

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Reddish, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106106

Headteacher: Mrs M Brown

Reporting inspector: Mrs OM Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 29 April – 2 May 2002

Inspection number: 195414

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Broomfield Drive
South Reddish
Stockport

Postcode: SK5 7DR

Telephone number: 0161 480 4736

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr David Matthews

Date of previous inspection: 9 – 12 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10859	Mrs O Cooper	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13786	Mrs S Walsh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30243	Mrs A Heakin	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education The Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27741	Mrs C Weaver	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography History Physical education English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is a small Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School serving the Reddish area of Stockport. There are currently 184 pupils on roll, 93 boys and 91 girls. Virtually all pupils are white and of United Kingdom heritage, so none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average, although none have formal statements. Most have moderate learning or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Overall attainment on entry is broadly average, although a wide ability range is represented. The school has experienced severe disruption in staffing due to long-term absences and difficulty in finding temporary teachers available for a term or more. The pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were being taught by temporary teachers during the inspection period.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that is providing a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils in challenging circumstances. By the time pupils transfer to their secondary education current standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in some year groups have been affected by the staffing difficulties, but the current situation is better and most pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. This is because the headteacher provides good leadership and other permanent staff have followed her lead and willingly taken on extra responsibilities to keep the school moving forward. In addition, the teaching is very good in the Reception class, good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory overall, the pupils have good attitudes to their work, behave well in lessons, are well cared for and most want to learn. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The children make a very good start to their education in the Reception class.
- Teaching is very good in the Reception class and good in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards are above average in information and communication technology by the end of Year 2 and in physical education by the end of Year 6.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to school and attendance rates are good.
- The provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6, to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in design and technology and geography by the end of Year 6.
- The marking and presentation of pupils' work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in June 1997. Overall standards by the end of Year 6 have risen faster than found nationally and in recognition the school has received an achievement award in each of the last two years. The declining trend in standards at the end of Year 2 has been halted and improvement is now evident. The overall quality of teaching has improved even with the staffing problems, but could improve further. The action taken to overcome the weaknesses identified in the previous report has been largely successful. The ventilation throughout the school is now satisfactory, with opening windows in most class bases. The deputy headteacher relinquished his responsibilities and subsequently retired, but because of the level of staff absence there is further work

to be done in developing the subject co-ordinators' roles to include monitoring of attainment. Standards in art and design and design and technology at the end of Year 2 and in religious education at the end of Year 6 have been improved sufficiently. The teaching issues have been remedied with the exception of the marking of pupils' work and the expectations of higher attaining pupils in some subjects.

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	C	D	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	B	C	C	
Science	E	B	E	E	

Overall standards at the end of the Foundation Stage (the end of the year in the Reception class) are average. Children in the Reception class make very good progress, achieve well and, most are on course to reach the level expected for their age in language and number, their knowledge of the world and in their creative and physical development by the end of the school year. Their personal and social skills develop very well and virtually all are on course to reach the expected level, with a significant number likely to exceed this level. In this area of learning standards are above average for the age of the children.

The school's 2001 results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and, when compared with similar schools, the results in writing and mathematics were in the lowest 5 per cent. Teachers' assessments showed pupils' attainment in science to be below the national average. Assessment of pupils in this year group soon after they started school showed overall attainment to be below average, with a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Whilst most achieved satisfactorily, some pupils, notably boys, underachieved, and standards could have been higher. Current standards of work in Year 2 are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The declining trend has been halted because overall teaching in infant classes has improved. Pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Standards are above average in information and communication technology and are average in all other subjects except history where no judgement could be made.

Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were average in mathematics, below the national average in English and well below in science. The good trend in improvement over the last five years was not maintained in science, mainly due to a few pupils not attempting to answer questions in the National Curriculum tests. Standards of work among the current Year 6 pupils show improvement and are broadly average in all three subjects and their achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average in physical education and are average in all other subjects except for design and technology and geography where insufficient time has been given to teaching the subjects to enable pupils to acquire sufficient knowledge or develop their skills to the expected level. The school was successful in meeting its targets in English and mathematics in 2001 and; with continued hard work may achieve the higher and challenging targets set for 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are happy in school and want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. In lessons behaviour is mostly good, but when not directly supervised by teachers it is only satisfactory. There have been three exclusions for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period. No racist or sexist behaviour was reported.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships are good. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, but their investigative and enquiry skills are not as well developed as they could be.
Attendance	Good. The attendance rate is above the national average, with unauthorised absence broadly average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 teaching of English is good. In mathematics, teaching is satisfactory overall and is good in the Reception class, Years 1 and 2. The skills of literacy are taught well and of numeracy satisfactorily, but insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' writing and numeracy skills through other subjects in Years 4 to 6. The overall strengths in the teaching are in the lesson planning, which identifies clearly what pupils are expected to learn; the management of pupils; and the deployment of teaching assistants. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, but in some satisfactory lessons the teaching methods did not encourage pupils to develop their investigative and enquiry skills as well as they could have done. There are inconsistencies in the setting of homework, in presentation and in the marking of pupils' work. The teaching meets the learning needs of all pupils well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, and satisfactorily in other years, where some more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons. The teaching enables pupils to acquire knowledge and develop skills at a satisfactory pace over time in the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their previous learning and potentially gifted pupils make similar progress to their peers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall, with a good range of experiences and opportunities for learning in Years 1 and 2 and a very good range in the Reception class. Insufficient time is allocated to some subjects in Years 3 to 6 to enable pupils to acquire sufficient depth of knowledge or develop their skills. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities provided.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and effectively promotes pupils' personal qualities.
How well the school cares	Child protection procedures are in place and there is due regard for

for its pupils	pupils' health and safety. Risk assessments are carried out but there are no formal procedures for recording the findings. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment have continued to develop satisfactorily.
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The school works satisfactorily in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership and has kept the school moving forwards despite staffing difficulties. She is well supported by one senior manager. During the long-term absence of the second senior manager and other subject co-ordinators, permanent staff are carrying heavy workloads and working hard in order to continue the drive to raise standards. Not all have a full grasp of their additional responsibilities and this is affecting the overall leadership of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. They have an effective committee structure, are more involved in monitoring the work of the school than previously and fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities. The school's development plan is a good document, very relevant to the needs of the school and is reviewed regularly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Arrangements to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress have been introduced and they help in identifying where further improvements can be made.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are used well to enable the priorities to be met and to benefit the pupils. Funding for designated purposes has been wisely targeted in order to improve the provision and raise standards by the end of Year 6. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation is adequate, although some classrooms are cramped. Resources for learning are adequate in all subjects and the library provision is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Their children are expected to work hard. • The children make good progress. • The school helps children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements for setting homework. • The level of communication with parents over staffing difficulties.

The inspection team generally agrees with parents' positive views, although the more able pupils could do better in some lessons. Some of the temporary teachers have not expected pupils in Years 4 and 5 to work hard. Inspectors agree the arrangements for setting homework have been inconsistent and could be better. The level of communication with parents over staffing difficulties is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage varies from year to year. In most years it is broadly average, although a wide range of ability is represented. The children make very good progress in all areas of learning because of the wide range of learning experiences and opportunities provided and the very good teaching. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because their individual needs are known well and catered for. Most children are on course to achieve the level expected for their age by the end of their year in the reception class in language, number, knowledge of the world and in their creative and physical development. Most children are on course to exceed the expected level in their personal development and standards are above average in this area of learning.
2. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average and the average for similar schools, (based on the proportion of pupils claiming free school meals). When compared with similar schools the results in writing and mathematics were particularly low and were in the lowest five per cent. Teachers' assessments in science showed standards to be below average. This is not a typical year group for this school as there are more pupils with special educational needs than usual and overall attainment on entry was below average. Nevertheless, a small number of these pupils underachieved in their early years in the school. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment were rigorous and showed a well below average percentage of pupils exceeding the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in the National Curriculum tests in reading the percentage of pupils exceeding the expected level was broadly average as several pupils just reached the higher level. No pupils in the school exceeded the expected level in writing or in science, which indicates some underachievement among higher attaining pupils as in reading this proportion was 27 per cent. The overall trend in standards over the last five years has been declining, and standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, have not been high enough, apart from in 2000 when the school achieved its best results ever at the end of Year 2.
3. Current standards of work amongst Year 2 pupils are higher and are average. The senior manager with responsibility for the infant classes has played a key role in the improvement in standards and pupils' achievement. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age and the higher level is increasing, with the exception of writing where none are exceeding the expected level. These pupils did not have the benefit of the very good teaching now evident in the Reception class and their early progress was slower. A whole school focus on raising teachers' expectations and standards has been largely successful. Consequently pupils are now making better progress and achieving well. Current standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are broadly average. There is no evidence of underachievement among any groups and no significant difference in the attainments of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the caring attitudes of the adults and the inclusive approach of staff in meeting pupils' individual needs during lessons and in additional small group or individual work.
4. In comparison with all schools and similar schools the results of National Curriculum

tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were average in mathematics, below average in English and well below average in science. Whilst these results were not as high as in 2000, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level increased in English, particularly in reading and was maintained in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was in line with the national average in all three subjects. There had been some staff absence during the year, which appears to have affected the performance of a very small number of pupils. Because year groups are relatively small, one pupil represents several percentage points and so makes the difference in results from year to year appear greater. Scrutiny of the test data showed a few boys underachieved in English, particularly in writing. There was more mobility of pupils than usual in this year group and test results show that the majority of pupils who had remained in the school for the whole of their primary education achieved satisfactorily.

5. The school was successful in meeting the targets set in English and mathematics in 2001, and with continued effort might achieve the challenging targets set for 2002. The overall trend in improvement in the school's average National Curriculum points for all three subjects over the last five years has been rising faster than found nationally. This has led to the school receiving achievement awards as one of the most improved schools in each of the last two years. Nevertheless, standards in science have been well below the national average in three of the last four years, indicating there is room for improvement.
6. Current standards of work among Year 6 pupils are average in all three subjects, showing some improvement in English and science, and similar standards to those in 2001 in mathematics. The pupils have had a temporary teacher for virtually the whole of this school year, but this has not affected their rate of progress. Most pupils in Year 6 are currently making good progress and achieving well, including those with special educational needs, as expectations of pupils are high. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level in mathematics and science is higher than in 2001. In Years 3, 4 and 5, most pupils are making satisfactory progress, with pupils with special educational needs making good progress, because of the effective support they receive. The school has taken note of the requirements of the new Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and works closely with the visiting specialist support teacher to create appropriate individual education plans for those who are entitled to them. These plans, combined with the early identification of pupils' needs and careful monitoring, result in the overall good progress made by these pupils.
7. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are continuing to have a positive influence on standards. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, both in literacy hours and other subjects and these develop satisfactorily. Good emphasis is placed on developing subject specific vocabulary and this develops well throughout the classes. Reading skills are taught outside literacy hours and most pupils make good progress in developing strategies for attempting unfamiliar words. Pupils use their reading skills effectively in research work from Year 1 upwards, using the library, computer programs, or the Internet and this helps their rate of learning in many subjects. Writing skills develop satisfactorily, with weaknesses in spelling and handwriting evident in some year groups, most notably in Years 4 and 5 where there have been changes of teacher. This can lead to untidy presentation of their work. Pupils do not make sufficient use of their literacy skills in other subjects, for example, in science in Years 4 to 6, where the results of experiments are dictated to pupils instead of requiring them to record their experiments in a scientific format. Numeracy skills develop satisfactorily. Pupils improve their skills in the mental recall of number facts and in strategies to help them

carry out mental calculations. They gain a satisfactory understanding of shapes and measures and handling data, but their investigative skills are weaker as they have fewer opportunities for this type of activity. Insufficient use is made of number skills in other subjects such as design and technology and science.

8. Current standards among Year 2 pupils are above average in information and communication technology (ICT). In art and design, geography, design and technology, music, religious education and physical education standards are average. No judgement could be made in history as no lessons were taught and pupil's books contained insufficient evidence. The teachers plan the use of computers into many lessons and this helps the pupils to make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills in many subjects. In Year 6, current standards of work are above average in physical education, with particular strengths in swimming and competitive games. Standards in ICT are average, as pupils have not had the benefit of the current good provision throughout their primary school education. In art and design, religious education, history and music standards are average. However, standards are below those expected for pupils of this age in design and technology and geography. This is because insufficient time has been given to teaching these subjects and the period of time between units of work does not allow for the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills at a satisfactory pace.
9. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and good for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6. Although the school has done everything possible to maintain continuity in pupils' learning, the achievement of pupils in Year 4 and particularly in Year 5 has been affected by the changes of teacher due to staff absence. Pupils in Year 5 have been taught by thirteen different teachers since February of this year and in Year 4 by four different temporary teachers. The inconsistency has slowed the rate of progress for the pupils, which at times has been unsatisfactory with pupils underachieving. The situation has been remedied for this term and most pupils are achieving satisfactorily in Years 3, 4 and 5, the only exception being a few higher attaining pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have good attitudes to school and learning. They come to school each morning happy and smiling and eager to see their friends. Most parents are conscientious about getting their children to school on time. However a small number of pupils are late for school, some rush in with their parents at the last minute but unaccompanied children dawdle into school. Pupils eagerly join in many activities such as the athletics coaching and aerobic classes. Many pupils are involved in after school rounders where they develop good sporting attitudes.
11. Relationships are good. Staff in the reception class have very clear expectations of behaviour. Very good relationships, together with a caring environment, create an atmosphere of trust where they know their contributions will be valued. The teacher makes it clear that everyone in the class is of equal importance. This results in reception pupils gaining confidence and pupils were able to speak out clearly in front of an audience of pupils and parents. In Years 1 and 2 there are very good relationships between teachers and the pupils who understand that their contributions will be valued.
12. Older pupils sometimes have to listen to the teacher talking for relatively long periods of time in lessons and do not have sufficient opportunity to contribute. In a geography lesson following up a walk in the local area, for example, most pupils were listening and attempted to answer the teacher's questions but appeared lethargic after a

lengthy period of teacher talk. Pupils responded better when they were given maps to study and were actively involved in their own learning. Pupils in Year 5 have had many teachers and have been subjected to different routines and expectations; this has affected their attitudes. The current teacher has done well to raise pupils' expectations, encourage them to collaborate and they are now more willing to apply themselves to their work. Very good relationships have developed in the Year 6 class and pupils are willing to work hard and persevere. They have responded well to the high expectations of the class teacher.

13. Pupils behave well in the classroom and when teachers supervise them. Behaviour in well supervised areas such as assemblies and the dining room is good. However a few boys lack self-discipline and can be boisterous if they think no one is looking. For example, Year 5 pupils behaved extremely well on the coach to the swimming baths and while they were in the swimming pool. However, as soon as the teacher moved away from the group in order to ensure that pupils were not left behind in the changing rooms some of the boys started to misbehave. There have been three fixed-term exclusions in the latest reporting period and the number of exclusions has risen since the previous inspection. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and have good manners. Bullying is rare and pupils described petty squabbles and falling out rather than sustained bullying. Pupils are very confident that the head teacher will resolve any difficulties that they may have. Pupils are encouraged to understand the impact their actions have on others and teachers often talk to pupils about their behaviour.
14. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils have the chance to help others by acting as reading or playground buddies. Job descriptions were issued, discussions held and training provided for those wishing to become reading buddies. Opportunities were missed to encourage pupils to write letters of application that might have increased their maturity. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to respect the beliefs of others in religious education lessons. Circle time, where children talk about personal issues, is used very well in the Reception class to encourage pupils to listen to one another and to develop empathy.
15. Pupils are not encouraged to take as much responsibility for their own learning as they could. Choices in subjects such as art and design and design and technology are restricted. In science and mathematics lessons pupils have limited opportunities to plan their own practical work and to record their own results.
16. The school attendance rate is above the national average and until recently unauthorised absence was similar to the national average. Most pupils attend school regularly and this helps them to make progress. The number of unauthorised absences has risen recently and this appears to be related to supply teachers not following up absences rather than truancy.
17. Pupils who have special educational needs have positive attitudes to school and are very well integrated into the school community. Their self-esteem is raised when they share their achievements in assembly or class plenary sessions. Pupils respond well to the caring ethos and relate well to the adults who work with them.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but is better in some year groups than others. The long term staff absence and in some cases subsequent retirement of staff at short notice have made it difficult for the headteacher and governors to prevent the disruption in teaching for pupils in Years 4 and 5. In all the lessons seen the teaching was satisfactory or better, with 65 per cent being good, of

which six per cent were very good and a further four per cent were excellent. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when 18 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The improvement in teaching in most year groups is one of the key factors in the rising standards at the end of Year 6 since the last inspection and in halting the declining trend in standards at the end of Year 2. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows weaknesses in the teaching of some temporary staff which is why the overall judgement on teaching is satisfactory rather than good.

19. Teaching and learning in the Reception class are very good overall. This is where the examples of excellent teaching were seen in physical development and in communication, language and literacy. The teacher is very well supported by the teaching assistant and both have very secure knowledge and a good understanding of how young children learn. They take all steps possible to build the children's self-esteem and confidence. They work particularly well together, which is to the benefit of all the children. They know each child's needs well and plan tasks carefully matched to their learning needs. Each child feels they are special and they respond by working hard because they want to please the adult working with them. The daily planning skilfully links the areas of learning together and enables the children to learn at a very good pace across the areas of learning.
20. In Years 1 and 2 teaching and learning are good and occasionally very good. Pupils are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning when appropriate and this enables all pupils to work to their full potential. Consequently, they make good gains in knowledge and deepen their understanding through research work as well as in whole class lessons. In Years 3 to 6 overall teaching is satisfactory, although there are examples of good teaching in all year groups and across a range of subjects.
21. The skills of literacy are taught well in literacy hours, but are insufficiently promoted across other subjects. Skills of numeracy are taught well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies continue to have a positive effect on the quality of teaching. The permanent teachers are now secure in their understanding of the strategies and the framework for teaching them, but not all of the temporary teachers have received training. There are some good brisk introductory sessions in numeracy, which help pupils to develop their skills in mental calculation. In both literacy and numeracy lessons, the introductions are followed by purposeful direct teaching. The time towards the end of lessons is used well to consolidate or reinforce what has been learned and for teachers to assess if sufficient progress has been made. Teachers can then amend their planning if necessary.
22. In other subjects the teaching varies between the year groups. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching and pupils' learning were good in all subjects seen, except for music and physical education where they were satisfactory. In physical education, the time taken to put the apparatus in place was longer than it could have been and shortened the time for physical activity. The in-service training undertaken by staff in teaching music skills is improving the pace of lessons and the level of participation by all pupils. It will take a little longer for this to be implemented fully and the overall teaching to become good. No lessons were seen in history in Years 1 and 2 and in design and technology in all year groups and so a secure judgement on teaching could not be made. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good in physical education and is satisfactory in most other subjects. The lesson structure used in literacy and numeracy is being transferred effectively to many lessons in other subjects and this has led to some improvement in teaching.
23. The key strengths of the teaching are the good lesson planning with clear

identification of learning objectives that are shared with pupils; the deployment of teaching assistants; and the management of pupils. Because the learning objectives are shared with pupils and often reviewed towards the end of lessons, pupils are aware of their rate of learning and in some lessons analyse their own work. The weaknesses in assessing pupils as they work and setting targets for improvement identified in the previous report have been remedied. However, the weakness in marking pupils' work and indicating the particular aspect that should be improved has not been fully overcome, partly because of the frequent changes of staff. The scrutiny of work showed some helpful comments, but also too many examples of unmarked work, particularly in Years 4 and 5 and poor presentation. The setting of homework is inconsistent and a cause for concern among parents. Some teachers are using computers to aid their lesson planning, but this is not yet consistent throughout the school.

24. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. This reflects class teaching and additional support from the local authority's support services. Where learning support assistants were observed, they made an effective contribution to raising achievement for these pupils. Assistants are well informed of each child's needs and work successfully with teachers to ensure that all gain full benefit from the lessons. Where adults have a positive approach and consistently praise pupils for their efforts, pupils feel proud of their work and are ready to take on new challenges in their learning.
25. The teaching meets the learning needs of most pupils and enables them to make at least satisfactory progress over time in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding, although the pace of learning has varied over the year for pupils in Years 4 and 5. In Years 4 to 6 pupils are not being encouraged to develop investigative skills and these are not as well developed, as they should be. This is often due to teachers giving pupils the information instead of letting them find out through investigation and enquiry. Research skills develop well through the use of the library and the computer suite. The teachers have raised their expectations of pupils since the previous inspection, but there are still occasions when the more able pupils are insufficiently challenged.

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

26. The curriculum for young children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Lessons are well planned in the required areas of learning so children receive work at the appropriate level. A suitable focus is given to learning through play and the children benefit from the high quality learning opportunities provided for them. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. It is broad and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the needs of all pupils including those who have special educational needs. The time allocation to subjects is satisfactory; the emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards has affected the overall balance of the curriculum. This means subjects such as geography and design and technology are not covered in sufficient depth.
27. Teachers' planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. All subjects apart from music in Years 3 to 6 have policies and schemes of work that guide the planning of teaching and learning. However, some policies and schemes of work have not been updated to

make sure that all strands of the curriculum are fully covered and cross curricular skills are identified. Since the last inspection the school has satisfactorily introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is no school policy to guide teachers' planning to make the most of opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy across the range of subjects, to reinforce and further develop skills such as writing in other subjects.

28. The provision for special educational needs is a strength of the school. Pupils who have special educational needs are included in all aspects of the curriculum and make good progress. Teachers have copies of individual education plans and use them to match work to pupils' individual needs. The group work during literacy and numeracy is effective in giving lower attaining pupils good opportunities to progress well. The school states its philosophy of valuing and respecting individuals and encouraging them to reach their full potential; this is promoted successfully in providing a firm foundation for pupils who have special educational needs to flourish.
29. The school works hard to give all pupils equality of access and opportunity. It is an inclusive school. Teachers work hard in class to make sure that no pupils are disadvantaged and unable to learn. This is always done sensitively. However there is evidence from lesson observations and analysis of standardised tests that there continues to be a lack of challenge for some higher attaining pupils. The instability of the staffing situation in Years 4 to 6 has an impact on consistency in teaching and managing pupils. The head teacher has tried to minimise the effect so that pupils will not be disadvantaged and the indications are that the staffing situation is soon to become more settled.
30. The provision for extra-curricular activities continues to be a strength of the school and enhances the curriculum. A wide range of sporting activities including rounders and cross-country is provided, with the football and netball teams playing successfully in local leagues. The local newsagent sponsors the school's football team. Opportunities for extra music tuition are available through the local authority's music service. The school has a good record in running residential trips, previously to Sweden and Portugal. This year, pupils from Year 6 will gain insight into a foreign country when they visit Dieppe and Year 5 will develop their physical and personal skills when they visit Edale Activity Centre in the summer term.
31. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Although the Drug Education policy is not yet complete the school provides appropriately for pupils' needs. Year 6 gained from a drama based day examining issues associated with drugs, pupils then performed for other junior classes so raising awareness of how to deal with difficult situations, such as how to say 'No'. The sex education policy is established and parents are informed about their right to withdraw their children. This module of work is covered sensitively and effectively with Year 6 pupils. Circle time is included in the curricular provision but though it is valued as part of the provision for pupils' personal development, the recent staffing changes mean that a number of teachers are not fully conversant with the methods of conducting circle time. This minimises the impact on pupils' personal development. When pupils leave the school they are given a special school badge to remind them of their days at St Mary's and to provide them with a tangible link to the values promoted by the school.
32. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and continues to be a strength of the school. Parents agree that the school encourages their children to become mature and to develop positive attitudes and values.
33. The provision for spiritual development is good. In religious education lessons pupils

are given the opportunity to explore the religious beliefs of Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhist and Muslims. Within this inclusive school there is a strong ethos of valuing individuals and pupils acknowledge each other's strengths and also show concern for each other. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers value pupils' thoughts and give time for reflection and for pupils to express their thoughts and opinions. In Years 3 to 6 this is less consistent. The school assemblies vary in quality but the better assemblies are well planned with a sense of occasion. The very good assembly led by the Reception class allowed pupil participation and made good use of the opportunity for children to use their speaking skills to talk clearly to a large audience. At the end of the infant assembly all children joined enthusiastically in the 'Celebration Rap', giving spontaneous applause at the end and leaving the hall in a happy cheerful mood ready to enjoy the day. Year 6 pupils were challenged in their religious education lesson to consider the dilemma facing aid agencies in allocating their funding. This allowed the pupils to understand something of the injustices that are prevalent in the world today. The school has a close association with the church and spiritual development is supported by visits and carol services.

34. Provision for moral and social development is good. The school has a well-established buddy system. This started with older pupils mentoring younger pupils at playtime and has successfully developed into sharing books and reading with younger pupils. Year 6 pupils take responsibility for keeping the library in order and the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 look after the school gardens. Each class has rules for behaviour and pupils recognise the necessity for classroom rules. In physical education pupils learn to play as a team and accept the rules of the game. In lessons pupils are generally considerate of each other and behave well. Pupils are encouraged to have a practical approach to those who are less fortunate. They contribute generously to the Harvest Festival when the produce is distributed to local elderly people. The support for charities is very good and the chosen charities often have a link with pupils or their families, for example Jeans for Genes, Barnados and cancer research. The weekly 'Good News Assembly' is used well to share and celebrate pupils' success not only in academic and sporting attainment but effort and progress in behaviour. The school council successfully represents pupils' views and meets regularly to express concerns and to take responsibility for liaising with pupils and staff.

35. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils have regular opportunities to listen to music as they join the school assemblies. Art lessons make a good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. Younger pupils examine the colours of Van Gogh's work before they try to paint their own sunflowers. Older pupils look carefully at famous paintings and try to analyse the artists' skills and then emulate the brushstrokes in their own work. Year 4 pupils improve their historical awareness when they carefully examine portraits and classical pictures so they can deduce facts about life and clothing in Tudor times. Pupils look at art beyond the western world for example Aboriginal designs. Learning about the past is made more meaningful by visits to Chester, Bramall Hall, and nearby air raid shelters. The school is fortunate in being so close to Reddish Vale Country Park and good use is made of this facility in learning about plants and river life. Infant pupils find out about their immediate locality and places further afield as they follow the travels of Barnaby Bear. Pupils had very good opportunities to find out about a different culture when a Japanese visitor, who shared dance and music as well as origami with the pupils, entertained them. Year 6 pupils were fortunate to be able to extend their appreciation of literature when they attended Tameside Theatre to see *Twelfth Night*. Pupils learn about other faiths and their traditions, which helps to prepare them for living in a multiracial society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school provides a welcoming environment where children are looked after well. Pupils are nurtured during their infant years and then encouraged to bloom into helpful young people in the junior classes. Permanent members of staff know their pupils well but the high number of temporary teachers in Years 4 and 5 affects the monitoring of personal development. However the head teacher does manage this situation well and is willing to take on this responsibility.
37. The governors are not sufficiently aware of health and safety issues. They have looked at the condition of the building to check there are no potential hazards, but have not yet completed any formal risk assessments. The school's arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The school follows locally agreed procedures and takes appropriate steps to ensure that children are not at risk. However, there are a small number of temporary staff in the school and not all of them have as yet been fully briefed about the school's child protection policy. The school is good at looking after children with medical problems; there are high levels of care and concern.
38. The monitoring and promoting of good attendance are satisfactory. Although the school has good rates of attendance, rates of unauthorised absence are rising. Most parents are very conscientious about contacting the school if their children are ill. The school relies on individual class teachers to follow up any unexplained absences. This is effective in most classes but not where there have been a high number of supply teachers. A small number of pupils are regularly late for school and a record is kept of them. The school relies heavily on the education welfare service to follow up pupils who are persistently late or absent.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. The school's behaviour policy is based on encouraging good behaviour through praise and reward, but includes sanctions, leading to exclusion when necessary. This works well in the infant classes where staff are experienced and fully conversant with the policy. Not all of the temporary teachers are fully aware of the sanctions as yet and, have to work hard to manage behaviour. They tend to rely on their own strategies and pupils have to accept different regimes.
40. The school works hard to try to ensure that pupils are not bullied. Most parents report that they are satisfied with how the school responds to incidents that might be regarded as bullying. Pupils have a lot of faith in the head teachers' ability to sort out difficult situations.
41. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have continued to develop since the previous inspection and are satisfactory. The school makes appropriate use of assessments soon after entry to Reception, teachers' assessments and statutory and optional national tests, to track the progress of pupils from entry to when they leave. The information is collated for each pupil to check sufficient progress is being made towards their predicted levels at the end of the Reception year, Year 2 and Year 6. Additional support is provided for pupils who are found to be falling behind and need a boost to their performance. The information is also used to set targets in English and mathematics for individuals, groups and whole classes, but there is little reference to these targets in the marking of pupils' work. A thorough analysis of pupils' performance in national test questions has been undertaken both by the school and the local education authority, which has identified weaknesses, for example in the number of pupils not attempting to answer questions in science. The school has not taken steps to remedy this weakness. The results

have been collated using a paper-based system and transferred onto a computerised system for ease in updating. The school has plans to transfer the information onto a computer to make updating easier. Assessment procedures in other subjects have been implemented recently, but are still in the early stages of development.

42. The school uses assessment information effectively in identifying pupils' special educational needs and in monitoring their progress. Regular visits from specialist support teachers provide valuable guidance, help the school to track their progress, decide on appropriate targets and to provide focused teaching. There are good links with the support services and informal advice often helps teachers to improve their strategies in working with these pupils. The impact of these efforts is evident in the decreasing number of pupils achieving the lower levels in National Curriculum tests.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The large majority of parents are supportive of the school and their children's education. Attendance at parents' consultation evenings is good and parents enjoy coming to school to see assemblies and services. Parents provide help in the classroom, with swimming lessons and on educational visits. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association that organises well-supported social and fundraising activities. A significant amount of money has been raised and used to improve the number of computers and musical instruments available. Parents are satisfied with the standard of education offered by the school but they do have significant concerns about the high number of supply teachers in Years 4 and 5. Despite their reservations about supply teachers the majority of parents judge teaching to be good. Some parents felt that they were not well informed about the situation but the inspection found that the school gave the parents as much information as it could without breaching confidentiality. Most parents say that they feel welcome in the school and they find the school very easy to approach if they have questions or problems. The majority of parents' feel that the school is well managed, but a few find the school unapproachable.
44. Parents are very concerned about the setting of homework. They considered that the high number of supply teachers had led to inconsistencies in the setting of homework and inspectors agree. Pupils confirmed that the amount of homework varies significantly both between classes and teachers. Expectations need to be made clearer. Although some parents support their children's learning and are keen for them to do well, others do not support them at home, for example by hearing them read. There have been meetings provided for parents to learn about literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, but these were not well attended. However, parents of children in the Reception class do work with the local early years' team to gain some understanding of how young children learn. This has resulted in some parents coming into school to work with their children.
45. Information for parents is satisfactory. Reports are computer generated but are individualised for each child. Reports on English are of especially good quality and are very clear about what each child knows, understands and can do. The reports contain targets for improvement in English and mathematics but these are more specific in some classes than others. A small number of parents were not happy about the information they received about their children's progress and this appears to relate to parents' evenings in Years 4 and 5, which have been postponed until supply teachers know their pupils well enough to have fruitful discussions with their parents. The head teacher has spoken to parents and made every effort to give them information on their children's progress. The school brochure is of satisfactory quality and there are

regular newsletters. The governors' annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements as it omits important information about special educational needs provision, the admission of disabled pupils, staff development, school targets and the way the school intends to develop in the future.

46. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved from the time the school has an initial concern and are kept well informed about their child's progress. Parents consider their children to be well supported.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher continues to provide effective leadership and management of the school in pursuit of its aims. She has been well supported by the senior manager responsible for the infant classes. Their leadership has led to improvements, which have seen the school receive achievement awards for the rising standards in both of the last two years. They have a clear vision of where they are leading the school, which is underpinned by the school's aims. They enjoy the confidence of the staff and governors and have managed the severe disruption in staffing well and maintained a strong team spirit, which temporary staff have found supportive and welcoming. The other senior manager, with responsibility for Years 3 to 6, has been absent since September 2001. This has undoubtedly had some effect on the overall leadership and management of the school. The headteacher has led by example in taking on additional responsibilities for subjects, such as mathematics, ICT and music and, for special educational needs. In turn, permanent members of staff have willingly taken on additional subject responsibilities in a caretaking role until the staffing situation is resolved. The effective change in the management structure of the school, brought about when the responsibilities undertaken by the deputy headteacher were relinquished, was managed well and maintained the pace of improvement initially. The headteacher wisely sought support from the local education authority's advisors to support the teachers taking on additional responsibilities and temporary staff, so that she could maintain the rigour in all aspects of her work. The advice and support from the advisors have been good and have helped the headteacher and staff to carry such heavy workloads and maintain the emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards.
48. Because permanent members of staff have taken on additional responsibilities for subjects recently, they have not yet got a full grasp of overall standards in some subjects, especially in design and technology and geography. They are, however, doing their best to move the subjects forward, evident in the revision of schemes of work and the implementation of assessment procedures. There are action plans for improving subjects that are priorities in the school improvement plan, but not for other subjects and in the current circumstances the subject co-ordinators are not in a position to contribute fully or effectively to whole school self-evaluation and review procedures. For these reasons the overall leadership and management of the school are judged to be satisfactory rather than good.
49. Due to the long-term absence of the special educational needs co-ordinator, the headteacher has taken on this additional role. Appropriate review meetings are held and all documentation is well organised. Teachers do not receive as much day-to-day support in planning their lessons to meet pupils' differing needs, but they work closely and provide support for each other. This strategy combined with the inclusive ethos of the school, leads to a consequent improvement in the levels of attainment for these pupils.

50. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. Since the previous inspection the governors have increased their involvement in decision making and in the daily life and work of the school. However, the governing body does not meet all its statutory obligations, as there are omissions in the information required in the governors' annual report to parents. The procedures for risk assessment lack rigour, as any concerns are not formally recorded. The governors are very supportive of the school and its staff and this has been appreciated during the period of turbulence in staffing, particularly over the last two years. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and check the progress of the school improvement plan carefully. The minutes of their meetings show they were fully involved in the decision to change the management structure of the school and have monitored the effect of the changes and decided to appoint a deputy headteacher for the beginning of the next academic year as the school's circumstances have changed. Inspectors support this decision as being in the best interests of the pupils at this time. The headteacher's termly reports for governors are of good quality, detailed and with a clear focus on raising standards.
51. The management of the school has strengths in the strategic planning and performance management procedures. Staff absence has led to some slippage in the time scale set for reviewing the teachers' progress towards their targets. Teachers feel the process has helped them to improve their practice and this is evident in the improved quality of teaching and overall rising standards at the end of Year 6 since the previous inspection. The performance management procedures are contributing satisfactorily to school self-evaluation and improvement. Again the local education authority advisors have contributed by carrying out some classroom observations, supporting temporary staff and providing in-service training to maintain the pace of improvement. The school makes good strategic use of all its resources. The school development plan has a good overview of the action to be taken over three years with the current year's action in detail, based on a thorough evaluation of the previous year. The current year contains the most relevant priorities for raising standards and inspection evidence indicates the plan to have been largely successful. The school budget plan is closely aligned to ensure the priorities in the school development are achieved. The day-to-day management of the budget is good, efficient and unobtrusive, allowing teachers to concentrate on their pupils. The governors monitor expenditure frequently and check all funding is used for its designated purposes. The school is making good use of the funding available to raise standards by targeting groups of pupils who need a boost to their performance. All teaching assistants have been trained to deliver intensive programmes in literacy and pupils are making better progress as a result of their involvement.
52. The procedures for tracking the progress of individual pupils from year to year have continued to develop. The information for pupils has now been collated in a paper based system. This has not yet been transferred fully to a computerised system, partly because of the time given to supporting the many temporary teachers. Helpful information is provided through the local education authority and this is being used to identify where further development can be made and to set challenging targets for improvement based on reliable data.
53. There are sufficient staff, both teaching and support staff, for the number of pupils on roll. The teaching staff, have been as well matched to the demands of the curriculum as they can be in the current circumstances. There is adequate accommodation, although classroom areas are cramped. The issue of ventilation in classroom areas identified in the previous report has been overcome. There are sufficient resources for learning in all subject areas and the library is well used.

54. The leadership and management of the school are continuing to have a positive influence on standards and provision in very difficult circumstances. The communication between the school and parents over changes in teachers has caused some concern amongst parents, but the large majority have confidence in the leadership and management of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to continue to raise standards in the school, the headteacher and staff supported by the governors should:

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6 to raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged in all lessons;
 - increasing the range of teaching methods to provide more opportunities for all pupils to develop their experimental, investigative and enquiry skills, to organise their own activities and make choices about how they approach their work;
 - expecting pupils to record their findings from investigations independently in order to show how much they know and can do.

Discussed in paragraphs 15, 27, 73, 79, 82, 85, 88, 90, 97.
- (2) Raise standards in design and technology and geography by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring sufficient time is given to teaching each subject in all year groups;
 - monitoring the frequency and quality of teaching in each subject to ensure pupils are making sufficient and systematic progress in developing their knowledge and skills;
 - completing the revised scheme of work for geography to show how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding will be developed from year to year;
 - improving the resources in geography.

Discussed in paragraphs 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107.
- (3) Improving the marking and presentation of pupils' work by:
 - ensuring the marking policy is applied consistently so that all pupils know how to improve their work;
 - ensuring the school policy for the presentation of work and checking it is applied consistently.

Discussed in paragraphs 23, 74, 76, 78, 82, 86, 90, 92.

In addition to these key issues, the governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:

1. Improving the consistency in setting homework.
Discussed in paragraphs 23, 44.
2. Ensure the Governors' Annual Report to Parents contains all required information and that formal procedures for carrying out risk assessments are implemented.
Discussed in paragraph 37, 45.
3. Improve the procedures for monitoring attendance.
Discussed in paragraph 38.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	3	26	16	0	0	0
Percentage	4	6	55	34	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	184
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	47

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	21	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (88)	77 (88)	88 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	21	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (88)	88 (88)	88 (88)
	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	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	11
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	18	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	84 (81)	84 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	8
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	16	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (65)	72 (68)	72 (73)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	171
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22:1
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	3	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	383,935
Total expenditure	375,538
Expenditure per pupil	1,987
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	8,379

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	184
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	5	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	55	9	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	49	18	11	1
The teaching is good.	49	38	3	4	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	49	9	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	34	7	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	54	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	55	11	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	45	37	7	5	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	53	7	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	55	9	4	2

Other issues raised by parents

Parents of pupils in Years 4 and 5, but particularly in Year 5, are deeply concerned about the number of different teachers their children have experienced, particularly this year, but also over the last three years. A significant number do not feel the school has kept them fully informed of how it is trying to overcome the problems.

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

56. The provision for children in the Reception class is very good and is a strength of the school. This is because the consistently very good and imaginative teaching combines successfully with children's willingness to learn. The vibrant and busy atmosphere in the classroom creates a very good climate for learning. The Reception class provides children with a very good start to their formal education.
57. The children are taught in one Reception class. Children attend full time and start in the September before their fifth birthday. A full-time teacher and teaching assistant staff the class of 29 children. Parent helpers, childcare students and the local authority's Early Years Liaison Officer provide good support which is well organised to meet children's educational needs.
58. Standards of attainment on entry to the Reception class are in line with those expected of children of this age most years. By the end of the Reception year the large majority of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum, with several children likely to exceed them. This shows very good progress. Children who have special educational needs are supported well, take part in all activities and make very good progress.
59. The school provides a well-considered induction programme that includes preliminary visits by the teacher to children's Nursery provision and half-day visits to the school by children and their parents in the term before they join the school. There is a phased start to the term in September so children can become used to the regular routines, staff and each other. An evening meeting is arranged for parents and a welcome pack provided for them before their children start. A follow-up meeting is arranged about a month after the children have joined the school so parents and staff can discuss any concerns.
60. The previous inspection report makes no reference to the provision for Reception children. Since then the Foundation Stage curriculum has been introduced and fully implemented in the Reception class to provide high quality education. As a result children achieve well. The consistently good and often very good quality teaching, children's positive attitudes and the very good quality teamwork show the development of this aspect of the school to be good since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Most children are on course to have exceeded the expected standards by the end of their year in the Reception class. This shows very good achievement and reflects the very good teaching in this area. All adults foster children's personal and social skills at every opportunity. Children enjoy coming to school and the large majority happily leave their parents and carers at the beginning of the day. Staff deal sensitively with children who are a little tearful. A strong emphasis is put on encouraging children to become independent, the guideline being 'Don't do anything for children that they can do for themselves'. This philosophy is successful as children move around the class and change activities with assurance. The highest accolade is for children who manage tasks independently and children respond well to this expectation. Each day a child gets a turn to be the VIP, sits on a special chair and is given responsibility of a

range of jobs such as taking the register to the office and helping the teacher throughout the day. Every child has a turn and each day the class sings to the VIP, resulting in children feeling special and valued. Relationships are very good and children play well when they learn to share toys and work together in, for example, the office role-play or sand and water activities. Children are sensitive to each other's needs. If one of the class is upset or finds difficulty with a task, they show their concern with hugs and assistance. Milk and snack time is used very effectively for the class to move into two small groups and talk about their news; this promotes the family atmosphere that is encouraged in the class. Children take responsibility for tidying up at the end of lessons and completing the log sheet when they have used the computer. When the parachute is used for outdoor play it provides excellent opportunities for children to work together as a team and to encourage their friendships to develop. They co-operate as they use construction toys and work together to make simple sentences. The classroom and courtyard are well organised to promote children's independence in selecting from a range of planned activities, tools and materials. Children happily respond to questions and enjoy showing their work to visitors. Adults have high expectations of behaviour and are excellent role models in being considerate and demonstrating acceptable behaviour in the classroom. This means that children are aware of the boundaries for acceptable behaviour, they feel comfortable and secure within their class and as a result they blossom. All adults work hard to ensure that the classroom is a happy place where children can grow in confidence and achieve very well in their personal development.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children achieve well. Most are on course to reach the expected levels of attainment by the end of the Reception year and a few children are likely to exceed them. The Reception class provides a wide range of stimulating experiences to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. The curriculum includes a wide variety of related activities and all children are given the chance to take part in all these well-considered learning opportunities. Teaching is consistently good and appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy have been introduced. There are regular opportunities for children to develop the spoken word and enjoy books. Children are able to show and explain their sentence work to the rest of the class. They join in structured role-play re-enacting parts of the class story and happily respond to the register in their language of choice, including Spanish, French, German and signing. Correct speech is modelled well by staff, often with the request 'Now you say it'. As a result children become confident speakers, as was seen when the reception class performed in the hall for the full school assembly and each child was able to speak clearly so the whole audience was able to hear and understand what they said. Reception children talk confidently to visitors. The teacher keeps her voice calm and quiet, encouraging the children to listen well because they are eager to know what their next activity might be.

63. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of reading and writing skills. This results in good achievement. Literacy lessons are typically lively, challenging and fun. Adults share books with children and encourage a desire to read. Children handle books appropriately and with respect. Children have book bags and well maintained reading records show parents support the school well in encouraging their children to read. Every week the whole class, along with their teacher and assistant, go to the school library and change their library books. Children listen carefully to the story their teacher reads to them and understand how to make book choices from the selection available. This session is invaluable in nurturing children's enjoyment of books. Lower attaining children enjoy sharing books with adults, they are happy to talk about the

pictures and explain what is happening in the story. More able children can talk confidently about the characters in their books, have a basic sight vocabulary and use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read simple words. Children enjoy words, one child chuckling happily at the repetition of 'soggy doggy' in the reading book. Children are aware that the name of a book is the title and when their teacher uses a book as a focus for whole class reading they respond with natural curiosity and enthusiasm. Children's enjoyment of stories is deepened when they listen to the wide range of story tapes at the listening station. Name cards, alphabet and sound friezes around the classroom help children to develop their early reading and writing skills. Children know that writing communicates meaning and learn to write their first names, often using play-dough to practise their letters. Lower attaining children are able to identify sounds and letters at the beginnings of words and write them legibly and more able children are able to write simple sentences when they work with their teacher or assistant. Children know that a sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. The full stop must be a neat, small full stop, as one child expressed it 'so we don't waste the pen'. All children enjoy writing lists in their role-play activities, writing party invitations or labelling characters such as the Gingerbread Man. These activities boost their confidence and improve their accuracy in writing.

Mathematical development

64. Most of the children are on target to attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception year, with some children likely to exceed them. Teaching is very good, activities are well planned and as a result children make very good progress. Children practise counting and give themselves a pat on the back for reaching 31. The children were excited when their teacher challenged them to count from 23 to 52 and thrilled when they succeeded. The teacher makes excellent use of Fuzzy (the puppet) to help children to consolidate their knowledge of number; the whole class broke into spontaneous applause as Fuzzy correctly recognised repeating patterns. Children know the difference between symmetrical and repeating patterns. Their understanding is reinforced through creative activities as children make necklaces from coloured pasta and use paint and sponges to create butterflies with matching wings. Knowledge of number is further supported because of the very good use made of appropriate computer programs based on patterns of shape as well as colour. Children gain a good understanding of shape because their groups are named after two dimensional shapes such as squares, rectangles, and when their teacher chooses a group she describes the features of the shapes so children listen carefully and gain a secure knowledge of simple shape. Opportunities that arise are taken to reinforce counting skills, for example counting the nuts that are threaded for the birds. Water and sand are used effectively so children learn full, half full and empty, and learn to sort items according to size, longer than or shorter than their hand. In measurement, good use is made of string for children to measure their heights and then combine the string with paint to make symmetrical patterns. When children find the challenges difficult they know they should have a go and also ask a friend to help. This encourages not only independence but also children's skills in thinking about problems rather than expecting an adult to solve them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. By the time they reach the end of the Reception year, most children are on course to reach the nationally expected levels of attainment in this area of learning. Children are interested in the world around them and this is promoted very well through the range of interesting opportunities provided. Children know that the special Christian book is the Bible and listen with fascination as their teacher tells them the Christian story of creation. Children's interest is sustained as they match toy animals to their babies and learn the correct names for baby horses, pigs, giraffes and cows. When their teacher read a story about a baby gorilla being reunited with his mother there were lots of 'aahs' as the baby and mother hugged each other. Children have good opportunities to investigate plants and growth as the class has its own flowerbed. Children understand that plants need water, light and soil, one child explaining that the pansies need the soil 'to sit in'. Children know there are events and occasions that are special to other people, when for example they create firework pictures to celebrate Divali and taste apples and honey as their teacher explains the symbolism of Rosh Hashanah. They celebrate the Chinese New Year and are aware of the significance of Pancake Tuesday. Recently the children had visited a local baby clinic and one of the mothers brought her baby into school so the children could see bath-time. This progressed naturally into children being able to name parts of the body. The children are fortunate to have regular access to computer programs. This is because they have computers in class but also because the computer suite leads into the class area and children are able to use it easily. When children have used a computer program they tick their name on the log sheet so their teacher can make sure that all children have a turn. All the children are confident and able to use the mouse to locate icons and work through programmes, and more assured children can print off their designs and patterns independently. The Reception classroom has direct access to a roofed quadrangle and in this area children experiment with their creative work including sticking and cutting to make a teddy with moving legs and arms, or making their mother and baby animals from play dough. In class assemblies the children pray devoutly and thoughtfully offer their individual prayers of thanks or concern.

Physical development

66. By the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to achieve and several to exceed the expected levels of attainment. There are good opportunities for children to take part in safe outdoor play. There is a designated play area for the Reception children, the ground has clear markings to enable team and group games. There are a few wheeled toys but the limited storage available restricts the amount of big play equipment. Despite this shortcoming, resourceful teaching more than compensates and children achieve well. When the parachute is brought out children learn to move in a variety of ways such as tiptoeing, jumping and running as they excitedly change places under the parachute while the rest of the class work together to raise it up above their heads. When the class count together in preparation for raising the parachute they count un, deux, trois as confidently as one, two three. They learn to take turns and easily accept being out when they play running games. Children know they should warm up and cool down when they have their indoor physical education lesson. They know that as they run and jump their hearts beat faster and send blood to their muscles. They are aware that this keeps them healthy. Children show good body control for their age as they take large steps like gentle giants, and move confidently around the room to music showing good awareness of space and a developing sense of rhythm. Excellent teaching and good modelling of actions help the children to improve their skills. The adults work well as a team to make sure every child understands and is able to participate. When one child showed very good skills

the teacher made sure the rest of the class watched, with the result that all children tried hard and improved their performances. Lessons are characterised by the imaginative teaching and the total enjoyment of adults and children. Children enjoy playing with small world creatures and fishing for the flat and fat fish in the water tray. They have regular opportunities to improve their co-ordination and manipulative skills when they use malleable materials to make models and construction toys. Children are fully aware of and respond to the expectation of putting everything away.

Creative development

67. By the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to reach the nationally expected levels of attainment, having made good progress and achieved well. Children use paint and develop their hand control as they experiment with brush strokes, they consolidate their understanding of the body as they make chalk drawings of the skeleton. They draw daffodils from observation and after their nature ramble they make leaf prints using appropriate autumn colours. Creative activities are used very well to help children remember their new knowledge of shape. Butterfly patterns reinforcing knowledge of symmetry and caterpillars being decorated to show repeating patterns. Modelling clay is used to make animals and gives good opportunities for discussion about the colour and names of baby animals. Children respect the range of musical instruments used to help them develop a sense of rhythm. Their teacher explains how the African instruments are made from gourds and seeds; the children are fascinated and enjoy their turns to play the percussion instruments. Children know the difference between beat and shake and are generous in their attitudes as they wait for their own turns. Children respond very well to the opportunities to express themselves imaginatively. This was seen in an excellent lesson when children danced confidently and expressed through mime their empathy for the 'Greedy Zebra' who unlike the other animals does not have a new skin. Children play imaginatively alongside each other in the role-play areas and are happy to explain their tasks and to talk about the pictures they create on the computer.

ENGLISH

68. Current standards of work in Year 2 and Year 6 are average. Whilst National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in 2001, evidence from the inspection suggests that these standards are rising significantly. This is because there is very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and good teaching in Years 1 and 2, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs are achieving well. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well in these classes and the positive effect is starting to show in pupils' attainment. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 in 2001 show that pupils' attainment was just below the national average, and inspection evidence indicates they will rise in 2002 as pupils have made good progress and achieved well in Year 6. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. The National Literacy Strategy has been more difficult to implement and monitor in the junior classes because of the changes of staff. This has resulted in slower, but

satisfactory progress in Years 4 and 5. These standards represent good progress since the last inspection.

69. Standards in speaking and listening are average overall. By the end of Year 2 pupils can listen carefully to the teacher and each other. They are encouraged to speak during class discussions, enjoy reading out loud, and are growing in confidence. More able pupils are beginning to read with expression. Year 6 pupils speak with confidence. They listen to each other and respond in a sensible, mature manner. They enjoyed speaking and could give many examples of opportunities to speak in front of a range of audiences for different purposes. They take part in a class debate about fox hunting, which involved carefully planning their argument, preparing a script, and then carrying out the debate in front of another class. They talk about a given topic and respect the views of others, adapting their speech for different audiences. Whilst some teachers use the literacy strategy effectively to engage pupils in discussion, others expect pupils to listen for too long and do not give them enough opportunities to speak. In these classes pupils' listening skills are well developed, but they lack clarity and confidence when speaking to an audience.
70. Attainment in reading is average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 with most making satisfactory progress, and those with special educational needs making good progress. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and have been taught to read for information. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to discuss the differences between fiction and non-fiction books and could use the 'contents' page to find information. More able pupils locate information in a book, scan pages quickly and answer factual questions from the text. These pupils are reading accurately, fluently and with expression, using a range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words, including letter sounds and use of context. By the end of Year 6 pupils are reading and enjoying a wide range of texts. Many are enthusiastic about reading, discuss many books they have read recently and have their own preferred authors. They read independently, explain what has happened in the story so far, and predict possible outcomes. They are beginning to use references from the text to explain their views, but have yet to develop a full understanding of how the author uses language to engage the reader.
71. A home-school reading system operates with colour coded books to guide pupils in choosing books at the right level for their ability. Most parents are supportive and many use the reading records to help monitor their child's progress. The school has implemented a 'reading buddy' system for those children whose parents do not hear them read regularly at home. Older pupils regularly hear these Year 1 and 2 pupils read in their lunchtime and were observed to be sensible and supportive role models.
72. There is open access to a bright, attractive school library, situated in the centre of the school. Older pupils operate the computerised organisation system at lunchtimes so that all pupils can read, browse or change their books. The area is cosy and conducive to encouraging pupils to want to read. The books are in good condition, stored appropriately and well looked after. Pupils know how to locate fiction books by author and can use the cataloguing system for non-fiction. However, the shelves are labelled by category and do not have the relevant Dewey numbers displayed, nor is there a chart on display which would help pupils to understand what the numbers on the books mean. All classrooms have reading areas with a good selection of

reading books to take home, as well as a selection of information books to support other areas of the curriculum being studied.

73. Current standards in writing in Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally, although younger pupils were seen to be making good progress during lessons where the focus on writing is effective. Attainment was above average for the pupils' ages in a Year 1 lesson when all pupils constructed sentences that included an adjective. More able pupils work independently to achieve their target of at least five sentences and most use capital letters and full stops correctly. A teaching assistant effectively supports less able pupils, so that they all write an interesting sentence. An analysis of pupils' writing shows good progress in handwriting, with correctly formed letters of consistent size and spacing. Most pupils write in complete sentences with some correct punctuation. However, more able pupils do not achieve a higher level because they are not yet joining their writing or using punctuation accurately and consistently enough. Pupils spell commonly occurring words and use their knowledge of letter sounds to change the spellings of familiar words, for example when Year 1 pupils played a circle game to change 'seen' to 'seep' to 'steep'. They knew which were the vowels and consonants, and could identify the letter names and sounds.
74. In Year 6 current standards in writing are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils have made good progress and write clearly and imaginatively for a range of purposes. They use their notes, completed as homework after a visit, to organise and write a recount text. They know the criteria for writing effectively and plan their writing well. Their handwriting is joined and legible and is starting to become more fluent. More able pupils write with interest and imagination, using simple and complex sentences and a range of adjectives, adverbs and connectives, although they do not always use the associated punctuation correctly. Some of the work of younger pupils in the junior classes is of too low a standard with unsatisfactory handwriting and poor basic skills in punctuation and spelling. Whilst pupils have been taught the strategy of look, cover, write and check to learn to spell new words and can use dictionaries efficiently, they often leave mis-spelt words uncorrected in their writing. Less able pupils are sometimes given difficult targets, and are not always supported in knowing how to improve.
75. The quality of teaching seen was good overall with the strongest teaching in Years 1 and 2. The high turnover of teachers in some classes of older pupils has led to difficulties in the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which overall is satisfactory.
76. A particular strength of the teaching is the very good organisation of the literacy hour which is helping to ensure that activities in every part of the lesson are focused on ensuring pupils make good progress towards the planned learning objectives. These objectives are effectively shared with pupils so that they know what they are going to learn. Whole class teaching is often well planned and interesting as in the case of a Year 2 lesson when the teacher mixed up sentences describing snails so that pupils understood the need to organise their writing in order to convey meaning. Pupils found this activity fun, enjoyed helping the teacher to sort it out, and were then able to organise their own writing effectively. All elements of the literacy strategy were well taught in Years 1 and 2, but the group-work in some older classes was weaker. Here the teachers did not always organise the pupils well enough in order to ensure the best use of time. An analysis of work from Year 6 revealed that pupils have been effectively taught to write for a wide range of purposes using appropriate styles of text to engage the reader. The teacher has displayed the criteria for success in different

forms of writing in order to remind and support pupils. An analysis of books in the other junior classes revealed a need to be more consistent in the assessment and marking of pupils' work. Teachers' expectations of pupils, particularly in their handwriting and spelling, are not high enough. Whilst there is evidence of targets for improving their work in pupils' books, they are sometimes the same for all pupils, and do not appear to be monitored or referred back to often enough in the marking of work.

77. Attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Pupils can concentrate both when listening to the teacher and while working with groups or on their own. Pupils enjoy answering teachers' questions during whole class teaching, and respond best when the teacher makes sure that all pupils have an opportunity to do so. Other subjects contribute well to the development of literacy skills, for example science, history, geography and religious education. The pupils make good use of the ICT suite for word processing some of their work, including stories and poems.
78. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, and good in Years 1 and 2. Planning is a strength, with good monitoring in place. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well, but the impact has been lost in some junior classes because of lack of training for some new or supply teachers. This has led to the co-ordinator having to give a lot of support to new staff and has slowed down the rate of improvement. The start of good assessment and group target-setting strategies can be seen in practice, but this now needs to become embedded and monitored across the school. A close scrutiny of pupils' work in books revealed inconsistencies in expectations in handwriting, marking and target-setting. The school does not carry out regular audits of pupils' work to check that standards are consistent across the school.

MATHEMATICS

79. The results of the most recent national tests show attainment to be well below the national average at the end of Year 2 and in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. The improved standards seen in 2000 dipped in Year 2 and, to a lesser extent in Year 6 the following year. This apparent lack of improvement can be explained by the higher than usual number of pupils who had special educational needs relating to mathematics in both year groups. Inspection findings show that current standards are average, and the school is in line to achieve this year's targets but the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels could be improved. The school has identified that pupils' problem solving skills need developing and inspection findings support this analysis.
80. In Years 1 and 2 the majority of pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well. This is because of the lively teaching and good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants. In Years 3 to 6 pupils who have special educational needs continue to achieve well. This is because teachers know their pupils well and ensure that in class when pupils have difficulty they are supported in their learning. The various additional booster groups also have an impact on raising the standards of lower attaining pupils, helping them to make good progress. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls and the large majority achieve satisfactorily.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly in place and teachers plan their lessons accordingly. Pupils are taught in single classes and within those classes pupils are grouped according to their level of attainment. This allows teachers to

make sure that group activities are appropriate for pupils' individual needs. Where teaching is strong it is characterised by good subject knowledge, confident delivery of the National Numeracy Strategy and a reassuring classroom atmosphere where pupils enjoy the mathematical challenges of the lesson. In the better lessons teachers make sure that pupils clearly know what they are going to learn and at the end of the lesson progress is reviewed to see if the aims have been achieved. This results in pupils understanding the point of the lesson and being motivated to succeed.

82. At the beginning of lessons, teachers start with oral activities, which include number bonds and counting. When these activities are lively, within pupils' ability and include the whole class, pupils are interested and enjoy themselves. As a result they have a positive attitude to mathematics. However, when the lesson starts at slow pace pupils are not motivated. In Year 2 the teacher uses the initial part of the lesson well and challenges the class 'Now our brains are warmed up, we are going to solve problems'. This provoked a positive response from the pupils and they continued to work well throughout the lesson. When topics are introduced as an interesting challenge, pupils respond well. This was seen when Year 5 pupils started their topic on 'probability'. The good use of humour and the involvement of the whole class meant that pupils became motivated and responded well to the demands of the lesson. Relationships are good in the school and adults praise pupils' efforts and encourage them to achieve. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to independently organise and take responsibility for their work. Generally when pupils have difficulty with a problem they have not yet become resourceful, and prepared to consider carefully how they might solve the problem. Pupils' books are often untidy, missing headings or dates and showing a lack of pride in the finished work. Where teachers' marking is good, for example in Year 1 and Year 3, the teacher poses questions to make pupils think more carefully about their work. This makes pupils aware that their work is valued. In all lessons it is clear that teachers are committed to helping their pupils improve their levels of attainment.
83. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use coins to make sixty pence or a pound, they are learning that multiplication and division are inverse operations and they can see the relationship for example between ten shared by two, two times five and five times two. They develop their thinking skills as they try to calculate how many packets containing four cartons of drink will be needed for a party for twenty six people. Pupils suggest different methods and experiment to see how to get the answer. This is a good teaching strategy that has the potential to help pupils achieve better results in the national tests. Pupils consolidate their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and learn about the features of cones, cylinders and cuboids. Pupils construct and interpret a simple bar graph showing favourite colours, and they understand the patterns of odd and even numbers. Younger pupils learn to tell the time using analogue clocks and use their writing skills to explain in sentences where they were at given times.
84. Between the ages of seven and eleven, pupils including lower attaining pupils improve their understanding of number. They make satisfactory progress and use their knowledge of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to make increasingly difficult calculations and by the age of eleven, more able pupils can use brackets appropriately in their calculations. Knowledge of shape and space is developed to include the properties of different types of triangle and quadrilateral, lines of symmetry, perimeter and area of shapes. Pupils make satisfactory progress and by the age of eleven can make nets of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils use their number skills to work out money problems and to calculate fraction and percentages. In Year 6 pupils understand the relationship between decimal fractions and

percentages, and are learning to apply this knowledge to data problems. Pupils make satisfactory progress in covering a range of mathematical knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 3 estimate and then calculate weights and distances. Year 4 pupils are able to work with negative numbers, identify compass points and mark co-ordinates for a graph. In Year 5 knowledge of time is increased to include calculations based on the twenty-four hour clock. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they can measure angles, use mean, median and mode to calculate averages and make graphs to show for example the difference in temperature between London and the Algarve. Pupils also make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills in other subjects such as science, design and technology and history.

85. The school makes appropriate use of ICT to support mathematics. Older pupils visit the ICT suite for short sessions on a rota basis, and work through a range of programmed mathematical activities to speed up their mental responses and consolidate their existing mathematical skills. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced to the school but there is some lack of confidence in teaching mathematics in Years 3 to 6. There is insufficient emphasis on practical mathematics, which would help pupils to improve their problem solving abilities and impact favourably on achievement in national tests. The use of mathematical skills across other subjects is satisfactory but there is further scope for graphs and data to be used in other subjects.
86. The subject co-ordinator has recently left the school and the head teacher has taken on this additional responsibility till a new appointment is made. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly. This ensures appropriate coverage of the curriculum. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress; this allows them to group pupils according to their learning needs and to pass accurate information on to the next teacher. Though pupils have individual targets for improvement, there is no consistent use of marking to track pupils' success in achieving these targets. Assessment files are in the process of being developed and once fully established should mean that assessment information could be used more effectively throughout the school to predict pupils' future attainment and analyse gaps in pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

87. Current standards of work are average at the end of Year 2. This is an improvement from the well below average standards shown by teachers' assessments in 2001. This is partly because the teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved since the previous inspection and teachers have raised their expectations of all pupils and in particular of the more able. Consequently, all pupils are achieving well. Approximately one quarter of pupils are on course to exceed the expected level for their age by the end of this academic year, whereas in four of the last five years no pupils have exceeded the expected level.
88. Standards among the current Year 6 pupils are also average and show some improvement from the well below average standards in three of the last four years. However, lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' books and discussions with Year 6 pupils show that whilst pupils have a sound body of knowledge their experimental and investigative skills are not as well developed. More able pupils are underachieving in Years 4, 5 and 6 because of the approach to teaching. Achievement is satisfactory for the large majority of pupils and, is good for those with special educational needs as they are well supported by their teachers and teaching assistants. A factor in the overall rise in standards is the revised scheme of work, which is based on national

guidelines and has a clear focus on pupils' learning.

89. By the end of Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand the principles of fair testing. They have a good grasp of forces, with some understanding that friction is a force, shown in their writing on how they make scooters and bicycles move and how the brakes make them stop. Pupils understand the need for a healthy, balanced diet and know that exercise keeps you fit. They are currently acquiring good levels of knowledge about different habitats and the creatures found in them. Good use of computer programs is enabling pupils to work to their full potential through researching information. They can name a range of natural and man-made materials and know the effect of heat on materials such as clay. They understand that electricity is used to provide light, heat, sound and movement, but some are less secure in their understanding of constructing electrical circuits. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to record their findings independently, which helps teachers in assessing what they know and understand and supports the development of literacy skills. This good practice continues to some extent in Year 3, but is less evident in Years 4 to 6.
90. By the end of Year 6 pupils know how to separate mixtures such as salt and sand, or pasta and sand and use scientific vocabulary, such as soluble, insoluble, filter, evaporate and decant confidently in their explanations. They understand how living things are adapted to their environments, for example how a wood louse is adapted to living under stones and pieces of wood. They can explain the process of pollination well and can name the main body organs and their functions. Pupils know that some changes to materials are reversible, whereas others are not. They can construct an electrical circuit with conductors and can draw accurate diagrams of series and parallel circuits. The analysis of pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests in 2001 showed that too often pupils did not attempt to answer questions requiring an explanation. Inspection findings indicate this is due to the teaching methods used in Years 4 to 6. In Year 4, there was a heavy reliance on worksheets in the autumn term, with pupils only putting words into sentences or a tick or cross to indicate if a statement was true or false. The pupils did not have to think hard about the answer. It is clear that much of the work this term has been copied because all books say the same. In Year 5, where there have been many different teachers, too much time has been spent on producing the title pages for topics being studied, too much work has been left unmarked and pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable.
91. In Year 6, there has been a focus on improving the pupils' body of knowledge to overcome some low teacher expectations in previous years and this has been successful. Pupils' books contain a clear set of revision notes, which have been dictated to them. These are usually presented well, with scientific vocabulary highlighted in contrasting colours. Discussions with pupils showed they were fully aware that this was the intention of the teaching this year and that some experiments would be set for homework. Observation of lessons showed that when are carried out all the pupils follow the teachers' instructions and do not have opportunities to devise their own experiments, or record their findings independently in scientific format. In Year 6, for example, pupils were required to copy the table for their results from the teacher's example before starting the experiment. More able pupils had to wait for others to complete the table, so that all could carry out the experiment together and check out their hypotheses. The findings were dictated to pupils and they only had to record independently what they had used. This does not enable the teacher to assess what pupils know and is likely to play a part in pupils not attempting to answer questions requiring an explanation on test papers. The scrutiny of work showed no evidence of the use of computers to present findings from experiments, or for research purposes. The discussions with pupils showed their enthusiasm for the

subject, but some frustration that they are not allowed to devise their own experiments to solve challenges set, with more able pupils feeling they could have made better progress and achieved well.

92. The key features of the good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are the teachers' secure subject knowledge; the teaching methods; the management of pupils and the deployment of teaching assistants. Teachers skilfully build on pupils' existing knowledge, providing opportunities for the pupils to decide what further information they want to find. Pupils use their independent research skills to acquire knowledge and reach their full potential, using both books and computers to access appropriate web sites and record their work independently. In Year 2 pupils found the answers to questions such as 'Why are snails slimy?' and 'Do ladybirds have teeth?' Teaching in lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 was satisfactory, but the scrutiny of work showed weaknesses in the marking of work in Years 4 and 5. Too often all pupils have been given the same tasks which did not provide sufficient challenge for the more able. Too much work has been left unmarked with few comments to help pupils in improving their work in the future. Some of the work with temporary teachers has been poorly presented.
93. The subject co-ordinator has only taken on responsibility for the subject recently, but in a short time has revised the curriculum in line with national guidelines and this is providing more support for teachers in their planning. Assessment procedures have been implemented and thorough analysis of assessment information is helping to identify the relevant areas for further development. There is a good action plan for development of the subject and with less disruption in teaching has the potential to raise standards further. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Standards of work are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 were below average. The improvement has been achieved by reviewing the whole school scheme of work to ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in the different aspects of the subject from year to year, and which supports the teaching. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, including those with special educational needs, because the teaching is now good. The revised scheme of work is not yet fully embedded in Years 3 to 6, because three of the four classes currently having temporary teachers. Whilst the teaching seen in lessons was good, scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks showed teaching of the subject has been patchy in Years 4, 5 and 6 and is satisfactory overall. Achievement is satisfactory for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, but is good for pupils in Year 3, where teaching has not been disrupted by staff changes.
95. In Years 1 and 2, pupils of all abilities experience a wide range of materials and produce some attractive, eye-catching work such as the fabric pictures of sunflowers and the printed pictures of Buddhist temples. By the end of Year 2 pupils improve their ability to represent what they see and feel. Painted portraits show pupils are beginning to develop a sense of proportion and to show increasing detail in their pictures, for example in the painted school badges on their uniform. They develop satisfactory skills in observational drawing, showing good attempts, for example in drawing the petals of daffodils. Pencil sketches of shells, an animal skull and a piece of wood, demonstrate good observational skills, with pupils beginning to use shading to show the effect of light. Through other experiences using textiles pupils develop their

creativity satisfactorily, for example when weaving using different materials and using 'tie and dye' techniques to provide a background design on fabric and then creating a pattern using sequins and threads. Colour washes have been used effectively over ink drawings of the 'Great Fire of London' to create a hazy sky, full of smoke. However, there is less evidence of three-dimensional work and this aspect is insufficiently developed.

96. The scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks in Years 3 to 6 showed few examples of work in Years 4, 5 and 6. Current work on display and discussions with Year 6 pupils revealed a satisfactory range of experiences over time, with most pupils making satisfactory progress, but for pupils in Years 4 and 5, progress this year has been unsatisfactory for reasons already given. In Year 6, pupils can discuss the work of famous artists demonstrating their understanding of the techniques used, for example 'The Water Lilies' by Monet and how small brush strokes were used to create the effect of the surface of the water. The weakness identified in the previous inspection in pupils' skills in observational drawing has been remedied. Pencil sketches of African musical instruments in Year 5 show good use of shading and line. Further work on still life when drawing classmates dressed as Ancient Greeks showed good proportion. Pupils use these skills well in recording their work in subjects, such as science and geography. Bold, symmetrical patterns, based on Islamic art have been created on fabric and made into prayer mats, increasing pupils' understanding of Islamic art and of other cultures. Year 6 pupils are currently improving their skills in sketching using charcoal and chalk. Their observations of the landscape from the school playground were used as the starting point for understanding perspective and how to draw, for example, the fence in front of the block of flats. Some pupils used white chalk lines alongside the black charcoal lines skilfully to show the effect of light on the boundary fence. Pupils have a good understanding of primary and secondary colours and of colour mixing. Discussions with Year 6 pupils revealed previous experiences in both two and three-dimensional work, for example when making clay coil pots and clay tiles with African designs. They have also made masks from papier-mache. Models on display in Year 3 have been made using a wire frame as the starting point, which provides a different approach to three-dimensional work.
97. Good quality sketchbooks are in use in Years 1 to 6, but are not used often enough for pupils to practise skills and techniques before embarking on final pieces of work. There is little evidence of larger group work throughout the school. Often the work in sketchbooks is not dated to give an indication of the pace of progress. Pupils in Year 2 were surprised to be given their sketchbooks, which contained only one piece of work from Year 1 and one previous piece of work in Year 2. In Year 4, the sketchbooks only contained one piece of work. There is satisfactory use of computer programs to support pupils' development of skills in graphic art and design. The pupils enjoy their artwork, sustain their concentration and have pride in their finished work. They work carefully so as not to spoil the work of others and willingly share the resources. Observation of a Year 4 lesson, where pupils were given the opportunity to decide which resources to use for themselves showed they were not used to this approach, with teachers usually making the decisions for them. This does not encourage pupils to make decisions about the media they are more comfortable in using nor enable them to fully develop their creativity.
98. Good features of the teaching and learning seen were the teachers' secure subject knowledge and demonstrations and explanations of the best way to approach the task set. This enabled pupils to move into their activities quickly and maintain the pace of the lesson. All teachers moved around the groups of pupils offering advice or giving support where needed to encourage pupils to persevere with their work. In Year 2,

clear explanations of the tasks enabled the pupils to begin to work on different activities quickly. In Year 4, the teacher's support for individual pupils helped them to clarify their thoughts on what they wanted to portray and led to many different ideas being followed through into artistic maps, such as journeys to school, a treasure hunt or the story of 'Shrek'.

99. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post since the beginning of this academic year but has already had a positive impact on standards in the subject through revising the scheme of work and increasing the resources available. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment have been established, but are not yet fully embedded. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good, but the full effect is not evident due to the disruption in staffing.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. By the end of Year 2 pupils have had a variety of experiences and standards are similar to those seen in most schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 6 are below those expected, which represents a lack of progress and underachievement for pupils of all abilities. This may partly be due to the high turnover of teachers in the junior classes. Only one design and technology lesson took place during the inspection week and no portfolio of work was available, so these judgements are based on an assessment of work in books and around the school, as well as discussions with pupils. The quality of work seen in Year 6 was satisfactory, but there is insufficient evidence of sustained provision throughout Years 3 to 6, in order to ensure the development of pupils' designing and making skills.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils can assemble, join and combine a range of materials. This was demonstrated in a display of puppets made by Year 2 pupils. It was evident that they had been able to examine how toy puppets were made, how fabric was joined and then produce their own designs and make their own decisions about materials and methods. Pupils had made their own individually designed puppets to a good standard.
102. By the end of Year 6, pupils are beginning to develop, plan and communicate their own ideas, as in the case of a control project in Year 6 where pupils produced a range of model fairground rides and working toy cars. Pupils were able to demonstrate their design skills with diagrams and sketches, accompanied by written annotations of their thinking. The work produced was at an appropriate level for their age, but there are not enough opportunities for them to develop the full range of skills in working with tools and equipment so that they can produce work of the highest quality.
103. It was not possible to reach a secure judgement about the quality of teaching because no lessons were observed, and there was insufficient other evidence. Discussion with pupils revealed that they are enthusiastic about the subject and value the work they have recently completed. However, they feel, and inspectors agree, that their skills would improve still further if they were provided with more opportunities for designing and making models.
104. Management and leadership are satisfactory. Long term planning to ensure a broad coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is in place and the scheme of work is currently being built up based on teachers' planning. The policy does not incorporate all the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a good range of resources, which are well organised and accessible. A high turnover of staff has led to disrupted provision and the planned work is incomplete and assessment

procedures not well established.

GEOGRAPHY

105. Current standards of work are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2, but are below expected levels for pupils by the end of Year 6. This represents unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 can describe where they live, know their address, and use geographical language to describe their route to school. In Year 2 they are developing these early geographical skills and can draw aerial views and simple maps of their school environment. They are beginning to develop an understanding of different places through their 'Barnaby Bear' project. Achievement is satisfactory for most pupils in these year groups and is good for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils in Year 6 could describe work they did on a river study and know that physical landscapes change through natural processes of erosion and deposition. They were able to find towns and countries in a range of atlases and road maps by good application of English skills using contents and index pages. There were weaknesses in their knowledge of keys and scales when they were asked to interpret physical features of a map of Spain and could not work out from the information available on the page where the mountainous regions were. When asked to compare their own location and the Lake District, they were able to give population as a difference, but their understanding did not extend to the impact of physical features on the population of an area, or the importance of location in their own town. Pupils of all abilities have underachieved over time in Years 3 to 6, partially due to the additional time given to teaching English and mathematics in order to raise standards, which has reduced the time for teaching geographical skills.
106. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall, with good teaching seen in Years 1 and 2. Recent projects using the local environment as a starting point have been well planned and have had a good impact on pupils' learning. For example pupils in Year 3 were following up a visit to Reddish Vale and were able to relate what they had seen when asked to identify examples of human and physical features in an environment. Pupils in Year 6 had visited an environmental centre in Reddish Vale. They communicated their learning successfully through diagrams and writing and had a good understanding of a physical process changing the landscape. However, an assessment of work in Years 3 to 5 reveals few examples of pupils' own work and those that are available are unsatisfactory in content and mainly copied from worksheets. This work is the same for all pupils regardless of their ability. There is little evidence of pupils being taught geographical enquiry skills or being allowed to take responsibility for communicating their own ideas. Teaching and learning improve in Year 6, where there is a higher volume of work and pupils' interest is evident with higher standards of presentation and improving written communication skills. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They particularly enjoy practical work, for example field trips, drawing maps and finding routes they have walked in a road atlas.
107. A new temporary co-ordinator is currently mapping out a revised scheme of work, but this needs further development so that it contains sufficient detail and teaching objectives are clear. Teacher assessment needs to be developed to help ensure pupils make better progress in acquiring the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the National Curriculum. The school has not carried out a recent, thorough audit of resources to ensure they are adequate and used to meet the needs of the curriculum.

HISTORY

108. There were no history lessons taking place in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection week and, whilst there was some evidence in Year 1 books, it was insufficient to reach a secure judgement about standards or teaching and learning for those pupils. Younger pupils distinguish old and new toys and begin to give reasons for their answers. More able pupils pose their own historical questions. Standards of work by the end of Year 6 are average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.
109. Year 6 pupils have experienced being evacuees for the day in a drama project at a local air raid shelter. These pupils have a deep understanding of the impact of World War II on the lives of ordinary people both nationally and in their local area. They are able to analyse the effects of war on work, food supply and family life. Year 5 pupils studying the Ancient Greeks are able to contrast and compare two civilisations and are beginning to understand beliefs and attitudes of the times. They know some of the key dates and events, and know what BC and AD mean. An analysis of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 revealed an over-reliance on copying work into books or using work sheets, with too little evidence of opportunities for pupils to carry out their own research or communicate their findings in their own ways.
110. Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. This good teaching was characterised by careful planning which included very good preparation of resources including, in the case of history since 1930, books, newspaper articles, and a number of very interesting artefacts which pupils were able to hold and examine for themselves. These, together with a well-planned visit, helped to arouse the interest of pupils and deepen their understanding. The teacher has made effective links with literacy, by selecting novels for reading set in the period being studied. An analysis of pupils' work in exercise books revealed a reliance on worksheets, with much of the work the same regardless of the ability of pupils. However, there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning in order to be able to develop their historical enquiry skills and to learn to communicate their knowledge in a range of ways. In the lessons seen, pupils were interested and keen to discuss their knowledge and ideas. They concentrate, listen to the opinions of others and work independently in order to record their own work.
111. The leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a new scheme of work, which incorporates existing practice and is based on the national curriculum. This will be further improved when history becomes a focus of the school development plan next year. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop links with other subjects such as ICT. There are good resources including published schemes, local history books and materials, and computer programs to help learning in specific projects. The school belongs to the Stockport library scheme, which enables them to borrow interesting artefacts and materials such as those currently being used in the World War II project. The co-ordinator acknowledges there is still much to do to develop history further in order to ensure pupils have access to the full breadth of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2, average at the end of Year 6 and have been maintained since the previous inspection. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and make good progress in gaining skills and knowledge. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils achieve satisfactorily as they have not had the benefit of the current good

provision throughout their primary school education. The computer suite has increased the resources available, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The permanent staff have undertaken the training which is available for all teachers nationally and this has increased their subject knowledge and confidence in the use of computer programs to support pupils' learning across all curriculum subjects. In addition, the teaching assistants are also undertaking training to increase the effectiveness of the support they provide. In Years 1, 2 and 6, the teachers have planned the use of computers into the daily activities within lessons very well and pupils work independently because of the good routines established. Pupils with special educational needs, whatever their difficulty, make the same rate of progress as their peers as they have equal access to the computers available and additional support where necessary.

113. By the end of Year 2 pupils are confident in using computers independently to support their learning in many subjects. In science, for example they access websites to find information about different birds and animals as part of their study of habitats, reading fluently the information about blackbirds. They collate information about the ways in which Year 6 pupils travel to school, which combines work in mathematics and geography, and present it in a pictogram, which they then print off. They have made books to show lifecycles where they have combined pictures with simple sentences. Pupils can successfully control the forward movements and turns needed for a floor robot to find the treasure on a map. They use graphics programs to draw pictures, erase them and try again. They can type in stories written in literacy lessons.
114. By the end of Year 6 pupils produce questionnaires to draw up databases and put the information into spreadsheets. They can present the data in pie charts and graphs. Good use is being made of computers to improve Year 6 pupils' speed and accuracy in recalling number facts. Pupils work independently to try and improve on their previous best performance. This is helping to prepare them for the forthcoming national tests and they work hard and with enthusiasm. Pupils demonstrate their sound knowledge, for example when they talk about creating their multi-media presentations and in solving problems, such as when they had to devise the badger trail, determining the direction the badgers would need to travel in, ensuring there was access to food and water. They have researched information, for example about the Islamic faith and its impact on the daily life of Moslems as part of their studies in religious education and about mountain environments in geography. Skills in word processing are good, with pupils typing up their instructions in the event of an air raid. They set the instructions out in a clear format, using an appropriate size and type of font. As part of their work in history, pupils successfully researched information about World War II. This demonstrates the good cross-curricular links now being made to support pupils learning, for example between English, history and ICT. In design and technology pupils designed coins. Currently the school does not have any programs to support pupils' learning in music, nor to develop their understanding of sensing data and these are areas for further development. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show they have a good understanding of the advantages of using computers, for example in the speed of sending messages via emails and accessing information from the Internet.
115. No teaching of classes was seen in Years 3 to 6, but indications from pupils' skills, knowledge and confidence indicate the teaching to be at least satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 teaching and learning are good, the teachers are confident in demonstrating the use of different programs which pupils then use independently over the course of the week. Teachers have put much effort into finding the most appropriate sites for young pupils to visit and this is partly the reason teaching is good, as the tasks set match

the pupils' learning needs well. The relationships between the pupils, teachers and teaching assistants are very good and pupils feel able to ask for help when it is needed, although they learn much from each other when working in pairs. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, who in turn know they have to work hard to complete the tasks in the time allowed, so that others can have their turn. All pupils enjoy working with computers, behave responsibly when working independently in the computer suite or in classrooms.

116. The headteacher has successfully led the drive to improve the provision since the previous inspection. Since the retirement of the former deputy headteacher she has taken over the curriculum co-ordinator's roles and responsibilities and so ensured the subject has continued to develop satisfactorily. The weaknesses in the resources have been identified by the school. Given the disruption in teaching and changes of staff, the school has done well to make satisfactory improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.

MUSIC

117. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory for most pupils and good for those with special educational needs. It is also good for pupils receiving instrumental tuition who make good progress in understanding standard notation and in their performing skills. The weakness in singing identified in the previous inspection report has been remedied and pupils' skills are satisfactory. Through in-service training the staff have improved their subject knowledge, and confidence, and the overall quality of teaching and learning is better than at the time of the last inspection. The scheme of work, which should have been completed under the school development plan, has been delayed by staff absence. The school requested advice from the local education authority's advisory service on the best way to proceed in such circumstances. This has led to all classes in Years 3 to 6 following the same aspect but at different levels, and training provided in how to develop pupils' composition and performance skills, which has successfully eliminated unsatisfactory teaching evident at the time of the previous inspection.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a repertoire of songs they enjoy singing and can sing unaccompanied with most keeping in tune. Through experimenting with instruments to get the best sounds they find tapping, shaking and scraping to be effective methods. They develop their performing skills satisfactorily when following pictures of instruments initially and later their own graphic scores. Pupils can successfully repeat a simple body rhythm or lines of an African spiritual song. They have a sound knowledge of percussion instruments and understand the difference between tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils are beginning to understand the musical elements of tempo and dynamics and alter the speed or volume of their playing when instructed to do so.
119. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of famous composers, for example Beethoven, Mozart and Tchaikovsky, but are unsure of pieces of music they wrote apart from knowing that Beethoven wrote symphonies. They have a good knowledge of instruments and the composition of an orchestra. Their listening skills are satisfactory and are developed not only through lessons, but also through the music played at the beginning and end of assemblies each day. Pupils' understanding of the musical elements is also satisfactory, for example when playing high or low pitched notes, or expressing the timbre of their compositions as 'thicker' when four pupils played an ostinato using chime bars compared to two. Pupils can put chime

bars in order of pitch. When creating their own music, pupils show secure awareness of how different parts fit together and the need to achieve a good overall effect. The singing heard in assemblies was a little half-hearted, but in the Year 6 lesson pupils showed their ability to sing in tune with clear diction.

120. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, but with examples of good lessons in Years 2 and 3. The good features in these lessons were the clear lesson planning and introductory activities to revise previous work and gain pupils' full attention through repeating body rhythms. Teachers use their voices as a resource, which encourages pupils to join in. A strength of the teaching in general is the focus on musical vocabulary and the effective use of the resources available, particularly the sets of chime bars. This gives all pupils the opportunity to be fully involved in lessons. Because of this full involvement and the interesting content the pupils' behaviour was good in all lessons seen. In satisfactory lessons the pace is leisurely and the time actually spent on musical activities is not as long as it could be. There is a weakness in the use of ICT in music, as the school does not have suitable resources to enable pupils to create their own compositions.
121. The subject is currently being led and managed satisfactorily by two members of staff. They are providing good support for the temporary members of staff with their lesson planning and general advice. Assessment procedures have been established since the previous inspection, but are not yet fully embedded. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. Current standards are average at the end of Year 2 and rise above average by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress since the last inspection when standards were average overall. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are physically more able, make good progress and achieve well. Attainment in swimming exceeds national expectations by the end of Year 6, with most pupils able to swim the nationally expected 25 metres well before they leave the school, and the majority swimming much greater distances. Taken overall, standards by the end of Year 6 are a strength of the school.
123. During the inspection it was possible to observe gymnastics in Year 2, games in Years 3 and 4, and swimming in Year 5. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to warm up muscles before physical exercise. In Year 2 they can perform a sequence of a balance, jump and roll, holding the balance fairly still. They can perform forward rolls safely. More able pupils can interpret sequences at their own level, performing more sophisticated movements, such as rolling from the apparatus. They can remember, reproduce and perform simple actions with improving co-ordination and control, discussing their performance afterwards and suggesting ways to improve their sequences. During games lessons, pupils were taught skills in striking, throwing and catching. In a lesson focusing on tennis skills, pupils were able to improve co-ordination in order to keep a ball in play in pairs. They demonstrated a correct tennis grip and could control the face of the racquet. More able pupils had very good hand-eye co-ordination. In another lesson pupils were able to develop skills in throwing, catching, aiming and striking in a variety of small games.
124. Pupils behave well during lessons. They have a good understanding of rules and procedures, and can co-operate in small groups and whole class games. They enjoy physical activities and are keen to participate. Whilst many have a keen competitive nature, they are supportive of each other and have a good team ethos.

125. The teaching is good overall, but better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. The good lessons are characterised by teachers' secure subject knowledge and clear learning objectives, helping to ensure pupils make good progress during lessons. Teachers plan a variety of games and activities, which maintain good pace and engage pupils' interest. Equipment and apparatus are well organised to support learning in a safe environment. Lessons have a good structure keeping a balance between knowledge, developing skills and providing situations where those skills can be applied.
126. The curriculum is considerably enhanced by the very good provision for sport outside the school day. This includes athletics, football, netball, rounders, cricket and aerobics. The school has won local netball tournaments for a number of years, but has now extended that success to football and rounders.
127. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator, who has held this responsibility since the start of the academic year, has a clear vision and enthusiasm for developing physical education still further. Provision is good with appropriate time allocations. There is a commitment to swimming, which is provided for all pupils in Years 3 to 6. This, together with good teaching, results in higher than average attainment. The newly devised scheme of work ensures a balanced coverage across the school and from year to year. The co-ordinator has identified the need to formulate a clear plan to further develop the scheme of work, in order to identify clear assessment procedures and ensure good progression.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils in the school make at least satisfactory progress in improving their religious knowledge and understanding and achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection but the school has improved the focus of its work to include world religions other than Christianity.
129. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about Christian celebrations such as those at Christmas and Easter. In their writing books entitled 'My Special Thoughts and Ideas' they write their own prayers to celebrate Harvest time. They know the significance of the christening ceremony to families and learn to respect other religions. Year 1 pupils know that Sikhs wear special clothes that are significant, and based on this idea of special things the pupils designed their own special hats. In Year 2 pupils know that both Buddhists and Christians have special books, people and places to pray. They have examined a world map to see the countries from where Buddhists originated. Good teaching in Year 2 helps the pupils realise that Christians respect the Ten Commandments and Buddhists also have their rules or precepts. After close examination of the precepts the class made their own mini- Tripitaka containing their personal rules. Pupils thought very carefully about their rules and were proud that some of their efforts would be shown at the Good Work Assembly. The infant assembly in which bible stories were used well to support the theme of celebration reinforced the good class teaching. The Celebration Rap sung and signed at the end of the assembly set the tone for a happy start to the day.
130. Pupils in Year 3 know about the significance of Hindu symbols as well as the traditional objects associated with Christianity. As pupils progress through the school they read and discuss parables and extracts from the Bible and learn more about

Christianity. Year 4 attempt to apply the bible teachings to their own lives as they consider if parables from long ago are still relevant today. In a well-planned lesson based on the Bible, Year 5 pupils were able to think carefully about their personal responses to 'forgiveness', how saying sorry was not necessarily the same as meaning sorry. This lesson contributed well to pupils' moral development. The teacher skilfully managed the discussion so pupils started to think about compromise as a solution when both parties to a disagreement felt to be in the right. A further value of this discussion was that it related to classroom incidents and pupils were able to understand its relevance to themselves. Year 6 pupils have studied Islam in some depth, learning about the internal and external features of a mosque, traditional clothing, beliefs, festivals and discovering which countries are traditionally Islamic. At the time of the inspection Year 6 pupils started a module of work based on church organisations and the responsibility of the global citizen. They discussed the problems facing organisations such as Christian Aid working in Bangladesh and Nepal and faced with dilemmas about which groups of people to support. As a result of the lesson, pupils increased their social awareness and understand the consequence of helping one group of people may often have repercussions on other groups.

131. Teaching of religious education is good in Years 1 and 2. The impact of the staffing issues in Years 4 to 6 means there is a lack of consistency and focus on the planning of the subject, which results in the teaching being satisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers have good subject knowledge and their work is relevant to the pupils, reinforced by the good use of religious artefacts and a lively approach to the lesson. Pupils' attitudes are positive though a small number of pupils in Year 5 display unacceptable behaviour which despite being managed appropriately by the teacher restricts the amount of learning in the lesson. Usually, when given the opportunity, pupils contribute sensibly and thoughtfully to discussions. There is a limited amount of written work in this subject, and in Years 3 to 6 it is badly presented and untidy. In Year 1 the work is carefully marked showing pupils' progression however this is not a consistent picture throughout the school. Assemblies are based on an agreed theme but the quality of impact and contribution to pupils' personal development and religious understanding is inconsistent. The lack of visits and visitors from other faiths detracts from the range of learning opportunities for pupils to appreciate the significance of religion.
132. The co-ordination of religious education is satisfactory. Two enthusiastic and committed members of staff are working together to review the scheme of work in light of the new agreed syllabus. Plans are in hand to follow local authority guidance in arranging visits. The co-ordinators collect teachers' planning every half term but do not monitor the teaching of the subject. Religious education is not on the present school development plan but it is hoped that it will be prioritised next term.