

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Shaw, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105719

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Dickinson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret J Lewis
22787

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th November 2001

Inspection number: 195409

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oldham Road Shaw Oldham
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Bernard King
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22787	M Lewis	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Art and design History	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
13723	J Overend	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
30078	R Powell	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	
30954	B Ashcroft	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
15551	P Mitchell	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Geography	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Primary School is an average sized Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic school for pupils aged 3 to 11 years. It has 246 pupils, including 30 full time children in the nursery. The school provides adequate, secure accommodation and facilities in a modern building situated in the small town of Shaw, near Oldham. It is a popular school and over subscribed. It takes Roman Catholic pupils from the parish and some from other nearby parishes. Pupils are all from white English speaking backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, 5.7 per cent, is below the national average. Twenty-six pupils are on the register for special educational needs, a figure lower than the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the reception class is broadly average, although there is a wide range of ability.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's is an exceptionally effective school with some excellent features. It provides very well for pupils of all abilities. Pupils achieve high standards because teaching is very good and the work they do is challenging. The headteacher, staff and governors work together very well to consistently make improvements in the school and maintain high standards. The school was granted Beacon status in January 2001 in recognition of its high standards and school ethos. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment at Year 6 in English, mathematics and science is excellent. Pupils in Year 2 also attain well above the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are excellent and he ensures a clear educational direction for the school.
- Teaching is very good and staff constantly strive to make it even better.
- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- The school's aims and values are reflected in all aspects of its work. All those involved in the school show a very high commitment to its success.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Relationships are excellent. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are very good and they have very good attitudes to their work.
- The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities and extra-curricular opportunities are also very good.

What could be improved

There are no significant areas for improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997 and was judged to be a good school with many very good features. Since then, under the leadership of the new headteacher, it has gone from strength to strength and continued to improve in many areas of its work. It has retained its good and very good features and now has some excellent features. Results in national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are even better and are very high compared with all schools nationally. The quality of teaching has improved and the percentage of good, very good and excellent teaching has increased considerably as a result of effective monitoring.

Assessment of pupils' work is used more effectively to carefully match work to meet the needs of all pupils. Those of higher ability are provided with a high level of challenge. The school has tackled and dealt with all the action points from the previous inspection effectively and kept pace with new initiatives. An increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills has brought about marked improvements in developing pupils' spelling, reading and mental arithmetic skills. Pupils with special educational needs show enjoyment in their reading. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development has improved. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is now much better. It is now taught well and standards are above average.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	C	A*	A*	very high A* well above average A above average B
mathematics	A	A	A*	A*	average C below average D
science	B	D	A*	A	well below average E

Throughout the school pupils attain very high standards in English and mathematics. Test results in 2001 showed that standards in Year 6 were excellent in English, mathematics and science. They were in the highest 5 per cent of schools. Compared with schools having the same proportion of free school meals, pupils' attainments were also very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Although standards in English and science dipped in 2000, since then they have returned to and exceeded their former high levels. Taking the results of English, mathematics and science together, over recent years the school has maintained a trend of results broadly in line with the nationally rising trend. Well above average results in English and mathematics have been sustained although results in science have been more variable. Inspection findings show that standards in Year 6 are excellent in English and very good in mathematics. In science they are good. Pupils' skills in writing are outstanding by the time they reach Year 6. The school sets challenging but realistic targets for pupils and these have been exceeded in 2001. Inspection findings show that pupils in the infants achieve very well in English and mathematics, reaching well above the national average. In science they reach above average standards. In the 2001 tests at the end of Year 2, pupils achieved very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics, where results were in the highest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. The results of teacher assessments in science at Year 2 were also well above the national average. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), history, music and physical education, in particular dance, are above average in both key stages. Pupils attain at the expected level in geography, design technology and art. When children begin in the reception class their attainment is broadly average. They make very good progress and by the end of reception they exceed the nationally recommended standards known as the Early Learning Goals and are above the expected levels for their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They work hard in their lessons and are enthusiastic and involved in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils co-operate very well with their teachers enabling very good learning to take place. They work sensibly and independently and follow instructions attentively. They display excellent manners.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Pupils become mature and responsible in response to the good examples and high expectations set by all staff.
Attendance	Punctuality is good and levels of attendance are satisfactory.

Pupils' enjoy coming to school and are proud of it. Their very good behaviour and attitudes to their learning make a significant contribution to their high achievements.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good	Very 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 school has a high proportion of good and very good teaching. Teachers provide challenging work to pupils of all abilities and plan lessons very well to meet their needs. They check and assess pupils' work very well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The quality of teaching is very good in the infants and the juniors and it is good in the Foundation Stage. There is a significant proportion of very good teaching in the reception class. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in their learning in the Foundation Stage and very good progress in the infants and the juniors. The teaching of English is very good with some excellent teaching in Year 6. Teachers develop pupils' skills in writing to a high standard in both the infants and the juniors. Teaching of mathematics is very good. In numeracy lessons most teachers are generally skilful in teaching pupils different ways of working out mental arithmetic. Teaching of science is good. The teaching of music is a strength in the school and pupils do very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum offers a very good range and quality of opportunities including educational visits, visitors into school to work with pupils and extra-curricular opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Teachers and support staff are very effective in supporting for pupils with special educational needs and pupils make rapid progress and achieve very well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision is very good overall. The school puts a high emphasis on pupils' personal development. It provides exceptionally well for pupils' moral and social development and very well for their spiritual development. Cultural development is good.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides very good care and support for pupils. It knows them very well. The monitoring and supporting of pupils' academic progress and personal development are very good. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory.
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Parents think very highly of the school. The school has a very strong partnership with parents and this is very effective in raising pupils' attainment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. He has established a very effective team of staff and is well supported by senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils all of its statutory requirements and provides very good support for the school. The governors have a good understanding of the school's development and work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff evaluate the school's performance proficiently and governors are fully involved.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans and manages its budget astutely and uses its funds wisely to support well-planned initiatives for improving pupils' education. This has had particularly good effect for boosting the attainments of groups of pupils of differing abilities.

The school is well staffed and it has good resources. Support staff make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school makes the best use of its accommodation. It ensures best value from the money it spends.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children like school and they make good progress; The teaching is good and the school expects the children to work hard; Behaviour in the school is good. The school works closely with parents; The school is well led and managed and parents are comfortable to approach the school with concerns; The children make good progress and the school helps them become mature and responsible; The school provides an interesting range of activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents feel the amount of homework is not right; Some parents feel that they are not kept well informed of their children's progress.

Parents overwhelmingly support the work of the school and a substantial majority totally endorses every aspect of school life. Inspectors agree with their positive comments. A few parents felt that they did not have enough information on their children's progress. This is not supported by evidence from the inspection although pupils' annual reports are brief and currently being reviewed by the school. Homework is set according to the school's agreed policy and makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Throughout the school pupils achieve high standards in English and mathematics, and above average standards in most other subjects. They do far better than most schools. Standards of attainment overall have risen since the previous inspection when they were good. Pupils do especially well by the time they reach the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics achieved by pupils in Year 2 are high and pupils are well ahead of those in other schools nationally. Pupils in Year 6 achieve exceptionally well and attain very high standards in English. Standards in writing are far above those expected and achievement is outstanding. The school's emphasis on the teaching and development of pupils' writing as a main thrust in the school development plan and as part of its chosen 'Beacon' initiative has helped raise the standard of writing to this high level. Pupils in Year 6 exceed the expected standard in mathematics and achieve very well. Pupils do well in science and attain above average standards in both key stages. Standards of attainment in ICT, history, music and physical education, in particular dance, are above average. At both key stages, pupils attain at the expected levels in geography, design and technology and art and design.
2. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2001, for pupils in Year 6, showed that their attainments in English, mathematics and science were excellent. They were in the highest 5 per cent of all schools in the country. In comparison with similar schools, results were as high in English and mathematics, although in science they were very slightly lower but still remained well above average. The majority of pupils reached the higher level (Level 5) in English, mathematics and science
3. Taking English, mathematics and science together, over recent years the school has maintained a trend of results broadly in line with the nationally rising trend. The school's results for Year 6 pupils have been consistently well above average in English and maths, although those for science have fluctuated. The school strives to maintain high standards but in 2000 dipped in English to the national average and in science to below the national average. Results in mathematics were sustained at well above average. Pupils in the Year 6 test group were not as able that year as in previous and subsequent years. However, since then results have returned to and exceeded their previously high levels. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are well above average in these subjects and outstanding in English. This represents a significant success for the school. There are no significant differences between boys' and girls' performance in mathematics and science and only a very slight difference in English where the girls just outperformed the boys.
4. The challenging targets set by the school were exceeded in 2001 and although slightly lower for the coming year, they are still challenging and realistic. Targets for pupils in Year 6 are set as a result of careful tracking of their performance in annual tests. These are rising overall and are due to be higher in 2003 and at 100 per cent for 2004.
5. Children do well in the nursery and the reception class and by the time they begin the National Curriculum in Year 1, they already exceed the early learning goals expected for children of their age. Most children are ahead with their personal and social, speaking, reading and writing, and mathematical development. They recognise words in books and talk about stories and pictures. They write their names at the end

of the nursery class and in the reception class form letters well and compose and write simple sentences. They listen well to teachers and use mathematical language such as 'more than' and 'less than'. They make very good progress in their personal and social development in the Foundation Stage and are friendly, confident and show independence. They work well together in pairs and in small groups, share resources and have established good relationships with their friends and the adults who work with them. They make good progress in their manipulative skills for instance when using scissors and working with clay.

6. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in Key Stage 1, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. As in Year 6, the results of National Curriculum tests in 2001 for pupils in Year 2 were excellent and in the highest 5 per cent of all schools in the country in reading, writing and mathematics. A significant number of pupils attained at the higher level, (Level 3) in reading, writing and mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science, the number of pupils attaining at the national expectation (Level 2) was above the average and those who attained at the higher level (Level 3) was well above the average. There was barely a hair's breadth between the performance of boys and girls in reading and writing although the boys slightly outperformed the girls' in mathematics. Over recent years, pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 maintained well above average levels across the board and rose even higher in reading and mathematics in 2001. In comparison with similar schools having the same proportion of free school meals, results in mathematics were very high and only slightly lower in reading and writing, where they were still well above the average.
7. The school's continuing emphasis on literacy and numeracy and high expectations of pupils' attainments by teachers helps to maintain and improve high standards. In English and mathematics, pupils achieve very well and make very good progress whatever their level of ability. Teachers assess pupils carefully and match tasks to their different levels of ability. As a result, pupils are challenged appropriately in lessons. The school has a register for higher attaining pupils. It provides 'booster classes' for pupils and at the end of Year 5 runs a summer school during the holidays for those who are attaining just below the expected level (Level 4), to help raise their attainment.
8. Pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in speaking and listening. These skills are promoted across the whole curriculum and pupils develop their breadth and knowledge of vocabulary effectively. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils listen attentively and are confident speakers. They discuss topics freely and maturely and are able to give contrasting reasons and points of view for their opinions.
9. Pupils make very good progress in reading and standards are very high. The reading that pupils do at home as well as in school makes a good contribution to these high standards and the quick acquisition of reading skills. Pupils enjoy their reading and gain great pleasure from it, being able to discuss the books they read and different authors assuredly. They demonstrate a range of reading skills, such as skimming a text and making deductions from it, as well as scanning texts to find information. Pupils learn to select information from books and other resources proficiently.
10. Pupils learn to write quickly in the reception class and in the infants. Letter formation and fluency develop very well as a result of the very good use of a variety of teaching strategies and opportunities given to pupils. The school gives an emphasis to developing writing and pupils learn to plan their work, use their imagination and present two sides of an argument. Pupils develop a good understanding of different

styles of writing. For instance, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils learned how to create a feeling of anxiety when writing.

11. The high literacy standards that pupils acquire enable them to work well in subjects where they need to use their reading and writing skills.
12. By the time they leave the school, the well above average standards in mathematics achieved by pupils are typified by the ability to use different ways of working out and solving problems with numbers in their heads. Pupils make very good progress in mental arithmetic and by Year 6, work accurately and quickly. They have a good understanding of computations and relationships between decimals, fractions and percentages. They identify and explain the differences between equilateral and isosceles triangles accurately and know the angle sum of a triangle. They make good progress in acquiring and using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Pupils in Key Stage 2 become skilled at collecting data and representing the information in a range of graphical forms. They use their skills in numeracy well in other subjects such as science.
13. In both key stages, pupils make good progress in science and achieve well. Standards in ICT are also above average. Pupils develop their skills well in the infants and rapidly in the juniors and by the time they leave the school they have a good understanding of the use of computers for a variety of purposes. ICT is used well by teachers to support pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum, such as history, English, science and mathematics. Standards in history, music and physical education are above average and pupils attain at the expected level in geography, design technology and art and design.
14. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teachers know the pupils very well and provide adapted work at the right level for them. The work is carefully structured and based on an accurate assessment of need. Experienced and competent learning support assistants or support teachers work with the pupils and help them to learn and concentrate on the lessons. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 1 about subtraction, pupils with special educational needs worked with a learning support assistant in a small group using cutout clowns and buttons to work practically on taking numbers away from 6 and learning how to write a subtraction sum. With this help and by using smaller numbers, they were able to complete the same lesson as the rest of the class. They enjoyed their work and so worked hard. There are excellent relationships between the staff and pupils and this motivates pupils with special educational needs to work hard and increases their confidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are strengths of the school. Children under five have positive attitudes to learning. In the nursery they settle quickly into school routines. They are eager to learn, as when they used the 'Pixie', a programmable toy, in a small group, but occasionally they struggled to wait their turn. By the time they reach reception class, they are good at working independently or in a group as required. They get on well with each other and behave very well.
16. Pupils in both the infants and juniors have very good attitudes to their work. They respond very well to the activities set and sustain their interest and concentration for long periods. They are very enthusiastic learners prepared to work hard and listen carefully to their teacher. This was seen clearly in a Year 3 music lesson where the

children learnt to add a drone on a xylophone and learned a new three part song very quickly by listening intently.

17. Behaviour is very good both in classrooms and around the school. It is exemplified by how well the pupils work in literacy and numeracy lessons, whether in a teacher's focused group or when working independently. They show how well they respond to expectations and convention in assemblies, where they participate enthusiastically but are quiet and respectful at appropriate times. Lunchtime in the hall is a very pleasant social occasion. Pupils move around the school sensibly and politely and behave very well in the playground, playing good-naturedly. There has been one fixed term exclusion in the past year.
18. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils and adults get on so well together that it is a very happy school. All adults set good examples of caring and helpfulness and the children copy this in their own relationships. Pupils' personal development is very good. They show a highly developed sense of responsibility, for example, older children look after younger ones at wet break times and in the playground. They are also very good with caring for property as seen in a history lesson in Year 1, where a very old and valuable doll was not touched by the children when left on display. All the children are eager for jobs and carry them out conscientiously. In discussions they are very confident to offer opinions but respect other's points of view. The older children can also confidently conduct their own research. Pupils respond very well to the extra-curricular activities provided for them.
19. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and is satisfactory. With good punctuality and with unauthorised absence being rare, their attendance supports their very high attainment and progress.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated very well into the classes and are able to work co-operatively with other pupils. They are fully included in all work and activities and show an interest in all that they do. They join in all class and additional activities, and visits. All adults value their achievements and teachers ensure that they contribute fully to the lessons. This helps to increase confidence and self-esteem.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The overall quality of teaching is very good and it enables pupils to make very good progress and achieve very well. Out of the 49 lessons seen, 43 per cent were good, 47 per cent were very good and 6 per cent were satisfactory. Four per cent of lessons were excellent and no lessons were unsatisfactory. Based on the evidence in the previous report, this represents a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching. The amount of very good and better teaching has significantly increased. This is due to a number of factors including the excellent leadership of the new headteacher, changes in staff and improved practice as a result of systems now in place to provide professional development and increased in-service training for staff. It can also be attributed to regular monitoring of teaching undertaken in English, mathematics and other subjects lessons by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject coordinators and outside consultants. As well as using the services of its LEA and the diocese for advice, the school has recently begun a 4-year cycle of external inspection by a private educational consultant who monitors teaching and other aspects of the school's work. Teachers and teaching assistants have also had further training in ICT which has raised the level of pupils' attainments in ICT at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In addition to visiting instrumental teachers, the school employs a music specialist to work in the school

and nearly all music lessons seen were very good. In other subjects of the curriculum such as science, history, physical education, and design and technology, teaching was balanced between very good and good. Excellent teaching was seen in lessons at Year 6 in art and design and English.

22. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and pupils make good progress in their learning. It is generally good in the nursery but there is a significant proportion of very good teaching in the reception class. At times, the management of some exuberant children in the nursery, although satisfactory, does not always ensure that they are fully involved in their activities and sustain their concentration as well as they could. In both the nursery and reception classes, staff work together well as teams and successfully integrate the children into the welcoming atmosphere of the classes. They have a good knowledge of the curriculum for children of this age. The organisation of teaching sessions and the way that support staff and helpers are deployed is very effective. Teachers have a good understanding of the skills that pupils need to acquire at the different stages in their learning and provide a good level of challenge in the activities that they offer. In the reception class they assess the skills that children need to learn particularly well, building upon and extending what the pupils already know. For instance, when playing a game to find the hidden troll, the staff use the situation well to extend the children's understanding of language such as, 'beside', 'underneath', 'near' and 'opposite' and also make it fun for them.
23. The quality of teaching in the infants and the juniors is very good. The two teachers who work as a team in the large class of 31 pupils in Year 2 plan together very effectively. They know exactly which part each teacher is to take during the lessons and which different groups of pupils they are to support. This works very well and pupils benefit from the experiences and variety of expertise that each teacher brings to the lesson. Teachers' planning is very good in the reception class and in both the infants and the juniors. The aim of each lesson is made clear to the pupils and their progress is checked by teachers at the end of the lesson. The ends of lessons are used very well to draw together and reinforce what pupils have learned and in doing so to give them opportunities to explain to others. Teachers have very good subject knowledge in most curriculum areas and communicate very well with pupils, giving clear explanations and demonstrations. They use resources well to explain ideas and to motivate pupils. This was evident in a dance lesson for pupils in Year 2 when percussive instruments, such as wood blocks were used expertly by the teacher to help pupils maintain sharpness in their dance movements. In a history lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher used a collection of artefacts well to motivate and provoke pupils' thinking on how the coming of the railways affected the lives of different groups of people. This inspired the pupils and helped them in their task and following group discussions. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent in the school. Teachers trust and have high expectations of pupils' maturity and behaviour giving them good opportunities to work independently and to extend their thinking. This results in pupils trusting teachers and in return working hard to rise to these expectations. For instance, in a history lesson in Year 6, pupils had opportunities to find information independently from the Internet when researching the differences between the Olympic games at the time of the Ancient Greeks and the present day games. They worked hard to do this and it paid dividends in their improved understanding.
24. A particular strength in the teaching is the way that teachers assess pupils' work and plan future work on the basis of this to match the abilities of different groups of pupils in lessons. Pupils have individual targets for improvement. Teachers plan and provide challenging tasks for all ability groups. Lessons are planned to make the best

use of support staff and extra teachers such as the special educational needs support teacher and the headteacher who are involved in teaching pupils in Key Stage 2 on a planned and regular basis. Pupils respond very well to the small group work and support they receive and as a result make very good progress in their learning. Teachers make good use of ICT in most lessons and where possible, provide programs to develop the themes of lessons and, at the same time, extend pupils skills on the computer.

25. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The targets set in individual programmes are specific and detailed and allow teachers to plan specially adapted work at the right level. Small groups of pupils are withdrawn weekly for additional specialist teaching, usually for English but sometimes for mathematics. This is of good quality and close liaison between the class teacher and the support teacher ensures that all pupils are learning the same things. In these lessons a variety of strategies are well used to help the pupils to learn, for example individual white boards and word books. The teacher provides good individual support and praise for pupils' efforts and so the pupils become more confident in their work. They are encouraged to express their opinions and thus they are keen to offer suggestions and try out more imaginative vocabulary.
26. The teaching of literacy skills is very good and one excellent lesson was seen in developing writing skills for a group of high attaining pupils in Year 6. They learned to analyse a written extract identifying the main arguments and points of view. They then wrote a letter of their own, developing the points of an argument logically to persuade against a suggestion for banning of cats and dogs. In the infants pupils learn to read and write quickly and develop their skills of punctuation and spelling very well. Written work across all subjects of the curriculum is usually neat and well presented. The planning of literacy is a strength of the teaching and pupils' skills in English are very well developed. The teaching and development of writing is an area of priority and one in which teachers excel. For instance, in a lesson in Year 4 the teacher demonstrated and ensured the use of strategies such as, short snappy sentences, similes and powerful verbs to develop a piece of writing to create an atmosphere of anxiety. Consequently, pupils succeeded in producing writing of a high standard. In literacy lessons, teachers use their skills of questioning and probing very successfully to guide and provoke pupils' thinking and learning for themselves. They develop pupils' vocabulary well in all subjects of the curriculum and make sure that in discussions at the end of lessons, pupils use the new vocabulary they learn.
27. Teaching in mathematics is good overall. It is consistently very good in the infants. The teaching of the mental arithmetic sessions in lessons is generally very good. Teachers maintain a good pace in this part of the lesson and make sure that pupils listen carefully. They set a high level of challenge and use mathematical games, such as 'Chase the Answer', well to motivate pupils. They also use resources such as small white boards for pupils to write their answers and show them.
28. Teachers give good demonstrations to pupils in science and ensure that work is challenging. In Years 1 and 2 all pupils had opportunities to do their own investigations into light sources and into a variety of different fruits to examine seeds. They developed their skills of observation and prediction well. Pupils in Years 3 took part in investigations to find out how different surfaces such as sandpaper bubble wrap and carpet affected moving objects. As a result of effective questioning by the teacher, they were able to link the different causes and effect of their observations.
29. Homework is a regular feature of the teaching and pupils are expected to complete the homework they are set on a regular basis in accordance with the school policy.

The amount of homework increases as pupils move through the school and is used well to prepare pupils at the end of the juniors for the next stage of their education. For instance, pupils in Year 6 were given a history topic to research with the use of ICT either at home or after school in the computer suite. Discussions with older pupils show that they know exactly what is expected of them each week and when homework is to be returned. This helps pupils develop a responsible attitude to their work and a very good knowledge of their own learning.

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

30. The school meets its statutory requirements and teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum, including religious education. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the pupils throughout the school is very good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. Adequate time is given to all subjects but there are periods during the year when some subjects are not taught because they are fitted into other terms. For example, geography was not taught during the inspection.
31. There is a curriculum 'map' in place in every subject to track what is being taught. This helps to ensure that there is a systematic building of skills and contributes to the good progress that the children make.
32. Planning of the curriculum over the long and medium term is very good. It is very detailed and identifies content and purpose carefully. Work is planned for pupils of all levels of ability. This leads to a very good level of challenge that helps to promote the high and often very high standards that the pupils achieve.
33. The school has very successfully implemented the nationally recommended strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The curriculum in these subjects is of high quality and it has been adapted to meet the needs of all the pupils. In literacy a wide range of learning opportunities are offered and literacy skills are developed very well across the curriculum. For example, pupils use research skills and writing skills in developing their skills of historical enquiry very successfully. The very good teaching promotes well above average standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening. The Numeracy Strategy has helped to maintain the high standards in mathematics and ensures that pupils have a very good knowledge of number skills.
34. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and for the juniors is excellent. The activities are very well attended and appreciated. Members of staff and parents give very generously of their own time to support a wide range of regular social and cultural activities throughout the year as well as seasonal activities such as sports tournaments and music festivals. There is also provision for specialist music tuition by visiting teachers. A variety of visitors and educational visits, including a residential experience for pupils in Year 6, contribute to pupils' learning and personal development. The children who attend the summer club find it a very worthwhile and enjoyable experience.
35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal social and health education. The coordinator has produced a set of yearly plans to ensure the children cover every topic at the correct level. Staff use lessons very well to encourage pupils to express their thoughts and feelings, while becoming aware of the feelings and needs of others. The children are also made well aware of issues surrounding their personal safety and health through the science curriculum, drugs education and visits

from specialists and community experts, such as in the Year 5 involvement with 'Crucial Crew', a local community group.

36. The links the school has with the community and with partner institutions are exemplary and have a very wide impact on the pupils' academic and personal development. This is an improvement on an already strong area in the last inspection report. The links with the Parish are very close and supportive and include the sacramental preparations in Year 3, which involve much help and encouragement from parishioners as well as parents. Various business links have helped children's learning with contributions to projects as well as financial support. These include Tesco, W H Smith and the Nationwide Building Society. The local library holds displays of the children's work.
37. The school works very hard to make its own contributions to the local and wider community. It is involved in many charitable initiatives throughout the year including the local support centre for the homeless, and national and international charities such as Cafod and Age Concern. Representatives from these charities worked in the school over a period of 12 weeks with the help of local people. These experiences all enable children to learn about the needs of people in their own and wider communities, and they take part and respond very generously and energetically.
38. There are very strong links with parents and with the local secondary schools which ensures that pupils cope well with the transition to secondary education. Links with local primary schools are also strong and have increased considerably under the Beacon status which the school now enjoys. Staff training is provided for other schools and many link and cluster group training opportunities are initiated by the school and held with other schools. This increased emphasis on staff training gives opportunities for staff and pupils to have wider social and cultural experiences and to widen their circle of friends and colleagues. The school's Beacon status is very carefully managed with all activities evaluated to ensure that their impact on St. Joseph's children and staff is positive as well as providing a high quality service to the community. There is a constructive link to Trinity and All Saints College, with the school providing placements for students.
39. The school has very good links with the local education authority (LEA) and other support services within the district.
40. Equal opportunities are very good. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the curriculum. In discussion pupils said that 'the school is like one big family and no-one ever feels left out of things'. Pupils show respect for each other and mixed gender groups work and play together very successfully. Higher achieving pupils are identified by the school and are given harder work to do in most lessons. They achieve very well. In Year 6, a large group of higher attaining pupils attend a weekly lesson to further improve their literacy skills where they reach outstanding standards. This is an improvement from the last inspection. The school monitors the progress of all pupils individually and works hard to ensure that all receive the support they need to benefit fully from the curriculum.
41. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Any problems are identified at an early age and strategies are well thought out to provide help on an individual basis. The support provided is of high quality and well organised. Individual education programmes have clear targets for pupils to reach against which progress is reviewed regularly. Various initiatives help pupils with special educational needs to learn, for example, a summer school and a writing partnership scheme

where they write with a member of the local community. Pupils with special educational needs are full, respected and valued members of the school.

42. The school continues to be very successful in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and has improved its provision in teaching pupils about cultural traditions.
43. The provision for pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum is very good. The school has a very strong Catholic ethos, which is explicit in its mission statement and aims that are exemplified in the life and work of the school. It has a clear commitment to Christian values and provides many experiences that contribute very effectively to the spiritual development of pupils. As well as regular planned prayers at specific times of the day, which give pupils a quiet time for reflection, other experiences occur in work and lessons across the whole curriculum. For example, in science in Year 2 pupils were encouraged to reflect on how they grow and change during their lives. Further effective and often spontaneous opportunities are taken by teachers in history, music and art lessons in both key stages.
44. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is excellent. The headteacher takes a very strong lead in promoting pupils' awareness of a moral code. As in the last inspection, teachers and support staff set very high standards of behaviour and take every opportunity to help pupils choose right from wrong. The school is highly effective in promoting positive behaviour and in encouraging pupils to be responsible, self-disciplined and trustworthy. For instance, in an English lesson at Year 6, pupils considered moral issues and wrote letters of complaint giving reasons for and against the axing of controversial television programmes, such as 'Coronation Street'. The school has supported several charities, most recently when pupils in Year 6, aided by the school's administrative officer, organised a coffee morning to raise funds for Cancer Research. The school operates a house system that is used to recognise and reward positive contributions and the house captains are part of the newly established school council.
45. The school places great emphasis on the development of pupils' social skills. Pupils are given numerous opportunities to develop responsibility, self-confidence and independence. In lessons they are frequently given the chance to work with a partner or as part of a small group and this helps them to consider the ideas, thoughts and feelings of others and to co-operate productively when working together. For example, in dance lessons pupils are given the opportunity to reflect and comment on the work of others, with the aim of improving performance. At play and lunchtime the school has a strong emphasis on promoting social skills. The well-designed playgrounds with designated quiet areas enable children to play together well. Bats, balls and other items of small apparatus are provided for the younger pupils at lunchtime and the adult supervisors join in the fun. Older pupils from the school council visit the infant play areas on a regular basis to support younger ones. The games of football in the junior playground are played with rules designed by the pupils themselves to ensure the safety of others. School meals are good social occasions, where the kitchen staff and supervisors provide an excellent atmosphere allowing pupils choice and responsibility. All staff are very good role models in the calm, enthusiastic and thoughtful manner in which they relate to, and help their colleagues, pupils, parents and visitors. They value the pupils' achievements and develop their sense of social responsibility by successfully promoting an understanding of living and working in a community. The importance the school places on the development of mutual respect, good relationships and strong sense of community creates a very positive climate for learning.

46. Pupils are also gaining an increased understanding of the beliefs and values of peoples of a different heritage than their own through the improved provision for pupils' cultural development, which is now good.
47. The school has developed effective opportunities to increase pupils' awareness and understanding of other cultures. For example, the visit of a Zulu dance group from South Africa; workshops in Indian dancing and Hindu music; tasting food from other countries; and visits to local schools with pupils from other ethnic backgrounds through the Beacon initiative 'Faith in the Community'. Activities in subjects such as history, art, physical education and music are helping pupils develop a good appreciation of their own heritage and European culture. For example, pupils in Year 6 study the Greeks and the heritage of the Olympic games, music from other cultures is used in dance and as part of assemblies, and pupils in Key Stage 2 learn about the work of Lowry, Picasso and Van Gogh in art lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. Parents are right to be very positive about the quality of support their children receive. All staff know the pupils and their families very well and provide a caring and safe environment in which pupils are confident to ask questions or seek advice. Parents are made very welcome in the school to discuss any concerns they may have and are always given time to do so. Pupils with special educational needs and those under five are well supported and the school has very good links with external agencies, such as the educational psychologist service for when these are needed.
49. The school has recently started to use pupil profile records to ensure pupils' personal development is carefully monitored. The procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory and have ensured attendance levels are broadly in line with other primary schools. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective and are helped by the consistency with which all staff apply them and act as role models to the children. Strengths also include the use of praise and rewards, the strong school ethos motivating pupils and the partnership with the Parish and parents which ensures the children know and want to live out Catholic values and beliefs. The development of the playground and provision of play resources, including rules, is supporting pupils' very good behaviour in this area.
50. The procedures for child protection are good. The coordinator ensures that legal requirements are met and that teaching staff are aware of the correct procedures and are vigilant. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day. They receive teaching on aspects of health and on their personal safety at appropriate times in the curriculum. Regular fire drills ensure the building evacuation time is minimal in the event of an emergency. The health and safety committee have started to use risk assessment to ensure the buildings and all activities undertaken in school are safe but have not yet had training for this. Many staff have undertaken emergency first aid training as well as some achieving the full first aid qualification.
51. The procedures for assessing and monitoring the pupils' academic performance are very good overall.
52. Assessment in English and mathematics is very good and this has helped to maintain the very high standards in these subjects. Targets are set for the pupils and regular assessments measure progress effectively. In English, assessments are thorough and ongoing. Reading and writing are assessed regularly and very well. The results of these assessments are used well to plan future work. The progress of pupils is tracked to ensure that they achieve as well as they should. In mathematics,

assessments are made after each unit of work and pupils' progress is tracked over time. Results of assessments are evaluated and then used to plan lessons and tasks at the right level to move pupils forward in their understanding. Formal assessment records have been developed for the non-core subjects and, although at an early stage of development, they are proving effective.

53. The results pupils achieve are recorded on a well-developed tracking system throughout the school and this leads to identification of suitable areas for improvement. The results of the end of Key Stage tests in Years 2 and 6 are analysed and used to prioritise areas for development, such as writing. This ensures the very high standards are maintained.
54. Teachers know the pupils very well. They keep records of individual pupils' progress. This progress is monitored very well and teachers are fully aware of what each pupil needs to do to improve. All the pupils' work is marked carefully.
55. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very good. As soon as a pupil is identified as having difficulties, strategies are put in place to deal with the problem. Detailed individual programmes are written and progress towards the targets is assessed and recorded regularly, with new targets set appropriately. There are now clear criteria for placing pupils on the special educational needs register. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. The school's partnership with parents is very strong and is effective in raising pupils' achievement and personal development. The parents and careers have very positive views of the school and feel privileged to have their children at St. Joseph's. They show least satisfaction with homework and the information provided on their children's progress. They are all certain the school is well led and managed and that they would feel comfortable approaching the school with any concerns that occur. There are good pre-school links with parents who receive good information, as do parents of children with special needs.
57. The school provides 3 parents evenings each year at which parents say they receive good information. There is also a newsletter for parents sent out each half term. The end of year reports are brief and do not always indicate clearly enough the progress made or the areas for development to help the child improve. The school is already in the process of changing these reports.
58. There is a clear homework policy which shows the quantity of homework to be expected each night for each year and encourages parents to be involved with this. At the meeting before the inspection, a few parents felt the level of homework was too high in the juniors and added to the stress children experience over examinations. However, others felt the amount was just right and prepared children well for the next stage of their education. Inspection evidence shows that homework is set according to the agreed policy and that it makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Some parents would appreciate information on topics that the pupils study each term so that they can help their children better.
59. Parents know they are made welcome and encouraged to help out in school. Some parents help in the classrooms and at other times, in particular with the Year 3 sacramental programme. They accompany pupils on educational visits and assist at school events. There is a very successful parent teacher association which generously supports the work of the school through fund raising and running a full

programme of social events for parents and the community. Funds raised have recently helped towards providing additional library and computer resources.

60. Parents are informed as soon as a pupil is identified as needing extra help and they receive a copy of any arrangements the school has put in place. Books that go from home to school regularly keep parents fully informed. Parents are often involved in helping the pupils at home and this contributes to the very good progress they make.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. They are major strengths of the school and make a very notable contribution to the very high standards of pupils' attainments, their very good behaviour and attitudes to learning, and to the high quality of care and personal development of the pupils.
62. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management of the school, together with the effective support of the deputy headteacher, key stage leader for Key Stage 2 and the very effective support of the governing body. The previous headteacher provided strong leadership at the time of the last inspection and the school has gone from strength to strength over the past four years since the appointment of the current headteacher. The headteacher ensures an exceptionally clear educational direction for the school and is committed to the continuation of improvements and sustaining the very high standards that the pupils attain. At the same time, he is highly concerned to reflect its aims and values within a Roman Catholic education that embodies the ethos of the school and permeates its life and work. He works energetically and tirelessly for the benefit of the school and sets an excellent example in his own teaching and by his relationships with pupils and the very high level of concern shown for their well being. Pupils, staff and governors hold the headteacher in high regard. All parents who responded to the questionnaire and the large number who attended the meeting with inspectors agreed that the school is well led and managed.
63. In January 2001, the school was awarded Beacon status and given additional funding to develop and share its expertise with other schools. The headteacher has a very clear view of how to develop this work and has allocated the budget very effectively. For example, additional staffing at St Joseph's has enabled its teachers to share their expertise with other schools to help raise standards in writing, which is also a national priority. Evaluations from schools who have been involved with these initiatives are very positive.
64. The headteacher has established an effective team of staff with a common purpose. The deputy headteacher and team leader for Key Stage 2 support the headteacher well. They make effective contributions to the development and support of staff which has been necessary over a period with some staff changes. They are well respected by staff. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for analysing the results of annual internal testing in Key Stage 2 and reading tests and teacher assessment which helps towards tracking and maintaining standards. She has also worked successfully with the governors to produce a handbook for their reference and in helping produce the annual report to parents. This has played a major part in governors' professional development and an understanding of their role. The team leader for Key Stage 2 has responsibility for staff development throughout the school and monitors teacher's personal training and development diaries to determine how well training meets the needs of the school and the individual teacher. Both senior members of staff meet with the headteacher on a regular basis and lead weekly key stage meetings with teachers on issues such as target setting, and monitoring of the

curriculum to make it better. They have both contributed to the school development plan for their key stages.

65. Expectations of subject coordinators are high. Subject coordinators are expected to play an important part in developing and raising standards in their subjects. They have responsibilities for resources and manage a budget for their subjects as well as preparing an action plan. Within a planned programme, they monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work and lessons to ensure the subject curriculum is taught according to the guidelines for the subject. They have gained confidence in this area through training of how to monitor and observe. They report developments in their subjects to the governing body.
66. The management of special educational needs is very effective. There is a good policy in place based on the recommendations of the Code of Practice. The coordinator for special educational needs has reorganised the provision since the last inspection. She monitors and reviews pupils' individual educational plans and liaises with parents and outside agencies. Since the beginning of the year the school has employed an additional part-time teacher for special needs who teaches pupils in class and in small groups. This is very effective in raising standards for pupils and contributes to the good achievement they make.
67. The contribution of the governing body to the effective running of the school is very good. The governors take their responsibilities very seriously. They are determined that the pupils should receive the best possible education and are committed to maintaining high standards in the school within a loving and trusting atmosphere. They are very well informed and work hard at their individual and collective roles. For instance, since the last inspection they have focused on priorities such as the best use of resources. This focus has helped to provide additional teaching assistants, and specific additional teaching resources for ICT and music. The governors' committees have appropriate and well- documented terms of reference. Governors are attached to all curriculum areas and regularly review the development of them. They have a good understanding of the school's development and improvement and are fully involved in the process of evaluation of the school with the headteacher. They are fully aware of the school's performance compared to all and similar schools.
68. The school improvement plan covering a 3-year period is a very good document and clearly identifies the educational priorities of the school and how and when they are to be achieved. It is well supported by action plans for curriculum areas. It is reviewed annually.
69. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The governors' finance committee, headteacher and school administration officer collaborate very effectively to allocate resources, monitor spending and ensure good financial control. All of the recommendations made following an audit of finance by the LEA in 1998 have been addressed and implemented.
70. The school is very effectively using the principles of best value in its decision-making. The increasing attention given to monitoring school performance is a strong feature of the work of the governing body. The headteacher provides comprehensive information to enable governors and senior management to compare the school's performance with similar schools as well as the national picture. This helps them to judge the value that the school is providing.
71. In 2000, the school challenged itself to raise the attainment of its pupils and targeted a range of additional resources to achieve this aim. For example, the increased

numbers of teaching assistants in classrooms, training for staff focused on improving pupils' writing, and the creation of two computer suites.

72. The governors have also employed external independent consultants to provide an independent evaluation of the school's provision and achievements and plan a similar exercise to evaluate the senior management of the school.
73. Very effective use is made of new technology to support both management and educational provision. The new computer suites have greatly improved pupils' skills since the last inspection and provide access to the Internet. Very good use is made of information technology to support financial management.
74. The school is well staffed. The teachers offer a very good mix of experience and expertise that is used well to provide specialist subject teaching, such as in music. There is also very good provision and deployment of support staff that has had a positive impact on standards. The school has a stated commitment to its staff. It was awarded 'Investors in People' status in 2000 and is enabling both teachers and support staff to continue their professional development. All teachers keep their own professional development diaries and the school is developing appraisal systems to enhance the work of support staff. There has been very good support and induction for the newly qualified teacher who started work at the school in September. For example, the school has provided a mentor, who is a source of guidance and support, and appropriate non-teaching time to enable observations in other classes throughout the school.
75. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and meets the needs of the pupils and the curriculum. This is partly due to good management of a site which regularly causes concern about damage from a high water table. The buildings are kept very clean and in good repair. Space is well used and high quality displays in classrooms and around the school provide a pleasant and stimulating environment for learning. The playground has been developed to provide quiet areas away from more boisterous activities and the playground markings provide good opportunities for creative play. Building work will shortly be carried out to create more teaching and storage space.
76. The range and quality of learning resources across the curriculum have been improved since the last inspection and they are now good in most subjects. The resources for information and communication technology, which were unsatisfactory, are now good and support learning in ICT well. The range and quality of books in the junior library are now sufficient to support the curriculum, an improvement from the last inspection, and include an impressive number of 'big books' for whole class use. All resources are very well organised, easily accessible to staff and pupils, and used very effectively to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
77. The school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. The school has no significant areas for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	23	21	3	0	0	0
Percentage	4	47	43	6	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.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	26

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	16	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	34	34	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	97 (96)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	34	35	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	100 (100)	97 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
	2001	20	10	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (97)	97 (91)	97 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (94)	97 (94)	97 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	186
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.6
Average class size	30.8

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	524398
Total expenditure	515132
Expenditure per pupil	2037
Balance brought forward from previous year	35655
Balance carried forward to next year	44921

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.5
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	246
Number of questionnaires returned	105

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	15	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	76	23	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	81	16	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	60	24	9	0	7
The teaching is good.	87	12	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	36	8	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	17	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	12	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	66	33	0	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	83	17	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	21	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	36	1	1	3

Other issues raised by parents

A number of letters written to the registered inspector were overwhelmingly supportive and complimentary to the school and different aspects of its work.

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

79. Children begin in the 30-place nursery after their third birthday and all attend on a full time basis staying in school for lunch. After a full year in the nursery they move to the reception class in the following September. This full time nursery provision makes a significant contribution to their early development and the good progress that they make in the Foundation Stage. The school has this year begun a system where the teachers in the Foundation Stage stay with the class in both the nursery and reception year in a two-year cycle. This works well and pupils in the reception class are very well settled and confident, prepared to try out new activities and to talk about what they do.
80. Most children make very good progress in personal and social development and in developing their communication and mathematical skills in the Foundation Stage. The overall level of children's attainment on entry to the nursery is average for their ages although they show the full range of attainment. Most have had some experience of a playgroup which helps them in their personal and social development. At the time of entry to the reception class the experiences that children have gained in the nursery are reflected in their initial assessments. These show that most attain in line with the standards expected and that a significant number of pupils show above average skills of language and communication. All children, including those identified with special educational needs, make very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. In the reception class nearly all reach and many exceed the expected standards by the time they begin in Year 1.
81. The quality of teaching is good overall with a significant amount of very good teaching in the reception class. This makes a major contribution to the good progress that children make. Teachers plan well and have a good knowledge of the different areas of the curriculum recommended for children of this age. This is evident from the good quality planning that has recently been put into place over the longer term. However, the shorter term planning is more thorough in the reception class than in the nursery although in both classes it is very clear which adults take the lead and have the responsibility for activities. Assessment of children's learning is more thorough in the reception class than in the nursery and is used more effectively to inform planning of activities. Overall resources are good and accommodation is adequate and used well. Co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Although the coordinator is not directly involved in the teaching in either class, she has monitored the teaching in both classes and has a satisfactory understanding of the standards that children attain.

Personal, social and emotional development

82. The quality of teaching is good in this area so that on entry to Year 1 most pupils exceed the agreed expectations. Children feel safe, secure and trust the staff who work and play with them. As a result of good provision and good support most children acquire a good measure of confidence. In the nursery, children are friendly and many show curiosity about visitors which they articulate clearly asking, 'What are you doing?' 'Would you like a drink?' Most children play in ones or twos and are encouraged to work in small groups for their activities, such as listening to taped stories or playing with construction toys. They share jigsaws together and concentrate well on completing them, one showing another how the pieces fit together. In the nursery a small group of pupils are very exuberant in their play and

consequently noise levels sometimes become high. Adults generally intervene appropriately to reduce this, particularly on the rare occasions when any disagreement occurs between children who are working independently. In both the nursery and reception, snack times are social occasions and children know the established system for taking turns and having a snack with a friend. Children develop friendships and staff encourage good relationships well in both the nursery and the reception class with the use of praise. Older children in the reception class collaborate and often support each other, for instance, when working together on a computer program. The reception teacher made it very clear to the children when they came together at the end of a successful activity session how happy it made her to see them working so well together. In the reception class children work and become very absorbed in self-chosen activities and adult directed activities. They access and clear away their resources efficiently and promptly. They sustain their concentration well when listening to the teacher, for instance, when learning to play a game of hiding and seeking the troll.

Communication, language and literacy

83. The quality of teaching in this area is good overall. It is often very good in the reception class. Teachers plan and support well the development of children's skills for speaking and listening in both the nursery and reception. Whether working in a class or a small group, staff question children and direct their thoughts effectively. Adults in both the nursery and the reception class always acknowledge what children say so that they feel valued and their confidence in learning and their self-esteem is boosted. For instance, when children in the reception class were making sock troll puppets with the teaching assistant, she talked to them all the time and succeeded in helping them create characters for their puppets. One child said, 'Mine is happy, she has a happy mouth'.
84. Children make good progress and most children's attainments exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of the reception class. Children in the nursery find listening more difficult in a whole class group but they make good progress. They listen very well when working with staff in a small group. Children in the nursery respond to simple instructions and recognise and join in a good variety of rhymes and songs. They act out stories such as Jack and the Beanstalk independently and listen carefully to taped stories such as Elmer the Elephant. They use their initiative, for instance when listening to the tape one child said to another 'Tell you what, pass the book and we can see if it's the same.' Adults make good interventions and talk with groups of pupils as they work independently. However, on occasions when no parent or student helpers are available, it is difficult for all to have the attention they need from the two adults present.
85. Adults share their enthusiasm for books and stories with the children and plan interesting activities around them which helps the children make good progress. For instance, nursery children learn that stories and words have a meaning in focussed activities on the story of Elmer the Elephant. They learn that stories have a sequence and with the use of familiar pictures they talk about the characters and with good support from adults learn to put the pictures in the correct sequence to match the story.
86. By the time they reach the reception class, they listen with enjoyment and respond to stories enjoying the repetition of language and of the action in the story such as happened in a lesson about The Three Billy Goats Gruff. The children rose to the challenging opportunities they were given by the teacher to play the parts and

improvise the text in small groups before the whole class, even adopting the appropriate voices for the characters in the story. Children in the reception class attain well in reading where the books they read are well matched to their ability. For instance, above average readers manage to work out many words in their reading books on their own and have acquired a bank of words they recognise on sight. Average and below average readers are developing a sight vocabulary but also use their knowledge of letter sounds well to sound out simple words. They are already exceeding the Early Learning Goals expected by the end of the Foundation Stage.

87. Teachers in the Foundation Stage give many opportunities to encourage children's skills in writing. In the nursery, they develop and use a variety of writing implements and begin to gain control over pencils in their drawings, for instance of 2 ducks. By the time they leave the nursery, almost all children recognise and write their first names.
88. Children's skills in writing develop quickly in the reception class and children are well supported by adults. For instance, they write captions for pictures such as a 'Wanted' picture of a troll and in making books to retell the stories they know. Children of all abilities are given a high level of challenge in their work. More able children succeed in writing simple but interesting sentences starting with a capital letter and ending with a full stop to describe how dangerous a troll is. 'The troll will eat you...bite you, hurt you'. 'It bites and smacks'. 'It has big sharp nails'. Other children write under the adults caption and copy using recognisable letter shapes and spacing. Many pupils are on line to attain, and some will exceed, the Early Learning Goals by the time they begin Year 1.

Mathematical development

89. The quality of teaching is good in this area. All children make good progress and for some the progress is very good. Attainment overall is good and children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of reception. Teachers plan a wide range of mathematical opportunities in both classes and give many opportunities for children to talk about shapes and numbers in their play. They structure activities to give children confidence. For instance, in the nursery the teacher prepared activities for children to learn and recognise, then create simple patterns with the use of pictures of bears. They developed the idea of a simple repeating pattern well and learned to use this when creating a pattern for a hat using stencils and coloured shapes. They are familiar with counting activities and enjoy counting in a group in songs and rhymes. With good support from staff, they learn to count up to and down from five in such songs as 'Five little men in a Flying Saucer' and 'Five Brown Teddies'. Some can recite numbers up to ten. In the reception class, nearly all children are confident with numerals to ten and many count beyond. They are beginning to count in twos and to learn that many objects occur in twos. Lessons and activities in this area of learning are very well prepared and planned and the teacher uses a variety of different ways to help the children understand. For instance, in a demonstration for the first time of adding and recording the answer of objects to five, the teacher and assistant involved the children fully and make it interesting and fun for them. They looked at different ways of making five and are beginning to develop an understanding of addition through practical activities, which they learn to record as $3 + 2$ makes 5 and $2 + 3$ makes 5. Teachers use practical experiences well. An example of this was when children in the reception class sorted shoes into pairs. They developed a good understanding of twos and made good progress. They learned that one more is three and extended the activity to learn to sort in a group of three. Children in the reception class make good progress in recognising numerals up to five and writing them correctly.

90. In the reception class, children are beginning to develop skills in measuring using a ruler, tape or string. Staff work very systematically to reinforce vocabulary, assess understanding and pose questions to move children on in their learning. Opportunities to explore the properties of sand and water and measuring dry items, such as pasta, establish an understanding of comparing different ways of measuring and the appropriate vocabulary, such as light / heavy, full / empty, more / less.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91. The teaching is good in this area. All children make good progress and by the time they reach Year 1 they are likely to exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. The progress that children make owes much to the consistent provision of practical experiences to which they can return to explore and reinforce their learning as well as the more structured opportunities provided by teachers. For instance, in the nursery, three boys playing in the black inky and cold water at the water trough and discovering hidden treasure remarked how cold the water was. When asked why, they knew that it was the ice cubes that were making it cold and that they were disappearing into the water as they melted. ICT is developed well by teachers in both the nursery and reception classes. When working with an adult to control a programmable toy, children in the nursery learned that they could control it to move forwards and backwards by pressing the correct button. Others learned and were helped to understand that it was necessary to press the cancel button to clear the memory before giving another command. Two children in the reception class were confident in working independently on a computer program for colouring a picture of Smudge the dog. They used a cursor and a mouse accurately to choose the colours they wanted to use. In the reception class children explored the suitability of different materials for making shoes and how they were made in the past. They explored the different types of materials which could be used to make a bridge and which materials made the strongest and safest bridges. Activities were planned well to link in with other areas of the curriculum such as the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' and this made them more meaningful to the children.

Physical development

92. The quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory. Most children make sound progress in the Foundation Stage and attain broadly in line with the Early Learning Goals. They have daily opportunities to handle pencils, paintbrushes and scissors, and to manage small construction equipment. This helps to develop their manipulative skills and concentration appropriately. Opportunities are built in by teachers into both self-chosen and adult-directed activities so that children have well-judged intervention from staff to directly teach strategies to improve control. For instance, when children learned to operate a remote controlled car in the nursery, they were carefully directed by the teacher to keep pressing their thumb on the button to keep it moving. Good use is made of the secure outdoor area and the resources to develop skills by playing on larger equipment such as wheeled toys when the weather permits. Children in both the nursery and the reception class also have regular opportunities to use the hall for physical activities. Reception children use small equipment such as balls in different ways to try to keep them under control. They are given opportunities to practise and refine their skills and encouraged to work in pairs by throwing, catching and kicking balls to each other.

Creative development

93. The teaching is very good in this area of children's development. Teachers give children a wide variety of activities to develop their creativity both in the nursery and in the reception class. By the time they leave the reception class children attain in line with the early learning goals. Teachers in both classes plan both structured and independent opportunities for children to explore, express their ideas and feelings and experiment with a range of materials. Most children enjoy using malleable materials, paints, crayons and making collages and objects such as party hats and troll models with the use of glue, fabrics, paper and wool. Children in the nursery enjoy working with play dough and wet corn flour and pasta. They take significant pleasure and surprise in discovering treasure hidden in black, inky water in the water trough. They make good progress in acting out their roles in the giant's kitchen for their play of the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. In the reception class children make good progress with their skills of modelling in clay, printing patterns and painting pictures. For instance, they achieved well and showed pride in their finished models of a troll made from paper and card embellished with coloured wool. All children build up a good repertoire of songs and rhymes. They sing together tunefully, learning and memorising words quickly. For instance, children in the nursery sing challenging phrases at a good pace and add actions well, such as, 'He looked left and right but he didn't like the sight'. Children in the reception class express themselves imaginatively as different characters using the stimulus of different costumes chosen from a wide range available to them. They work alongside each other discussing their characters and choices. A parent helper provided well-timed intervention to extend and improve the quality of the imaginative play- acting and helping pupils with their ideas of how a 'cat' and a 'fairy' should move.

ENGLISH

94. Standards in English are well above average overall and very high in Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are higher than those achieved by similar schools. An exceptionally high percentage of pupils in Years 2 and Year 6 reached the higher standards in reading and writing in the 2001 national tests. Targets set by the school for 2002 are slightly lower than those for 2001 but are realistic, reflecting the number of pupils in Year 6 who have special educational needs. Pupils of all abilities are achieving very well. These improvements are because of the very effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school; teachers have high expectations of pupils and set demanding tasks which the pupils respond to by working very hard. The extra coaching provided for lower and higher achieving pupils is successful in raising their standards. Younger pupils are given a thorough grounding in the basic skills needed to read and write well. As they get older they are given an interesting and varied range of writing tasks to improve their skills further. Reading is improved for all pupils by involving the parents in helping pupils at home. As pupils get older a good selection of books helps to maintain their interest and progress. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills and pupils are encouraged to share ideas and justify opinions. Good use is made of assessment results to find out where there are weaknesses and to do something about them.
95. Lower achieving pupils and pupils with special educational needs do very well. Their difficulties are assessed, they have work that is adapted to meet their needs and they receive extra support from very capable learning support assistants and support teachers. Small groups of lower achieving pupils are withdrawn on a weekly basis for a literacy lesson with a specialist teacher. They complete the same work as the rest of the class, but within a small group, where work is carefully structured to improve

reading, writing and speaking with individual help. These lessons are successful in improving skills and increasing confidence. Higher achieving pupils also do very well. Challenging work is planned for them in all lessons. A group of higher achieving pupils in Year 6 are withdrawn for an extra session. This is very successful in extending their literacy skills and, as a result, the standards they achieve are outstanding.

96. Standards of speaking and listening are high and all pupils achieve well. These skills are fostered in all subject areas as well as in literacy lessons, pupils being encouraged to speak about their ideas and listen carefully to others. In the infants imaginative ideas arise out of discussions about what they read. For example, in Year 2 pupils enjoy the story 'Asha in the Attic'. The teacher sets the scene well and pupils listen attentively with their eyes closed while she describes going into an empty old house. They are very interested and keen to contribute their own examples and acknowledge that they would feel scared. In response to well-directed questions, they learn to use descriptive words such as 'creaky' and 'dusty'. They speak clearly and audibly most using well-formed sentences when describing their work or expressing their opinions.
97. Pupils continue to develop as competent speakers in Key Stage 2. By Year 6, their answers show that they listen carefully to the teachers and to each other and take their views into consideration. They discuss their work using a wide vocabulary and speak clearly and confidently in well-constructed sentences. For example, in Year 5 pupils discuss a letter, supposedly from the head teacher, proposing a ban on television and computer use on weekdays. This stimulates their interest and provokes a strong response from the pupils who discuss maturely their ideas showing an understanding of the use of emotive language to be persuasive. Higher achieving pupils demonstrate an ability to listen and talk with assurance when they identify and discuss the main points in an argument, in response to a letter suggesting that cats and dogs should be banned.
98. Standards of reading are very high and all pupils achieve well. In the infants the higher and average achieving pupils enjoy reading and read fluently, accurately and confidently, using different ways to tackle unfamiliar words. Lower achieving pupils read more slowly and with some errors, but extra help is given and they are able to use their knowledge of letter sounds to pronounce new words. Regular practice, both at home and in school, enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Home-school reading record books are completed regularly and provide a good record of the progress being made.
99. Standards of reading continue to be very high in the juniors. Pupils become fluent and accurate readers who read for pleasure. They read with expression, tackle unfamiliar words well and understand what they are reading. A love of reading is fostered in school. For example the pupils are in reading groups of similar abilities. Every week they read a book together with the teacher and discuss it. All pupils gain great pleasure from this and look forward to it. They discuss favourite authors and explain why they like or dislike them. Pupils know the library classification and are adept at using this to find books for independent research. Higher achieving pupils in Year 6 are able to select the relevant points from texts, using deduction appropriately, and find and organise information from a variety of sources.
100. Standards of writing are very high and pupils of all abilities achieve well. In the infants teachers use a variety of strategies well to teach writing. For example, pupils use individual white boards to jot down how they think words are spelt before working out the accurate spelling with the teacher. This is successfully getting pupils to become

more fluent with handwriting and to more accurately relate sounds to letters. They retell stories, write instructions and invent words as well as stories. They write imaginatively and at length and take care with their choice of words. Lower achieving pupils retell a story simply and receive extra help and practice to form letters accurately. However, they too use language imaginatively. For example, one pupil in Year 2 writes 'The two ugly sisters were mean and nasty, and called Snorter and Ugly.' Handwriting is accurate and legible and full stops and capital letters are usually used correctly.

101. Standards of writing in the juniors are very high. The oldest pupils' writing is carefully planned and often fluent and accomplished. They use words imaginatively. For example a Year 6 pupil writes, 'The girls' feet were soaking with dew and their heads beaded with perspiration'. They can write persuasively and argue their case well. They are able to present both sides of an argument giving reasons and write a formal letter of complaint. Spelling and punctuation is usually accurate and handwriting is joined-up, clear and fluent. Higher achieving pupils achieve very well and are able to write in interesting ways for different audiences, using carefully chosen words for effect. For example, 'I am writing in response to your outrageous letter.' Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and they are able, with help, to take a position on an issue, in this case, mobile phones for children, and to write to justify it.
102. Literacy skills are developed very well in other areas of the curriculum. All through school pupils are encouraged to read a variety of materials and older pupils use the Internet, encyclopaedias and atlases to research geography and history projects. In other subjects, for example in mathematics and science, pupils learn to use the correct vocabulary. Computers are regularly used for the presentation of English work.
103. Teaching is very good throughout the school. Lessons take place in a good humoured atmosphere of mutual respect which encourages pupils to speak out confidently, to be prepared to try new things and to want to work hard. Pupils' behaviour is very good, sometimes excellent, and they are highly motivated by the work set and the brisk pace of lessons. For example, in Year 1 the teacher's obvious enthusiasm stimulates the pupils interest in 'The Gruffalo' and they join in enthusiastically, using puppets. Teachers plan thoroughly for their lessons and, because they assess pupils regularly, they are able to provide tasks that build on what they already know and challenge pupils of all abilities to make progress.
104. The marking of pupils' work is particularly good as it lets them know not only what they have done right and wrong but also how they can improve. Pupils have their own targets to reach and these are discussed with them regularly so they are aware of how well they are doing.
105. Teachers use a variety of methods very well to help pupils improve their work. For example, they plan stories and reports on sheets that help them to think about the different parts of the story before they write and they use individual white boards to jot down their ideas. They are reminded to use a dictionary or to consult a word list. Learning support assistants provide very good help, especially for pupils with special educational needs, who benefit greatly. Homework is regularly set and supports the teaching well.
106. The coordinator is competent and very effective and has initiated and maintained a range of strategies that have improved teaching since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

107. The standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Year 2 in the tests taken in the Year 2001, were very high in comparison with the national average and also very high when compared with similar schools. The number reaching the higher Level 3 is also very high. These very high standards are built upon in Key Stage 2, and the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, in the tests taken in the Year 2001, were also very high in comparison to the national average and when compared with similar schools. The number reaching the higher Level 5 is also very high. The end of year assessments, which are completed by the school, indicate that pupils are on track to maintain these results in the coming years.
108. There are a number of reasons for these consistently high results. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very successfully implemented throughout the school. Staff have received training and are familiar with the new recommendations. Lessons are planned very effectively and there is always a high level of challenge for all the pupils. What the pupils are expected to learn in the lessons is always shared with them at the beginning. The subject leader is very effective and has worked well to maintain the standards. For example, she has monitored teaching and has led training for staff. Results of tests are carefully analysed to see where the pupils could achieve more. Resources for the subject are very good.
109. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in developing their number skills in relation to their abilities. This is because the teachers plan work at the right level for them and they receive good support from the learning support assistants. For example, in a very good lesson seen in Year 1, the learning support assistant supported the pupils well when they were learning to write numbers the right way round, using the number caterpillar. This enabled them to take part fully in the lesson and the praise and encouragement they received raised their self-esteem. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls throughout the school.
110. Pupils achieve very well in the infants and they make good progress in all classes. Teachers know the children well and have formed good relationships with them. This motivates the pupils to work hard. Challenging tasks are set for the pupils. For example, in Year 2 the more able pupils were challenged to develop their knowledge of converting analogue time to digital time. They worked with good concentration and application to complete the task. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of number skills. They can add and subtract accurately and can halve two digit numbers mentally. They recognise and can name common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, such as cube, cylinder and sphere.
111. Pupils' good progress and attainment is continued throughout the juniors. Throughout the Key Stage, work is always well matched to the abilities of all the pupils. This gives them confidence to complete the tasks and achieve well. For example, in Year 4 all the pupils produced a large amount of well-presented work when they were using different strategies to add two and three digit numbers together using a one hundred square. By the end of Year 6, pupils can add, subtract, multiply and divide large numbers quickly and accurately. They have a very good knowledge of the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. Pupils are given many opportunities to work out word problems and problems involving real life situations. For example, a group of higher attaining pupils in Year 6 were making very good progress solving problems when being supported by a learning support assistant. The pupils were identifying the relevant parts of the problems to enable them to calculate the answers quickly.

112. The quality of teaching is very good overall. A particular strength of all the lessons is the mental arithmetic session at the beginning. Teachers use a variety of resources to ensure that all the pupils are involved in it. The pupils respond eagerly to the questioning and are keen to show their answers using their whiteboards. Such as when Year 5 pupils were doubling two digit numbers. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and ask challenging and open-ended questions to consolidate the pupils' knowledge and extend their learning. Lessons move at a good pace and the activities the teachers plan ensure that the pupils remain interested and sustain concentration throughout the lessons. Teachers manage the pupils very well and this leads to a very pleasant classroom atmosphere which is conducive to the very good learning which takes place. Pupils enjoy mathematics and always behave very well in every lesson. All areas of the mathematics curriculum are taught and many opportunities are given throughout the school for the pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge in the use and application of mathematics. ICT is used to support the learning in mathematics and in most lessons pupils use classroom computers. Programs are carefully selected to help the pupils develop their mathematical skills.
113. The coordination and management of the subject is very good. The coordinator gives in-service training to staff and other schools, monitors the quality of teaching and planning and manages the mathematics budget.

SCIENCE

114. Standards are good at both Key Stage 1 and 2. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection and consistent with the most recent national test results. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in extending their scientific knowledge and understanding.
115. By the age of seven, the pupils have developed a good fund of knowledge and understanding of science through carefully prepared structured tasks. They know that light comes from many sources and that darkness is due to no light. They know that plants need particular conditions to survive and that living things grow and reproduce. They understand that animals grow and change. As a result of good guidance by teachers and staff, pupils are able to record observations in appropriate ways and use simple charts and tables.
116. By the age of eleven, the pupils have built successfully on earlier learning and developed a secure knowledge of scientific ideas and concepts. They know how sound and light travels and the effects of different forces. They can explain the structure and function of the human body and can identify the parts of a plant. They have learnt about reversible and irreversible change and soluble and insoluble materials. They know about magnetism, friction, air resistance and other forces. They use their mathematical skills very effectively for appropriate measurements, such as Newtons, to measure forces in their investigations. They use correct vocabulary and use their literacy skills well to write accurately about these facts.
117. The teaching of science in both key stages is good. Lessons are well planned and objectives are shared with pupils. As a result, all pupils have very positive attitudes to science. The good planning of lessons provides appropriate levels of challenge for pupils of all abilities and allows good progress to be made.
118. Demonstrations are well organised and resources are used effectively. For example, in Year 3 a good range of different surfaces was supplied for a toy car to roll over.

This enabled pupils to make generalisations like 'The van travels slower on rough surfaces'. In the same lesson, well-designed worksheets guided pupils through their observations of the investigation. In a lesson in Year 2, the teacher used a good range of fruit and pupils were given a good structure for recording their written observations to show what different seeds were like. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to make predictions. For example, asking pupils to guess what the seed would be like before the fruit was cut or in Year 6, what would happen when sugar, flour or sand was mixed with warm water.

119. In most lessons pupils use the classroom computer confidently, either with interactive CD-ROM's to support their learning or to word process their observations.
120. All teachers have good subject knowledge that, combined with good planning, high expectations and skilful classroom management, enables pupils to exceed the expected levels for their ages. However, in Key Stage 2, the balance of activities is heavily weighted towards developing pupils' knowledge and understanding which limits the time spent on individual investigative activity. The high use of worksheets restricts the opportunities for pupils to record their findings in their own way. However, in Key Stage 1, there are some good examples of scientific enquiry and the development of pupils' independent recording skills. For example, in Year 1 pupils are able to record what they found out after looking into boxes with and without light. As a child in Year 1 said 'Investigations are when we are trying to find out something we don't know'.
121. In, Year 2 pupils used a chart to record observations, whilst carrying out a survey of the school grounds for different plants and animals. In Key Stage 2, however, pupils are capable of taking more responsibility for planning and carrying out investigations and make their own choices, decisions and conclusions.
122. The quality of subject leadership is good and the science curriculum is broad and fully meets the requirements of the national curriculum. The coordinator has worked with staff to create a well-designed scheme of work and has opportunities to monitor pupils' work and observe lessons. There are good resources to support teaching and learning. Systems to assess and record pupils' progress are now in place.

ART AND DESIGN

123. The school has maintained its standards in art since the previous inspection. Although only two lessons were seen during the inspection, evidence was available from displays and from class portfolios of work from the past year and teachers' planning to indicate that standards of attainment in art are typical of those found in most schools. Art contributes well to pupils' cultural development. It helps them appreciate and understand their own local environment as well as learning about well-known Western artists and sculptors such as Henry Moore, and painters such as Van Gogh, Lowry and Picasso. In addition, pupils visit local galleries to study painters' work and take part in local exhibitions.
124. Teachers give pupils frequent and regular experiences in art, helping them to learn at a steady rate through the infants and the juniors. They use the nationally recommended programme of work and this ensures that pupils develop their skills in art sequentially. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well on their experiences in the Foundation Stage. Sound teaching encourages pupils to explore different techniques, media and skills and to develop an awareness of contrasts in textures and colours. For instance, pupils in Year 2 have produced pictures using different paint, pastel and printing techniques. They draw and paint lively and colourful pictures and make

observational drawings of their friends and learn to enlarge pictures from photographs. In Year 1 pupils explore texture and colour when successfully designing and making fabric and paper collages. Pupils in the juniors extend their experiences further to produce paintings of landscapes and pictures of industrial scenes in the style of famous painters, such as Lowry. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, based on the work of Henry Moore, pupils modelled using clay to create an abstract form. The lesson built very well on what pupils already knew about abstract art and gave them an opportunity, in a short time, to create a form without detail but which expressed a meaning. At the end of the lesson, they evaluated their work and that of others sensitively and were able to say what the forms and shapes meant to them.

125. Of the two lessons seen, teaching was good in one and outstanding in the other. In both lessons a strong feature was the teacher's own knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject and for developing pupils' understanding of abstract painting and use of form and colour to provide them with a good starting point for their own work. As a result pupils in one lesson were able to create interesting pictures in the style of Picasso using either an art computer program or paints and in the other lesson a model in clay in the style of Henry Moore. In both lessons pupils made good steps in their understanding of abstract art. When teaching was outstanding the teacher showed very good expertise in the subject and communicated a difficult concept to the pupils at a lively pace, instilling confidence with the use of good vibrant demonstrations for instance of how body language can convey meaning and feelings. The relationships between pupils and the teacher were excellent and the lesson enabled excellent learning to take place. The lesson was a very good example of thorough planning, good management of time, positive management of pupils and organisation of resources and very good deployment of a supporting teacher.
126. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The coordinator is new to the post this term but is building well on the previous good management of the subject. Displays are attractive and well organised to improve the learning environment for the pupils. An action plan is in place for the current year.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. Standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those seen in most schools. The school has recently created a scheme of work based on national guidance and is keen to develop pupils' capabilities in design and technology. However, the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements meant that it was not possible to observe a full range of lessons at both key stages. Only one lesson, in Key Stage 1, was observed and therefore no overall judgements are possible on the quality of teaching.
128. In the lesson that was observed, the teaching was good. It was part of a series of lessons on puppets. Teachers and the voluntary assistant co-operated well to help pupils construct their puppets using a variety of materials. The good level of interaction also contributed positively towards the pupils' skills in speaking and listening. Pupils enjoyed the construction of both the Chinese stick puppets and the glove puppets and, during this activity, developed their understanding of how different materials are suited for different purposes.
129. Discussion with pupils in Years 5 and 6, and scrutiny of their work, showed that older pupils also enjoy assignments where they design and make products. Pupils in Year 5 have constructed musical instruments from a range of materials. For example, shakers using plastic cartons and rice, small drums from cartons and plastic, and a

guitar from wood, plastic and elastic. All the instruments had been decorated using the pupils' own designs and choice of media, such as paint, tissue and paper collage.

130. Year 6 pupils had designed and made model buildings. For example, two girls had collaborated to make a model kennel. Their making skills were good, as they had used a variety of tools well, and cut and joined wood and stiff plastic sheet, using a glue gun, to produce a well constructed model. The pupils were very enthusiastic and were able to appraise their products and suggest how they could be improved.
131. However, pupils' designing skills are not particularly well developed and more opportunities need to be given to them to learn these skills. This would challenge pupils to use information sources, produce and explore ideas and consider alternative solutions should difficulties arise.
132. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines for the curriculum. The coordinator is knowledgeable and from monitoring pupils' work and teachers' planning has a clear overview of the provision and standards in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

133. Standards reached by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are similar to those in most schools and pupils of all abilities are achieving satisfactorily. No teaching of geography was observed during the inspection. This is because geography is taught in blocks of time during the year rather than weekly. The planning for geography is thorough and gives teachers clear guidelines as to what to teach in each year group. It stresses appropriately the teaching of geography skills such as using maps and developing research skills, and incorporates the use of information technology. The coordination of geography is satisfactory. Assessment sheets have been introduced but are too recent to have yet had an impact on standards. A portfolio of work is being put together to provide examples of pupils' work at different levels.
134. In Year 1 pupils walk around the area to study features of the local environment and draw a simple map. In Year 2 they study rainforests and learn to use geographical vocabulary to describe a place. They write imaginatively about going for a walk in the rainforest, a good support for literacy. They start to understand the threat to the rainforests and to the people who live in them.
135. In Year 3, pupils start to answer questions using detailed maps of the United Kingdom and use compasses to locate north, south, east and west. By Year 6 pupils are able to use aerial photographs, modern and old maps of the local area to describe what can be seen and how land has been used. They describe the landscape in geographical terms, for example a semi-rural area. They study environmental issues such as quarrying and vandalism and use co-ordinates and scales competently. They use a wide variety of sources to research information independently. For example, they use the Internet, CD ROMS, atlases, maps, reference books and encyclopaedias well. The very good literacy skills that pupils in Year 6 demonstrate, allow them to make the most of the resources available and work independently.

HISTORY

136. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach standards in history that are above those typical for their age and are similar to those at the previous inspection. By the time they are seven, they are developing an understanding of aspects of the past well beyond

living memory, including that of famous people such as Boudicca. In Year 6, pupils gain good knowledge of different aspects of British history as well as of life in ancient Egypt and Greece. They understand some of the characteristics of societies as different as those existing at the time of the Ancient Greek civilisation, the Vikings, Tudors and Victorian Britain. In Year 2 they develop empathy with ordinary people during the Second World War and begin to appreciate the impact of past generations on their own lives as when they study Remembrance Sunday.

137. Teachers use their good knowledge of history and resources imaginatively to motivate and interest pupils. They show pupils how to find out information from a range of sources such as videos, books and objects from the past. A strength of the teaching is how teachers use educational visits and visitors into school and events in school such as a 'Victorian Day' to bring the subject to life for the pupils. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 used their visits to museums such as the Jorvik museum in York as a stimulus for their work on the Vikings. Visitors into school have included visits by the local library staff and grandparents and older people in the community who have talked to pupils about their lives in the 'Olden Days'. Pupils in Year 5 also gained a good understanding of life in Victorian Britain as they handled objects used by different groups of workers in those times. They discussed how the coming of the railways during the Industrial Revolution affected different groups of people such as farmers, coach drivers and servants. The discussion became meaningful to them and clearly had a positive impact on their understanding of what it meant for working people to live through those times of change. Pupils' skills of empathy were developed as they described the effect of losing jobs and the difficulties for businesses that would have arisen. This work and discussion is of a high standard. Pupils in Year 6 develop a good knowledge of the Ancient Greeks and focus particularly well on the comparisons between the ancient Olympic games and the modern day Olympics. They research for themselves with the use of encyclopaedias on the computer and the use of the Internet to compare the modern and ancient games.
138. The quality of teaching seen in lessons is good overall with very good teaching in Years 1 and 5. Pupils in Year 1 begin to understand about the passage of time. As they compare their own toys with those of their parents and grandparents they make the distinction between the simple wooden and metal toys of the past and their own plastic, and often sophisticated toys. A good feature in this lesson was that tasks were provided for pupils of different abilities and provided plenty of challenge for the more-able pupils. Pupils in Year 3 were interested as their teacher told them about Boudicca and talked about life in Britain 2000 years ago, exploring the type of evidence that could be used to find out about peoples' lives in the past as a source of information. They knew how to access computer programs to find relevant information. A less successful feature of some lessons was that activities and tasks did not use historical enquiry as deeply as they might. However, tasks made good contributions to pupils' literacy skills such as when pupils in Year 4 wrote a letter to give reasons why they did not want to join the crew of a sailing ship in Tudor Times. In Year 5, the teacher's very good knowledge of the Victorian era and her effective questioning, prompting and explaining skills, gave pupils a good insight to this period and the contentiousness at the time of the coming of the railways to Britain.
139. A good feature of the teaching is the high standard of presentation expected from the pupils. Books are neat with many detailed illustrations of objects from the past, so enhancing their literacy skills. Pupils are given opportunities to express their opinions and feelings about the past. For instance, Pupils in Year 6 relate a drawing of Medusa and label it imaginatively, using phrases such as 'an evil woman at the edge of the world, snake hair hissing, unseen power and evil eyes'. Teachers use ICT as a

resource for developing lessons. They use extracts from videos judiciously and scan pictures of tickets of one of the earliest modern Olympic games.

140. Management of the subject is good. The coordinator has improved the range of resources since the last inspection and has organised the use of the local museum for borrowing resources for specific topics. History makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development through the study of ancient and modern civilisations where moral and cultural aspects are studied. The school has adopted the new nationally recommended scheme of work and assessment is in place. Pupils' work and teachers' planning is monitored regularly and there are plans for the coordinator to observe how well it is working in the classroom.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

141. During the inspection no whole class lessons in ICT were seen, but pupils were observed working in a group on computers in the ICT suites and also working on classroom computers. Scrutiny of teachers' planning, displays of work and discussions with pupils and staff provided further information.
142. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special education needs, make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below those expected and the pupils made slow progress.
143. A computer suite has now been provided in each key stage and all pupils have access to the computers each week. Resources are of a high standard and the curriculum is now better organised to provide progressively more challenging experiences for the pupils. There is now systematic teaching of specific skills in using computer programs and functions.
144. At both key stages the pupils are well motivated, behave sensibly and responsibly and show much enjoyment in their progress when they are using the computers. They make good progress in learning to handle the computer mouse and in using the keyboard and the different functions on the screen. By the end of Year 2, the pupils know how to use a range of programs with confidence. Year 2 pupils perfect their word processing skills to write sentences on the computer using capital letters and full stops. They use the keyboard accurately and are able to delete mistakes and edit their work competently. In Year 1, pupils' use of control technology is developed when they are using a programmable toy to perform different functions.
145. As the pupils progress through Key Stage 2, their skills continue to improve rapidly. They understand and use the language of ICT as they talk about what they are learning. They know how to locate information using the Internet. Year 3 pupils were using the computers to access information to assist them in their topic of 'The Romans'. Year 6 pupils know how to use and produce spreadsheets. They also produced a graph from the spreadsheet and inserted this in a word processing document. After copying and pasting their work, they were then able to print it. Word processing skills are developing successfully and pupils can change the font to alter the style of text before printing their work.
146. The teaching of ICT is good throughout the school. Teachers plan activities thoroughly for the pupils and use classroom assistants and parent helpers well to help support the different groups when they are working on the computers. They make good use of questions to assess the pupils' understanding. The activities are

always well organised and have sufficient challenge to motivate the pupils to work hard and remain interested in the tasks.

147. Although the coordinator has only been in post for a short length of time, she manages the subject effectively. She has considerable expertise and gives colleagues a good level of support.
148. ICT is used very well to support the learning in other subjects, particularly English and mathematics for example. In almost every mathematics lesson pupils worked on programs in the classroom to support the work being taught. In the science lesson in Year 3, pupils were using an interactive program to support their work on forces. Year 5 pupils were practising reading music using a computer program and then composing their own pitched melodies on the computer.

MUSIC

149. Standards of attainment are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils make good progress throughout the school. These standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.
150. When all the children are together in assemblies, they enjoy singing and all join in. Most pupils sing well unaccompanied and can follow a melodic tune. They sing enthusiastically and produce a sound that has good quality and tone.
151. Pupils enjoy music and take part in the lessons enthusiastically. They behave well and maintain good self-discipline when handling the instruments, producing sounds only at the appropriate moment. They clap and recognise complicated rhythms and warm up their voices by copying the actions of the teacher. Good examples were seen in Years 1 and 2 when the pupils copied the different sounds and rhythms that the teacher demonstrated. Opportunities are given for the pupils to compose their own music. For example, Year 6 pupils composed a melodic repeating phrase to accompany the rest of the class who were performing a layered rhythm phrase. In Key Stage 2, pupils sing confidently in two, three and even four parts. Specific skills are taught well. For example, Year 5 pupils, who were singing a familiar song, were taught how to phrase the music and breathe in the correct places.
152. Music teaching is very good throughout both key stages. The expertise and enthusiasm of the specialist music teacher has contributed greatly to the increased standards, but the subject is taught very well in all the classes. The coordinator manages the subject effectively and has provided a scheme of work which has given the staff confidence to teach the subject and which ensures that all skills are taught in a systematic way. There is a wide variety of good quality resources which have been provided. The extra curricular recorder group for both boys and girls is helping them to become familiar with standard musical notation and reading music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. During the inspection only a limited number of physical education lessons were observed, and these were all in dance. In these lessons there was a high proportion of very good teaching, which is an improvement from the last inspection. Pupils' achievement continues to be above average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, as it was in the last inspection. There is a well-planned programme of physical education in the school that ensures all pupils have the appropriate range of activities and ensures good progress in pupils' work. Games, gymnastics, and dance are all taught throughout the year. Swimming is taught in Year 3 at the local swimming baths, so

all pupils leave the school able to swim 25 metres, and many further than this. There is a residential visit in Year 6, when pupils can take part in outdoor and adventurous activities, such as kayaking. As part of its Beacon School activities, the school has developed an orienteering programme for pupils, which benefits pupils from St Joseph's and other local schools. The school offers a wide range of after-school clubs in sport and many of the school teams have been successful in local inter-school competition.

154. In the dance lesson observed in Key Stage 1, the teaching was very good. Pupils were encouraged to respond to the music and reflect the changes to the beat in their dance sequences. They were able to watch each other's work, offer suggestions, evaluate their own work and then improve it. Pupils worked very hard and clearly enjoyed their activities.
155. The dance lessons in Key Stage 2 allowed the pupils to perform patterns and movements from English and Greek country dances. Again these were well-planned lessons, displaying good subject knowledge and high expectations by the teachers. In both lessons children performed confidently and enthusiastically. Both lessons challenged children to work together, thinking about ways to improve the quality of their performance. For example, in Year 3 when asked to comment on other children's dancing, one child said, 'Kate and Michael were good at swinging each other round'. Teachers successfully ensure that all pupils participate fully and that boys and girls work together well.
156. Leadership of the subject is good. The enthusiastic subject coordinator has led the development of the new scheme of work that has very good medium term plans to guide staff. The coordinator has had the opportunity to monitor provision of physical education throughout the school and is keen to support colleagues developing their expertise. Resources are satisfactory but access to them is difficult in the storeroom in the hall.