by the school and pupils make good progress as a result. For example, pupils who are new arrivals to this country are given limited small group help to develop their understanding of English. This approach works well and during the inspection visit it was pleasing to observe this group of pupils making progress in other lessons, for example, by providing answers in numeracy lessons.

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

53. *The curriculum provided by the school is good, overall. It is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. An excellent range of out-of-school clubs and activities is a strength of the provision; this adds to the standards attained by pupils. The school gives appropriate emphasis to developing skills in reading, writing and number work. However, the long session, after the morning break, that provides extra help for pupils to develop their skills in English has not been evaluated in terms of its content, organisation and contribution to pupils' learning. In both Key Stages 1 and 2 the time allocated to teaching is well above the recommended minimum and underlines the school's commitment to raising standards. Good arrangements exist for the provision of homework; it is regularly given and adds to the pupils' learning.*
54. The school's approaches for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are on the whole effective. The planning takes full account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this is making a good impact on teaching and learning. In

other subjects, the school has made sensible and effective use of national guidance to inform planning. Teachers look for links across subjects and search out opportunities for developing pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, in a Year 3 class a poem was used as a stimulus for dance. In a Year 5 class scientific vocabulary was clearly explained and explored. All classrooms have a very good range of computers; this provision helps to develop skills and broaden the opportunities available to pupils. Computers were in constant use throughout the inspection week.

55. Teachers' planning and practice take account of any special educational needs pupils have. This reflects the inclusive nature of the school and its intention '*to develop the potential of each individual*'. Because of the good leadership of the co-ordinator for special educational needs, and the commitment of all staff, resources are used to good effect to remove barriers to learning. High quality support-staff work in partnership with class teachers to provide carefully planned learning activities. These practices result in pupils making good progress and help them develop their self-esteem. For example, well-structured group work with clear, shared goals in science lessons allows pupils to develop good relationships. Examples of good collaboration between pupils are held in high esteem and rewarded in class and in assemblies. There are good links with the local education authority's Service for Inclusive Learning and the Travellers Education Service. The school is well prepared for the implementation of the new national requirements for pupils with special educational needs. The sensible use of individual education plans, and very good parental support, are additional factors which help pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
 56. In the Foundation Stage, learning opportunities are satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards attaining the nationally agreed standard. In the Nursery class children are provided with a range of good opportunities that help them acquire the skills needed in their early learning. Work in the Reception classes generally complements the work already undertaken in the Nursery. However, on occasions children in the Reception classes are expected to sit still for too long and this approach limits the developments they make in their learning.
 57. The opportunities pupils have for taking part in out-of-school activities are excellent; the activities have a positive impact on the pupils' development. Activities include football club, camping, youth hostelling and continental trips. They are well attended and open to all within the relevant year groups. A very successful orienteering club is highly organised with some forty Key Stage 2 pupils, both boys and girls, participating in two sessions a week. The school is recognised nationally for its prowess in orienteering. Up to eighty Key Stage 2 boys and girls take part in the lunchtime run in the local park, on three days a week. This helps to meet the school's intention to offer safe and supervised access to open spaces in a community where risk-free play areas are limited. The response to instrumental lessons is good and the school is currently negotiating to extend the range offered. The residential stay at the Kingswood residential centre contributes significantly to the development of the pupils' computer skills.
- Satisfactory provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is made across the curriculum, by individual teachers. However, there is no planned or coherent approach across the school and no systematic records of pupils' developments are kept.

58. The local community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has very strong links with its parish and the local community. The contribution to pupils' learning is very good with parents and parishioners involved on a regular basis with the life of the school. The local police instruct pupils on bicycle safety. The local park is well used for physical activities and science investigations. The school has developed good links with the receiving secondary school. There are good induction strategies in place, including a Sports Day organised for pupils at the secondary site. Additionally, links with the local Iranian school and special school provide opportunities for growing understanding between pupils, staff and parents.
59. ***Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Provision for their cultural development is good.***
60. The very good provision for spiritual development is underlined in the School's Mission Statement. The calm and caring ethos reflects its Catholic nature. The pupils are offered a variety of prayer and worship opportunities in class, in assemblies and in the adjoining Catholic Church where they can reflect on their responsibilities to themselves, others they know and the wider world family. Celebrations of the sacraments provide both spiritual and social milestones for pupils and their families. Staff provide very good role models encouraging their pupils to value themselves and others.
61. Pupils have a very strong sense of right and wrong. Moral issues are regularly explored whether small (the removal of small plastic toys from the Reception class) or large (the consequences of street violence). Staff support pupils in making the right choices when faced with moral dilemmas. In an assembly, pupils were helped towards an understanding of the dangers of 'living with anger'. In this atmosphere pupils' behaviour is of a very high standard with older pupils taking a responsibility for organising play for younger pupils. The school regularly stages fund-raising activities for local and world-wide charities.
62. Social development is very well provided for within the life of a very strong local community and parish. Observations at lunchtimes indicate that pupils and adults get on very well together whatever their age, gender or ethnicity. Pupils enjoy their time in the hall knowing it is a relaxed and safe environment. They greet their teachers confidently as they pass through and speak easily readily to adult visitors. The wealth of out-of-school activities, where pupils, parents and teachers interact on a more informal basis, make a clear contribution to pupils' social development. The photographic evidence from the Alstonefield residential visit provides an impressive record of an important social event in the life of the school. These positive relationships are a real strength of the school and provide a sound platform for learning.
63. Opportunities for cultural development are good. Pupils visit local museums such as the Science and Costume Museums. Visits to school from musical and theatre groups offer a cultural dimension to provision. The visit to Norton Priory by Key Stage 1 pupils provided insight into a different lifestyle. Pupils celebrate their own Irish

Catholic culture through music, dance and the sacraments. There is a lively, pictorial display of life in Ghana and pupils in Key Stage 1 experience the country's clothes, stories and traditions through the good efforts of an enthusiastic member of staff and the class teacher. However, the opportunities for developing an awareness and sensitivity to other faiths and cultures, including and beyond those already represented in the school, are in need of further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR IT'S PUPILS

64. *Overall, the school provides a very good level of care for its pupils. Teachers and support staff provide caring and thoughtful support to pupils. The care provided for pupils is a true reflection of the Christian ethos that is found throughout the school. The headteacher provides very good leadership in this area of the school's work; he is very knowledgeable about individual pupils.*
65. The school has well-established policies for Health and Safety and Child Protection. A safe secure and caring environment is provided for all pupils. Good procedures for Child Protection have been established; there is a trained named person. All staff are aware of the schools arrangements. Links with the relevant agencies are well established. Parents have been informed of the school's arrangements.
66. The school has good arrangements in place to enable it to meet its responsibilities in relation to health and safety principles and practices. Risk assessments of the school site are undertaken regularly and action taken as required. Arrangements for matters such as educational visits, which are such a feature of its provision, are carefully planned and appropriately detailed. Medical and first aid provision is very good; the school has an appropriate quota of staff with formal qualifications. Arrangements for pupils who are unwell during the school day are handled well. Effective procedures are in place for relevant record keeping. Routine matters such as fire drills, which were identified as a matter of concern in the last inspection report, are now effective.
67. Procedures for monitoring pupil's behaviour are very good. The school has a well-developed policy that details how pupils should behave. All pupils and parents are aware of the policy and it is supported by rules that are displayed in all classrooms. Pupils are encouraged to act responsibly in the classroom, at lunchtime and in the playground. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies are implemented consistently and effectively across the school. Parents and pupils say that the school acts quickly and fairly when any incidents of bullying occur. The school makes good use of a range of rewards for good behaviour. Pupils respond well to these approaches. On those occasions where these high standards are not maintained the school works closely with parents and pupils. On the rare occasions when it is necessary, appropriate external agencies are used to bring about improvement.
68. The promotion of pupil's personal development is good. All staff, led by the headteacher's excellent example, display a very close knowledge of pupils and work very hard in their best interests. Pupils recognise this and know that they can rely on any member of staff, when needed. Whilst the school does not have a formal programme for personal, social and health education it is clear that the school offers all

pupils the experiences such a programme contains through its normal curriculum. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to discuss personal, social and other issues. The school recognises that there is a need to develop further this aspect of its work.

69. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with learning difficulties including, those who join the school from overseas, receive good support from all staff and are enabled to settle quickly. The school's caring and supportive environment encourages them to develop and display good attitudes to learning. They form good relationships with other pupils and adults alike.
70. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. They have recently been further developed by the introduction of a computerised system of recording attendance. The school's overall attendance record is below that normally found in primary schools. However, through the consistent application of its policy, the school has seen steady improvement in attendance rates. It has set an ambitious target for further improvement and the recent changes in its administrative arrangements will provide much useful information. Parents and pupils are well aware of the school's approach to these matters and the school takes regular opportunities to remind them of the need for pupils' regular attendance. The school takes care to monitor those pupils who arrive late and to enquire as to the reasons. Registration procedures are speedily and efficiently handled. The school's hard work in this area, together with the interesting lessons, good teaching, very good relationships and caring ethos, is having a positive impact on attendance.
71. Procedures for monitoring academic progress have improved since the last inspection and now have many good features. The school collects a considerable amount of data about pupils' performance. This includes the results of national tests taken at ages seven and eleven. In addition, children are tested on entry to the Nursery and to the main school in order to establish their levels of attainment. Teachers maintain very detailed records on a day-to-day basis. Procedures for assessing any pupils who may have special education needs are very good. Early recognition of any difficulties enables the teaching staff to provide individual pupils with the necessary support.
72. The marking of pupil's work, including homework, is carried out regularly by teachers. However, the use they make of written comments when marking work is too variable. In too many cases work is just ticked and there are no comments that would help pupils understand how they could improve further. When the marking is most effective, the teacher's comments provide pupils with constructive help. For example, in a Year 4 English book the teacher had written, *'Remember what we said about using he, she or they. You must use people's names'*. The next piece of work showed clear evidences that the advice had been used to improve the writing.
73. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that the wealth of assessment data is not used, in a consistent way, to plan the next stage of learning. Examples of good practice were seen. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson the work given to pupils was closely matched to their differing levels of attainment. Lower attaining pupils were provided with exciting opportunities to explore torches; higher attaining pupils were asked to plan a simple science investigation. This approach meant that all pupils

made progress in their learning.

74. Overall, these judgements indicate an improvement on those recorded following the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS.

75. *Parents are very supportive of the school. Parents, both at the meeting and in the questionnaires returned, expressed a high level of satisfaction about its work. Parents say very clearly that children like coming to school, that staff know their children very well and have their best interests at heart. They express a very high degree of confidence in the headteacher. The school has very strong links with the parents and is closely involved with both the church and community.*
76. The parents of children who enter the Nursery receive useful information about the way in which the school is organised and how they can support learning. The school takes care with the admission of these children and their introduction to school routines. Similarly parents of pupils starting in other classes are also well informed and supported. The prospectus is very clear about the attitudes and values which the school promotes and includes a useful range of information about school life and the curriculum. Arrangements for the induction of pupils are good and parents find these helpful. Pupils are helped to settle quickly to school life and soon develop very positive attitudes to learning.
77. The school keeps parents well informed about its activities, including routine administrative matters. The school has developed a clear understanding with parents about the standards and expectations required of them and their children and gives clear undertakings as to its own actions. Parents respond well. The school works hard to encourage parental support for pupil learning in all the forms offered. The annual report made by governors to parents meets requirements. It also offers an interesting insight into the school's life.
78. Written reports are of good quality. Parents receive clear accounts of their children's progress and development. Opportunities are also given on a formal basis for parents to discuss pupils' progress with staff; in addition many take opportunities to discuss matters as they arise on an informal basis. Parents say very clearly that they feel comfortable about contacting the school and that they are kept very well informed about their children's progress. Reports on any pupils who have special education needs are also carefully handled and meet requirements. Parents are fully involved in necessary reviews of their children's statements.
79. All pupils are provided with opportunities for homework covering a suitable range of tasks including reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers consistently set this work. On many occasions this work is linked to ongoing class work. Pupils and parents are familiar with homework routines. The vast majority of pupils, many with the support of parents, complete the tasks with enthusiasm and on time. The school also has a home school reading record which is regularly used by many parents.

80. The school welcomes parental support both within school and on the many visits and activities off the school site which are such a feature of its work. Many parents support these activities as for example on the visit to Alstonefield. Similarly a number of parents regularly work in classrooms. It is clear that this support is having a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and their personal development. The support of parents is a significant factor in the excellent range of activities which the school offers. Parents are also encouraged to attend assemblies, many other school activities and those that the school participates in within the community. Parents welcome these opportunities; they greatly appreciate the extent to which the school seeks to involve them.
81. The school makes good provision for pupils with special education needs. Individual education plans are used as required; appropriate reviews are carried out as necessary.
82. The school places much emphasis on its partnership with parents and on its place in the wider community, particularly within the church community. It is very clear from the responses of parents and from inspection evidence that the school is very successful in achieving its aims in this area. The last inspection found that this aspect of the school's work was a strength of the school; this high standard has clearly been maintained.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

83. *Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. Since the last inspection, under the excellent leadership of the headteacher the school has moved forward significantly. Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff now have a shared vision and commitment to raising standards whilst maintaining the caring ethos of the school.*
84. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school has developed a clear statement of aims, which gives priority to providing pupils with equal access to a full range of personal and social experiences, as well as developing their intellectual needs. The opening of a new purpose built Nursery this term, and an increase in staffing for children in the Reception classes, has improved the resources for over eighty children below the age of five. Children in this Foundation Stage of education are making satisfactory progress at this early time in the new school year. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and are beginning to impact positively on pupils' attainment. This is particularly true in Key Stage 2 where standards have improved significantly since the last inspection to a point where they are now generally in line with those typical for pupils at the age of eleven in all subjects.
85. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, key stage co-ordinators and subject co-ordinators have clear job descriptions. They work together well to plan for improvement and agree priorities for the School Development Plan, which is amended as priorities are identified and met. This approach has contributed significantly to the raising of standards at Key Stage 2, where performance targets for 2001 have been exceeded. The senior management team is an effective group, which drives change to improve the quality of education for all the pupils.

86. A detailed monitoring programme has been implemented which includes analysis of test data, analysis of pupils' books, scrutiny of teachers' planning and lesson observations. Priority has been given to English, mathematics, and science. In these subjects, co-ordinators have contributed to raising the standards of teaching and learning by monitoring teaching and learning and then sharing the best practice across the school. This has contributed to the raising of the standard of teaching in Key Stage 2. Due to conflicting pressures on staff time and the need to prioritise, not all co-ordinators have had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. As an example of the negative impact this can have, the lack of monitoring in the Foundation Stage has resulted in inconsistencies in the use of strategies for teaching and learning and best practice is not being shared with others.
87. Rigorous half termly testing in both key stages is analysed to group pupils according to prior attainment and target support for pupils with special educational needs. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 2 where pupils are grouped according to their attainment in mathematics. The introduction of individual and group targets in order to provide more challenging activities for all pupils are at an early stage of development.
88. Overall, the work of the school governors is excellent. The governing body comprises of active, committed and very well informed governors, including a good proportion of parents. The governing body has an effective committee structure. Committees consider and then take action on matters to do with staffing, curriculum, finance, and premises. They are very aware of the need not only to raise standards but also to maintain a strong Christian ethos which values relationships and strikes an appropriate balance between the social, personal and academic needs of all pupils.
89. The governors' systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school are exemplary. Termly subject audits and action plans are shared with link governors who, consequently, are well informed prior to feeding back to their committees or the full governing body. There are link governors for every subject as well as special educational needs, finance and health and safety matters. Each governor has been effective in promoting improvement by meeting with his / her curriculum co-ordinator at least on a termly basis, and often more frequently.
90. Governors are involved with staff to identify priorities for inclusion in the School Development Plan. This plan comprises a number of manageable targets. It recognises the need to provide an effective Foundation Stage for children below the age of five, and to raise standards for all pupils especially those of higher ability at the ages of seven and eleven. Another priority is to use the outcomes of the detailed analysis of pupil performance data to set individual and group targets. The governing body complies fully with statutory requirements. For example, the school is implementing the required processes for performance management and annual performance targets have been set for the headteacher and teaching staff.
91. The number of pupils attending the school has fallen during the last few years. The majority of pupils who have left the school have done so because families have left the area. This has been offset by an intake of pupils following the closure of a neighbouring school.

92. The school spent a less than average proportion of its budget on staffing last year. However, an increase in staffing this year together with a well above average expenditure on support staff, who are used effectively to support learning, is a good use of the school's budget.
93. The school decided to use most of its income designated for special educational needs and English as an additional language to provide additional trained support staff. This has proved effective in contributing to the good progress being made by pupils at both key stages. Other specific grants have been used effectively, particularly those relating to staff professional development, the National Grid for Learning and the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
94. Systems for the day-to-day administration of the school's financial affairs are very good and effective. The school secretaries have access to an appropriate range of technology to support their work. Governors are extremely well informed now that they have taken over control of administering the budget from the local education authority (LEA). A finance governor visits regularly to monitor actual expenditure against budget projections. The finance committee meets at least termly and maintains an excellent overview of the school's financial situation
95. There are good procedures for applying the principles of best value. Of particular note is the rigorous way in which governors evaluate the impact of their decisions. For example, the development of information and communication technology was identified as a need at the time of the last inspection. A decision was made to give pupils residential experience to increase their computer skills together with a major investment in resources. Teaching and learning has since improved, with opportunities provided for pupils to use information and communication technology consistently well in all classes to support learning across the curriculum. The governors use reports from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, as well as end-of-year statutory assessment results, to inform their decision-making.
96. ***Teaching staff have a satisfactory range of qualifications and experience. The quality and size of the outdoor accommodation is unsatisfactory, with playground space being restrictive. There are no grassed areas available without using the local park. To compensate for this, there is an excellent provision of residential experiences together with an impressive range of out of school activities that include orienteering for which the school is proud of its local and national acclaim. Generally, learning resources are good in terms of their range and quality.***
97. Staff are committed, hard working and generous with their time. They have good access to professional development opportunities, including class-based support from the LEA's inspectors and advisory teachers. An appropriate and high quality induction programme has been arranged for newly qualified teachers.
98. The school accommodation is well maintained. The hall and shared areas are used effectively. During the week of the inspection the library areas was not used to enable pupils to undertake individual research skills. Although there is no computer room, computers are networked into each classroom and are used consistently well to

support learning.

99. Staff have displayed pupils' work carefully and attractively in the hall, classrooms and corridors. This has created a colourful and interesting learning environment. Classrooms are well furnished and provide adequate space for teaching and learning. During the week of the inspection, the site manager and cleaning staff kept the building very clean and the site free from litter. The governors' premises committee has been active in trying to ensure that the building is secure and well maintained. Governors have arranged for appropriate health and safety risk assessments to be undertaken.
100. Overall, the areas surrounding the school are unsatisfactory. Playground space is very limited and there is no grass area for pupils to play. The outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage is secure and has a good range of resources including a fixed climbing area and imaginative markings for children to practise road safety skills on their bikes.
101. There are good resources for learning across the curriculum. Reading books for home use have been so well used that many are now less than inspiring and ready for replacement. Subject co-ordinators audit resources and put in requests for replacements and additions. These requests are then prioritised. Co-ordinators manage a budget and at any time can check their balance.
102. The school has clearly invested in appropriate resources in order to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The computer network is a very good resource for developing knowledge and skills in information and communication technology. The resources are used consistently and effectively to support learning across the curriculum.
103. These judgements show how the school governors, headteacher and staff have worked together to enhance the educational provision following the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

104. The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to build on the improving standards in the school, and raise them to even higher levels.
 - (i) Provide pupils with more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through:
 - a) Analysing the content of lessons, particularly the numeracy and literacy session, to ensure that pupils, throughout the school, are given more opportunities to develop their own ideas and understanding, in particular in the Year 5 and 6 classes where pupils are more mature; *(Please see paragraphs numbered 11, 12, 32, 34, 38, 42, 44, 72, 150, 151)*

- b) Providing more opportunities for pupils to develop a range of approaches to their learning by helping them to use a range of skills, for example, research skills;
(Please see paragraphs numbered 162)
- c) Using, in a manageable and systematic way, the wealth of detailed assessment information to help pupils set their own targets for the development of different aspects of their learning.
(Please see paragraphs numbered 181,189)

105. As well as considering the above issue the headteacher and staff should consider the following minor issue.

- A review of the way the teaching-time following the mid-morning break is used, to ensure that pupils obtain maximum benefit from the long session.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	9	29	18	0	0	0
Percentage	0%	16%	52%	32%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	45	243
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12	130

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12	94

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	49

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5%
National comparative data	5.2%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	18	16	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	14	18
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	29	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (88)	82 (83)	88 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	18
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	29	31	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (83)	91 (81)	100 (98)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

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	19	20	24
	Girls	19	20	22
	Total	38	40	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (78)	82 (78)	94 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	24
	Girls	18	20	22
	Total	37	42	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (83)	84 (83)	92 (94)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	9
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	6
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	239
Any other minority ethnic group	9

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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	209

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
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	£
Total income	673,000
Total expenditure	736,982
Expenditure per pupil	1,982.66
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,288
Balance carried forward to next year	11,474

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	315
Number of questionnaires returned	154

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	105	41	4	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	113	38	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	107	42	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	88	51	12	2	1
The teaching is good.	120	32	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	96	51	4	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	119	28	4	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	129	23	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	92	56	3	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	119	30	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	114	37	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	91	44	9	5	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

106. *Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes (Foundation Stage) is satisfactory with children making satisfactory progress. By the time they enter the Year 1 classes, a significant number will achieve the nationally expected standard (early learning goals) in all areas of their development. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is variable and is not always as rich and exciting as it could be.*
107. The Nursery class provides education for thirty-two children on a full time basis. Two Reception classes provide full time education for forty-nine children.
108. Good provision is made for children when they start school. There are no home visits but good opportunities are provided for children and their parents to visit the Nursery before they start school. When children enter school, teachers make an informal assessment of their attainment. This is followed up with a formal assessment early in the first term. The more formal assessment is linked to the steps in the national guidance known as early learning goals.
109. The co-ordinator for this stage of education has identified the need to monitor teaching and learning. She understands that this will enable teachers to share the more successful teaching strategies and improve the quality of learning for all children. During the inspection, the best activities were observed when children were challenged to use a range of skills. For example, in a Nursery creative activity children mixed flour and water to make a play-dough with the teacher exploring language development continuously: 'What does it feel like?' 'Is it hard or is it soft?' Children were fascinated when colour was added, and expressed their delight.
110. The variable range of experiences that children have before starting school and the wide range of abilities in the Reception classes often make it unsuitable for all children to be taught together as a class. In these situations support staff are not being used to maximum effect. Too much of the support staffs' time is spent in listening to the teacher rather than helping groups of children to learn.
111. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good. Rooms are colourful and divided into areas where the children experience the early learning goals. The outdoor area available for the Nursery, which is also shared by the Reception classes, provides a good base for imaginative play. Overall, resources in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory for all areas of experience.
112. During the week of the inspection, support in the Nursery was very good, with two full-time learning assistants and teaching staff assisting children with special educational needs, English as an additional language and computer skills. The additional support for children in the Reception classes is less consistent and limits the range of experiences available and the progress they make.

Personal, social and emotional development

113. Children's personal, social and emotional development in both Nursery and Reception classes is given a high priority, to very good effect. A significant proportion of children enter the school with immature skills in this area. Children become more confident as they realise that their contributions are being valued. Relationships throughout the Foundation Stage are very good and it is expected that most children will have met the early learning goals when they enter Year 1.
114. Apart from a few children in the Nursery who are still a little unsettled, most children learn the teachers' structured routines quickly. They learn to work together and have respect for each other. Children are learning to concentrate and persevere with their tasks and seek help when required. All staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour. Children respond well to this approach. They know what is right and wrong. Staff take care to explain why they should behave in the 'correct' way.
115. Children feel safe and secure in the foundation years. In all classes they are provided with an element of choice to develop responsibility. However, opportunities are often missed to develop independence. Although resources are put out for children, the resources are not always clearly labelled and so children cannot develop important skills, for example, by clearing equipment away.

Communication, language and literacy

116. On entry to the Nursery class children's communication, language and literacy skills vary considerably. There are a significant number of children, including those with special educational needs, and others for whom English is an additional language, whose standards are low. However, there are also several children in each Reception class whose reading, writing and speaking skills are well developed. During the inspection, the level of attainment of these children was not always recognised and the work provided did not always challenge their thinking and develop their skills.
117. Generally, the quality of teaching and learning in this area is good, this helps the children to make good progress. Although some children are still below the standard typically found nationally when they move from the Foundation Stage to Year 1, about two-thirds of them are likely to be close to the nationally expected standard. Good opportunities are taken to increase all children's knowledge and use of a wider vocabulary in both years.
118. Good use is made of name cards to encourage them to write their names independently. However, the absence of labelling of equipment, trays etc, hinders children's development of their communication skills. In the Nursery there are good examples of recognisable marks on paper as the children attempt to write and these efforts are built on in a clear systematic way in the Reception classes.
119. During the week of the inspection, books were not given a sufficiently high profile. Where books were used as a focus for an activity the children's responses were of a

high quality. For example, after being read *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* in a Reception class, children developed their language to discuss the characters in the story. In the following group activities, children, whose language skills are less well developed, recalled the story in role play with another pretending to read the story; characters from '*Goldilocks*' were reinforced in dice games with more confident children recording their answers in writing whereas others completed the game orally. Children are beginning to learn about books, knowing titles and how to handle a book. As a result children in Reception classes handle books well. There is a book corner in both Reception classrooms with a satisfactory selection of books. The books that children take home have been well used and many need replacing. Computers are used well to share stories. Speaking and listening skills are developed satisfactorily whether listening to stories or joining in singing games. In the listening areas, children get many opportunities to listen to the tapes of the books they have heard.

Mathematical development

120. When children enter the Nursery class the majority have levels of attainment in mathematics that is well below that of children of a similar age nationally. However there are a small number of children whose attainment on entry is higher. Teaching for the development and awareness of mathematical language is good. Singing games such as *Three Bears* and *Five Little Fingers* helps to reinforce number and make learning fun. Children know their number for the day (2) and the shape of the week (triangle). By the end of the Foundation Stage most of the children will be on course to achieve standards expected for children at this stage in their education. The higher attaining children will have achieved the expected standard and will be working at a higher level.
121. The highest attaining children in the Nursery can count to at least ten and recognise the numerals, sort and match objects and have knowledge of shapes and colours. Others have knowledge of numbers beyond ten but have no idea about the value of numbers. The majority of children are learning numbers to five, with challenging activities planned to build on what they already know. This is built on and extended in the Reception classes. Here the higher attaining children count, match, sequence and sort numbers to ten, with lower attaining children matching numbers to five. Computer programs, which encourage children to sequence numbers and explore patterns to ten, reinforce learning.
122. Children's understanding of shape is satisfactory. This particular area of learning is built into all activities that children experience in the Nursery and Reception classes. For example, creating shape pictures, and using flat and solid shapes to construct houses and other objects. Children soon learn to recognise a circle, square, triangle and rectangle. In the Reception classes children use simple mathematical language for position and size such as *bigger than*, *smaller than*, *in front*, *above*, and *under*.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

123. Provision and teaching for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them is good. After only three weeks in the Nursery children are

learning the early skills of using the mouse to click pictures and shapes on the computer. These skills are developed so that in the Reception classes children are confident with mouse control.

124. The majority of children enter school with little general knowledge. Teachers build on children's natural curiosity and help them to understand the world in which they live. Photographs from last year highlight visits within the local community such as the local park where children made tree rubbings and to Asda where they investigated materials and foods from different parts of the world. In outdoor play, children are experiencing road safety and in role-play they explore the roles of the policeman and the crossing warden. Role-play is used very well to investigate travel and transport. Children are provided with many opportunities to explore and understand their own culture, for example, by celebrating Advent, Christmas and Easter. Children have also developed an understanding about other cultures and beliefs through listening to stories and carrying out activities connected with the Chinese New Year. In the Reception class children link a study of themselves, to sequencing baby-child-adult, and they can identify parts of their body. The current topic has a safety theme, which includes 'Stranger Danger' and road safety.
125. Scientific ideas are well developed through the very good opportunities provided in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Previously completed experiments enable children in both years to explore materials, from dressing teddy for younger children to washing and drying clothes for older ones.
126. In one Reception class children used magnets in a fishing game which also helped to sequence numbers. A boy realised that a magnet could not pick up all the objects on the table but it did attract paperclips. There was real delight as he enjoyed seeing how many of these he could collect.

Physical development

127. Provision for this aspect of the children's development is very good. Before entering the Nursery class many children have had few opportunities to develop climbing and balancing skills. Children in both foundation years share the good range of outdoor equipment including fixed climbing frames, 'tunnelling', sand and a track for their wheeled vehicles with traffic lights, crossing patrols and road-works. The teachers' planning highlights how these activities will be used to develop children's skills. Although the space available is limited, children feel secure. Many children are on course to reach a standard higher than that typical by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

128. No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection. The children's finer skills are developing through handling small objects such as cutting playdough, exploring different textures such as a coloured cornflower mixture and completing jigsaws, and working with construction sets.

Creative development

129. Overall, provision for this aspect of the children's development is good. Children used scissors safely and pencils and crayons were used well to record pictorially. Examples of last year's work that were on display suggest that teachers provide children with a rich environment for creative development and that most children will have achieved the early learning goal on leaving the Foundation Stage.
130. Good teaching encourages children to develop a love of music. All the children enjoy singing nursery rhymes and a range of other songs, and nursery children respond enthusiastically. Less confident children joined in the actions and eventually the words too as they became more confident. In the Reception classes children are beginning to experience a wider range of musical activities. Listening skills in both classes were developed as children were challenged to repeat rhythms, and to explore loud and quiet sounds. Good progress was made during these activities and a good range of percussion instruments was well used. During the inspection the teacher used the *cancan* to experience explore rhythm and develop an awareness of soft and loud sounds.

ENGLISH

131. *In the 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds the school's results in English were in line with the national average and well above those for similar schools. This was an improvement in the results over the last three years. At the time of the inspection, the national assessment results for 2001 in English were available in school. These results indicate a further improvement in overall standards for eleven-year-olds. The inspection took place in the third week of a new school year. As a result, the amount of work available in English in the pupils' books was limited. However, work already in Year 6 pupils' books and discussions with pupils indicate that many of them should attain the nationally expected standard (Level 4) by the end of the school year, with a significant minority of pupils attaining at a higher level.*
132. In the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds the school's results in English were below the national average but above the average compared to similar schools. Over the previous three years, however, the results had been in line or above the national average, in both reading and writing, and the improvement in the school's results for seven-year-olds in 2001 indicate a return to this pattern. Work in the books of Year 2 children and through talking and listening to them indicate that the majority of pupils should attain Level 2 by the end of the school year, with a significant number attaining at a higher level.

133. The majority of children enter the school with attainment lower than that typical for their age group. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 to attain the nationally expected level in English at age seven years. This good progress is maintained as pupils move through Years 3 to 6 so that eleven-year-olds reach the nationally expected standard.
134. There is no consistent pattern in the difference between the attainment of girls and boys in tests in English. For example, in tests for seven-year-olds, boys performed better than girls in 1999 and 2000 tests, but not the previous two years. In tests for eleven-year-olds, girls outperformed boys in 1997, 1998 and 2000 but not 1999. (Similar information for 2001 tests is not yet available).
135. Teachers encourage all the pupils in their class to be involved in the lesson and strive hard to help pupils achieve the required standard. For example, in a Year 3 class with a small number of girls, the teacher directed questions specifically at them, and with her encouragement they made a confident contribution and good progress. In one class a pupil with little English was making very good progress in the lesson because the teacher was focussing on the pupil's language needs which helped him understand and learn so well. In another class, a teacher regularly included a pupil with special educational needs in class discussions and showed the pupil's work to the class. The class listened and watched attentively, applauding the pupil's achievements.
136. By the age of seven, pupils show levels of attainment in speaking and listening that are at least in line with those typically found for their age group, with a minority working at a higher level. Good progress is made in lessons where pupils are encouraged to talk about what they have learned. For example in Year 1, pupils were able to retell confidently occasions when they felt 'fed up', like the duck in the story they are reading as a class. In Year 2, they explained to the teacher what was the same about two sets of instructions, and the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Most pupils were keen to contribute, and they were able to take turns and listen to each other and the teacher.
137. In the Year 6 classes, pupils' speaking and listening skills are already at least in line with the level typical for eleven-year-olds. For example, they read their own writing out confidently with good expression and attention to punctuation. They explained and discussed their work with adults with confidence. In Year 5 pupils performed a play they had been reading to the rest of the class, speaking clearly and animatedly, and the class listened attentively. Year 3 and 4 pupils were able to explain the differences between a play-script and prose effectively and they shared their ideas on how to set about writing a play-script.

138. Throughout the school, pupils' listening skills are further developed by learning to follow instructions for literacy programmes on the computer, or listening through headphones to taped stories.
139. Good home-school reading record books show that most pupils read frequently to someone at home, as well as to staff in school. In addition to the teaching during literacy and other lessons, the reading at home helps to raise the standard of pupils' reading throughout the school. Pupils read regularly and change their books frequently. Older pupils write regular reviews of the books they have read which helps them to become critical readers and also develops their writing skills.
140. In all years, many pupils are already reading at a level appropriate for their age, with a significant minority reading at a standard above that expected for their age. For example, Year 3 pupils read parts in a play to the class with expression and clarity, showing a good standard of reading. Those pupils who are below average in reading receive well-targeted support from additional staff as well as their teachers, and make good progress as a result.
141. Pupils' attainment in reading in Year 2 and Year 6 is at least in line with that typically found at age seven and eleven respectively. By Year 2 most pupils are reading their books accurately, and with some expression. A few pupils read hesitantly, one word at a time. Pupils know to '*sound a word out*' if they do not recognise it, and this they do quite successfully. They also look at the pictures and use the sense of the sentence for clues. For example, one child sounded out *hid* for *hide*, and then realised *hide* made more sense in the sentence. By Year 6, most pupils read accurately and fluently and with expression, paying attention to punctuation, so that it makes sense to the listener. Many pupils can talk about their favourite authors, such as Jacqueline Wilson, and why they like her books: '*You get involved and want to read on.*' Pupils know how to find information from reference books, using the index and contents page, and can scan to locate the information on the page. However, pupils have limited experience of where to find reference books in the library. This is a result of not having a school library to use, or taking regular visits to a local library. Some pupils in Year 6 recognise they read mainly fiction and have as their target to read more non-fiction. Pupils' library skills will only improve when they have more opportunity to read non-fiction materials.
142. In both Years 2 and 6, attainment in writing is not as high as it is in reading. Nevertheless, evidence in the pupils' books indicates that the majority will attain levels in line with national expectations, by the age of seven and eleven respectively. By Year 2, a majority of pupils are writing in simple sentences, with basic punctuation in place. Some pupils' handwriting is already regular and neat, with accurate spelling of frequently used words. Where teachers' marking is most effective they write comments in pupils' books pointing out how the work could be improved, as well as praising their efforts.

143. By Year 6 pupils have developed a good joined handwriting style. Their writing shows secure sentence structure with appropriate punctuation. In their creative writing they express enthusiastic opinions well, with appropriate imaginative ideas and development, and use of vocabulary and spelling. In some lower attaining writers' work the use of punctuation is not consistent, they don't always use it correctly. In the teacher's marking, there are few comments to help pupils improve their writing. Some basic errors are not picked up, for example *were/where*; as a result pupils continue to make the same errors in their writing. As pupils move through the school not enough attention is given to helping pupils develop those aspects of their writing that would make their work more exciting, for example, they are not always encouraged to think about a range of descriptive words to enliven their writing. In the Year 6 classes too much time is spent in completing English exercises without relating their content to everyday writing tasks.
144. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their literacy in other areas of the curriculum. For example in a Year 2 science lesson, when making a little book about the life cycle of a frog, a pupil wrote, '*All about frogs and frogspawn. Frogspawn is like a dot in the middle of the jelly. The jelly is not like the jelly we eat. It is different*'. In another Year 2 science lesson the teacher took great pains to ensure that pupils understood the difference between translucent and transparent so that pupils were able to describe how different types of papers effected the way light past through them.
145. The school makes good use of computer programs in literacy lessons. In a Year 3 lesson pupils made good use of computers to help them spell a number of words. All pupils know how to operate the computers and settle quickly to their tasks. The tasks are matched very closely to the needs of the pupils, even individually in some cases, so pupils learn well and make good progress, whether using a spelling programme in Year 3 or an exercise in the use of conjunctions in sentences in Year 4.

Overall, the quality of teaching observed in English lessons was good throughout the school.

146. In total thirteen lessons were observed in aspects of English (literacy skills). In two lessons teaching was judged to be very good. In seven lessons teaching was judged to be good. In four lessons teaching was judged to be satisfactory.
147. The quality of teaching that was observed in the Key Stage 1 classes was good overall. Five lessons were observed. In four of the lessons the teaching was judged to be of a good quality; in one lesson the teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Scrutiny of work in the pupils' books completed so far this year confirms that teaching is generally of a good standard.
148. Overall, the quality of teaching observed in the Key Stage 2 classes was good overall. In total nine lessons were observed. Teaching was judged to be very good in two lessons; good in four lessons and satisfactory in the remaining three lessons.
149. Teachers use the literacy hour to good effect. They place an appropriate emphasis on

helping pupils to develop an understanding of words, sentences and general text. They are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge, produce good, detailed planning and are well organised. They identify clear objectives that they share with the pupils. Although only three weeks into the school year, they know their pupils well and have established very good relationships with them. Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to the subject. Teachers' knowledge of pupils and information on their past progress enables them to match activities to their different needs. This contributes to the good progress they make. Teachers were resourceful at involving the pupils in the discussions at the beginning and end of the literacy lessons. In the most effective lessons, teachers used a variety of strategies creating enthusiastic learners. For example, they demonstrated to pupils how they as writers can *think through* the processes involved in improving writing. This encourages good quality suggestions from pupils. Generally, lessons went with a swing and teachers used a range of resources, including hand puppets, to keep pupils engaged in the lesson. All these factors helped pupils to make good gains in their learning.

150. At the time of the inspection, an additional daily half-hour following on from the literacy lesson, was used for the teacher to undertake reading activities with different groups of pupils. Evidence collected during the inspection indicated that overall, this time was not well used. In general, pupils made few additional gains in their learning in this time; work was not well focussed to the pupils' individual needs.
151. The school tests pupils' ability in English frequently and tracks their progress in detail through the school. Where this information is used well it has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In some classes group targets are displayed on the tables, and pupils know them and refer to them, but this is not evident in all classes and with all pupils, or in their books. Full implementation of target setting in literacy and involvement of pupils in the process, with regular reviews, is not yet developed in a consistent way throughout the school.
152. English is well managed by the co-ordinator; she has a good understanding of the subject. She continues to provide the staff with clear direction in the development and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. She attends regular updates and training. Raising standards in pupils' writing is a school priority. To this end the co-ordinator has organised training for staff with the local literacy adviser. This is already in progress. Lessons have been observed and feedback given to staff on the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching.
153. There is a good supply and variety of big books for literacy lessons and group readers for guided reading sessions. However, some of the reading scheme books are in poor condition and need replacing, particularly in the Key Stage 1 classes. Greater variety and more non-fiction books are needed to widen pupils' experience and knowledge of authors and books. The school library is used as a teaching and teacher resource area, as a result pupils have little experience of libraries or library systems with the result that the pupils' library skills are underdeveloped.

154. Overall, these judgements represent an improvement on that reported following the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

155. ***Overall, standards in mathematics are in line with those found in primary schools nationally. In the 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds, the school's results were in line when compared with all schools nationally and well above when compared with similar schools. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils and staff indicates that, there has been significant improvement in the proportion of Year 6 pupils working at the level typical for their age, that is Level 4.***
156. The results of statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that attainment was well below standards typical for pupils of this age. However, the school's results were typical for pupils in similar schools. This proved to be an exception to trends since the last inspection when standards were above those typical for pupils of this age. Evidence from 2001 results indicates that standards have returned to be at least in line with national averages. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in the Key Stage 1 national assessments. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that, at the third week of the school year, standards are in line with those typical for pupils of this age and at this point in the school year.
157. In the 2000 statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was above that typical for pupils of this age when compared with all schools, and above when compared with similar schools. Standards at the higher Level 5 were below those typical of pupils aged eleven nationally, but in line with those of similar schools. Results for 2001 suggest that standards have increased, including the proportion of those achieving the higher Level 5. Pupils' overall performance has improved significantly since 1997. In 2000, boys performed better than girls, although nationally girls did better than boys.
158. As the inspection took place early in the school year, the school had kept examples of work from the previous year, to help inspectors make judgements about attainment. An examination of this work indicated that Year 2 pupils had a wide range of attainment. The highest attaining pupils could recognise the difference between numbers in the hundreds, tens and units. Their work was well presented and accurate. Pupils developed strategies to solve problems, using multiplication facts relating to the two, five and ten times multiplication tables. Lower attaining pupils had practised simple addition and subtraction with numbers up to twenty throughout the year.
159. In discussion most Year 2 pupils were able to identify common two and three-dimensional shapes; they were able to estimate objects in terms of *heavier, lighter, longer* and *shorter*. They recognised odd and even numbers, and use doubles and near doubles to solve addition problems. They used standard units to record time in hours, half and quarters and measured accurately in centimetres. Overall, pupils in this age group attain standards in the important skills of numeracy that are close to those found

nationally.

160. In Year 6, pupils are taught in a number of different mathematics groups according to their past attainment and needs. Some higher attaining pupils began this year multiplying thousands by hundreds, tens and units choosing from a range of strategies. They can explain their strategies confidently, even when decimals are introduced into their challenging activities. Lower attaining pupils have a good understanding of the place value of numbers but are less confident when using a range of strategies to multiply larger numbers. Evidence indicates that at this early stage of the school year, standards are in line with those typical of eleven-year-old pupils nationally. Discussions with pupils confirmed that an increasing number of pupils are performing at the higher Level 5 when applying mental and oral skills.
161. The progress made by pupils in mathematics as they move through the school is good. There is evidence that since the introduction of the elements of the numeracy strategy, pupils across the school have made good progress in mental calculations. Pupils have a good attitude to their work and they are very good in Years 5 and 6 where pupils demonstrate increasing levels of concentration and perseverance.
162. In both key stages pupils are tested each half term and then grouped according to ability in order to give more rigour to teaching and learning. In Key Stage 2 pupils are grouped into sets. In addition, Booster activities, 'Springboard 5' and club activities are used to raise standards. During the period of the inspection, pupils in Year 5/6 sets were given the same tasks resulting in lower attaining pupils being given work that was too difficult. In most classes, pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language were well supported and made good progress. In other groups they lacked the individual support needed to enable them to understand and complete their tasks.
163. ***Overall the quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good in both key stages. In the four lessons observed in Key Stage 1, teaching was judged to be consistently good. Of the twelve lessons observed in Key Stage 2, two were judged to be very good, six were good, and four were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 has improved significantly since the last inspection.***
164. Teachers throughout the school are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. There is consistency in the use of the recommended three sections for each lesson. Overall, the mental and oral elements in the introductions are good; pupils are then set tasks, which are usually matched to their abilities; the summing up period is used to good effect to check gains in knowledge and understanding. In the best lessons this latter part of the lesson is used to introduce new learning or to inform pupils about the next stage of learning.

165. In the very good teaching, teachers made effective use of questioning to develop pupils' ideas or to reinforce their earlier learning. Pupils were well managed, and activities were well matched to ability. Lessons were well planned, with clear objectives, appropriate activities and good resources. Mental work was conducted at good pace and made use of a range of appropriate devices in order for teachers to check understanding and accuracy. Where appropriate, number fans, cards and whiteboards were used with enthusiasm and accuracy.
166. In lessons, pupils were well behaved, responded positively to challenge and were attentive and eager to contribute to lessons. They worked co-operatively when required and maintained concentration. Older pupils used initiative to choose strategies to solve problems and, in the upper set, an understanding of how to solve problems is given equal footing with the need for accuracy. Individual pupils presented their work tidily and accurately. Throughout the school, homework is used consistently and effectively to extend the work done in lessons
167. Marking is used mainly to record achievement. At its best, marking informs pupils of targets met and challenges them to improve further and gives suggestions on how improvements could be attained.
168. Mathematics is well led by the co-ordinator. Effective in-service training has raised teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. The co-ordinator has produced a good mathematics policy statement and provided advice on curriculum planning. He produces termly action plans and as priorities change they are incorporated in the School Development Plan which guides improvement. The co-ordinator has analysed performance data from statutory test results and is well aware of what needs to be done to raise standards further, including responding to the needs of higher attaining pupils. He has been involved in the establishment of 'booster' classes and a mathematics club. Year 5 pupils have been supported by 'Springboard 5' activities planned to raise their levels of skills and understanding.
169. Resources for mathematics throughout the school are good.
170. A significant and effective investment has been made in resources for supporting mathematical activities including the use of information and communication technology throughout the school. Programs have been provided to develop skills and understanding in a regular and consistent manner.
171. These judgements represent a significant improvement over those reported following the last inspection.

SCIENCE

172. *Standards in science are in line with those expected in primary schools; they are improving. Pupils experience a good range of activities based on the national programme of work for science. They generally make good progress in science because of a combination of good quality teaching and their own very good attitudes to their work.*
173. In Year 2, the class teachers make assessments of seven-year-olds' science attainment. The 2000 assessments show the school's performance was very high in comparison with the national average, especially for those pupils attaining the higher Level 3. The results put the school in the top 5% of all schools.
174. In the 2000 national tests for science for eleven-year-olds, the school's scores fell slightly below the national average for this age group. When compared to similar schools the results were above average with the percentage of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 being close to the average. Boys and girls performed equally well.
175. At the time of the inspection, the national assessment results for 2001 were available in science. These indicate further improvement in the school's performance, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. Discussions with Year 6 pupils and work in their books shows that these standards are secure and that the good progress made in Key Stage 1 is continuing in Key Stage 2.
176. The range of work planned by teachers and undertaken by pupils covers the national programme for science in a balanced and progressive manner. The school has made good efforts to improve practical science in Key Stage 2. This is effective. However, a heavy focus on test preparation for the Year 6 pupils makes their work too book-based, rather than investigative. A scrutiny of the work of last year's eleven-year-olds showed too little evidence of pupils setting up investigations, predicting what might happen and recording the results in tables, charts and graphs. Nevertheless, performance of these pupils went up in the national tests. Where tasks enabled pupils to carry out investigations, pupils enjoyed them. Their learning was enhanced. There were several instances where careful planning and extra support for pupils with special educational needs ensured that they undertook science investigations and reported back to the class on their findings. This practice is clearly boosting their self-confidence.
177. During the inspection there were instances of pupils being able to use computers to enhance their written work in science. In addition, pupils used complex computer equipment to help them measure and record changes in temperature when investigating the insulating properties of different materials. Key scientific words are emphasised and displayed to develop literacy skills, including those of pupils who have English as an additional language. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in groups. They listen to each other, taking turns to say what they think and making shared decisions.
178. Work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils indicate that, by the end of Key

Stage 1, they have a sound understanding of what constitutes a fair test. They enjoy practical lessons where they can make predictions, experiment, observe and draw conclusions. For example, they can identify light sources around the school, comparing brightness and colour; investigate what happens when dried corn is heated in a microwave oven; and measure *pushes and pulls* using play equipment in the local park. Additionally, they learn about how things survive and grow by using a garden area at the front of the school and through making up decorative hanging baskets. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 can make and draw simple circuits and show that they have a good understanding of how they work.

179. Currently, work in Year 6 pupils' books shows that they have a secure knowledge of a range of scientific ideas. Discussions with pupils revealed that they have a good understanding of what living things have in common. They could explain processes such as filtration and evaporation and knew the basic properties of solids, liquids and gases. The higher attaining pupils were able to explore abstract ideas such as how light travels, how sound is made and the orbit of the earth around the sun. They have a sound knowledge of what makes a fair test and talk with confidence about *keeping things the same* to get reliable results.
180. Throughout the school pupils have very good attitudes to their learning in science. They thoroughly enjoy practical investigations and show that they can work together in a co-operative and sensible way when they are allowed to work independently. Science plays, visits to the Science Museum and science week with its interactive displays and parental involvement, all make noticeable and positive contributions to both attitudes and learning.

Overall, the quality of teaching in science lessons observed during the inspection was very good.

181. During the inspection seven lessons were observed. Teaching was judged to be very good in three lessons, good in two and satisfactory in two. In all the lessons observed the teachers showed that they had a good knowledge of the subject, their planning was detailed and they used good questioning skills that helped pupils develop ideas. In the very good lessons there was a strong emphasis on investigating, with pupils asking questions such as: "*What if we do this? Which one do you predict? Will it be fair?*" In a Year 2 lesson where teaching was very good, a range of activities was set out for pupils to investigate light and reflection. Skilful teacher support allowed pupils to explore ideas independently and record their findings. For example, higher attaining pupils were able to devise their own ways of exploring *opaque translucent* and *transparent*: to see how much paper was needed to stop a torch light showing through. The management of the lesson, characterised by the teacher's confidence in letting pupils investigate for themselves, resulted in very good gains in learning. Similarly, in a very good Year 5 science lesson where investigative activities were carefully planned to explore materials and how they change, pupils, including those with special educational needs, were totally absorbed in their own learning. Here, the inventiveness of the teacher was evident in the selection of activities. These ranged from the *teapot challenge* where pupils were measuring conductivity to the visit of *Bob the Builder* who demonstrated mixing sand, cement and water so that pupils could

observe how combining materials can change them irreversibly. In the two lessons where the quality of teaching was satisfactory, both in Key Stage 2, pupils' progress was restricted by the lack of challenge in the activities.

182. The school has used national guidance for the subject in a sensible way to enhance its own scheme of work. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' achievements are very well developed, especially as pupils get closer to the tests at age eleven. There is a regular testing system that provides teachers with useful information on which to predict the outcomes of pupils' performance in the national assessment tests for eleven-year-olds. At the time of the inspection it was not clear how the information was used to support the development of investigation skills or to share targets with the pupils themselves.
183. Management of the subject is good. There has been considerable monitoring of teaching by the enthusiastic science co-ordinator. This is to be resumed, focussing on opportunities for practical work. The science action plan, clear in its description of strengths and weaknesses, is an effective tool in raising standards.
184. Overall resources for science are satisfactory.
185. Taken overall, these judgements show a significant development of science since the last inspection

ART AND DESIGN

186. Standards in art and design are good. Evidence from the extensive displays and in pupils' sketchbooks indicates that good progress is being made in developing a range of skills.
187. The majority of the evidence on which inspection judgements were made was gained from an examination of pupils' work. In Year 2, pupils study Lowry and choose a favourite painting, giving reasons for their choice. They experiment with mixing water and marbling ink and complete observational sketches of snowdrops and daffodils. They also create collages from such materials as rice, pasta, barley, corrugated paper, feathers and polystyrene. They experiment with touch as well as visual impact. Through the use of computers they create *dazzle* pictures. Linking to design and technology, they design and make their own greetings cards. They experiment with a variety of materials and processes, including textiles, and learn to blend oil and crayons for effect.
188. In Key Stage 2, they build on this good work by studying the paintings of Van Gogh and compiling information to help them develop their own ideas. They extend their range of techniques when they create fabric wall hangings with miniature designs to give collective impressions of their stay at Alstonefield. Year 4 pupils investigate pattern and create their own class book of wallpaper designs, complete with computer aided front cover design.
189. Two art and design lessons were observed during the inspection. In the Year 2 lesson both teaching and learning were very good with good outcomes from pupils as they

studied sections of a picture using a viewfinder. In the Year 6 lesson, satisfactory standards were reached in drawing the human body. A slightly slow pace and some inattention from a small group of pupils meant that not all pupils progressed at the same rate.

190. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. There is an appropriate school scheme of work that uses the latest national guidelines to help teachers' plan their lessons. The documentation includes a useful statement on supporting pupils with special educational needs.. Resources are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

191. The limited evidence gathered indicates that in design and technology pupils throughout the school attain standards that are expected for their age.
192. Work on display in the school shows that pupils have opportunities to plan, develop and communicate ideas. For example, work from Year 5 pupils illustrates that they plan, sketch, draft and revise to make papier mâché puppets. Throughout the school pupils use helpful evaluation sheets to improve their designs. For example, as part of the 'Light up the Cave' project they are able to write: *I could make my battery-powered torch waterproof by covering it with plastic.* In Key Stage 2, pupils make bags, coil pots and model sarcophagi after recording their design ideas and selecting appropriate tools and techniques. They measure, mark out and cut out their materials. Finally, they join and combine the materials to make products such as stringed puppets with controllable moving parts. They use nets to make card packaging and then incorporate computer-generated labelling into the final product. Pupils' knowledge of electric circuits is reinforced when they design and build *Beat the Buzzer* games.
193. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection.
194. There is a range of satisfactory resources in the school, including equipment and materials to support activities in food and textile technology.
195. The co-ordinators are new to the subject and they have not yet been able to conduct a thorough audit. There is a useful subject file that shows that current schemes of work make good use of national guidelines. They also offer suggestions for design opportunities.

GEOGRAPHY

196. Scrutiny of the work in pupils' books, on the classroom walls and in displays and talking to pupils indicate that standards in geography are similar to those found nationally in primary schools at the age of eleven. At the age of seven, the geographical understanding, acquisition of skills and knowledge is above that expected for pupils of that age. These judgements are similar to those recorded at the time of the last inspection.
197. All classes have a forty minute lesson of geography each week, this ensures good coverage of the national programme of work. Topics are planned thoughtfully over a two-year cycle, to avoid repetition for those pupils in mixed-year classes. Orienteering

expeditions and class visits to Alstonefield in Derbyshire are long and well-established practices at the school. These make a good contribution to the development of pupils' geographical understanding and fieldwork skills. In orienteering pupils develop skills such as map reading, using a compass, understanding directions, symbols and a key '*black for man-made; brown to do with the land,*' explained a Year 6 pupil.

198. In the Key Stage 1, children make good contrasts between their own urban locality with that of rural Alstonefield. They draw maps of both, of their route home from school, and of the route from school to Alstonefield, drawing in things they pass on the way, such as trees and buildings. They show an increasing sense of direction in making lists of what is to the left and to the right of them in their classroom, and locate north – '*When I look north I can see...*' and use grid references. Over their time in the infants, pupils acquire increasing geographical understanding and knowledge and skills of map drawing and map reading. For a link to other places in the world, they have a wonderful resource in a Ghanaian teaching assistant who immerses the pupils in Ghana for an afternoon – artefacts, food, clothing and music bring the session to life. Pupils locate Ghana on the globe. The topic makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and geographical understanding and widens their understanding of other cultures.
199. Conversations with Year 6 pupils showed that their knowledge and understanding of geography is at least in line with the nationally expected standard. They have acted as news reporters reporting on flooding and tornadoes. They studied flooding and its causes in the UK and in Mozambique. They studied rivers such as the Nile in Egypt and the Ganges in India, and understand their significance, knowing, for example, that the Ganges is sacred to Hindus. They understand and can explain the water cycle and where rivers fit into it. They use the *Whole World* programme on the Internet to find out about different countries. They study aspects of life in Bangalore and Chambakoli in India,
200. Two geography lessons were observed during the week of inspection, both in the lower juniors. In one the quality of teaching was good, and in the other satisfactory. The lesson where teaching was good had a lively pace, effective planning and organisation. The group activities were matched to the needs of the pupils. Pupils showed good understanding of the topic and explained it well, using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils were using aerial maps of their local area to locate landmarks, such as the school, the church, their house, and the routes from one to the other, giving directions. Pupils working with these maps on the four computers were thrilled to be able to *zoom in* on the landmarks for a clearer view. They use and understand geographical vocabulary such as *aerial* and, *bird's eye view* when referring to maps. They discuss the differences between *local*, *community* and *neighbourhood* and what facilities they need in a local area. In the lesson where the teaching was satisfactory, the pupils were interested in the topic and learning. However, the teacher's strategies did not make the best use of time and some pupils became restless as a consequence.
201. Geography is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator with a well-developed knowledge of the subject and a high level of involvement in associated activities. The scheme of work for geography has been amended to incorporate components of the new national guidance. New resources are being acquired as fresh topics are identified, and a review of the new scheme at the end of this year, the second in the

cycle, is planned. Existing resources are good, particularly the recent purchases of aerial maps of the local area, street-level maps and aerial maps networked on the computer for pupils to use. The co-ordinator monitors what has been taught by scrutinising pupils' work annually. She has recently developed assessment sheets covering all aspects of the schemes of work for teachers to complete and pass on to the next teacher.

HISTORY

202. The evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that by the age of seven and eleven pupils attain standards in history that are similar to those found nationally. Looking at pupils' books, talking to pupils and scrutinising displays indicates that pupils are developing a sense of change over time and are given opportunities to develop research skills as they move through the school. Their learning of different periods is well supported by an appropriate range of educational visits, such as to Bramhall Hall for studying the Elizabethan age, Castlefield for investigating industrial development and local history.
203. Pupils in Year 2 have compared celebrations in their own lives with those in the past, such as birthdays and Christmas. They have looked at how older relatives and the Edwardians celebrated their birthdays. They learnt about using old photographs and toys to find out about the past. They used photographs to reflect on their own past and that of their teacher at the age of eight. This increased their understanding of the passage of time and the kinds of changes that have occurred in Manchester. Pupils are given opportunities to talk and write about their own past, as in one pupil's memories of a family wedding in church, *'A celebration I remember'*. They have drawn time lines of the history of writing, fire fighting and nursing. In discussion they were able to explain important events on each time-line. They have written about the Great Fire of London, and added their own contribution to Samuel Pepys' diary, *People were panicking and screaming in terror*. Pupils make their own books of a mediaeval castle, with a wide range of activities developing their understanding of different aspects of life in those times. They have written letters home pretending to be a worker in the kitchens, *The kitchen is very hot but where I sleep is very cold*.
204. Year 6 pupils demonstrated good historical knowledge of the Egyptians, the Romans, the Tudors period, the Victorians and postwar Britain. They could recall many facts about King Henry and his wives, the breakaway from the Roman Catholic Church and reasons for it, and how Queen Elizabeth I came to the throne. They were fascinated by aspects of Ancient Egyptian life and particularly religion and customs associated with death and the afterlife. This topic was well supported by a visit to the Manchester Museum where they could find out more about mummification. They also used the Internet to locate more information. They were able to describe the difference between primary and secondary sources of information, relating it to the artefacts in school.
205. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past are developing satisfactorily. They have good opportunities to develop their research skills in history, both through the recently purchased topic books and the computer programmes, CD-ROMs and appropriate Internet web sites that they have access to in

history lessons. History makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills.

206. In the one history lesson that was observed, the quality of teaching was good, with good organisation, effective use of time and a range of appropriate and challenging activities that engaged pupils throughout. Pupils obtained information about Ancient Greek artefacts from a new program on the computer, having to answer questions on the information ensured pupils understood what they were reading, this approach made a good contribution to their learning. A group who examined artefacts had to think about their purpose and use and explain their ideas. Pupils were very enthusiastic and interested and made good progress.
207. History is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator with good subject knowledge. The scheme of work for history has been amended to incorporate components of the new national guidance. It is planned on a two-year cycle and is effective. It will be reviewed at the end of this school year. Resources for the subject are now good. Recent purchases of artefacts for topics on Romans, World War II and Victorians as well as attractive new books for pupils to do their own research, add greatly to the opportunities for pupils to develop their interest and understanding of history. In addition, pupils use programs on the computer, for example about ancient Greek artefacts. The co-ordinator has recently introduced valuable assessment sheets for teachers, these are to be passed on to the next year's teacher. She monitors pupils' work annually by scrutinising their books and follows this up with feedback to colleagues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

208. By the ages of seven and eleven, all pupils attain standards in information and communication technology (ICT) that are typical of those found nationally in these age groups, with evidence that a significant proportion of each year group demonstrate skills which are above those expected. The use of ICT skills, knowledge and understanding to support learning across the curriculum in each classroom is of the highest standard. As pupils move through the school they make very good progress in using computers to support their learning. This is a strength of the school. Pupils' progress is accelerated towards the end of Key Stage 2.
209. Following the last inspection ICT was given a high priority and governors supported its development in their financial planning. A decision was made that instead of providing a single computer room by 2001, there would be four networked computers in each classroom. This has been achieved. A good range of software has been acquired to enable pupils to build consistently on skills and knowledge, particularly in English and mathematics. Additional funding was added to the available national funding and very good in-service training was used to raise the skills, knowledge and understanding of all teachers. An effective residential experience is provided for all pupils in Key Stage 2; this has become a valuable annual experience and has a major impact on standards in ICT.
210. In the Foundation Stage children below the age of five are given opportunities to become confident users of the computer mouse. For example, in the Nursery class

children were able to use the mouse confidently to click on images, choose colours and draw pictures. Children in the Reception classes were able to drag pictures to show that they understood the baby-child-adult sequence of human development. They also used programmable toys to demonstrate that computers control movement. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 used number programs to sequence numbers and Year 5 pupils monitored temperatures in a science experiment using the computer to give accurate changes in temperature. Evidence from last year's work demonstrates that Year 5 and 6 pupils use computers to extend all areas of learning. An average attaining group of pupils in Year 5 used spreadsheets successfully to investigate the best options for a theatre visit. Most pupils know how to log on and access programs, with lower attainers doing so with adult assistance.

211. Many pupils use the Internet and use e-mail technology as a result of residential and home-developed experiences. The school's development plan recognises the need to extend these opportunities to all pupils.
212. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing ICT skills. Progress is variable, but improved resources have enabled all pupils to make better progress than that reported following the last inspection. In the Year 5 and 6 classes progress is often good. Residential experience has provided stimulating experiences for higher attaining pupils with at least one pupil designing and managing his own web page.
213. It is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching in ICT, as only one period of teaching was observed. However, there was sufficient evidence to show that in their classrooms teachers were using ICT in an effective way.
214. The teacher designated to support teaching and learning in ICT across the school has a variable impact on learning. In the Foundation Stage where children choose their activities her time is less well targeted. When the planning focusses on groups of pupils and the teacher has a specific role her influence is more effective. For example, in a group activity in Year 5 pupils were introduced to spreadsheets and the use of formulae to determine value for money. Time was used effectively in order to enable the pupils to complete the task, and good support was given to respond to the needs of individuals. Planning was appropriate and the teachers subject knowledge was good. When additional support is not available, teachers show confidence and plan for all pupils to use the good range of software. Computers were in constant use throughout the inspection. The use of new technologies to support all subjects of the curriculum is a significant strength of the school.
215. Scrutiny of the work from the Year 6 pupils of last year indicates that they made satisfactory progress in developing their skills in communication, data handling, and control technology. The co-ordinator has included the further improvement of these areas in his action plan so that even higher standards can be attained.
216. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they enjoy ICT. Older pupils accepted responsibility when asked to work independently or in pairs. They respond positively and enthusiastically when challenged, and work well collaboratively to solve problems. A child in the Reception class was over heard to say; *'Wait a minute and I will help you'*. Overall, pupils were very well behaved, although younger pupils were

sometimes reluctant to concentrate and persevere.

217. The co-ordinator has developed a clear policy statement for ICT. Teachers draw appropriately upon national guidance when preparing their termly plans. ICT activities link extremely well with work in other subjects, and this has become a strength of the school. The school is now in a very good position to respond to the priorities outlined in the co-ordinator's action plan.
218. Since the last inspection, the determination of the governing body and the school management team to raise standards in ICT has been translated into practice - standards have improved significantly. The joint commitment to use residential experience to help raise standards and the use of computers to support learning in the classroom was far-sighted and inspirational. These judgements show how far the school has progressed in ICT since 1997.

MUSIC

219. The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that in music, throughout the school, pupils attain standards that are typically expected nationally, for their respective ages. Teachers are using the recent national guidance for music to good effect.
220. In Key Stage 1 pupils enjoy singing in assembly, they sing in tune. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop their skills in singing. As a result the school has a good choir. During hymn practice all pupils participate enthusiastically and sing with vigour demonstrating enjoyment from their involvement. The photographic evidence that was available during the visit showed that pupils have been provided with a range of opportunities to use music to enhance other aspects of their work. For example, Year 6 pupils have used a range of pitched percussion instruments to accompany a poem about a storm.
221. Resources for music are good. There is a good range of instruments that are easily accessible to pupils.
222. These judgements are similar to those reported following the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

223. Standards in physical education are above those typically found in primary schools. There is a broad and varied curriculum, which is complemented by a range of lively out-of-school activities. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and receive national recognition for standards in cross-country orienteering.
224. Four lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was good in three lessons and satisfactory in the fourth. In all lessons planning and organisation were good. Lessons ran efficiently and skills were built on. In the satisfactory dance lesson in Key Stage 2, whilst progress was evident for most of the class, too much direction from the teacher stopped two pupils reaching higher levels in experimenting with their own sequence of timed travelling movements. In a Year 5 class, the good subject

knowledge of and encouragement from the teacher enabled pupils to create a movement phrase to music in partners and then in groups. The very efficient use of time meant that pupils remained enthusiastic and purposeful throughout. In the Key Stage 1 lesson, probing questioning and good use of pupil demonstration helped pupils to explore pushing and pulling movements. Moving and *freezing* at different speeds encouraged pupils to develop body control. The lesson was linked skilfully to previous sessions. Time for evaluating performance ensured that pupils set their own targets for the next session. In all sessions, it was clear that pupils thoroughly enjoy the activities and aim to perform at their best.

225. The subject is well co-ordinated with an appropriate scheme of work in place giving guidance to teachers on a broad range of activities. Swimming is included. Transport problems beyond the school's power to resolve meant that this entitlement was not being met last term. The school has now made new arrangements to ensure that Year 4 pupils acquire the appropriate skills in swimming and water safety.
226. Resources are good and include a range of camping and orienteering equipment so that all pupils can participate in annual camps and orienteering events. The school site has no grass area but the school has been resourceful in developing off-site activities where cross-country and field games can be played. There is a strong sporting tradition at the school and encouragement for high attainers, both boys and girls, is such that pupils continue to excel both as individuals and team players. They have had local success in football and national recognition in gymnastics, Irish dancing and orienteering.