

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY ROSARY RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105701

Headteacher: Mrs B Morris

Reporting inspector: Mr G R Alston
20794

Dates of inspection: 10- 13 September 2001

Inspection number: 195649

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 -11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fir Tree Avenue
Fitton Hill
Oldham

Postcode: OL8 2SR

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Madden

Date of previous inspection: 17 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20794	Mr G Alston	Registered Inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19740	Mr A Smith	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?
22740	Mrs M Leah	Team Inspector	English as an additional language English Design and technology Geography History	How well is the school led and managed?
29261	Mrs P Ward	Team Inspector	The foundation stage Science Art and design Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Rosary R C School is an average size primary school with 213 pupils ranging from 3 – 11 years in age. In the nursery and reception classes there are 49 children under the age of six who entered the school in September. There are very few pupils with parents from another cultural background, and no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs due to learning or behavioural difficulties is higher than that found in most schools but no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school is situated in a Regeneration Area and takes significant numbers of pupils from a large council estate. Pupils' attainment on entry is below the expected level. The proportions of higher and lower attaining pupils vary significantly between classes and there is a high mobility rate of pupils. This impacts both positively and negatively on the school's results in national tests and causes great variance from year to year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that continually analyses its own performance and works hard to continue to improve the education it offers its pupils. The school successfully provides a happy, caring learning environment. Children enter the school with standards that are below the expected level in language and number, and leave the school having reached the expected level in English and mathematics. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and the school is very well led by the headteacher, with the help of a hard-working staff and a very supportive governing body. As a result the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- In junior classes pupils achieve well in science, and in the 2001 national tests all pupils at the age of 11 achieved the expected level or above.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good; they form warm, sincere relationships, try hard with their work and accept responsibility well.
- The good range of experiences provided for children in the nursery and reception classes enabling them to make good progress with their learning.
- The school provides a strong pastoral system that helps develop sensitive, responsible pupils. A very good range of experiences develops pupils well, spiritually, socially and morally.
- The headteacher, with the strong support of a conscientious team of teachers and non-teaching staff, leads the school very well and, in consultation with a very knowledgeable governing body, ensures that money is used effectively.
- The school evaluates its work carefully, and there is a very strong commitment from everyone associated with the school to further improve the education its pupils receive.
- The school has good links with parents and the support parents give pupils at home is a great help to them.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in writing by improving the standard of handwriting in their books.
- The quality of the teaching in the mental/oral parts of mathematics lessons in order to raise pupils' ability to answer mental calculations accurately and confidently.
- Pupils' confidence and ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and mental strategies in practical, problematic, everyday situations by providing them with more opportunities to do this.
- Assessment procedures and schemes of work in some subjects, so that in all subjects these match the quality of those used in English.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since its last inspection in March 1997, the school has made a very good improvement in the areas of concern highlighted in the report and almost all of them have been dealt with fully. The clearly defined and well-organised management structure is effective in monitoring the quality of teaching, evaluating the work of the school and supporting new developments. The school has significantly improved its provision for information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and music. It has improved resources; developed appropriate schemes of work, provided effective support and training for teachers, and employed personnel with great expertise to assist in the teaching of these subjects. This in turn has increased teacher expertise and confidence, and as a result, standards have risen. The standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work has improved in their handwriting books, but this is not transferred to their other written work. Teachers' planning has significantly improved: all subjects now have appropriate schemes of work that provide clear guidance for teachers and these are now being revised in a planned programme of curriculum development. Very good assessment procedures are in place in English and good ones in mathematics, but in a small number of other subjects pupils are not regularly assessed. This means there is little recorded evidence of pupils' achievements and, as a result, teachers' planning to build effectively on pupils' past learning is insecure. The school has reviewed the length of the school day and the time it allocates to the teaching of subjects, and now follows the pattern found in most schools. The priorities the school has identified for development, along with its great enthusiasm and commitment to higher achievement, give the school a good capacity for further improvement.

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	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	D	A	A	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	D	A	A*	
Science	A	C	A	A*	

The information shows that results in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average. Compared to schools which have pupils with a similar background, results are much better in all three subjects. Trends over time show that results vary from year to year and reflect the pupils' abilities in the classes that took the tests and the change in pupils in the classes. Results have been consistently around the national average, except in 1999 when there were a high number of pupils with special educational needs (29 per cent) in the Year 6 class. Results were good in 2000 because there was a larger number of higher attaining pupils and a smaller number of lower attaining pupils (19 per cent) who took the test in the Year 6 class than is normal for the school. The results of the 2000 national tests for seven year-olds were average in reading and writing but well below average in mathematics. When these results are compared with schools of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, they are well above average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics. At the ages of seven and 11, evidence from inspection is that average standards of achievement are developing in English and mathematics. In science, standards are average at seven and above average at age 11. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in the standards they achieve. Pupils achieve well enough. Standards in English are high enough but standards in mathematics can be better. Pupils' ability to answer mental calculations is not as strong as their computational skills. Similarly, pupils' ability to solve problems is not as good as it should be because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday,

practical situations. Pupils display satisfactory standards of handwriting in their handwriting books but not in their other books, where it is below the expected level. The school has already met the targets it was set in national tests and is on course to achieve challenging future targets based on current pupils' attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn, settle quickly to their tasks and sustain concentration well. They are proud of their school and give of their best at all times.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. All pupils behave very well in all situations. They are courteous and polite to one another and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and are built successfully on mutual respect. Pupils are very mature and sensible; they organise themselves purposefully and readily show initiative both in and out of lessons.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is average and pupils enjoy coming to school, often arriving early.

In recent times, no pupils have been excluded from the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good; they behave well and develop relationships of high quality. They work with enthusiasm and are well motivated, exhibiting great interest in all that is around them. These very positive attributes help pupils to make good progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and teachers successfully meet the needs of all pupils. The teaching for children under six in the nursery and reception classes is very good and good for pupils in Years 3 and 6. In the 43 lessons seen the teaching was always at least satisfactory, being very good or better in 26 per cent of lessons. The teaching in three lessons was of excellent quality. In infant and junior classes, pupils are effectively taught the skills of literacy and numeracy. However, these skills are not always built upon well enough, particularly in handwriting. Pupils do not transfer the skills they have developed in handwriting lessons into their other written work. In mathematics, the quality of the teaching in the mental/oral parts of lessons does not adequately develop pupils' ability to answer mental calculations accurately and confidently. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use or apply their mathematical knowledge in practical, problem solving activities. In the good lessons the teachers provide good resources for pupils to use, set challenging tasks and make pupils feel valued. As a result pupils contribute confidently to lessons. They respond to their demanding tasks positively, trying hard and producing work that reflects their capabilities. The satisfactory teaching is instrumental in helping pupils to make satisfactory and, at times, good progress. The help given to pupils, especially pupils with special educational needs, by support staff is beneficial to all of them. As a result the learning is greatly enhanced when support staff are present to support these pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is effective planning by all teachers, and a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy. The curriculum caters satisfactorily for pupils' interests and needs; the many opportunities to contribute in lessons and become confident in themselves. An appropriate range of out-of-school activities and a variety of visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Teachers plan appropriate tasks and provide activities based on clear targets that enable pupils to learn effectively. Classroom assistants provide good support. Progress is better when classroom support is available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Lessons offer many opportunities for pupils to show initiative and be responsible for their own learning. There are good role models from all staff who have very clear expectations of behaviour. Mutual respect between everyone in the school ensures pupils develop a mature understanding of their social and moral responsibilities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils are sensitively looked after in a warm, caring environment. Teachers know pupils well. Good assessment procedures are in place.

Parents support the school well, both in raising funds and by helping pupils at home with their work. The school tries hard and successfully keeps parents informed about the work of the school and of their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has dealt admirably with the changes in staffing and with school improvement. She is well supported by the management team; there is a very good team approach in decision making and day to day organisation.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are very supportive and carry out their duties well. They have an effective committee system that enables them to monitor and analyse the work of the school and to be kept fully informed. The school considers carefully how it can get best value in purchasing equipment and services.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school carefully evaluates its performance. Where areas for improvement have been identified, the school considers and implements ways to raise standards. Coordinators conscientiously manage their subjects; their effectiveness and skills in monitoring and further improving the teaching and learning are developing successfully.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses the money it receives well and deploys its resources effectively. The school gives good value for money.

The school considers carefully how it can get best value in purchasing equipment and services. The school has good levels of teaching staff but the levels of classroom assistants are less than in most schools of a similar size. The accommodation is good and resources for learning are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of teaching and the behaviour of pupils.• The progress pupils make and the standards they achieve.• The management and leadership of the school.• The attitudes and values the school promotes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework pupils receive.• The range of out-of-school activities.• The information the school provides.

The inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views. However, inspectors do not support parents' expressed concerns. Homework is consistently given and supports pupils' learning. The school provides a similar range of out-of-school activities to that found in most schools. It also provides adequate levels of information to parents by means of regular parents' evenings, pupils' annual reports and its 'open door' policy for parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2) or above was close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher level (Level 3) was close to the national average in reading and writing but below in mathematics. Teacher assessments indicate a similar picture in science to that in mathematics. When compared to schools with pupils of a similar background, the school's results are well above average in reading, above in writing and below average in mathematics.
2. The results of the 2000 national tests at the age of 11 show the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 4) or above was well above the national average in English and mathematics and very high in science. The proportion reaching the higher level (Level 5) was above average in English and well above in mathematics and science. When compared with those schools that have pupils with similar backgrounds, results are well above average in English and very high in mathematics and science. This reflects the character of pupils who took the tests in 2000. In the Year 6 class the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (19 per cent) was lower than is normal for the school and the number of higher attaining pupils was higher. The significant variations in the attainment of pupils on entry over the past years mean that it is of limited value to compare trends over time. The pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 and Year 2 classes is average in all three subjects. The school's own comparative data, based on pupils' prior attainment, shows good progress over time.
3. The previous report identified areas of weak standards in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (DT) and music. Also concern was expressed about the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work. There has been a good improvement in all areas but further improvements are needed in handwriting. The school has improved its provision for ICT, DT and music significantly. It has improved resources, developed appropriate schemes of work, provided effective support and training for teachers, and employed personnel with great expertise to assist in the teaching of these subjects. This in turn has increased teacher expertise and confidence and, as a result, standards have risen. The standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work has improved in their handwriting books but this is not transferred to their other written work.
4. Assessments of children on entry to the school show that most children who are under the age of six enter school with language skills, number and personal and social skills that are below the expected level for children of this age. They achieve well in all areas of learning, and the good learning environment seen in the foundation stage makes it likely that, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the children will achieve expected level in communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in personal, social, and emotional development.

5. Overall, pupils' attainment in English at the ages of seven and 11 is average. At the age of seven and 11, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. At the age of seven, pupils listen carefully and are becoming confident in expressing themselves clearly. However, their vocabulary is narrow. At the age of 11, pupils listen purposefully and contribute well to class discussions, but their ability to question others' ideas and opinions is less well developed. In reading, higher attaining pupils talk about the books they like and read regularly, but many pupils' experience of books is narrow. At the age of seven, pupils can successfully attempt to read unknown words. The most fluent, confident readers are beginning to read short, simple novels with good expression. At the age of 11, the best readers are able to discuss their favourite authors and why they like their books, but for average and lower attaining pupils, knowledge of different authors is limited. Pupils have sound information finding skills; these include the ability to access information from the computer. In writing, at the age of seven, pupils record their ideas using several simple sentences that are appropriately constructed. Pupils spell common words correctly because they have sound strategies for spelling words with regular patterns. At the age of 11, higher and average attaining pupils use good expressive language and grammatical awareness in a variety of planned work. Pupils' skills in spelling are at the level of their other language skills. In handwriting books, pupils' handwriting is accurate and fluent; this results in satisfactory presentation of written work. However, these skills are not transferred to their work in lessons and many Year 2 pupils do not write in joined script. The picture is the same in junior classes; in all classes significant numbers do not write using joined script.
6. Across the school, progress is sound in reading, writing, speaking and listening. In speaking and listening, pupils make good gains in their ability to express thoughtful ideas about their work in the plenary session at the end of the lesson. In reading, higher attaining and average attaining pupils have made good gains in their ability to make very detailed analyses of plot and character and in their knowledge and understanding of the library systems of classification. In writing, higher and average attaining pupils make steady progress in their ability to write at length and for specific purposes.
7. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is average at the ages of seven and 11. All pupils make sound progress across the school. At the age of seven, pupils are confident in their understanding of the value of tens and units and can use this knowledge effectively in addition and subtraction of two digit numbers. Pupils' understanding and use of mathematical language are sound. However, although they tackle problems in a systematic way, their ability to explain their strategies is not as strong. Likewise, pupils lack confidence and ability to answer mental calculations quickly or accurately. At the age of 11, many pupils do not have rapid recall of multiplication facts up to the ten times tables. Similarly, pupils are not confident in developing their own strategies for solving problems or ably explaining their reasoning. Pupils' skills in mental calculations are not as strong as their computational skills due to a lack of opportunities to discuss their strategies in the mental/oral part at the beginning of the lesson. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. Data handling skills are good and in many instances pupils use appropriate computer programs well to develop their understanding. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measures is sound.

8. Overall, in mathematics pupils make sound progress. However, their progress in the knowledge and understanding of number throughout the school and is not enhanced through effective, regular practice in mental calculation and revision of number facts. Pupils' progress in using and applying their mathematical knowledge in everyday, practical situations is not as good as in their other numeracy skills as the opportunities for them to do this are limited.
9. In science, pupils' attainment at the age of seven is average and above average at the age of 11. Overall, progress is good because teachers provide pupils with lots of opportunities to experiment for themselves. At the age of seven, pupils have good scientific approaches and exhibit sound skills in observation and in communicating their findings. At the age of 11, pupils have the ability to recognise the need for a fair test; plan and carry out their own experiments, and select relevant equipment. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the natural world, and of materials and their properties and the physical world.
10. In ICT, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and 11. All pupils make sound progress. At the age of seven, pupils are confident in the use of a 'mouse' and can select items on the screen. They can program a moveable toy to go in a variety of directions and distances and are beginning to appreciate the impact of control technology in everyday life. At the age of 11, pupils have appropriate skills in word processing, can save their own work, find information on the CD ROM, and use icons and menus. They have written and sent e-mails to various places, including neighbouring schools. Satisfactory use of pupils' ICT skills is made in most subjects. For example in Year 4, pupils produce an illustrated booklet of Haiku poems. In Year 6, pupils use the Intranet to find information about their bodies and about the Greeks, and use spreadsheets to find out about spending at the tuck shop.
11. In junior classes, pupils make good progress in music and achieve the expected standard by the time they leave the school. In art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education pupils, achieve well enough and reach the expected level for their age at seven and 11. In swimming most pupils reach the expected level at the age of 11. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its standards in all subjects and improved in music and design and technology.
12. The school has made a good effort in introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils' literacy skills are given sufficient emphasis and further developed in other subject areas in both infant and junior classes. Pupils' writing skills are utilised appropriately and there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length for different purposes, for example in science and religious education. Likewise, there are sufficient opportunities for reading for information. The learning in many subjects is enhanced by opportunities presented to pupils to use their research skills, for example in science, history, geography and religious education. Pupils' numeracy skills, which are at the expected level, are used appropriately to classify, compare and measure in several subjects. Examples were seen in art, design and technology, ICT and science. The school has set itself challenging targets for literacy and numeracy that it is on course to meet. Good assessment and recording procedures are used effectively to set individual targets for pupils to achieve, and this is helping to maintain standards.

13. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well enough and make sound, and at times, good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. This is because tasks in the classroom are planned effectively by the teacher to meet their needs and the classroom assistant provides good support. The quality of individual education plans for pupils at Stage 2 and above is good. For pupils at Stage 1, many plans lack sufficient detail to provide clear guidance. Class teachers, the special needs coordinator, classroom assistants and outside agencies compile them. Learning targets set are, in the main, detailed, specific and achievable in the short term. The individual plans are reviewed regularly and targets modified according to pupil performance. Pupils are well supported in the classroom when classroom assistants are present. However, classroom assistants are not always present to support pupils in literacy or numeracy lessons. As a result, teachers do not always have the time they would like to support these pupils and this limits the progress they make.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. In the previous inspection the quality of these aspects was considered to be good in almost all areas. The school has worked hard and successfully built upon and developed these positive aspects further. Pupils' attitudes, their behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. Attendance is satisfactory.
15. Children settle very quickly into the positive school routines and adopt a very good approach to learning. This grows from first entry into school upwards and is maintained throughout the school by almost all of the pupils. They are very happy in all years and classes and throughout the school day. For example, at lunchtimes and in the playground they are at ease with each other and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The high levels of encouragement and praise given by staff to pupils, as part of the school's behaviour policy, motivate them very well. Pupils are eager to share and demonstrate their work with teachers, other pupils and visitors within the classroom. For example, at one break time two pupils brought out some numeracy work they had completed to show to a senior manager whilst on playground duty. They clearly demonstrated their growing pride in their achievements. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to the school, as they are very well integrated within the school community. The positive relationships between pupils and adults are very good and allow pupils to develop confidence in their own abilities and progress well through the school.
16. The behaviour of the greater majority of pupils during the inspection was very good. However, a small number of pupils occasionally misbehave and lose concentration. This was usually the case when the teaching was not correctly targeted at pupils' ability and when classroom support was not evident. Pupils are very quick to settle to tasks and they act in very responsible manner. For example, in a Year 3 physical education lesson, pupils resisted the temptation to become silly, being very aware of the limitations of hall size and their class numbers. Pupils show positive levels of concern and regard each other very well. For example, at break times they are careful in their games and activities not to encroach on quieter areas where less energetic pupils play. In discussions with pupils, all said that they felt very safe and none expressed any concerns about bullying or harassment of any kind. They knew what to do if feeling worried and felt quite confident to talk at any time to any member of staff if feeling threatened in any way. There have been no exclusions from the school in recent years. Pupils know the school's high expectations for good behaviour and are content to follow the

school rules. The school behaviour policy is consistently applied throughout the school by all staff and this helps to maintain the very positive, caring and secure environment that the school works hard to maintain.

17. The personal development of pupils is good throughout the school. There are more opportunities for responsibilities towards the end of the junior stage. Pupils are very eager to accept responsibility, for example by acting as classroom assistants, monitors or generally helping staff around the school. They quickly volunteer to take messages to the school office or return items of equipment, and at lunchtimes older pupils are actively involved in assisting younger pupils to dine. The school is internally very tidy and free from litter and graffiti; this is in part due to the pupils' respect for and ownership of their school. The exterior of the building is in a reasonable condition due again to pupils' respect for property. Relationships are very good between all pupils and staff. For example, the school administrator, site manager, dining hall staff and mid-day supervisors are all very well respected by the pupils due in the main to their excellent working relationships with the pupils. Pupils have the same high respect for each other, visitors and teachers. This is a mature and beneficial approach, which actively supports their learning.
18. Attendance is broadly similar to that found in most schools, as is the level of unauthorised absence. The school has positive strategies for attendance and aims to deter absence. The school is seeking ways to further develop these by making both parents and pupils more aware of the impact these have on learning. For example, the names of pupils with good attendance are listed in the newsletters issued to parents. The overwhelming majority of pupils are very eager to come to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and teachers successfully meet the needs of all pupils. This is a credit to the staff given that two teachers are new to the school, three teachers are relatively new to the profession and three teachers have just changed the age group they teach. The teaching is very good for children under six in the nursery and reception classes and good for pupils in Year 3 and 6. In the lessons seen, the teaching was always at least satisfactory, and was very good or better in 26 per cent of lessons. The teaching in three lessons was of excellent quality. The school has had some success in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection. No teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory as compared to 10 per cent previously, and the amount of very good teaching has risen from eight per cent to 25 per cent. In the previous report, unsatisfactory teaching was linked to low expectations and work not matched to pupils' abilities. There was also concern about a lack of schemes of work and teachers' expertise in the teaching of ICT, DT and music. All these concerns have been successfully addressed. The schemes of work in place for all subjects provide clear guidance for teachers and there is a planned programme for further development. All teachers have followed programmes of training in ICT, DT and music and this provision has been further improved by the employment of part-time staff with expertise to teach these subjects. The school has developed good systems for assessing pupils and this has led to better lesson planning which has helped provide work that is matched to pupils abilities.

20. In infant and junior classes, pupils are effectively taught the skills of literacy and numeracy. However, these skills are not always sufficiently well built upon, particularly in handwriting, because pupils do not transfer the skills they have developed in handwriting lessons into their other written work. In mathematics, the quality of the teaching in the mental/oral parts of lessons does not adequately develop pupils' ability to answer mental calculations accurately and confidently. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use or apply their mathematical knowledge in practical, problem solving activities. In good lessons the teachers provide good resources for pupils to use, set challenging tasks and make pupils feel valued. As a result pupils contribute confidently to lessons. They respond positively to challenge by working hard and producing work that reflects their capabilities. The satisfactory teaching is instrumental in helping pupils to make sound and, at times, good progress. The help given to pupils by support staff is beneficial to all of them. As a result the teaching is greatly enhanced when support staff are present to support pupils. In infant classes, the teaching of all subjects is satisfactory with the exception of ICT, where it is good. There was not sufficient evidence to make a judgement in music. In junior classes, the teaching in all the subjects is satisfactory, except in ICT and music, where it is good.
21. Overall, the teaching of children under the age of six in the foundation stage is very good. In the lessons seen all the teaching was at least good, and in almost 60 per cent of lessons it was very good or better. Teachers' planning is carefully based on the early learning goals for children of this age. Relationships are very good and the teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children in these areas. The nursery nurse, learning support assistants and the teachers co-operate well to plan suitable activities to build the children's confidence and skills, including extension work for higher attaining pupils. In a very good mathematics lesson aimed at increasing children's understanding of the numbers one to 10, the teacher interacted well with the children inspiring them to contribute enthusiastically to the discussion. The children were highly motivated by the use of the story of 'Five Little Ducks' and their knowledge was greatly increased. In an excellent lesson when the children were introduced to the computer, good informal assessment took place so that each successive step built effectively on children's past knowledge. A strength was the way the teacher adapted the activities according to how well the children achieved, eventually leading to all children successfully completing the task. The lesson was well organised to encourage children's independence and initiative in learning.
22. The teaching in classes with infant pupils is satisfactory. In the lessons seen, the teaching was always at least satisfactory, being good in 20 per cent. Where the quality of teaching is good, careful preparation provides a good range of resources to support pupils' learning, and they are well motivated by praise and encouragement. The teacher has high expectations of pupils and they respond enthusiastically. Lessons are well planned and organised, providing pupils with challenging tasks. An example of good teaching was in a Year 1 / 2 science lesson where the pupils explored melting ice using their senses. They responded enthusiastically to the problem of finding out what causes ice to turn back into water and concentrated hard, reaching a good understanding of how they could speed up or slow down the process. Questioning was used effectively to promote and assess understanding, and the teacher gave immediate extension or reinforcement as the needs arose. In a good Year 1 physical education lesson in which pupils developed their skills in sending and receiving a small ball, the

teacher used perceptive questions that focused pupils on the demonstration and valued their contributions to the discussion. The lesson provided pupils with the opportunity to see how other pupils successfully completed the task and to use this information in improving their own performance. Careful questions promoted pupils' thinking. For example, after demonstrating to pupils the teacher asked 'What happens when... or if I don't what will happen..?' Pupils were well motivated and lots of sensible discussion followed in which pupils used their newly acquired knowledge to improve their skills effectively. In the literacy and numeracy sessions, the teachers have established appropriate classroom routines for pupils and there is an industrious working atmosphere. In less effective lessons, teachers focus for long periods with one group and as a result have difficulty intervening with other groups. On these occasions progress for pupils is limited. In other lessons, the tasks teachers provide do not challenge higher attaining pupils. Teachers are skilled at using classroom assistants productively in the numeracy and literacy hour, for example, in a number session the assistant provided good support to lower attaining pupils with their task of adding two single digit numbers. Due to the way that classroom support assistants are allocated to classes early in the term, in some lessons where there is no classroom support, lower attaining pupils' progress is not as good because the teacher cannot effectively work with all groups of differing ability. The plenary session is focused sufficiently well on re-emphasising points from the lesson or giving constructive feedback.

23. In junior classes, the teaching is satisfactory, although it is good in Year3 and 6. In the observed lessons, the teaching was always at least satisfactory. It was good in 15 per cent and very good in 27 per cent of lessons. All the good and very good teaching was in Years 3 and 6. The best lessons are well planned; cater for the needs of all pupils; have a clear purpose; include challenging activities, and proceed at a good pace. In a very good Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils focused on the impact of verbs in the story of Rumpelstiltskin. The teacher used an effective range of teaching strategies and had high expectations of what pupils could achieve and how they should behave. In this lesson, discussion and questions were used well to challenge pupils' thinking, to inspire ideas and to see alternative possibilities. Whole-class teaching was effective, but pupils also had the opportunity to work independently or collaboratively, which they did well. This resulted in their settling quickly to the task, working at a good pace, and producing work which showed a good understanding of verbs. The teacher made the learning fun and as a result, the pupils enjoyed the lesson immensely. In a good Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher used her time well to monitor and support pupils as they worked in groups discussing how they were going to investigate computational strategies for multiplication and division. She listened carefully to the discussions and joined in when necessary, ensuring that opportunities to extend and clarify pupils' ideas were effectively taken. In other good lessons, teachers used questions well to check on past and present learning and develop the lesson successfully from pupils' responses. In a very good Year 6 science lesson, the teacher used questions well to develop the lesson from pupils' own knowledge and understanding. Good use was made of open-ended tasks and questions, for example, 'Why do you think we need a key to identify different specimens?' or, 'How do you think you could make use of this information to make your own key?' The pupils responded with great enthusiasm and learnt a great deal from each other about keys and identifying different specimens. Where the teaching is less effective, qualities that are missing are: good pace to the lesson, challenging, interesting tasks and effective intervention by the teacher. For

example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson the teacher did not intervene sufficiently well as pupils worked in order to extend their thinking or check on their learning.

24. Most teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. In a Year 3 ICT lesson, the technician was well briefed by the teacher and used his expertise and ability to follow up the lesson, focusing on the use of CDs and supporting pupils well. He carefully balanced the amount of information he gave to pupils against effective questions to check on their knowledge. As a result pupils gain a clear understanding of how to load, navigate and eject a CD competently. The format of lessons based on the guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has maintained the satisfactory teaching of English and mathematics; clearly focused lessons end with effective plenary sessions to check on pupils' learning. In the teaching of mathematics, appropriate use is not always made of mental exercises to give pace to the lesson and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to discuss their own mental strategies. Most teachers' management of pupils is good, ensuring good levels of discipline and creating an industrious working atmosphere. Teachers show great sensitivity towards pupils' needs; as a result, pupils feel valued and confidently contribute to the lesson. Pupils are eager to learn and, when given a task, respond positively by working hard and producing good work that is matched to their ability. The satisfactory teaching is instrumental in helping pupils make sound progress.
25. Homework is used appropriately to support the work in classrooms. The regular use of homework is effective in promoting the development of reading, spelling and mathematics. Many parents make good use of the reading diary, which has great value as an effective link between home and school.
26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans exist for all pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. They are well structured and identify appropriate and realistic goals. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them in their individual plans. Most teachers plan tasks based on these plans, and support staff are well briefed to work with small groups or individuals. As a result, pupils make sound and at times, good progress. Teachers show patience and understanding and have high expectations of both the academic performance and the behaviour of pupils on the register of special educational needs. In the nursery and reception classes, these pupils are given good, skilled assistance from well-qualified and experienced nursery nurses. Pupils in other classes who work individually or in small groups with support staff make good progress. However, at times in both infant and junior classes, there is no classroom support in literacy or numeracy lessons and progress for pupils with special educational needs is then not as good. This is because the teachers cannot physically give all ability groups their full support.

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

27. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall. The school provides a broad and balanced range of worthwhile opportunities, which meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils, including those who have special educational needs.
28. The curriculum provision for children in the foundation stage is good, covering the recommended six areas of learning fully. Children are provided with an effective and very well planned range of learning opportunities that allows them to develop their skills very well in the nursery and the reception classes. For pupils in the infant and junior stages, the school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. The curriculum provides all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There have been several improvements since the last inspection. The length of the teaching week now meets the national recommendations and the allocation of time to subjects is appropriate. English, mathematics and science are given high priority. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which have been implemented successfully, are effectively followed and are having a beneficial effect on standards and progress. The basic skills in these subjects are generally well taught. Since the previous report there is increased opportunity for pupils to develop and extend their work in mathematics, although there are still insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations. As recommended in the previous report, the school has recently introduced a new handwriting scheme. However, this is not yet effective in improving the standard of pupils' handwriting in their books.
29. A major improvement has been the adoption of the government recommended guidelines for the National Curriculum subjects in most subjects. The school has devised its own effective schemes in ICT and physical education; in religious education it follows the Diocesan guidelines. The appointment of a qualified technician is successfully assisting teachers in the implementation of the ICT scheme. Provision for music, art and design and technology is much improved. A specialist teacher is now successfully implementing the programme of work for music. In design and technology there is a well-planned four-year programme of work and a comprehensive plan for further development. The school has a planned programme as outlined in the curriculum coordinators' action plans for the further development of all subjects. A personal relationship policy and scheme includes carefully planned provision for personal social and health education. All these improvements help to ensure that pupils' learning opportunities cover the required ground and build effectively on what they already know. It also enables well planned opportunities to be provided which develop knowledge, skills and understanding systematically throughout the school.
30. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils follow the same curriculum as other pupils, through tasks that are adapted to suit their learning needs. There are appropriate arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs. A comprehensive register of special educational needs is well maintained, and the individual education plans, which are provided for pupils on the register, are of a satisfactory standard. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and reviews, which are held regularly, provide a

good focus for further development. The curriculum for pupils meets requirements and the very good relationships that exist in the school promote the effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into every aspect of the school's life.

31. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school has a detailed policy for this area. The school's aims are related to personal and social development as well as to academic success. These are achieved through very good implementation of the assertive discipline policy, anti-bullying policy and the detailed personal relationships programme. This includes carefully planned provision for sex education. The school is preparing to consult with parents about a drug education programme that is being considered.
32. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities includes netball, football, dance and ICT. Pupils in the upper juniors are about to embark on an interesting project run by the Groundwork Trust where they will be looking at environmental issues. A satisfactory range of links with the wider community contributes purposefully to the pupils' quality of learning. The school has forged links with several local companies. One company provides sponsorship for the school's sports kit. Pupils have also taken part in a small research programme involving a local bakery and a healthy eating project with the local supermarket. Infant and junior pupils have successfully participated in the Oldham music festival. Pupils throughout the school are also involved in fund-raising for children in Africa and many other charitable events, including the gift of harvest food parcels to the elderly in the local community. They have also participated in carol singing in the local shopping centre for children in need. The older pupils have the opportunity to visit an environmental centre for three days where they become involved in a good range of exciting activities. All these well-planned experiences make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and to their own personal development. The are good links with the local high schools to make pupils comfortable as they move on to the next stage of their education.
33. The school's provision and practice for all pupils to be socially included in all that the school provides is good. The school continues to be committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils in all aspects of school life. Policies for equal opportunity are well understood by adults and pupils and are carefully implemented throughout the school. There is no significant difference in attainment as a consequence of gender, disability, race or creed discrimination. Sporting activities are accessible to both sexes. Teachers' questioning and allocation of jobs show no bias towards gender, ability or ethnicity. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive well-structured support and they join in with the wide range of classroom activities at their personal level. No occurrence of racial or gender-based incidents was seen and school documentation indicates that there are strategies in place to deal with them, if they occur. There are no pupils in school for whom English is an additional language.
34. There is very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The provision for cultural development is good.

35. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school provides an education that nurtures Christian values and reflects the mission statement of the school and the Catholic faith. The requirements for a daily act of worship are fully met. In class, pupils are given daily opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer. Very good quality assemblies further enhance pupils' spiritual awareness. These are carefully prepared. Effective acts of collective worship allow pupils to reflect on their relationships in the community with their families and friends. Stories from the Bible are used to illustrate friendship. Music is used to provide a spiritual uplift for the beginning and end of assemblies. Cross-curricular work displays, including a collage of the Holy Rosary community and another of a candle, provide focal points that contribute to spiritual development. Pupils contribute respectfully to the prayers and hymns. A high sense of spiritual awareness is developed and very good opportunities are provided to encourage pupils to consider other people's feelings. Pupils' spiritual awareness is also raised in a range of lessons. For example, in science pupils' poems about the planets and space captured their special feelings. Likewise, there was great wonder expressed on the faces of infant pupils as they were investigating ice melting. There was a memorable experience during the inspection when Harry Hedgehog's participation in assembly provided an exciting stimulus for the pupils.
36. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. There is a strong moral framework where high expectations of behaviour, self-discipline and very good relationships are fostered. All staff set a very good example for pupils through the quality of their relationships with one another and with the pupils. The school rules and class rules, which the pupils help to decide, are prominently displayed in all classrooms and implemented well. For example, in an infant class when pupils excitedly shared their findings in a science experiment, their natural enthusiasm impinged on their ability to listen to one another. The teacher quickly asked them to read the rule 'to listen to each other' and the pupils readily responded. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Excellent relationships are a strong feature of the school. Pupils are given good opportunities to take on tasks. The younger pupils take the register to the office and older pupils have additional responsibilities including dinner duties. Within classrooms pupils are encouraged to work together cooperatively. They are also involved in community activities. They visit senior citizens to sing carols and take an active part in church events. Charity work, such as fund raising for a children's hospice, is a strong feature of school life. Educational visits are an important aspect of social provision. For example, there are opportunities to participate in educational visits such as a visit to a transport museum, and some local allotments for harvesting and planting. Other opportunities include orienteering in Medlock Valley, participation in a yearly music festival as well as a visit to hear the BBC Philharmonic orchestra. These all provide valuable social experiences for pupils.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is generally good. In lessons, good opportunities are found to promote understanding of the wider community. In art, pupils look at the work of famous artists and produce paintings in the same style. Music played in assemblies includes the work of a range of composers. Music is also played in classrooms to provide a pleasant learning environment. Local culture is celebrated in assemblies. The pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of their society is raised in the stories, poems they read and when learning

about the traditions of faiths other than Christianity in the religious education lessons. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to experience first-hand, through visits and visitors, the multi-cultural society in which they live. The school has plans to review the provision to extend these opportunities further in order to ensure that pupils are well prepared to live in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. In the previous inspection, the quality of this aspect was considered to be satisfactory, with some good aspects. There were good systems to monitor social and academic progress. Staff set good examples and a clear code of conduct was well established. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported with parents involved both in setting targets and also in the termly reviews of individual educational plans. There were clear policies for fire and accident emergencies with designated first aiders. Child protection was covered with a designated member of staff taking responsibility. Transfer arrangements were in place with good liaison with the receiving schools. The school has maintained and further developed this aspect, which is now good.
40. All of the school's staff are strongly committed to the care and support of all the pupils. They are consistently warm and understanding in relationships and sensitive to pupils' needs. The school has developed a sound caring, and secure family atmosphere of support and nurture for all of its pupils. This approach is beneficial in supporting pupils' growth. Arrangements for the monitoring of pupils' personal development are good. The school's caring ethos, good relationships and the high levels of trust that pupils have with all staff all contribute to the monitoring and support of personal development. The school ensures that its systems assist in the sensitive induction of pupils into school and allow them to quickly settle into the welcoming atmosphere. The good links with other schools, and with the local high school to which most pupils' transfer, are supportive of pupils' uninterrupted development during transition periods. Secure procedures are in place for child protection and all staff are kept suitably informed by the regular updating of relevant information at staff meetings and by individual conferences. The member of staff with responsibility for child protection fulfils the position with care and industry. She has received training and ensures that all staff know to be always vigilant and what to do if they have any concerns. Outside agencies provide good support to the school and there is regular contact with the social welfare officer. There are suitably trained first-aid persons in the school throughout the whole school day. The school is currently about to implement, for all teaching staff, a whole-school first-aid course.
41. The school is effective in maintaining its health and safety responsibilities for all of its pupils and staff. The health and safety policy undergoes regular reviews and termly checks and risk assessments are carried out by the school staff and governors, who are well equipped to organise action and produce meaningful reports which are followed through by the full governing body. There are effective termly fire drills, the details of which are logged, with a record of time taken to evacuate the building and to confirm all pupils have been accounted for. Attendance and punctuality are carefully recorded and monitored by the school computer system. The school works hard to maintain and further improve attendance by its systems of rewards for good attendance and by informing parents of the value of good attendance and promptness. They follow up on any

absence by contact with parents, and the welfare officer is in regular contact with the school. She follows through on any matters that affect the school by contacting families to lend support when the school's efforts have been unsuccessful. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully assessed and their work is monitored regularly.

42. The school manages to maintain very good levels of behaviour, both within the school building and at other times such as lunchtimes and breaks. The school has a positive behaviour system in place, which is known and followed consistently by all of the school's staff. Pupils respect the school's high expectations for good behaviour, and the positive effects that are produced are in part due to the mutual and mature approach they adopt. The school's procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are also effective in treating all pupils equally. The school has recognised that many pupils entering school have very low self-esteem. Staff work hard at raising the confidence of all pupils by placing a very strong emphasis on making pupils aware of their own self-worth, abilities and importance, both in the school and community.
43. Overall, the assessment and recording procedures for pupils' achievements are good. The assessment procedures for children under six are satisfactory and used effectively to plan work to meet the children's needs. Pupils are regularly tested in English and mathematics. Information gained from assessment in English is used well to set individual targets for pupils. In mathematics group targets are set. In English this shows very good practice and provides pupils with a clear picture of what they are trying to achieve. This in turn motivates and encourages pupils to try hard. Systems of assessment and record keeping are in place in all other subjects except art, design and technology, geography, history and music. These records reflect what pupils have learnt in their lessons in relation to the objectives that the teacher set. Consequently, information about individual pupils' achievements is sufficiently detailed and easily accessible to teachers. As a result, teachers have a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do. This helps teachers in planning the next stage of learning by building on the work pupils have learnt in the previous lessons. The school has plans to develop this practice into all subjects in a planned programme of curriculum development. The school effectively carries out assessments when pupils are aged seven and 11, and successfully carries out analysis of these results to identify areas for improvement. For example, in English, writing was identified as an area for improvement and a planned programme of improvement is to be introduced. Test results when children first enter the school are carefully analysed and used effectively to plan sessions to meet the needs of all children.
44. The school has sound procedures in place for identifying pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers assess pupils' progress and if there is a need for intervention from an outside agency, the coordinator for special needs is able to contact the appropriate agency for specialist support. The co-operative approach to meeting pupils' special needs is a positive feature of the school's provision, and it contributes well to the academic and personal development of these pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. In the previous inspection the quality of these aspects was considered to be satisfactory overall. The school was supported by parents and worked hard to increase parental involvement and confidence in approaching school. However, these benefits were limited due to the small number of parents participating. There was a teacher with designated responsibility for parental contact. Parents had been informed of homework policy, and they were satisfied with it. Parents were kept well informed about school matters. There was a fully informative school prospectus and regular newsletters and the pupil reports were of good quality. There were strong links with the church. The school has worked hard to maintain and further develop these positive levels of co-operation and involvement with parents. Links with parents are good, as is the involvement of parents in their contribution to children's learning. The quality of information is very good.
46. The level and value of information offered to parents is very good. Regular newsletters contain valuable news detailing the school's social and topical events. The detailed termly topic information that is issued to parents is beneficial in assisting those who wish to help their children at home with additional work. The school's detailed annual pupil reports to parents set out future individual targets for pupils to aim at in the coming year and areas for them to review their own progress. It also sets out future targets as well as an area for parents to make their own comments on the report. The parent/teacher meetings held during autumn and spring and other meetings, for example about literacy and numeracy, are all beneficial in developing stronger relationships with parents.
47. The school's strong 'open door' practice is highly regarded by parents. Parents are comfortable to talk with staff at both the start and end of the school day. However, currently there is not a strong element of parental involvement within the school by parents. This is despite the school's deliberate policy of parental inclusion within classroom activities. The small number who are in school do provide assistance and they are welcomed and prized by teachers for the support that they offer in classrooms and around school. The school does attempt to develop this important aspect further. A member of staff carries this specific responsibility.
48. The information provided by parents at their meeting with inspectors and also the analysis of the returned questionnaires demonstrate that parents are very happy with the improvements that have been made by the school since the last inspection. They strongly support the school's approach to their children's education and personal development.
49. Analysis of both the Ofsted and the school's own questionnaires indicates that a minority of parents feel that they are not kept well informed about their children's progress. They also think that children do not get the right amount of work to do at home and that the number of extra-curricular activities it offers is limited. Most believe that children like school and make good progress; that teaching is good, that children are expected to work hard, and that school helps children to become mature. Inspection evidence supports the positive parental views. However, it does not support their other concerns. Inspectors felt that the information supplied, including pupil progress reports, home-school book, governors' annual reports, newsletters, termly topic information and the school prospectus are very good in fully informing parents. It was felt that the levels of homework do support pupils'

learning and that the school does offer a significant level of extra-curricular activities in line with many other similar schools.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff of the school are very good. It is the high quality of leadership and management which has enabled the school to make very good improvement since the last inspection. The shared commitment to improvement by all involved with the school, headteacher, staff and governors, is excellent.
51. The headteacher provides dedicated and enthusiastic leadership with a clear vision and determination to achieve high standards. The management structure, involving two senior teachers in the senior management team instead of one deputy headteacher, works very well. Effective delegation by the headteacher makes the best of individual talents, for the good of the school. Weekly meetings of the senior management team take stock of the school's performance and establish priorities for development.
52. The headteacher inspires a strong sense of teamwork and of commitment. Staff and governors contribute to the annual review of the school's mission statement. This results in a shared vision of the way ahead and enthusiastic promotion of the agreed aims in all aspects of school life. The excellent relationships are a considerable strength of the school and the commitment to equal opportunities enables all to share in its success.
53. There is a strong element of self-evaluation throughout the school. Rigorous systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. These support the staff's professional needs as well as school development as a whole. Performance management is an integral part of school life and strategies are used positively to identify needs and provide support.
54. The headteacher and senior staff rigorously analyse school and national test results to identify strengths and weakness in the school's performance. Data gained are used to set new targets and to identify areas of the curriculum for further development.
55. The school development plan is a very effective management tool. It is drawn up in consultation with parents, governors and staff, and contains a three-year schedule of priorities based on a very clear analysis of the needs of the school. Specific responsibilities are highlighted with appropriate time scales and evaluation criteria. Each area for development is supported by a detailed action plan closely linked to the budget. Curriculum coordinators are empowered to manage their subjects and carry out thorough reviews as each subject in turn is highlighted in the long-term plan. Progress in meeting the priorities of the school development plan is constantly monitored by the headteacher, governors and individual staff members. All staff are kept fully informed, for instance, through the staff room time line of priorities.

56. The governing body is very supportive of the school and of the headteacher. It fulfils its statutory duties very well and actively carries out its role as a critical friend of the school. Governors are well informed about all aspects of school life and take part in strategic planning through an efficient committee structure. There are very good systems in place for governors to evaluate the school's performance. For instance, each governor is linked to a class. Through detailed termly discussions with the class teacher, each governor is involved in monitoring progress and setting targets for achievement.
57. Financial planning is of a high standard. The headteacher and finance committee consider the implications of expenditure against the budget before making recommendations to the full governing body. Efficient systems are in place for monitoring what is spent and for evaluating the value gained for the school through that spending. The current carry-forward is prudently earmarked to maintain staffing levels. Specific grants are used appropriately.
58. The office manager provides very good support in day-to-day administration. Very good use is made of new technology. For instance, accounts and attendance data are computerised so that the office runs very efficiently. Recent improvements to the building provide much needed office space.
59. A good number of teaching staff are well deployed to meet the school's needs. Four of the current staff joined the school as Newly Qualified Teachers over the last six years and have benefited greatly from the school's very good systems of induction. These enable new teachers to gain expertise by attending courses run by the local education authority and by learning from the good practice within the school. A senior manager acts as a mentor and provides high quality advice. A part-time teacher enhances the school's provision in music. Learning support assistants are appropriately deployed and make a good contribution to learning. The amount of non-teaching support in class, however, is lower than in most schools and is stretched to meet teachers' and pupils' needs. The information technology technician makes a particularly useful contribution to pupils' learning in all age groups and his work contributes considerably to the improvement in standards.
60. The accommodation provides an attractive and effective learning environment, which is generally used well. Classrooms are carpeted, bright and well-prepared with interesting displays of pupils' work and learning aids. Very good use is made of the computer bay by all classes in turn. The spacious library contains a small collection of high quality books but was not in use during the inspection. Learning resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum.
61. Taking account of the context of the school, the standards achieved, the income per pupil, the very good behaviour and excellent relationships, the very good management and satisfactory teaching the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. 1.) Further raise standards

a. in mathematics by

- increasing the quality and frequency of opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday, practical situations;
- improving the quality of the teaching in the mental/oral parts of lessons in order to raise pupils' ability to answer mental calculations accurately and confidently;
- spreading the good practice, similar to that used in English, of setting individual targets for pupils to achieve
(Paragraphs 7, 8, 20, 87, 88, 89)

and,

b. in writing, by improving the standard of pupils' handwriting.
(Paragraphs 5, 20, 28, 81)

2.) Bring assessment procedures in all subjects up to the quality of those used in English and mathematics.
(Paragraph 43)

3.) Continue to implement the planned programme, as outlined in curriculum coordinators' action plans for the development of their subjects and in the school development plan.
(Paragraph 29)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

Continue the planned programme for reviewing the provision for preparing pupils to live in a multi-cultural society. (Paragraph 38)

Review the provision of classroom assistants. (Paragraph 22)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

43

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	3	8	9	23	0	0	0
Percentage	7	19	21	53	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)	26	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	60

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	48

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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	10	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	17	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (86)	85 (86)	90 (83)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	17	18	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (90)	90 (97)	85 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	28	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (64)	93 (60)	100 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	16	16
	Girls	8	10	12
	Total	19	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (72)	87 (60)	93 (80)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	198
Any other minority ethnic group	5

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)	7.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	434,269
Total expenditure	432,127
Expenditure per pupil	2,063
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,170
Balance carried forward to next year	43,310

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	213
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	47	4	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	39	18	6	0
The teaching is good.	53	42	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	43	18	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	37	8	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	40	19	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	44	51	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	57	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	34	24	5	16

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

63. Children enter the nursery at the age of three. They enter the reception class in the year they are four, and Year 1 in the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, there were 26 children in the nursery class who were attending part-time and 23 children in the reception class attending full-time. Following the induction period, children attend the nursery full time. Nearly all the children attend the school's nursery before transferring to the reception class. In the nursery class there is a full-time teacher and a full-time nursery nurse. In the reception class there is a full-time teacher and a part-time learning support assistant. Good procedures for introducing children to school life and a carefully planned transfer programme between the nursery and the reception class help the children settle in with ease. Care is taken to meet with parents and carers. Home visits before the children start in the nursery are used to establish positive relationships with parents and assess children's needs. This enables teachers to be able to plan carefully to meet the individual needs of children.
64. All staff establish good caring relationships with the children and provide them with a secure and safe environment. The planning in the foundation stage is good and covers all the nationally agreed areas of learning. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Effective use is made of support staff. Children with special educational needs, pupils of all abilities and both boys and girls are well provided for and are totally included in all areas of learning.
65. Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year. The present cohort of children begin nursery with below average attainment overall. This is confirmed in the initial assessments conducted with these children in the nursery. Children in the reception class are also assessed in the first few weeks of the school year. Children make good overall progress in the nursery. In communication language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world they make very good progress. When children transfer to the reception class, this progress is maintained. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most children have achieved well and attain the expected levels of learning in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. This is due to the good and very good teaching in these areas of learning. This is a very good improvement from the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be generally satisfactory.

Personal social and emotional development

66. In the nursery children are eager to learn although they have only been in class for a few sessions. In both classes, children make good progress in working as part of a group or class and are likely to attain the early learning goals. Children enter the nursery with below average skills in personal and social development. This area is given high priority. In both year groups children play and work well together. For example, they patiently await their turn to be shown how to use the computer. They respond well to expectations to sit quietly and to say please and thank you. They do as they are told. They demonstrate growing independence in

their dressing skills, by washing hands following painting activities and by placing their coats on the correct peg. They are confident to try new activities. This reflects the skilful teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. Teachers ensure that children feel secure, and they encourage and support them and have high expectations of what they can achieve. Independence skills are developed through responsibilities. For example, in the reception class children take the register to the office. There are clear and effective expectations that children will grow in independence and behave well.

Communication Language and Literacy

67. The children make very good progress in the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and, as a result, they are likely to achieve the early learning goals. In the present nursery class, 50 per cent of the children speak in single words and short sentences. Their vocabulary range is narrow. They explore and experiment with words and sounds whilst they are playing in the water tray and constructing the train set. They listen with enjoyment to the story, 'I don't want to go to bed', and join in with the repetitive phrase. They are learning how to hold a pencil and make marks on paper. In the reception class children listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs and music. They are learning to discriminate phonemes. The higher attaining children can write their name and can readily identify the given letter sounds. They take turns in speaking about their work and listen well to their teacher and each other. The average and lower attaining pupils are learning to write their name, they make models of snakes and monsters and find the letters 's' and 'm' in magazines to reinforce knowledge of these sounds. All the children are interested in books and independently choose books from the well-organised reading area. They are eager to share their chosen story, hold books correctly and interpret the story from the pictures and letter clues. Higher attaining children are beginning to read the early reading scheme books.
68. Teaching in this area is very good overall and one lesson observed in the reception class was excellent. In both classes, carefully planned activities engage children in speaking and listening and enable them to communicate their thoughts. Very effective questioning further develops speech and language skills and leads to good progress. The excellent team work between non-teaching and teaching staff means that every opportunity is taken to reinforce children's knowledge and skills, and for them to practise what they have learnt earlier. For example, after the direct teaching of letter sounds, their teacher painted the letters, modeled them, looked in books for them and then played a sorting game. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the constant interaction of staff according to their needs, as is the case with all children.

Mathematical development

69. When pupils first enter the nursery their mathematical skills are below their language and literacy skills. Children make good progress and are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. There are carefully planned opportunities for children to develop their mathematical language and understanding of number through practical activities and daily routines. In both classes, children sing number rhymes, sort toys into colour and shape, and count orally. In reception, they count reliably to 10 and beyond, recognise numerals, use language such as 'more' or 'less.' In practical activities and discussion they are beginning to use the vocabulary associated with adding and subtracting. They are

able to order numbers. Lots of interesting opportunities are provided for children to aid their development.

70. Teaching in this area is good. Teachers and support staff demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn mathematics. In the nursery every opportunity is taken for children to develop mathematical understanding through counting, matching and sorting, and through stories, rhymes, games and imaginative play. In reception, this early learning is consolidated and extended, enabling children to become confident and enthusiastic and to join in and talk about mathematical activities. The use of exciting teaching methods, for example the duck costumes, motivates children to watch carefully, listen and learn well, and recite the number rhyme, 'five little ducks', with enthusiasm and accuracy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

71. Children make very good progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the nursery and the reception classes, carefully planned activities enable children to find out and identify features of living things and to investigate and question why things happen. Children are encouraged to investigate their surroundings and to find things out for themselves. They investigate construction materials and learn how to use the computer. They experiment with dry and wet sand and with water and slime. They imitate sounds when playing with the toys, for example the train. They investigate the computer and use of the mouse. In the reception class, they use mirrors and make footprints with paint to bring greater understanding of their body parts. They talk about when they were young. Children are beginning to explore CD-ROM, to identify the space bar and the return and delete key. Teaching in this area is very good overall. There was some excellent teaching in the nursery when the teacher, the nursery nurse and the technician motivated the children to learn how to use the mouse and the paint programme.

Physical education

72. Children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area. No physical education lesson was observed during the inspection because of timetable arrangements and inclement weather. However, teachers' detailed planning shows that, in both classes, well-organised activities and appropriate physical challenges enable children to grow in confidence. They repeat a range of body movements, balancing on parts of the body. They learn to move without bumping into each other; operate equipment by pushing, pulling and riding, and practise running, skipping and hopping skills. Discussion with teachers shows that they ensure that children are well supported and that good attention is given to safety, for example warming up before activities and wearing the appropriate clothing. The school has an enclosed area where the children use wheeled equipment. During playtime, they demonstrate growing control of pedaling and avoiding one another. Good emphasis is also given to developing skills in handling materials especially in model making. Their skills in cutting, modelling and building with construction toys and bricks are developing well, as too are their capabilities in cutting, sticking, and colouring, keeping within lines.

73. Teaching is good. When supporting children in table activities, staff in both settings provide clear instructions and demonstration. They use questions to extend children's understanding of what is required so enabling children to make good progress in their physical development.

Creative development

74. Children are provided with carefully planned opportunities to explore colour and shape and to use their imagination through art, music, stories and play. They experiment with paint and play dough and are challenged to think about their work through skilful discussion and questioning about what they are doing and what they should do next. Children sing well, remembering the words and tunes of simple rhymes and hymns.
75. Teaching is good in this area. Children are given well-planned opportunities to explore colour and shape and to use their imagination through role-play in the home corner. When experimenting with paint, children are taught how to hold the paintbrush correctly. Children are encouraged to think carefully about their work through skilful discussion and questioning about what they are doing and what they should do next, for example in the reception when painting monkeys, in music when singing number rhymes and in their imaginative play.

ENGLISH

76. Standards of attainment for pupils aged seven and 11 seen during the inspection are similar to those found in most schools nationally. In statutory tests in 2000, the proportions of seven-year-olds who reached the expected level and above, and the higher level in reading and writing, were in line with those found in most schools nationally. Results were well above similar schools in reading and above similar schools in writing. Although there are variations from year to year, standards have been maintained at average or above since 1997.
77. In statutory tests in 2000, the proportion of 11 year olds who reached the expected level and above in English was well above that of most schools nationally. The percentage who reached the higher level was above that of most schools. The school's test results compare very favourably with those of similar schools. Standards vary considerably from year to year. This reflects the differing proportions of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. For instance, in 2000, when test results were high, 19 per cent of the pupils tested had special educational needs. In 2001, when results were lower 29 per cent of the Year 6 class had special educational needs. The mobility of families and children entering and leaving the area also affects standards and hinders comparison with infant results. All nine of the pupils who left the 2001 cohort between Years 3 and 5 scored average or above in their Year 2 National Curriculum tests. In tests for pupils age seven, boys do better than girls in reading and writing but not in mathematics. At the age of 11, girls do better than boys in mathematics but not in English and science. There was no evidence in lessons to support these differences.
78. Standards of current Year 6 pupils are not as high as those reached in the 2000 tests. Nevertheless, the meticulous tracking of pupils' attainment from year to year indicates that almost all pupils are making at least sound progress as they move through the school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the infants and juniors in

speaking and listening, reading and writing. The rate of learning in all lessons observed was at least sound. Teachers are careful to provide appropriate work for pupils with special educational needs and this, together with small group teaching where possible, enables them to make sound progress. Occasionally, when there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the class and non-teaching support is not available, the pace of learning slows.

79. Standards in speaking and listening are similar to those found in most schools. All staff provide a range of interesting opportunities to stimulate discussion in English lessons and in other subjects. They model good listening skills so that children learn what is expected. Pupils gain in confidence as they move from class to class. In Year 2, pupils contribute enthusiastically to class discussion in clear distinct sentences. Their vocabulary is, however, narrow. They read out their own work with expression. When listening in short spells to their teacher they show understanding through appropriate response. They are becoming aware of some differences between spoken and written language. Higher attaining pupils are confident to act out stories and present their 'playlet' to the school in assembly. In Year 3, pupils are beginning to answer questions thoughtfully. For example, when deciding whether the actions of the miller's daughter in Rumpelstiltskin are foolish, most pupils articulate and justify their own opinions, as well as listening to others. Higher attaining pupils in Year 5 persuasively express points of view in debate, for instance, on the merits or otherwise of education for boys only in Ancient Greece. In Year 6, pupils are beginning to consider their choice of words when summarising a text. Almost all are good listeners. Their ability to question others' ideas and opinions is less well developed.
80. In the infants, thorough teaching of letters and their sounds enables pupils to make steady progress in learning to read and spell. In Year 1, most recognise letters by shape and sound. They enjoy building three-letter words and making rhymes like mug, rug and jug. In Year 2, most pupils read confidently from class readers and reading scheme books. They recognise an increasing number of common words by sight and use sound clues and pictures successfully to read unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to employ a range of strategies including context, to increase their understanding, and are beginning to read short, simple novels with good expression. Lower attaining pupils are hesitant. They recognise most initial letters but have difficulty in blending sounds to build up words and so struggle to make sense of the text. Whilst higher attaining pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and stories, many pupils' experience of books is narrow. Pupils in Year 3 continue to enjoy reading in the Literacy Hour and from reading scheme books. They are less confident in handling non-fiction independently and their ability to use contents and index to find information is limited. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have sufficient reading skills to support their learning in other subjects. They retrieve information with understanding from reference books and from CD-ROM. Higher attaining pupils skim and scan efficiently. Through secure implementation of the National Literacy Strategy almost all are aware of a range of genre and express their preference, for example, for science fiction or humorous books. Whilst they have some knowledge of the works of Shakespeare and Dickens, very few know of famous children's authors apart from Roald Dähl.

81. Particular attention is paid to the teaching of extended writing. Extra lessons beyond the Literacy Hour are having a beneficial effect on achievement in all age groups. In Year 1, pupils are starting to appreciate sentence structure and most follow the teachers' instructions to write one sentence with appropriate capital letter and full stop. In Year 2, pupils extend their ideas in several simple sentences, as when retelling a familiar story like *The Giant Jam Sandwich*. They are aware of the need for basic punctuation but are not always accurate in its use. They make phonetically recognisable attempts at spelling, for instance, '*jayont samwich*', and spell many common words correctly. Higher attaining pupils sequence events to tell a story. Lower attaining pupils use simple words and phrases to communicate meaning but their spelling is not always phonetically recognisable. In Year 6, pupils write in a range of styles showing awareness of the different requirements, for instance, for poetry or report writing. They plan their writing with appropriate structure and are beginning to evaluate and edit their work. Their narrative writing, is strong on action, but often, due to limited vocabulary, lacks description and imagination. Basic punctuation is accurate. Higher attaining pupils show imagination in choosing words in phrases such as '*fell into an uneasy sleep*' or '*wolfed down his breakfast*' to enliven their stories. They are beginning to use punctuation such as speech marks with some accuracy. In response to the last inspection report, the school has recently implemented a systematic approach to the teaching of handwriting skills. Whilst standards are beginning to improve, and writing in specific handwriting exercises is good, techniques are not transferred into pupils' writing beyond handwriting lessons. Very few pupils write in joined script by the end of Year 2, and some pupils do not consistently write fluently in joined script in Year 6.
82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some consistently good and occasionally very good teaching in Year 3 and Year 6. Teaching was always at least satisfactory, being good in 29 per cent and very good in 14 per cent of lessons. Teachers use their good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the National Literacy Strategy to plan work that builds securely on earlier learning and enables pupils to acquire skills steadily over time. The whole-class shared activity at the start of the lesson is usually well taught, although it is occasionally too long. This results in pupils becoming restless and the pace of learning slows. In most classes, group tasks are well organised and support pupils' learning. In some lessons, however, where pupils' concentration span is short, and when group work is not well matched to the pupils' particular needs or there is insufficient adult intervention, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. In all classes, teachers set purposeful attitudes to work by sharing their clear learning objectives with the pupils at the beginning of each lesson. This, together with frequent reminders as the lesson progresses, ensures that pupils know what is to be learnt and what they must do to proceed. The hard work and effort put in by pupils reflects this effective practice. Good relationships are a strength of the school. Teachers manage pupils positively using praise and encouragement to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem so that they take pride in their work. Whilst teachers' expectations of pupils' attainment are usually high, not enough attention is given to standards of handwriting. As a result, pupils do not always present their work well, or do not use the skills they have learnt in handwriting lessons in other areas of their work. Day to day assessment is used effectively to set individual targets that encourage pupils to be aware of their own learning. In the very good lesson, the teacher's lively delivery and practical approach made learning fun, motivated the pupils well to make a special effort,

and promoted very good progress. Skilled questioning made pupils really think and justify their opinions.

83. There are good cross-curricular links as pupils use their literacy skills, for instance, to research for information in geography and history or to record investigations in science. The wide range of literature studied in the Literacy Hour enhances pupils' cultural development. Opportunities to co-operate with others to act out stories, as well as to share ideas in group tasks, support social development. The school's current organisation of information technology hardware does not facilitate the use of computers during the Literacy Hour. Satisfactory arrangements are made, however, to support writing and reading skills over time. The library has been improved since the last inspection. Books, although not great in number, are of high quality, attractively arranged and appropriately organised. Pupils use the library well in seeking information for different subjects across the curriculum. Good use of the local education authority's lending scheme enhances the provision.
84. The school has very good assessment systems, which are used to monitor individual, class and school achievement and to set relevant targets. In a whole-school determination to share good practice and raise standards further, the curriculum coordinator monitors teaching and learning in the classroom. Staff are encouraged to develop professionally through relevant in house and local education authority training. The curriculum coordinator, together with the headteacher, analyses the results of national and school tests to identify areas for curriculum development. An ongoing programme of evaluation and review is outlined in the school development plan and reflects the school's commitment to continued improvement.

MATHEMATICS

85. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds year olds the proportion of pupils who reached the nationally expected standard (Level 2) or above was close to the national average. The proportion that reached the higher level (Level 3) was below the national average. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, the percentages of pupils who attained the expected standard (Level 4) and above and those who attained the higher level (Level 5) were well above the national average. When the school's results are compared with those schools with pupils from a similar background, they are below average for seven-year-olds and very high for 11 year olds. This reflects the cohorts of pupils who took the tests in 2000. In the Year 6 class 19 per cent of pupils were on the special needs register and in the Year 2 class 33 per cent of pupils were on the special needs register. Due to significant differences from year to year in the attainment of pupils on entry, it is of limited value to compare trends over time. The school has identified this and has targeted extra classroom support in some classes. The school's own comparative data, based on pupils' prior attainment, shows sound and at times good progress is being made over time. Such variation in the abilities of pupils in different classes makes it difficult to compare test results or the attainments of Year 2 and 6 pupils. Results in tests indicate girls do better than boys. However, this was not evident from sampling pupils' work or from lesson observation.
86. The school has at least maintained and in some respects improved upon the average standards identified in the previous report. Pupils' attainment at the age of

seven and 11 is average and all pupils make sound progress over time. There is no significant difference between the progress made by boys and that of girls. Pupils' skills in the key area of number are at the expected level. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. They make good progress when they are well supported by learning support assistants.

87. By the age of seven, pupils display sound strategies for counting on in twos, fours and fives. They demonstrate a good understanding of place value, they know the value of each digit in a two digit number, for example, that 66 is made up of six tens and six units, and use this knowledge effectively when adding numbers which have both tens and units. Subtraction skills are sound. Pupils know that a fraction is a part of something and identify a half of a shape. They add and subtract two digit numbers; understand basic mathematical symbols, and recognise and use coins appropriately. Pupils have a good understanding of shapes and identify two-dimensional shapes such as triangle, square, rectangle and circle by reference to properties, such as the number of sides and corners. They are also able to name some three-dimensional shapes, such as a cuboid. Good progress is being made in computation of number but progress in mental mathematics is not as strong. This is because, during the mental/oral session at the start of the lesson, there are too few opportunities for pupils to explain their strategies. This results in a lack of confidence and ability to answer mental calculations quickly or accurately. Similarly, due to limited opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical everyday situations, their skills in solving problems and practical application are not as strong. For example, pupils find difficulty both in estimation and in explaining their strategies for solving problems.
88. This positive start is built upon successfully in junior classes and, by the age of 11, all pupils have a sound knowledge of number. Their understanding of place value is secure and they add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers accurately. Pupils can successfully round numbers to the nearest ten and hundred. They have a satisfactory understanding of decimals and they successfully add and subtract numbers that include tenths and hundredths. Pupils' knowledge of fractions is sound. Most pupils know that some fractions although written differently, are the same, for example, that a half is the same as three sixths and seven fourteenths. Pupils understand the relationship between fractions and decimals. Higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of percentages and can calculate percentages of numbers such as 25 per cent of 100. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measures is satisfactory. They recognise lines of symmetry in shapes and they have a sound knowledge of the functions of a calculator. Data handling skills are good. Pupils collect information, record it in appropriate ways including frequency charts, and then use bar, line and pie graphs to display the information. Higher attaining pupils understand the term 'square number' and can apply this knowledge effectively in deciding whether a given number is a square number. Pupils' skills in applying their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations or solving problems are not as strong as their computational skills. This is because opportunities to do this are limited. As in infant classes, there are too few opportunities for pupils to explain their strategies in the mental/oral part of the lesson. This restricts opportunities for pupils to learn from one another and begin to develop a knowledge of different strategies. As a result pupils' mental skills are not as strong as their skills in other mathematical areas.

89. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the lessons observed, the teaching was always at least satisfactory, being good in 16 per cent of lessons. Teachers' planning in mathematics and their subject knowledge are sound. What is to be learnt is clearly identified and focused and the well-planned activities enable the objectives to be realised in lessons. The teaching is based upon sound subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. All teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve in lessons, including their behaviour and achievements in their work. As a result, pupils have good attitudes towards their mathematical work. They enjoy taking part in the oral and mental parts of the lesson and in other activities planned for them in lessons. Pupils work with enthusiasm and are able to sustain their concentration over long periods of time when working independently. For example, in a Year 5 class, pupils worked individually and remained focused on the task of doubling and halving large numbers and applying their knowledge of 'rounding' up or down to the nearest 100 or 1000. However, in this and other similar lessons where pupils are investigating different strategies for calculating problems, pupils do not show initiative in deciding how to approach and tackle a particular problem. Behaviour in lessons is of a good standard throughout the school. A feature of the lessons observed is the high level of interest pupils show and their positive attitudes when given the opportunity to learn and develop different strategies. Lessons are well structured and achieve a good balance between direct teaching and pupils being actively engaged in activities which are well matched to their abilities. However, teachers do not always use questioning techniques well to assess and develop pupils' understanding, particularly in oral mental skills. For example, in a Year 3 class the teacher did not use his questioning skills effectively to differentiate questions for pupils who were working on adding on one or 10 to a number. On the rare occasion when pupils were asked to explain how they reached an answer, the teacher did not record their response for other pupils to see to aid their understanding. All teachers use time and resources well, which has a clear impact on the sound rates of learning achieved by pupils in lessons. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 6 class. Here the teacher made effective use of the classroom assistant, carpet area and white board during a lesson to develop pupils' understanding of partitioning, and of how to apply this principle in the multiplication of two and three digit numbers. The marking in mathematics is consistent in all classes. Teachers' comments encourage and motivate pupils but not all teachers indicate how pupils can overcome any difficulties they encounter in their work.
90. There is a satisfactory curriculum for mathematics. However, there is not enough attention to mental and oral work or opportunity for pupils to use or apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday, practical situations. Across the school, work was seen that related to number, shape and space, the measures and the handling of data. Mathematical skills are used and developed effectively in other areas of the curriculum. In history, junior pupils use a time line to chronicle events and record significant changes in society. In geography, the development of mapping skills to fix the position of places accurately, using scale and an understanding of co-ordinates, is linked well to work in mathematics. Pupils use their skills in ICT to record and display data collected in surveys in a range of formats. In design and technology lessons, pupils accurately measure their materials. The development of mathematical vocabulary in all classes makes a positive contribution to the literacy development in the school. Pupils' reading skills are used to good effect in interpreting problems. The subject makes a good

contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development through the wide range of opportunities offered to pupils to work together collaboratively and celebrates the contribution mathematics makes to Arabic and Islamic cultures.

91. The coordinator manages and leads the subject well. A satisfactory range of resources supports teaching and learning. The coordinator has been responsible for the subject for one year. She is appropriately qualified and experienced; has recently attended a training course, and is very enthusiastic about the subject. She has successfully delivered training to other members of staff for the effective implementation of the Numeracy Strategy and has a clear vision of how to improve the subject through the monitoring of planning and teaching. The subject policy and scheme of work have been updated to meet the requirements of recent initiatives in the subject. Well-developed assessment procedures keep teachers and the coordinator well-informed and aware of how well pupils are achieving. For example, the coordinator along with staff monitor test results to identify the strengths and areas in need of development. Formal assessment records of each pupil are kept and group targets are set and shared with pupils.

SCIENCE

92. In the national tests in 2000, pupils' performance in science at the age of 11 was well above the national average; in comparison with the average for similar schools their performance was very high. There was no significant difference between the results of boys and girls. Results at the age of 11 have varied considerably between 1998 and 2001. There are as yet no comparative national figures for 2001, when 100 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 and 46 per cent the higher Level 5. Inspection evidence indicates that these standards are likely to be maintained by pupils now in Year 6.
93. In teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in 2000, pupils' performance was below the national average, with 85 per cent reaching Level 2 and 10 per cent below. At the time of the inspection there are no comparative national figures for 2001, when teachers judged the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 to be 88 per cent of which 16 per cent reached the higher Level 3. The present Year 2 pupils are on track to attain the national average.
94. There has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when the results in science at the age of 11 were well below the national average. This improvement can be attributed to the implementation of a whole school scheme of work which enables teachers to plan more effectively to the increased monitoring of what is being taught, and to the overall improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly the strong and effective focus on scientific enquiry.
95. Pupils start school in Year 1 with a generally sound knowledge of the world about them. This reflects the good progress they make in the foundation stage from a low level of attainment on entry. This good progress is maintained in the infant stage through carefully planned opportunities for pupils to use their investigative skills to extend their scientific knowledge. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1, where pupils identified the five senses, and in Year 2, when pupils exploring melting ice, showed growing knowledge of what is meant by a fair test and discussed effectively their findings in order to make further predictions. Pupils' recording skills are not as advanced as their scientific knowledge and

understanding. As a result it is difficult for the lower attaining pupils to record their work without the assistance of an adult.

96. By the age of 11, pupils have a growing scientific knowledge and are acquiring a good range of investigative and experimental skills. In Year 3, pupils accurately recall information from previous lessons in which they explored pushing and pulling. This knowledge is extended through their investigation with magnets. They know that attract means pull and 'repel', push. In Year 4, pupils use their scientific knowledge to predict what they are likely to find out and are able to explain their findings when using a thermometer to measure temperature. Discussions with pupils in Year 5 demonstrate their good knowledge of different forms of seed dispersal. In Year 6, where pupils use keys to identify animals and plants, they are confident in making their own branching key and show good understanding of the associated technical language.
97. Analysis of work throughout the school shows that pupils have covered a good range of scientific enquiry. Pupils use scientific terms accurately in their descriptions and accounts and communicate information effectively using diagrams tables and charts. The higher attaining pupils write about their investigations. The average attaining pupils and the lower attaining pupils have more difficulty in writing at length about their findings and in making accurate mathematical recordings, because their handwriting and mathematical skills are not so well developed. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make generally good progress in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding of those aspects of science that they are studying. This is mainly due to the good quality of teaching and the increased opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves, through interesting, meaningful activities and opportunities for experimentation. The school's expectation that all pupils will reach at least the expected level at the age of 11 is challenging. However, the high quality teaching, the commitment to raise standards, and the scientific knowledge of the pupils, which is often above and beyond their capabilities in mathematics and literacy, makes this achievable.
98. Pupils in the infants classes show growing knowledge and understanding of the differences between things that are living and things that have never been alive, and that humans and animals need food and water to stay live. Their skills and scientific knowledge are beginning to be developed effectively and their understanding of scientific vocabulary is increasing. Pupils in the juniors continue to make good progress in their learning. At the beginning and end of the junior stage, pupils make particularly good progress. This is because there is continual assessment of children's understanding before moving on to the next teaching point. Pupils with special educational needs, as well as the average and higher attaining pupils, are presented with the correct challenge of work to meet their learning needs. They receive the necessary teacher guidance, level of questioning and additional resources to be fully included in the lesson and successfully achieve the tasks set. In those classes where this does not happen, pupils with learning difficulties find it difficult to complete the written and mathematical aspects of recording their science findings and therefore only make sound progress.

99. The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen, all the teaching was at least satisfactory; it was good in 20 per cent and very good in 40 per cent. This makes an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2 was reported. In all lessons teachers show good subject knowledge and their lessons are carefully prepared to match the requirements of the National Curriculum. Lessons start promptly and a thorough review of previous learning enables pupils to consolidate what they know and prepares them for the next stage. Teachers share what is to be learned during lessons to enable pupils to understand the purpose and relevance of their work. A particular strength is the emphasis that teachers place on pupils undertaking their own experiments and investigating for themselves. This has improved their enquiry skills and increases their independence and research skills. There is a good emphasis on the use of scientific vocabulary, and questioning is used well to make pupils demonstrate their understanding of the meaning of words, as when, in a Year 1 lesson pupils explored the meaning of 'senses'. Discussion is also used effectively to encourage pupils to predict outcomes and to reach conclusions. Plenary sessions are used well to check that pupils have gained the knowledge understanding and skills intended. Teachers are careful to ensure that proper safety measures are in place, as was observed in Year 4 when pupils were learning how to measure temperature. In the lessons judged to be very good there is high challenge: pupils are expected to complete tasks with quick pace and therefore they work hard to please their teacher. Where teaching is less effective, pupils are expected to sit on the floor for too long a period of time. Because they are uncomfortable, they become restless and lose concentration. In other lessons, insufficient additional resources are available to assist those pupils who have not yet developed the writing, spelling and mathematical skills to complete the worksheet given. Because it is the start of the year, classroom assistants are deployed in the foundation stage for the first few weeks of the term. As a result, in some lessons observed in the infant and junior departments, not enough learning support assistance during group activities to enable teachers to focus sufficiently on increasing the skills of pupils according to their attainment level. The very good relationships that exist between teachers and the pupils have a significant impact on the progress that pupils make. Pupils therefore enjoy their work in science: they are interested in their investigations and confident in expressing their findings.
100. The well-qualified and effective coordinator keeps the staff up to date with new information and developments. She monitors teachers' planning and provides effective support for teachers when it is required. The assessment and tracking of the pupils as they move through the school are clearly beginning to have a positive impact on the standards that the pupils attain by ensuring that they make the progress of which they are capable. The policy statement and scheme of work complies with the recommended areas of learning. The recently introduced scheme of work gives good guidance to teachers in their planning of lessons that match the learning needs of pupils. The well-organised and interesting science curriculum has raised pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. A very effective science week provided useful training for the staff; raised the profile of the subject and provided exciting and interesting experiences for the pupils, particularly a visit from the planetarium. This work extended pupils' mathematical skills, creative writing skills, art, design and research skills including use of the Internet and also contributed well to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection week. The school has just returned following the summer holidays and very little work was displayed. Evidence from the lessons, scrutiny of teachers' planning, discussion, the limited display and work in pupils' folders indicates that, throughout the school, pupils are working at the level expected for their ages.
102. In Years 1 and 2, pupils explore and use colour to communicate ideas. They experiment with tools and techniques using chalk, paint, crayons and straws, and apply these to their drawings. During practical activity, pupils showed an appreciation of shapes and colours associated with fire. In a display exploring the idea of community, Year 2 pupils have used pen, paint and collage to good effect to represent buildings and texture.
103. In Year 4, pupils were asked to design a set for Star Wars using pastels. They showed an appreciation of how to develop their scenes around a horizon line. They are beginning to use simple perspective. They recorded from their own experiences and expressed their ideas confidently. In Year 6 a well presented display of pictures is the basis for art appreciation and a stimulus for their work on movement where they draw a person in step by step positions. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 shows that they are gaining satisfactory knowledge of the work of other artists. They also recollect their work in earlier classes, which included work in the style of L S Lowry and Picasso. Much of their work has been linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in history they used oil pastels to draw ancient Greek pots. Work in sketchbooks shows sound progress in pupils' observational skills. In their drawings of fruit, sketches of their friends and their self-portraits, they demonstrate growing confidence in shading using pencil and pastels. Pupils discuss their work sensibly and obviously enjoy their work.
104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the lessons seen all the teaching was satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared. The objectives for lessons are displayed and shared with the pupils so that they are more aware of their learning. In a lesson with the infant class, the teacher explained the task well, but gave little direct teaching of the different effects of the media they were to use. Appropriate questioning engaged pupils purposefully in close observations based on their experiences of fire. Positive encouragement motivates pupils to concentrate well. In this lesson there was no additional teacher support to enable the teacher to devote more time to the different needs of the higher, average and lower attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs were fully included but would have had more opportunity to make progress had this support been available. In the junior class, the teacher made appropriate use of a video to illustrate the horizon line, and she explained the smudging technique when using pastels. As a result pupils were able to experiment and increase their knowledge by exploring perspective. However, in both the lessons observed there was too little direct teaching of skills.

105. There are some good cross-curricular links. This was seen in the work completed during a science week, where printing and illustration had been used very effectively to demonstrate the poems about space. Some effective collage work that supports religious education and is a focus for assemblies. There are opportunities for pupils to further develop their literacy skills, for example in researching different artists. Links to information and communications technology are developing and pupils experiment with a range of programs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through the subject. For example, there are opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and to discuss different artists and cultures.
106. The coordinator for art has only been in post for five days. There is no policy, but an improvement since the last inspection has been the introduction of the Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. This helps teachers plan their work so that pupils to build on previous work and improve the progress as they move through the school. Assessment opportunities are identified in the teachers' planning, but this does not provide sufficient detail of what pupils have achieved. There is a clear commitment to raising standards of teaching and learning in art. The development plan includes a review of the subject area in Spring 2002. Formal monitoring of teaching and learning are to be introduced when this review takes place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards reached by 11-year-olds have improved since the last inspection and now match the expected level for pupils of this age. Standards of seven-year-olds also continue to be in line with expectations for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving satisfactorily in skills and knowledge.
108. In Year 1, pupils disassembled boxes successfully when considering the problem of making a box strong enough to hold a plastic cat. They confidently drew their design, cut, stuck, decorated and tested their model. They carefully evaluated their success and suggested improvements. In Year 2, pupils designed enthusiastically their own toy with moving parts driven by pneumatic power. They drew labeled designs appropriately from front and side elevations, listed the resources needed and formulated a plan of work. They considered successfully how best to stick parts together when ordinary glue doesn't work and found a solution to their problem. They used measuring and cutting skills competently on card and tubing before assembling and testing. They were very enthusiastic in discussion about their work and showed good recall of the processes used.
109. Pupils in the junior department explored a range of moving mechanisms purposefully. Pupils in Year 4 designed a storybook for infant pupils effectively. They used paper fasteners, for instance, to move the signals and train in their picture successfully. In Year 5, pupils worked with wood and a variety of mechanisms enthusiastically. They used tools like saws safely and were aware of the need for accurate measurement. They suggested appropriate ways of strengthening their structure confidently. In Year 6, pupils were challenged to design and make an elastic band powered vehicle that travels unaided for at least one metre. They drew an initial design accurately and listed resources before producing labeled diagrams of different stages in the production process. Having made and tested their products, they made a perceptive evaluation of their work.

Pupils worked in groups, collaborating successfully to make and test their products. In discussions with the inspector, they showed pride in their work and were keen to explain what they had done. They display satisfactory evaluative skills and good awareness of safety aspects.

110. The school has recently increased teachers' expertise through coordinator and whole staff training. A scheme of work based on national guidance has been introduced to ensure continuity in developing skills and extending knowledge, year on year. The school, in consultation with the local education authority has decided to plan its main teaching in a one-week project annually. Due to this organisation, no lessons were seen during the inspection. However, scrutiny of teachers' plans, of samples of work, together with discussions with pupils, indicates that teaching is effective. On this evidence, teaching is judged to be satisfactory throughout the school.
111. Management of the subject is good. The curriculum coordinator has been instrumental in broadening the curriculum and improving teaching standards. She monitors teachers, provides good, knowledgeable support, monitors teachers' plans and helps teachers evaluate the outcomes of their work. Assessment of individual pupils' attainment is not yet fully in place. Resources have been much improved since the last inspection, with the acquisition of an appropriate range and amount of tools. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop socially through practising collaborative skills in group work. Links to literacy are effective as pupils discuss, label and evaluate their work, and numeracy skills are practised in measuring and estimating. Links with information and communication technology are developing.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

112. As at the time of the last inspection, standards of seven and 11 year olds in geography and history are at the expected level for pupils of this age. Policies and schemes of work in geography and history are now in place and provide for steady progress in the acquisition of skills and knowledge as pupils move from class to class. There are close links between the two subjects and in some classes, they are planned as humanities. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making steady progress. Learning in lessons observed was always at least sound and was good in history in Years 3 and 6. This reflects the quality of teaching.
113. In geography lessons, pupils in Year 1 are developing a secure knowledge of the locality. They are learning the significance of each line in an address and are becoming aware of their own and the school addresses. Pupils in Year 2 draw a simple plan of their journey to school. They highlight features such as the church and the traffic lights. They use appropriate vocabulary to compare human and physical features in their own locality with isolated conditions on the Isle of Struay. In Year 4, pupils are beginning to generalise about human necessities in determining best places of settlement. They identify suitable areas for settlement on a map, taking account of survival needs. They give logical reasons for their choice. As they move through the junior department, pupils become increasingly competent at map reading. They move from simple to four-figure co-ordinates to locate places and plan routes. By the time they are in Year 6 they have sound knowledge of world maps, for instance, identifying India and the village of

Chembatoli. They compare life in the Indian village with their own. They are aware of environmental issues like pollution and show appreciation of the climate and characteristics of particular localities, for instance, mountainous areas.

114. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a sound sense of the past, for example, through considering changes in homes and houses over time. In Year 2, pupils have secure knowledge of the life and times of famous people of the past like Guy Fawkes, and of events like the Great Fire of London. They are beginning to consider why people like Florence Nightingale acted as they did. Little evidence was seen of pupils developing skills of independent historical research, for example, through examining artefacts. In Year 3, however, pupils are developing good skills at finding out about the Tudors through examining pictures and searching the Internet for information. By the end of the junior years, pupils can suggest a range of historical sources and have sound skills in carrying out historical research. This enables them to acquire secure knowledge of the topics covered. For instance, they use census returns to find information on everyday life in Victorian times. They are aware of differences in society's treatment of children between Victorian and present times, and they discuss the role of people like Dr Barnardo and Lord Shaftesbury in bringing about change.
115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both infant and junior departments. Teaching was satisfactory in both geography lessons seen. In history, whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, some good and some very good teaching was seen in Years 3 and 6. Teachers make sure that pupils know what is to be learnt by outlining objectives clearly at the beginning of each lesson. This concentrates pupils' efforts on the task in hand and pupils try hard to succeed. Teaching is carefully planned and resources well prepared so that lessons run smoothly and pupils learn steadily. Teachers manage pupils well through building positive relationships where pupils are confident and know their good behaviour is rewarded by praise and encouragement. Pupils work well together and collaborate successfully. In some classes, the pace of learning slows when pupils of all abilities are not fully challenged by the tasks set. For instance, pupils in Year 5 spend too much time drawing out their own time line, when they already have secure understanding of time lines from earlier work. Occasionally lessons lack pace when the teacher's introduction goes on too long or learning is interrupted as pupils who are not on task divert the teacher's attention. Strengths in the good and very good teaching are the efficient organisation and balance of whole class and group activities, and the skilful use of questioning techniques to extend pupils' own ideas and enable them to become more independent learners. Plenary sessions are also used to particular effect to clarify and consolidate new learning.
116. The curriculum coordinator has a good action plan for the review of the subjects next year. Her role in monitoring standards is not yet developed. Assessment systems are not fully in place. There are good links with literacy, numeracy and information technology as pupils carry out research and record their work. Good opportunities are provided for social, moral and cultural development, for instance, in the way pupils' awareness is raised of local, national and global issues of, for example, pollution. The comparison of the tenets of past societies with life today enables pupils to develop a sense of justice and fair play as well as empathise with others.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Pupils make sound progress and their attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and 11. At the previous inspection, attainment was stated to be below national expectation in both infants and juniors. There has been a good improvement between inspections. The impetus for this improvement has been the acquisition of resources, staff training, the employment of a knowledgeable technician and the development of an effective scheme of work specifically focused on the development of pupils' computer skills. At the time of the previous inspection, the poor range and quality of hardware, weak teacher knowledge and the lack of a comprehensive scheme of work restricted pupil attainment. All issues have since been successfully addressed. The school has plans to establish a computer suite, and the current system is networked and has Internet access.
118. By the age of seven, most pupils are competent in using the mouse and are beginning to develop typing skills using the keyboard to identify letters, capitalise, use of space bar, delete and insert. Pupils save their work successfully; use a variety of fonts and use the computer to generate pictures for use in cards and calendars. They produce and print out pictograms and simple graphs for mathematical data and are able to highlight sections of text. Year 2 pupils are able to use a CD-ROM to read stories themselves, including working simulations. They use the mouse confidently, change font size, and highlight key words.
119. By the age of 11, almost all pupils are able to access programs confidently, load material such as photographs in relation to a multi-media authoring program, save their work and organise and refine information in different forms. They use terms such as 'drag', 'clipart', 'rotate' and 'edit' with confidence and understanding. However, pupils are often frustrated in the lack of keyboard skills and many type with index fingers only. All junior pupils have access to the Internet and have used the e-mail address. They happily use the World Wide Web and CD-ROM regularly to carry out research for other subjects. Year 6 pupils have successfully been able to find a web site with information on the human body that they downloaded and printed for their projects. By Year 6, pupils have developed a wide range of skills and many pupils are competent, independent users. Higher attaining pupils are confidently able to search the web and locate information and can combine text and print from different web sites. In maths and science they competently collect and input data and can present information in a variety of graphs and charts. Pupils confidently use spreadsheets; for example Year 6 pupils collate information about 'things sold at the Tuck shop'. However, pupils have little experience of using sensors purposefully to measure temperature over a period of time. In control technology, pupils progress from using the 'Roamer' to using 'Super Logo' to write programs to create, by Year 6, mazes. An increasing number of pupils improve their keyboard skills as a result of having a computer at home. However, only about 30 percent of pupils have a computer at home.
120. Statutory requirements are now met and this is an improvement when compared to the previous inspection. In addition to improved hardware and software provision, subject teaching is good. In the lessons seen, all the teaching was at least satisfactory and half was good. All lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and are well planned, and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. In a Year 3 lesson there was an excellent focus on vocabulary. Pupils were able to explain

'load', 'navigate', 'eject' and 'icon'. Discussion between teacher and pupils generated a relevant, two-way use of terminology. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and questioning is often challenging. Teachers know their pupils well and tasks are appropriately set in order to build on prior knowledge. Work, especially in juniors, is often of an on-going nature and helps to consolidate and develop pupils' skills effectively. The school employs a knowledgeable technician for half the week, which has a very positive impact on pupils' progress. He effectively works with each class by following up the teachers' direct teaching input with small groups of pupils. For example, working with nursery children to develop their skills of using the mouse in a colouring activity, the technician intervened effectively providing clear guidance and encouragement. The children reinforced their previous learning and enjoyed the activity immensely. As a result, pupils' attitudes are very good. They listen attentively to teacher instructions and act upon them enthusiastically. They greatly value the time they have on the computers and work very hard either independently or in pairs. Pupils are very well behaved whilst on task, show great interest in their work, and sustain concentration well. Pupils help each other very well and those with special educational needs benefit very well from the support of their peers as well as support from the teacher. Pupils treat equipment with respect. As a result of pupils' very positive attitude towards the subject, they make good progress.

121. The school has recently adopted its own scheme in conjunction with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. The 'Driving Licence' scheme provides clear guidance for teachers. Pupils have their own file on computer. This serves as an on-going record of pupil achievement. In addition, there are termly assessments against the specific learning objectives of the scheme of work. Teachers make more informal notes on weekly plans. Although the school currently has no portfolio of pupils' work, the coordinator is developing a base upon which to compile one. This has the dual purpose of a total school record of achievement in the subject and a resource bank for teachers. Planning is good and reflects teachers' confidence in their subject knowledge, understanding and expertise.
122. The coordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and has worked extremely hard to raise teacher expertise and confidence. There have been formal and informal training sessions for staff and the technician affords good technical support for teachers. The coordinator monitors teachers' planning and scrutinises pupils' work. There is no provision currently for lesson observation in infant classes but there are opportunities in junior classes. The cross-curricular application of computers is developing. Pupils' work on graphs in data handling within mathematics; paint programs in art and design and retrieve information in literacy. Although resource provision has been much improved, control and modelling technology needs more equipment. A growing range of software supports the hardware, access to the Internet and e-mail in the networked system. The school has worked very hard to improve provision in ICT and this has impacted very well upon pupil attainment, particularly within the past year. The school has effective systems in place to check that pupils are protected from offensive materials on the Internet and from undesirable external contacts through e-mail.

MUSIC

123. Standards overall at the ages of seven and 11 match the levels expected at these ages. Standards in singing and in playing recorders and percussion instruments during the lessons observed are good. No lessons were observed in the infants, and judgements are therefore based on discussion with teachers, scrutiny of their lesson planning, and the performance of pupils' contribution to the music festival.
124. By the age of seven, pupils sing clearly and in tune. When in assembly they perform well together. They sing hymns and songs from memory and also with the aid of a hymn chart which also supports their reading skills. They are developing an awareness of patterns in music; for example, they remember that the chorus is repeated after each verse. The infants keep good time when they are singing the hymn 'Kum By Ya', and when singing 'Friends', they show satisfactory control of pitch and rhythm. Planning shows that pupils cover a satisfactory range of work. They listen to songs and learn to sing by rote. They are encouraged to find their singing voices and to use these voices for different effects, for example for the different animals when singing the 'Red Hen Song'. They have the opportunity to work on rhythmical percussion accompaniment and to practise it with song.
125. In the juniors, there is a strong emphasis on pupils learning to play the recorder. Year 3 pupils listen carefully to their teacher, who discusses with them how to hold the descant recorder, how a sound is produced and how to play the notes B and A. They successfully follow her instructions, practise and demonstrate increasing control. Pupils play in small groups and then all together. They are soon able to play a simple tune with a piano accompaniment. They listen carefully to the tune Morningtown Ride, quickly remember the words and sing well in tune. The pupils are able to remember and repeat a simple pattern when singing and playing their instruments. This was demonstrated in their performance of the 'Skye Boat Song', when pupils sang whilst others effectively performed a simple ostinato accompaniment using a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They show very good attention to tempo and dynamics. Pupils listen to a satisfactory variety of music, which includes music of other cultures and times. There is good opportunity to compare styles of performance; this was seen during a lesson in which pupils listened to the Seekers' version of the Sky Boat Song and then discussed how this version differed from their own performance. Year 5 pupils are growing in knowledge and skill in playing the descant recorder. They practise the notes G, A and B, refine their blowing skills and demonstrate growing knowledge of the major scale and tonic sol fa. No lesson was observed in Year 6. However, in assembly pupils sing hymns showing satisfactory control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. No composition work was seen during the inspection but pupils in Year 6 talk about their composition work when in Year 5, particularly about their contribution to the music festival and how they have identified the instruments being played in an orchestral arrangement.
126. Progress in singing is sound. Pupils in junior classes sing with clear diction, improved voice control and satisfactory pitch. When accompanied by the specialist teacher they achieve well; however, in assembly, when pupils are accompanied by taped music, they achieve less well. Their progress in playing the recorder is very good during the lessons observed. These lessons take place once a fortnight. Although pupils are encouraged to practise at home there is little

opportunity for these pupils to practise these skills in school on a regular basis and therefore progress is slowed.

127. In junior classes, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, no judgement can be made on the teaching in infant classes. In the two lessons observed by a part-time specialist teacher the teaching was of a very good standard. She teaches pupils on alternate weeks. Class teachers support her work effectively at other times. Her particular strengths are in singing and musicianship. Lessons are planned jointly with individual class teachers. The plans have worthwhile activities that provide for, and develop, pupils' skills. The clear learning objectives are clarified with the pupils to ensure they have good knowledge of what it is they are to learn. Pupils' previous knowledge and understanding are used effectively to help them to develop their skills in performing music. The good pace of lessons helps to maintain pupils' interest and the good practical opportunities provided ensure pupil involvement. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. During lessons they are very well behaved, listen intently to the teacher and follow instructions well. They persevere to improve their individual and group performance. They are confident when performing in front of an audience and demonstrate enjoyment and pride in their achievements. The teaching of singing and instrumental skills and the opportunity for pupils to appreciate the performance of others and perform themselves were aspects of her teaching which were most effective in helping pupils to develop as musicians. The very good relationships that exist have a significant impact on the good progress that pupils make during lessons. The close team work between the specialist teacher and the class teachers in their planning and teaching ensures that pupils are appropriately challenged, that pupils with special needs are fully included and that lessons are enjoyable.
128. A major improvement since the last inspection has been the recent introduction of the Curriculum Council's recommended scheme of work. Good use is also made of another published scheme. These now assist the specialist teacher and class teachers well in their planning of lessons to enable pupils' musical knowledge and skills to be built on as they move from class to class. Many music lessons are linked to topics and other areas of the curriculum, including literacy, numeracy, science, art, dance and music. When music is played in class and assemblies this supports pupils' spiritual development well as was observed during registration when Beethoven was being played in the background.
129. There has been considerable improvement in the curriculum content and the standards of teaching and learning since the previous report. Leadership is now good. There is now a more structured approach to raising standards. The school has plans to further develop music. This includes how to assess pupils' level of attainment and record and track their progress in the subject; the greater inclusion of music from other cultures, and monitoring of the teaching and learning across the school. More use is beginning to be made of ICT and tape recorders in the subject. Opportunities for pupils to participate in school productions contribute well to pupils' social development. An opportunity to hear the philharmonic orchestra, and participate in the Oldham music festival, where pupils in the infants and the juniors received very favourable reports, contribute well to pupils' musical and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. During the week of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Inspection evidence is drawn from observations of lessons in dance, games, and gymnastics. No significant weaknesses were highlighted in the last report and standards have been maintained.
131. At the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards at the expected level for their age in those aspects of the physical education curriculum observed. They make expected progress in developing control and co-ordination in travelling, jumping and balancing to practise gymnastic skills. Pupils are broadening their experiences of using a range of stimuli to create dance-like movement sequences and they are acquiring competence in a range of games skills. All pupils make at least sound progress, and there is evidence that some pupils make good progress and achieve results that enhance their self-esteem.
132. In Year 1, pupils demonstrate good coordination when using large body movements. They move with control and make good use of general space. In the hall they move freely, engage in a range of warm up activities and are able to stop and start movements safely. They develop sound skills in rolling a ball accurately and stopping it competently with either their hand or their foot. It was not possible to see any Year 2 lessons.
133. At the age of 11, pupils move around the hall with increasing control, and demonstrate an expected range of passing and dribbling skills in football. Year 3 pupils show growing competence in passing and controlling a ball in hockey. In Year 5, pupils successfully transfer their own sequence of symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes to partner work and are beginning to evaluate their own efforts and those of others successfully. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were challenged to develop a sequence of movements in small groups to depict 'getting up in the morning'. Enthusiastic discussion followed and pupils produced a good number of appropriate responses. They showed appreciation of movement as they successfully completed the challenge whilst using the tempo of pieces of music as a stimulus. The school currently supports an effective swimming programme, and most pupils achieve the swimming requirements of the National Curriculum before the end of the junior stage. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. They make sound progress overall and achieve results which enhance their self-esteem.
134. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In lessons seen, the teaching was always satisfactory, being good in 15 per cent. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching physical education, and have appropriate subject knowledge. In the best lessons, planning is good with clear learning objectives outlined, appropriate challenging tasks set, and a brisk pace maintained. Pupils work with enthusiasm, enjoyment and commitment. They clearly enjoy the sessions and all change into appropriate clothing. Pupils are willing to share ideas, work co-operatively and make good use of opportunities to practise their skills. Behaviour is good; apparatus is sensibly and responsibly used and, in competitive situations, pupils show due regard for laws and fair play. In a good lesson, pupil performance is used well to demonstrate achievement, focus on good practice and encourage others to observe and evaluate their own actions. In a Year 1 lesson, where pupils were developing skills in rolling and stopping a small ball, the teacher pointed out good practice to the

pupils and analysed why particular ways were effective. This helped pupils in improving their own performance and provided lower attaining pupils with clear guidance on what skills were needed. However, this good practice is not consistent and pupils are not always given the opportunity to comment upon and evaluate performances. This limits both their development in physical education and their speaking and listening skills. Pupils' personal development benefits from good opportunities to work collaboratively and show initiative as they tackle the tasks the teacher sets them.

135. The enthusiastic coordinator has recently overseen the production of an appropriate policy document, and a scheme of work that allows for the coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum. The scheme is fully implemented and there is a clear action plan for development. At present, there is no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching or teachers' planning, which limits the coordinators' effectiveness in gaining an overview of the subject across the school. The provision for a number of extra-curricular activities, and the skills of visiting specialists, enhance the physical education curriculum, as does the experience gained by pupils on a residential visit. Resources for physical education are satisfactory. Pupils are assessed at the end of a series of lessons and this provides information on whether they have met the objectives set out in the teacher's planning.