

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

High Crompton, Shaw

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105711

Headteacher: Mr John Gardner

Reporting inspector: Keith Edwards
[Rgl's OIN: 21190]

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 June 2002

Inspection number: 196208

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior school
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rushcroft Road High Crompton Shaw Oldham Lancashire
Postcode:	OL2 7PP
Telephone number:	01706 847 524
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Appropriate authority:	The Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Dorothy Morris
Date of previous inspection:	9 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21190	Keith Edwards	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9779	Suzanne Smith	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
8316	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Science Art Design and technology Music Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's draws most of its children from the immediate locality although an increasing number are attending from further afield. It is a popular school that is proud of its Church of England status and its standing in the community. Numbers on roll are very similar to those at the time of the last inspection, although the school is undergoing a planned annual reduction in its intake. There are 221 full-time boys and girls. The pupils are taught in seven classes in discrete year groups. All of the pupils are white and come from homes where English is the first language. Five per cent of the pupils have an entitlement to free school meals. This is well below the national average.

There is one intake into the reception classes during the course of the year. Before this, the children have a wide range of pre-school experience ranging from attendance at local nurseries and playgroups to none of these. The attainment of most of the pupils on entry to their reception year is about average although a significant number have higher achievements in their personal and social development. There is a wide spread of ability in each class. Nine per cent of the pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is much less than the national average. Four of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs. There has been a significant change in teaching staff since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that provides good value for money. The school is a very orderly community where the quality of relationships is very good. The good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the personal development of each child lies at the heart of the school's work. The quality of teaching is good and it enables the pupils to make good progress overall. By the time they leave school, the pupils achieve standards in English, science, history and physical education that are above average.

What the school does well

- The provision in the Foundation Stage is good and it enables many children to exceed the targets for their age group.
- Standards in English, science, history and physical education are above average by the time the pupils leave school. The pupils make good progress in the junior classes.
- Staff teamwork contributes strongly to the pupils' development. The quality of the relationships both within the school and within the broader community is very good.
- The strong focus on the personal development of the pupils has helped the children to develop positive attitudes towards learning. The pupils' standard of behaviour is very good.
- The school provides very well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils; the provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The school is well led. The headteacher and his deputy have forged a strong partnership which has helped to establish a good climate for learning.
- The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is good and it enables them to make good progress.

What could be improved

- Assessment information is not used consistently to help the pupils, particularly the higher attainers, to learn. The school lacks procedures for assessing pupils in the foundation subjects.
- There is a lack of rigour in the teaching in Years 1 and 2; expectations could be higher in some lessons, especially for the higher attaining pupils.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinator is underdeveloped. The structure of the senior management team is too unwieldy to be effective in the monitoring of teaching and learning and raising standards.
- There is a lack of balance in the time allocated to the different subjects of the curriculum.
- The accommodation restricts the pupils' learning opportunities, particularly the lack of a discrete play area for the children in the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then St Mary's has made good progress. Standards have improved in English, science, history, and physical education by the time the pupils leave school. The quality of teaching has improved and results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 have increased year on year. The pupils' standard of performance, both in singing and playing instruments, is above average by the time they leave the school. The quality of music strongly contributes to the school's ethos. The school has increased its information and communication technology capability significantly and the pupils now have regular lessons. The school has also been successful in achieving the prestigious award of "Investor in People".

St Mary's has been successful in resolving most of the key issues from the last inspection. For example, the school has improved its assessment procedures to ensure that the work set is more closely matched to the different ability groups within each class in the core subjects. There is scope for further improvement in the use of assessment to set challenging work in the foundation subjects and for the higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2. The school now supports its work with schemes of work for each subject. The headteacher has forged a very good working relationship the governors and the efficiency of the school has improved. All statutory requirements are now met. Standards have improved overall but the school is still not teaching mental mathematics as well as it might. Although there have been many improvements to the accommodation, the buildings still require further development for the effective teaching of the curriculum.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	C	B	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	C	C	D	
science	D	C	A	B	

These results relate to the pupils who took the tests in 2001. The pupils make better progress in the junior classes based on their prior attainment at the age of seven than they do in similar schools. Furthermore the pupils' performance at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily since the last inspection.

The inspection evidence shows that the pupils make good progress in the reception class and by the end of the Foundation Stage most pupils achieve the early learning goals and many children exceed them. The pupils make sound progress in the infants and evidence from the work seen shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. The pupils make good progress in the junior classes and by the age of eleven, standards in English and science are above average. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to achieve well. However, too little attention is paid to the higher attaining pupils in most classes and the work that is set for them often lacks challenge. Overall standards by the end of Year 6 are higher than the national average and the school meets the appropriate targets it sets. The pupils perform well in competitive sports and in their singing and playing musical instruments.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. The pupils take great pride in being members of the school. They concentrate on their work and try to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are very good. The pupils are very polite and courteous and move around the school in an orderly manner. There have been two exclusions since the last inspection.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are becoming mature and responsible. The quality of relationships is very good and this makes an important contribution to the ethos of the school and the quality of the life within it.
Attendance	Attendance levels are very good. Almost all children arrive promptly at the start of the school day and lessons start and finish on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and it enables the pupils to make good progress. The quality of teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and it enables the children to make good progress, especially in their personal and social development and their language development. The pupils with special educational needs receive good support and so make good progress in learning basic skills. Throughout the school, the teachers have established very good relationships with the pupils and maintain good discipline. Particular strengths of the teaching throughout the school include the quality and range of the homework, the quality of the teamwork with the other adults who support in class and the wide range of practical activities that the pupils do. These motivate the pupils and enrich their learning. The teachers have a secure grasp of the Literacy Strategy and use these lessons to good effect in the junior classes. However, there remain weaknesses in the teaching of mental mathematics and some lessons in the infant classes lack pace and rigour to ensure all pupils are achieving their best in both literacy and numeracy. The peripatetic music team make a strong contribution to the pupils' performance. Music is very well taught. The teachers are developing their expertise in information and communication technology and are using the new computer suite to good effect.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It makes good provision for literacy and satisfactory provision for numeracy. Particular strengths are the wide range of extra-curricular activities, physical education and health education. It is broad but does not ensure a satisfactory balance between most subjects of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for special educational needs has improved since the last inspection. The school provides well for these pupils in every aspect. Teachers set realistic and achievable targets. The effective team of

	teaching assistants contributes to pupils' progress and inclusion.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The pupils' social and moral development is very well promoted through lessons and a wide range of responsibilities and community links. Their cultural development is good. Particular strengths are the wide range of musical activities and performances, and visits to museums. The pupils have a strong commitment to their own faith and culture and the diversity of other cultures and faiths found in Britain. The school provides well for the pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a safe and secure environment for its pupils. The monitoring of the pupils' academic performance is satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in the school's use of assessment information.

The community makes a very good contribution to the pupils' learning. The school has formed an effective partnership with the parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and his deputy form an effective management team. They have developed a strong sense of teamwork and a good climate for learning. However, the role of the curriculum co-ordinator is underdeveloped and the structure of the senior management team is too cumbersome.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body meets all statutory requirements and has a good relationship with the school. It is very well organised and has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school includes criteria for success in its improvement plan and has established clear priorities for development. It has taken effective action to meet its targets, particularly with regard to raising standards and enhancing its resources and accommodation.
The strategic use of resources	The school has a clear strategic view of future developments. Its educational priorities are well supported through its financial planning. The school provides good value for money.

There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. There remain shortcomings in the adequacy of the accommodation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • Standards of behaviour are good. • The school expects their children to work hard and to do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school is approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of information about how well their children are getting on.

Parents expressing views through questionnaires and at the meeting held before the inspection are very pleased with what the school provides and achieves. The inspection team broadly endorses the parents' positive views of the school. The parents are united in saying that their children like school, achieve high standards of behaviour and grow in maturity. Almost all feel comfortable to approach staff with problems and concerns and value the commitment of staff, particularly in the provision of extra-curricular activities. Some feel they would like to be better informed about how well their children are doing and inspectors agree that annual progress reports are not consistently well written to ensure that they have a good understanding of what their children know and can do.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Baseline assessments indicate that on entry to the reception class, the attainment of most children matches what is expected for their age. However, the communication skills and the level of maturity of many children are above average. The good teaching in the reception class results in most of the children making good progress and they are in line to exceed the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage in each of the areas of learning, with the exception of their physical development. This is because the school lacks a well-resourced discrete play area for the children in the Foundation Stage.
2. The children make good progress in their personal and social development because the adults provide such good role models and provide a rich variety of experiences for the children. This also contributes significantly to the children's growing confidence in speaking and listening. The children follow a well-constructed curriculum and the staff provide the children with a wide range of activities, routines and experiences that are carefully chosen to meet their learning. In particular, the consistent very high quality of the deputy head and the close teamwork evident between her, the part-time teacher, the classroom assistants and the nursery nurse, results in a positive atmosphere where children are inspired to learn. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on valuing each child and this helps the children to feel included and have a really positive start to their education. Assessment is used consistently well throughout the Foundation Stage to ensure that the children build on their previous experiences. The children with special educational needs are sensitively supported and helped to make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
3. The National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that the pupils' attainments were below average in reading and writing; in mathematics standards were well below average. Fewer than a quarter of the pupils achieved the higher levels in reading and none achieved the higher levels in writing; their performance was below the national average in these respects. Their performance in reading and writing was well below that of pupils in similar schools; in mathematics, the pupils' performance was very low in comparison to similar schools. Furthermore, standards in reading and writing have declined over the last three years. However, last year's cohort of Year 2 contained a high proportion of pupils who were on the school's register for special educational needs. An analysis of the current Year 2 pupils' work and early evidence from the current national tests show an improvement on previous years and indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. Although the school consistently meets the targets it sets, there is scope for raising the expectation of the infant staff to ensure that all of the pupils, particularly the higher attainers, achieve their potential in literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 2. Overall, boys and girls make steady progress in Years 1 and 2.
4. The National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 show that standards were above average in English, broadly average in mathematics and well above in science. An analysis of the school's 2001 performance data indicates that the pupils' achievements were about the same in English as those of pupils attending similar schools. However, their performance in science was above average and in mathematics it was below average when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
5. Test results for eleven-year-olds at St Mary's have risen consistently over the last four years and standards are improving in the core subjects in Years 3 to 6 in line with the national trend. Furthermore, a significant success for the school is that the pupils in 2001 made better progress in the core subjects overall from the age of seven to the age of eleven than the pupils in similar schools over the same period of time. This is mainly due to the effective teaching and the structure provided by the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's

performance in science has risen markedly since the last inspection. The school meets the challenging targets it sets for its eleven-year-old pupils.

6. The pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and standards are above average for their age by the time they leave school. Most pupils listen carefully and speak clearly. From an early age they learn by heart many songs. The teachers set a good example in helping the children to appreciate the richness of language through the range of stories that they tell and the quality of their expression when reading from books. There are many opportunities, such as involvement in the School Council and discussions with pupils from visiting schools, for the pupils to develop their confidence in speaking and listening.
7. The pupils make steady progress in learning to read in the infant classes and good progress in the juniors. Here, the pupils respond well to the daily opportunity for them to become engrossed in a book and in the current Year 6 standards are above average. Most pupils use their skills of inference and contextual clues to help them read unfamiliar or difficult words. They read with a good degree of expression, fluency, accuracy and understanding. Their skills include skimming text to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. Their reference skills enable them to work well in other subjects where they need to research information.
8. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their reading and in writing through appropriately focused strategies to meet their specific needs. An additional factor in this good progress is the effective support they receive from well-briefed classroom assistants. Class teachers are well supported by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the pupils' individual education plans are relevant and introduce the appropriate amount of challenge. However, too little emphasis is given to those pupils who are gifted and talented, particularly up to Year 4, and consequently they do not consistently meet their potential.
9. Current writing standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2. The pupils' spelling, sentence construction, punctuation and handwriting are improving. There are some examples of pupils using their newly learned skills to extend their writing in other subjects, such as their writing about features of seaside towns in geography. Standards of spelling and punctuation match those expected of seven-year-old pupils. However, opportunities are missed in the infant classes for the pupils to develop further their writing across the curriculum. The pupils make good progress in writing in the junior classes and standards are above average at the age of eleven. They know how to punctuate their work accurately and the most able pupils use a rich seam of vocabulary and a range of literary techniques to create atmosphere for the reader.
10. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards in mathematics are average. Although the Numeracy Strategy is well established, the school has not yet fully addressed the issue from the last report about raising standards in mental mathematics. This limits the confidence of the pupils in their ability to make accurate calculations involving tables and measurement. However, the pupils make sound progress in acquiring and using an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They are able to collect data and represent the information in a range of graphical forms, sometimes with the aid of information and communication technology. The pupils apply their skills in numeracy satisfactorily in other subjects such as science and geography.
11. The pupils make good progress in science and standards are above average by the age of eleven. The younger pupils engage in practical investigations and can classify materials according to their properties. By the age of eleven, the pupils engage in investigations and apply sound scientific methods to their conclusions. They check the validity of their predictions and know how to apply the concept of a fair test.
12. The pupils respond well to the improved provision for information and communication technology and make good progress in learning the technical skills of word processing, data handling and researching information. They benefit from good teaching within the well equipped computer suite but their progress is only satisfactory overall as too little use is made of the class-based computers to support learning in other subjects.

13. Standards in history and geography are satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and above average in history at the end of Year 6. Standards in geography are broadly average by the time the pupils leave school. These subjects are well supported by field visits that stimulate the pupils' interest. Standards in art and design and design and technology are supported by clear schemes of work and standards are average overall. The pupils achieve well in physical education and standards are above average by the time the pupils leave school. In swimming, the pupils benefit from regular lessons and in games skills the pupils benefit from the many opportunities provided for them to compete against other schools. Furthermore, the amount of curriculum time allocated to physical education by far outweighs the time given to the other foundation subjects. The pupils' achievements in music are satisfactory but there are particular strengths in performance. The pupils sing with confidence and clarity and this makes a strong contribution to their sense of belonging to their school community. Many have developed skills in playing musical instruments and perform with flair in the school orchestra.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Inspection evidence confirms the views of parents that their children enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and respond to their work with enthusiasm. Throughout the school they show high levels of interest and involvement, usually concentrating very well on tasks set, often becoming completely absorbed until the activity is completed. This, and their enjoyment of the challenges set for them make a substantial contribution to how well they learn. In some cases tasks set for more able pupils are not planned to stretch them sufficiently, resulting in occasional restlessness when they become bored. The pupils show excitement in activities requiring them to investigate and find out for themselves and as a result develop progressively as independent learners. Most take considerable pride in producing neat and accurate work. Their ability to make positive contributions to discussions develops well as they move through the school, enabling them to share views and opinions and to learn from each other. They are enthusiastic about the very good range of extra-curricular activities available to them.
15. There is a very good response from the pupils to the consistent expectations for high standards of behaviour. It results in a calm and orderly environment for learning to take place. In lessons during the week of inspection, behaviour was always at least satisfactory and often much better. This enables teachers to use the time available for teaching very effectively. Pupils have a very clear understanding of school rules and respond very well. Out of lessons, they interact confidently with one another, staff and visitors and are invariably well-mannered, polite and courteous. At lunchtimes they play and socialise happily, often showing high spirits, but also good will towards each other. The system of awards is valued and results in high levels of motivation. There have been no exclusions during the last two school years. School premises, equipment and materials are treated with high levels of respect, there is no graffiti and very little litter is dropped.
16. Relationships throughout the school and the response of pupils to opportunities provided for their personal development are very good. Respect and concern for others permeates the school community resulting in high levels of awareness about the needs of others. Pupils find staff approachable and are able to share any concerns. They listen with respect to what their peers have to say, seldom interrupting. This results in a growing confidence about sharing views and opinions, and contributes well to a developing ability to evaluate the work of others with sensitivity. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that any such incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively. During group and paired work, pupils co-operate well, sharing happily where needed and contributing to discussions with growing confidence. In lessons there is an expectation of 'fair play,' loyalty and team spirit that is founded on a well-established moral code based on Christian values. Very effective social skills develop progressively as pupils move through the school. This is very evident in the dining room where they socialise effectively both with their peers and with adults. They are alert to the needs of others through the work they do for charity being involved and interested in the process of deciding which to support. There is a growing appreciation of the rich mix of cultures in the world we live in that is strengthened significantly through the valuable friendships that have been established with a primary school in central

Oldham. In all year groups pupils respond very positively to the many opportunities provided for them to take responsibility for every day routines, carrying out tasks allocated conscientiously.

17. The pupils with special educational needs are well behaved because of the high quality of support and commitment of teachers and the well-informed teaching assistants, as well as lunchtime supervisors. These pupils, in common with all pupils in the school, benefit from the strong Christian ethos and very good provision for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most pupils understand the school's rewards and sanctions system. All staff involved with pupils with special educational needs have a good understanding of their stages of development and the levels of support needed.
18. The pupils like coming to school. This results in attendance that is well above the national average, at 96 per cent for the last school year. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average, at 0.1 per cent. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection that, from figures available during inspection, continues in the current year. Reasons given by parents for absence are usually sound. There is a very high level of punctuality at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions, ensuring lessons get off to a prompt start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching is good. In all of the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better. Sixty-two per cent of the teaching was good or better with 18 per cent judged to be very good and one lesson in Year 6 being excellent. This represents a clear improvement since the last inspection and supports the parents' view that the quality of teaching is good. The overall quality of teaching is better in the junior classes than it is in Years 1 and 2 and it contributes towards the pupils' faster progress. In particular, the overall quality of teaching in English and science in the junior classes is more effective than it is in the infant classes. In English, lessons have greater pace and expectations are higher. In science, there is much greater emphasis on practical investigations in lessons in the junior classes and there is greater challenge, which stretches the pupils' reasoning skills. However, in mathematics lessons, the school has still not sufficiently addressed the issue from the last report that judged that insufficient attention was paid to the development of the pupils' mental strategies. This weakness in the teaching has contributed to the fact that standards are not as high in mathematics as they are in English and science by the time the pupils leave school.
20. The children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the good and often, very good teaching provided. As a result, they make very good progress. The teachers, who presently job-share, carefully assess what the children can do and understand, and use the information to plan activities that will move each child forward in the learning. The teachers have high expectations of work and of behaviour, which help the children to be clear about what they should learn and do. The teachers place a strong emphasis on discussions about the activities they provide. This helps the children to feel confident about making observations on a variety of topics. Both teachers provide teaching of a consistently high quality. They create a positive atmosphere and make learning fun for the children. This inspires the children to want to give of their best at all times, consolidates their understanding and makes them enjoy success in their learning. A very good example was observed in a mathematical activity, during the final session, when the teacher summarised key learning points with the children. She produced scarves, which she asked the children to put in order of lengths, hiding parts in a bag. The children enthusiastically kept guessing which scarf was the longest, until one of them suggested that it would not be possible to know, until they compared all the scarves.
21. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and it helps the pupils to build steadily on their achievements in the Foundation Stage. The teachers' planning is appropriately structured and lessons have clear learning objectives. The planning takes account of the range of ability of the pupils in each class although much of the work is not demanding enough for the higher attaining pupils. The literacy and numeracy hours are taught satisfactorily. Resources are well organised and the teachers make good use of display to support the pupils' learning in these

- areas. In each class, the teachers and classroom assistants have a good rapport and work well together. Support staff are involved in the planning and provide good support for individuals and small groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Throughout the infant classes, the teachers make skilful use of questioning to challenge the pupils' level of thinking and have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. They ensure that the pupils present their work as well as possible; the quality of the display of the pupils' work reflects the value that is given to it. However, the expectation of what the pupils might be able to achieve in any given lesson is often low and the pace of many lessons is too slow. Praise and ongoing assessment are used effectively to motivate the pupils and to raise their achievement, although too little attention is paid to assessment data to ensure that all of the pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons.
22. The quality of teaching in the junior classes is good as it builds successfully on the pupils' earlier achievements and enables them to make good progress in the core subjects. The emphasis that each teacher gives to the pupils' personal and social development is a strength; it raises the pupils' confidence and self-esteem and nurtures a very positive attitude towards learning. Appropriate attention is paid to the pupils' previous attainment when planning work in English, mathematics and science for the pupils of different abilities. There is clear evidence of well-structured planning that enables these lessons to run smoothly. Assessment information is used to set the pupils according to their ability into suitable literacy and numeracy groups and there is often an appropriate variation in the work set for the particular range of ability within each group. Furthermore, the feedback to pupils is good and in the best examples, particularly in Year 6, the pupils are told what they need to do to improve their work or to achieve a higher mark.
 23. Throughout the school the teachers provide good role models for their pupils. The behaviour of the pupils is managed well. However, there are occasions in the infant classes when a minority of the pupils become restless when lessons lack pace and challenge. There is good support for the newly qualified teachers and they have been enabled to develop effectively as competent professionals. Homework is used well to support learning in both key stages. Physical education is well taught in both key stages and enables the pupils to gain confidence, to support each other and to develop a sense of fair play.
 24. The quality of teaching of information technology is consistently good when it is taught in the computer suite. The teachers make good use of the computer suite to systematically teach their pupils keyboard skills and computer applications. The teachers have responded well to the opportunities to develop their expertise so that they are confident in introducing the pupils to new techniques. However, although a few pupils are given the opportunity to word process their work, explore pattern in art and produce graphs to illustrate results of their surveys, too little use is made of many of the classroom-based computers to support learning.
 25. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The good management of these pupils contributes to their good progress. It is firm, encouraging, but, nevertheless, demanding. The pupils are valued as individuals and the staff work towards building the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The pupils' specific needs are assessed well and programmes of work are planned accordingly to meet them. This particularly applies to those pupils with statements of special educational needs. Assessments are undertaken regularly and systematically to ensure that these pupils make good progress. However, the teachers are not as effective in identifying those pupils who are gifted and talented and setting appropriate work to challenge them. As far as it is possible, pupils with special educational needs are taught within their classes, with support from staff specifically designated for the purpose. A particular strength of these arrangements is the close liaison and planning between all staff whether they are employed directly by the school or provide local education authority support on a peripatetic basis.
 26. The school makes further good use of specialist teaching. For example, a peripatetic music teacher combines individual and group tuition for a range of instruments with a session that successfully enables all of the school's developing musicians to perform together as an orchestra. He is very effective in motivating the pupils and ensures that the pupils develop their skills in a planned and systematic way as they progress through the school.

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

27. The school offers its pupils a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements. All subjects now have policies and schemes of work, the majority based on national guidance. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection.
28. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well and, as a result, standards have improved, especially by the end of Year 6. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory. Numeracy is used well in other subjects of the curriculum but the weaknesses found during the last inspection in pupils' mental mathematical skills have not improved sufficiently.
29. Overall, planning for the curriculum is satisfactory, with strengths in language and literacy, science and physical education. The curricular guidance for science is good and has resulted in improved standards overall, especially the quality and range of scientific investigations. However, the school does not monitor the use of the curriculum time and therefore, while there is sufficient time for literacy and numeracy and science, and a very high proportion of time for physical education, the planned time for other subjects is not clearly monitored and is in many cases insufficient. The school has not yet ensured that an appropriate time is allocated to each subject, although there are recommendations. The curriculum, therefore, is broad but not balanced. In addition, co-ordinators have not identified the skills which are to be learned by pupils in each year in subjects such as history and geography.
30. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and this results in their clear understanding of the requirements of a healthy lifestyle. The governors have approved a policy for sex education and this, together with drug awareness, is effectively included in teaching and learning. The school participates in the "Healthy Schools Scheme" and this is reflected in pupils' very high levels of knowledge and understanding of health issues.
31. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and this shows an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' individual education plans are very detailed and used very well by all class teachers when planning lessons and ensuring the efficient and effective use of support by the highly skilled group of teaching assistants. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Progress reviews are very well recorded by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school is well prepared for the implementation of the new Code of Practice.
32. However, apart from the "quality learning groups" for the gifted and talented pupils in Years 5 and 6, together with planning in English, mathematics, science and physical education, the curriculum is not sufficiently challenging for the gifted and talented pupils in other year groups of the school. This is an area which the headteacher and staff intend to improve. There is a gap between the school's written policies and intentions for inclusion and the actual practice. For example, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in most classes in subjects such as geography, design and technology, and art and design. This is why standards are satisfactory in these subjects rather than high and, as a result, the school does not consistently build on the good progress made by children in the Foundation Stage.
33. The quality learning groups for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are effective in meeting the needs of gifted and talented children in these classes. The instrumental music teaching and the provision for physical education ensures that the gifted and talented pupils achieve well in these subjects. The school ensures that all pupils are satisfactorily included in all activities including extra-curricular activities, visits and the contribution from visitors.
34. A very wide and interesting range of educational visits, including a residential visit to France, and extra-curricular activities and visitors, enrich and support pupils' learning. The school benefits by good links with the community, especially visits to the museums, other schools for sporting events and the locality for participating in choral speech and music festivals. Very good use is made of resources within the community to enrich what is taught in the classroom. The broad

range of visits include a science workshop, field trips, visits to museums, the theatre and France, among others, and they are planned very well to ensure that full advantage is taken of the opportunities they provide for learning.

35. Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good throughout the school. Particular strengths are in pupils' personal, social and moral education. The school effectively promotes pupils' spiritual development. A key feature in this is the pupils' enjoyment in being at school, together with the enriching curriculum and opportunities to marvel at their environment. The Christian faith of pupils is consistently enhanced by prayers during the day, the high quality of hymn singing and the ways in which aspects of pupils' lives are related to their Christian beliefs. The effective links with the church and involvement in Christian festivals and celebrations are successful in enhancing pupils' Christian beliefs and spirituality.
36. The school provides very well for pupils' moral development and this is reflected in pupils' very good behaviour and their mature understanding of the differences between right and wrong. The school is a friendly and harmonious community where pupils understand and follow the school's code of conduct. They show very high levels of self-discipline, in the classrooms, during extra-curricular activities and at play. They are taught to be considerate and to trust each other. The school has taken highly successful steps in developing pupils' sensitivity to people from other faiths and cultures. An outstanding example of this was observed during the inspection when, during one of the frequent visits of pupils from a neighbouring school, which has a high percentage of Muslim pupils, there was an atmosphere of welcome, genuine enjoyment and mutual trust. Pupils wanted to learn more about each other's faith and its impact on cultures and everyday life. The good provision for teaching and learning about trust and respect for each other is very good and, as a result, there are very few incidents of any form of oppressive behaviour. Through their geography lessons, pupils are made aware of the wider community, the effects of pollution on the environment and the responsibility of every person to contribute towards conservation. The active involvement of pupils in fundraising and their knowledge of the charities they support helps their understanding of the needs of other people.
37. The provision made for pupils' social development is very good. The very positive relationships within the school and the involvement of parents are strengths. The friendly and supportive atmosphere during lessons soon helps them to develop confidence with other pupils and adults. Pupils have a wide range of responsibilities, from being register monitors to undertaking office duties at lunchtime. The School Council contributes very positively towards pupils' understanding of a democracy and how their opinions can make a difference. They also understand the importance of taking other pupils and adults' opinions into consideration. The wide range of inter-school sporting activities, the high quality singing and performances by the school orchestra, together with successful participation in local arts festivals further enhance their social development. The wide range of visits, especially those linked to history and geography, increases their knowledge and understanding of different areas and the change in social circumstances over time. However, these would be improved further if more time were given to these subjects. Pupils in Year 6 are very well prepared for transfer to the next stage of education by visits but, equally importantly, by the personal and social education work undertaken on 'Transition'. The excellent handling of this important element of pupils' development by the teacher allows pupils not only to voice their concerns and features they are looking forward to but also to try to solve each other's problems. The role-play situation of the 'teacher and pupil' gave very good guidance on how and how not to behave.
38. The school provides well for pupils' cultural development. The wide range of artistic and extra-curricular activities and educational visits to places of interest are some of the strengths. For example, these enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of how the social conditions in history affected the lifestyles and cultures of different groups of people. Visiting theatre groups and other performers, and visits to performances, as well as the wide range of musical activities and participation in musical festivals also contribute to their cultural development. Pupils have many opportunities to experience art, music and literature from a wide range of cultures. The visit of pupils from a neighbouring school not only enhances their social development but also their cultural development. Assemblies successfully enhance pupils' spiritual development by the

emphasis given to prayer and the Christian ethos of the school. They also successfully contribute to all many aspects of pupils' social, moral and cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to provide for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Members of staff know pupils very well indeed and the very positive relationships result in pupils being confident to share concerns where needed. Child protection procedures are fully in place and members of staff regularly updated about their responsibilities. The school works closely with support services where needed. Within the personal, health and social education programme the pupils are made suitably aware of personal safety issues. Security is given a high priority and there are appropriate levels of supervision for pupils at play. There are effective arrangements for dealing with first aid emergencies; there is not, however, a suitable medical room. As at the time of the last inspection records relating to first aid incidents do not always provide sufficient information to allow the school to monitor effectively the reasons for injury and the action taken. Members of staff show suitable levels of awareness about safety in lessons, for example the need to 'warm-up' in physical education. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised often enough to ensure that everyone is familiar with these routines. The regular testing of appliances and equipment used at the school meets all statutory requirements. There are suitable arrangements for members of staff to report 'day to day' concerns about safety. Procedures used to identify possible safety hazards are carried out conscientiously; these arrangements have improved since the time of the last inspection but need further work to meet risk assessment requirements. This has led to the school's overlooking some hazards associated with storage.
40. Procedures for monitoring the attendance of pupils are good, overall. Registration arrangements meet statutory requirements and provide an accurate record of those present in the school. Registers are kept centrally and secure for use in emergency. Procedures to record the very few arrivals after registration are effective. Reasons for absence are always required in writing and parents are contacted where this is not forthcoming. Although members of staff are alert to the need for contact where an unexplained absence causes them concern, there is no consistent routine to follow up all such incidents without delay.
41. The very high expectations for good behaviour are clearly communicated to and understood by pupils. This leads to very high standards being seen throughout the school. Classroom management routines are consistently applied and effective. The system of awards that acknowledges achievement in all aspects of pupils' lives at school is highly valued by both pupils and parents. On the rare occasions that behaviour causes concern the school seeks to involve parents at an early stage to discuss ways forward. The successful promotion of good behaviour has resulted in no exclusions during the last two school years. There are suitable arrangements to deal with the rare incidents of bullying.
42. There are very good arrangements for the personal support and guidance of pupils. Effective links with the pre-school group, that include visits to the school, ensure that children are familiar with staff and routines before they start in reception, helping them to settle quickly and happily. Annual progress reports for parents include a useful evaluation by pupils of their personal development. Sex education is very well planned; it has high expectations for parental involvement and places suitable emphasis on the role of the family. The personal, health and social education programme contributes very effectively to personal development, covering a broad range of topics related to health, social, community and environmental issues. Well-planned opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility for everyday routines and be involved in decision making through the School Council make a significant contribution to their personal effectiveness. Well-planned extra-curricular activities, together with effective use of the community as a learning resource, extends pupils' horizons, develops confidence and self-esteem. Assemblies and registration periods are planned effectively for the promotion of Christian values. Preparation before transfer to Year 7 is very well planned to deal effectively with concerns and ensure pupils get off to a good start in the next stage of their education.

43. The monitoring of the pupils' academic performance is satisfactory. All the staff, including teaching assistants, know their pupils well and there are very good relationships throughout the school. These promote teaching and learning. The school has effective additional assessments for some pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants are continually observing and recording important developments and areas for concern if they occur. Individual education plans are relevant to each pupil, record the stages reached and give good guidance for teachers and teaching assistants. Minutes of all review meetings are accurately recorded.
44. Assessment was one of the key issues for action in the previous inspection report. Since then, some improvements have taken place, notably in assessing pupils' progress and subsequent attainment in English and mathematics, but these systems have yet to be extended across the curriculum. Consequently, planning of lessons is adversely affected, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, who are not being stretched enough, and, as a result, are making slower progress than they should. The school recognises the need to have a more cohesive system for assessment and planning.
45. The school has started to track pupils' progress in the core subjects, from the reception class. This is now helping teachers to monitor the pupils' achievements more closely. Information from records forms the basis of setting targets for pupils' improvements and these are regularly reviewed. Staff have undergone training to enable them to be specific and realistic in deciding the areas for improvement. However, many pupils are not sufficiently involved in their own learning, and do not know well enough what they need to work on next.
46. While the school carries out statutory requirements with regard to assessment, there are no formal systems for assessing any foundation subjects. As a result, teachers do not assess pupils' work regularly and use this information to move them onto the next steps in their learning. This adversely affects pupils' progress and subsequent attainment in the subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents, particularly through the information provided, is very good overall. The parents hold very positive views about the school. They appreciate the well-planned opportunities to familiarise prospective parents with routines and to get to know staff before their children start in the reception class. The prospectus and governors' annual report provide well-written information about expectations and performance: however, following the last inspection, the need to update parents on progress made towards targets set has been overlooked. Parents find the teachers accessible and easy to talk to, resulting in problems being quickly resolved. There is generous access to teachers through consultations each term that enable parents to find out how their children are getting on; and the regular newsletters keep them up to date with events at the school and dates for their diaries. Information evenings about, for example, numeracy, literacy, sex education and information and communication technology help parents to understand what their children are learning and how they can help at home.
48. Annual progress reports are produced for parents during the summer term. They provide good information about pupils' attitudes to school and in English and mathematics a broad evaluation of what they know and can do. In other subjects information provided is less useful in helping parents to understand how well their children are doing. Suitable targets are usually set in English and mathematics, but they are not always expressed in terms that help parents easily to understand what their children must do to improve. There are suitable arrangements for parents to discuss the content of reports with their children's teachers. National Curriculum test results are reported as required.
49. Parents for pupils with special educational needs are well informed of their children's progress through the high quality of information given and opportunities for involvement at review meetings

when these occur. Occasionally, annual reports give additional detail but in most subjects they are no more detailed for them than they are for other pupils.

50. The involvement of parents, and the interest that most take in their children's learning, has a good impact on the work of the school. There is a successful and thriving parent and teacher association that is active in organising both social and fundraising events. Through these they make significant contributions to learning by the purchase of materials and equipment for the school. The interest they take in the work their children do at home supports learning well, particularly when this is in partnership with the school as in, for example, the sex education programme. There is good support from parents in the classroom, and valuable help for trips and visits out of school. Events involving their children are supported well by parents and attendance at formally arranged meetings to discuss progress is high.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school benefits from good leadership from the headteacher, a dedicated and enthusiastic staff and a supportive governing body. There is a strong sense of teamwork. The governors and staff now work with shared purpose, which shows that the school has responded well to one of the key issues of the last inspection. There is a strong commitment to the Christian ethos of the school and to continuing improvement. This is reflected in the physical environment where the school has continued to make significant improvements and in the quality of the relationships that prevail in the school. In this respect, the headteacher leads strongly by his own personal example and is well respected by the parents and the pupils. This has a very positive effect on the quality of education. The school has a clear policy for equal opportunities, which is effectively implemented in each area of the school's work. This ensures educational inclusion so that all pupils, of whatever background or ability, make the most of the opportunities offered. However, the school recognises that more could be done to challenge those pupils who are gifted and talented.
52. The headteacher is very supportive of his staff and provides a good role model. He strongly encourages a positive, caring ethos that promotes high standards of personal development through his personal style. He makes a point of forming secure relationships with the children through his direct involvement with them in a range of contexts, particularly extra-curricular activities. The ethos of trust, openness and honesty permeates the daily life of the school. He has established an effective partnership with his deputy with clear delineation of areas of responsibility although currently her administrative workload, with teaching in the Foundation Stage and in the upper juniors, is too onerous. Curricular responsibilities are devolved and curricular planning is carried out co-operatively but the subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in ensuring that school policies are consistently followed in the infant and junior departments. Furthermore, while the senior management team is involved in setting targets for raising attainment in English and mathematics, it is too unwieldy as a group to ensure that initiatives are fully implemented and achieving the desired effect. For example, the senior management team has yet to provide a clear direction for linking the many good elements of assessment that the school now has in place in order to effectively raise attainment. Nor has the school been able to ensure a reasonable balance of time to the curriculum to enable all subjects to be taught at the appropriate depth.
53. The leadership and management by the co-ordinator for special educational needs are good and contribute to the good progress made by the pupils. The school is well placed to implement the new Code of Practice and to improve inclusion for all pupils. The co-ordinator ensures that individual education plans are relevant to pupils and guide lesson planning, and ensures that teaching assistants are efficiently and effectively used. Where pupils with special educational needs require external support, this is used efficiently and pupils' needs are taken into account.
54. The headteacher is well informed. He has developed a good balance between the strategic management and the pastoral elements of his role. Action taken since the last inspection has been effective in dealing with most of the key issues and the school has made good improvements in many areas. For example, the school now meets all statutory requirements and has developed schemes of work for all subjects. However, there is still scope for further

improvements in the use of assessment to raise standards and in continuing to develop the pupils' skills in mental computation. There is a much improved correlation between the priorities of the school development plan and the allocation of funds. The school consults widely to establish its long and short term objectives has a clear sense of direction.

55. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory obligations and makes a very good contribution to the effective running of the school. The governors are well informed and work hard at their individual and collective roles. There is an effective committee structure with appropriate terms of reference. They take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to raising standards. They have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development of the school through their frequent visits, the review of curriculum policies and discussions with subject leaders. Furthermore, the governing body is fully involved in the school's initiatives on the pupils' personal, social and health education.
56. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document that is based on broad consultation and a detailed audit of the school's current position. The involvement of staff, governors and the community ensures that the educational priorities identified provide a shared vision for the school's development. However, although it is updated annually, there is scope for more regular formal monitoring of the progress towards given initiatives. There is a strong commitment to improvement among staff and governors and the school is well placed to continue to succeed. The school uses its finances well. This reflects the financial prudence of the school's management team and of the governing body when considering new expenditure. The school has taken effective measures to ensure the school is in balance at the end of the financial year. The governing body is aware of the principles of best value and applies them satisfactorily. The headteacher is well supported by an efficient finance officer and effective use is made of management information systems for school administration. The systems for the monitoring of the outcome of expenditure are satisfactory. The school provides good value for money.
57. The school has been successful in achieving the prestigious award of "Investor in People". There has been a significant change in the teaching staff since the last inspection and the number of classroom support personnel has greatly increased. Two members of staff are newly qualified teachers and they speak highly of the level of support they have received. The strength of the teamwork exemplifies the importance the school attributes to staff development. All of the teachers value their further professional development and have agreed targets. The performance management scheme has been introduced successfully and the new cycle begun, thus successfully addressing another issue from the last inspection.
58. Since the time of the last inspection accommodation has improved to include a new computer suite, a 'quiet area' in the grounds and refurbished toilets for the juniors. The accommodation for pupils with special educational needs is good. The accommodation is still, however, barely satisfactory to meet the needs of the curriculum. The disruption caused through interconnecting rooms in the infants will be relieved through the building of a new corridor in the near future. Classrooms for older pupils are cramped for the number of children and this places some restriction on activities. The open nature of these rooms results in considerable noise pollution that distracts and sometimes makes it difficult for pupils to hear their teacher. There is good wheelchair access to the main school, but this facility has not yet been extended to the computer suite. The grounds provide good facilities for both lessons and play, except for children in the reception class for whom there is no suitable play area. The school buildings and grounds are maintained to a high standard.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to improve the standards of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:-
 1. Continue to develop the school's use of assessment information to ensure that all of the pupils, particularly the most able, are given demanding work. This process should include:

- a) compiling a register of gifted and talented pupils and developing systems and strategies to challenge their learning further (paragraphs 25,32)
 - b) ensuring a closer match between the work set and the abilities of the pupils, particularly in the infant classes and the non-core subjects throughout the school (paragraphs 21,32, 44,45,46)
 - c) raising the expectations of teachers in Years 1 and 2 (paragraph 21).
2. Streamline the senior management team and develop the role of the subject co-ordinators to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the support and evaluation of teaching (paragraph 52)
 3. Improve the balance of the curriculum by planning and monitoring the time available for all subjects, especially the foundation subjects (paragraph 29)
 4. Continue to work towards further improvement in the accommodation to provide a discrete play area for the children in the Foundation Stage and to minimise the disruption to the pupils' learning caused by extraneous noise (paragraph 58)

Minor issue

1. The school should also continue to develop the pupils' ability to make mental calculations in mathematics (paragraph 92)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	19	17	0	0	0
Percentage	2	18	42	38	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	221
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	11	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (91)	80 (94)	83 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	24	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (94)	80 (97)	87 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	14	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	13
	Girls	18	12	21
	Total	31	23	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (88)	66 (76)	97 (85)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	18	15	17
	Total	30	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (76)	77 (71)	83 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	221
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	32

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

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	2001/2002
	£
Total income	469465
Total expenditure	498342
Expenditure per pupil	2121
Balance brought forward from previous year	33541
Balance carried forward to next year	25697

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	222
Number of questionnaires returned	79

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	32	0	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	76	24	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	47	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	59	37	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	32	16	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	29	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	37	8	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	24	3	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	29	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	24	4	3	3

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

60. Children enter the reception class in September, initially on a part-time basis, and after two weeks, they attend full time. Parents are encouraged to accompany their children and to stay for mid-day meals with them, if they wish. The teacher visits the playgroup or the nursery, in the latter part of the summer term, to ensure a smooth transition between home and school.
61. Most children in this year's cohort started in the reception class with broadly average levels of attainment in each area of learning, except in their personal and social development, for which they are slightly above, and in speaking and listening, for which they are above. The children make good progress and, by the time they start Year 1, their levels of attainment are above average, except in their physical development, where they remain average.
62. The previous inspection judged that by the time children enter Year 1 their levels of attainment across all areas of learning met the expectations for their age, with a significant number achieving above that level, particularly in respect of language, literacy and numeracy. Since then, the school has made good progress. However, the school has not yet addressed the issues regarding the development of outdoor area and the provision of large play equipment.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. The children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This area is very well taught and consequently, the majority of children exceed the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
64. By the end of the reception year, all the children socialise and mix well with older pupils and understand the rules and the behaviour expected of them. They are trustworthy, polite and co-operative. For example, they quickly tidy up their construction and paint equipment and discard their empty milk cartons in the bin. In the 'Crompton Airport', they amicably decide on the different roles of pilot, stewards and cabin staff. The children are caring and sensitive to the needs of others, including those with special educational needs, who require assistance at times. The children concentrate for long periods of time and they are often seen to be completely engrossed in their activities. They line up to go into the hall sensibly, and in assemblies they sit quietly and pay attention. The very good relationships that exist encourage the children to take part and to be confident learners.

Communication, language and literacy

65. The children make good improvement in their communication, language and literacy skills over their time in the Foundation Stage. The good teaching that they receive, helps the children to develop their skills so that, by the time they enter Year 1, most children exceed expectations in this area of their learning. A strength of teaching is the way that classroom assistants carefully record children's responses, which are then passed onto the teachers to inform planning.
66. The children listen well to each other, the teachers and the non-teaching staff. They speak readily in free activities and in role-play. The airport has captured their imagination and, with one of the parent helpers, they enthusiastically prepare sandwiches for the passengers. The children happily bring in items of interest and talk about these to the rest of the class. The teacher gives them opportunities to ask questions. For example, when one child showed a toy cow bell, which he brought from Switzerland, one of the children enquired whether the real ones are louder than the one he showed them. The teacher builds on pupils' communication skills, by using their contributions successfully. For example, when discussing the variety of shells, the teacher suggested that they could use 'fragile', which one child offered for 'easily broken'.

67. In reading, the children make good progress through systematic and rigorous teaching of phonics. The teachers know how to combine the teaching of oracy with reading and writing. The children take pride in being able to read phrases and sentences. They thoroughly enjoy reading their books and talk enthusiastically about the favourite stories. They are confident to read out their sentences that they have written about their favourite picture, following the visit to Oldham Art Gallery.
68. Writing skills are very well taught in the reception class. The teachers use a simplified form of the literacy hour well to introduce the children to the letters and sounds needed to build their reading and writing skills. The particular strength is the way that staff plan differentiated tasks and imaginative activities to meet the learning needs of all children. Skills are carefully consolidated through repetition in a variety of ways, without losing the children's interest. During the inspection, the children were observed writing two or three sentences about their pictures. Their letters were well formed and sentences were correctly punctuated with capital letters and full stops. The children are well motivated and continuously increase the amount they write.

Mathematical development

69. The children achieve well in their mathematical development and begin Year 1 with understanding and skills that exceed the expected levels. In the reception class, children count forwards and backwards to 30. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers plan and resource good practical activities to give the children first-hand experience that leads the children to understand shape, size, weight and capacity. The staff stress the importance of correct mathematical terms and ensure that the children know and understand these when exploring mathematical activities.
70. The children learn that they can measure objects using non-standard units. They make sensible estimates as to how many Lego bricks they need to measure a cubit. In the computer suite, the children soon learned that their piece of string is longer than their snake because the snake is not straight. In this group, the children progressed rapidly onto measuring their string in centimetres. The teachers successfully summarise key learning points in the final session of lessons, by asking questions such as, 'What have we learned?' Children offer, 'That we can measure things that are curled'.
71. Staff track children's progress in relation to mathematical development, as in other areas of children's learning. They plan accordingly, and match tasks by ability so that the more able children can move ahead, while the less able are given more time and help to gain confident understanding. They learn how to solve simple problems in, for example, comparing and ordering lengths, using a variety of non-standard lengths. An additional factor in the children's progress is that they take delight in all the activities and are, therefore, eager to learn more.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. The children enter reception class with broadly average knowledge and understanding of the world. Through effective teaching of this area of learning, they make good progress, so that, by the time the children start Year 1, their levels of attainment are above the required learning goals. The teachers and their assistants create a lively learning environment and plan imaginative activities, which stimulate the children's curiosity and capture their interest. The children wonder with awe at the sight of the emerging butterflies. They carefully observe and record what happens to the eggs over a six weeks' period, in 'Our caterpillar diary'.
73. The children learn about food technology and the importance of food hygiene, while preparing sandwiches for 'the in-flight refreshments'. They understand that food will keep fresh by putting their sandwiches in the fridge. The children learn about healthy eating and talk about salads being good for us. There are very good examples of children competently learning to use the computer to draw a variety of transport and type in suitable sentences, such as ' My taxi is yellow'. They use a technological robot skilfully and give directions correctly so that the toy does not run off the board. The children develop an awareness of passing of time, by looking at the life cycles of frogs, for example.

Physical development

74. The children start school with expected levels of general physical development, including the control of more precise movement using pencils and other tools. They make satisfactory progress overall. The main hindrance to their development is the lack of large equipment and a suitable play area for the full range of activities to take place. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching is good and the children thoroughly enjoy and fully participate in the activities provided.
75. The children use the limited space outside and carefully control their bikes to ensure that they do not bump into anyone. They show concern for one another's safety, both indoors and outside. The children use space well in their dance and gymnastics. They travel along the apparatus with an inventive range of movements. This is a result of the teacher's skills in devising challenging movements within safety limits and the abilities of the children.
76. The range of planned activities in the reception class allows the children to learn to use tools and materials safely and with increasing fine control. The teachers explore aspects of health and exercise. The children know, for example, that their heart beats faster after exercise, by feeling their pulse before and after the warm-up session.

Creative development

77. The children make good progress in their creative development, through the good quality of teaching that they receive in reception class. By the time they enter Year 1, their levels of attainment are above the early learning goal for this area.
78. The children draw and paint with considerable enthusiasm through the skilful assistance of the nursery nurse, in conjunction with the teachers. Following the visit to Oldham Art Gallery, the children were inspired to paint after the styles of various painters, such as van Gogh, Monet and modern painters. The children undertake a variety of roles in the High Crompton Airport, and often seem to be completely engrossed in the activity, such as telephoning air traffic control to check whether it is safe to land the plane. The children respond well to music in their dance sessions, and successfully portray animals such as a dog, horse or the camel, with its 'nose in the air'. The children's imaginations are successfully extended through the wide range of activities that the teachers and assistants provide for them.

ENGLISH

79. The pupils make steady progress throughout Years 1 and 2 and by the age of seven they are attaining standards that are in line with the national average in reading and writing. The pupils make good progress from Years 3 to 6 and by the age of eleven they achieve standards that are above the national average in English. This represents an improvement on the findings of the last inspection.
80. The pupils throughout the school are both confident and articulate. Their speaking and listening skills are effectively developed through discussions in lessons in different subjects and through class activities such as circle time, when the pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and listen to each other. At the conclusion of the more successful literacy lessons the pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and share their ideas with the class. In these sessions the pupils show a good range of vocabulary and can express their ideas clearly.
81. The pupils are confident when reading aloud. Most of the infant pupils read accurately, and the most able read with good expression and intonation. Although standards in reading have fallen in the national tests in recent years, the school has taken steps to address the issue and standards in reading by the end of Year 2 are now average. Letter sounds are well taught but there remains scope for the teachers to further develop the pupils' reading by assessing their aptitude and determining the next steps that pupils need to take to improve. The pupils who experience difficulty in reading are well supported by trained teaching assistants.

82. The junior pupils use their reference skills well and can readily find information from the non-fiction books in the school library. In Years 3 to 6 the reading skills of inference and deduction are appropriately developed within guided reading sessions in addition to literacy lessons. The school has given this a high priority and has developed effective strategies to help the pupils read beyond the literal interpretation of a text. For example, the pupils in the junior classes read independently for at least half an hour each day and standards by the end of Year 6 are now above the national average; the more able pupils talk with interest about the works of authors that they enjoy reading and many are self-motivated readers who display a love of reading and literature. Within lessons the pupils are taught how to use an index and the contents page to locate information in reference books. By the end of Year 6, most of the pupils have mastered the skills of scanning a text to retrieve information. These pupils are able to utilise these skills when using information and communication technology to research topics such as the solar system.
83. Throughout the school the pupils present their work well and most junior aged pupils use joined up handwriting. Most teachers model the school handwriting policy well, although this is not always followed consistently. In the infant classes the majority of pupils express themselves satisfactorily in writing – their sentences follow on from each other in a sensible sequence. However, the pupils are not provided with a sufficient range of writing opportunities and this prevents the more able pupils from developing a range of writing styles. By the age of seven the most able pupils are able to write a simple story. Most pupils spell common words correctly, although they do not readily apply their knowledge of spelling rules when spelling less familiar words.
84. The rate of learning accelerates in the junior classes and the pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. By the age of eleven the pupils have a secure grasp of how to punctuate sentences and the most able pupils use a variety of punctuation to create tension and atmosphere for the reader. The pupils have a good understanding of how to use paragraphs and can write in arrange of styles and for different purposes. For example, the pupils in Year 5 write onomatopoeic poetry and younger pupils record details of their visits to places of interest such as Manchester Museum to research the ancient Egyptians. The pupils in Year 6 distinguish between literal and figurative language in poems such as “The Highwayman” by Alfred Noyes and construct their writing well, using metaphors and similes to good effect; the most able pupils select the vocabulary they use carefully to create the desired impact on the reader. For example, one pupil wrote:
- “Helpful as a mother bird feeding its young,
As chatty as a baby chick when it’s hungry,
A lovely voice like a lark’s morning song
But when she is annoyed
Her voice is like the hunting call of a swooping peregrine.”*
85. Literacy skills are further reinforced in the foundation subjects, particularly religious education. For example, the pupils explore different themes from the Bible and learn to use specific vocabulary such as “saviour” and “sacrifice”. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs through a range of strategies and particularly through effective support from classroom assistants. The school makes good use of additional intervention strategies, such as the additional literacy groups in Years 3 and 4 and booster classes for older pupils to support those who have some learning difficulties.
86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the juniors. In both phases, the teachers manage the behaviour of the pupils well. There is good liaison between the teachers and the support staff and homework is used well, particularly to support reading. Displays are used effectively to demonstrate aspects of literacy and to guide pupils with their choice of vocabulary.
87. In the infant classes, when sharing books in literacy lessons, the teachers use the text effectively to draw attention to particular features such as adjectives, rhyming words and homophones. For

example, the class teacher in Year 1 used Colin McNaughton's "Suddenly" to good effect to show points of grammar and to help the pupils to recall the key incidents. The teachers plan a range of interesting activities for the pupils but lessons are impaired by either a lack of pace or insufficient use of assessment information to ensure that all of the pupils are sufficiently challenged. For example, in Year 2 the pupils enjoyed writing about desirable features of seaside towns such as Bournemouth but the pace of the lesson was slow. In Year 1, although the teacher had considered carefully what it was she wanted the pupils to learn, the activities were not demanding enough for the higher attaining pupils and opportunities were missed to develop the pupils' writing. In the junior classes, lessons have good pace, particularly in Year 6. Questions are used well to move the pupils' thinking forward and to encourage closer observation of the text. The teachers have appropriate expectations of the different ability groups and the work set is well pitched to motivate and sustain the interest of different groups of pupils. The teachers use praise to good effect and the quality of marking helps to the pupils to identify the strengths and weaknesses in their work.

88. The subject leader is a skilled practitioner who has identified areas for improvement and is working hard to raise standards. The school has identified standards in reading and writing in the infant classes as areas for improvement but this has not been matched by releasing time for the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning herself. This weakness in the delegation of responsibilities has slowed the rate of improvement in this key stage. Furthermore, although there are sound arrangements in place to check the overall progress of the pupils, the information is not always used to inform the teachers' planning or to make the pupils aware of what they need to learn next.

MATHEMATICS

89. Overall, standards in mathematics are satisfactory and reflect the standards found at the previous inspection. They show a considerable improvement on the National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2001 when they were well below the national average.
90. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in Years 5 and 6. In all classes, the pupils achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and data handling. They make satisfactory progress in some aspects of number but unsatisfactory progress in their understanding and use of mental mathematics. This is a weakness that limits the pupils' confidence and speed in calculations. As a result, pupils are competent in calculations involving number when they have been taught the methods: however, they are unsure and, at times, incompetent when either estimating or using mental skills in unfamiliar situations. The school has not improved standards in this aspect of mathematics well enough since the last inspection and it remains an aspect for improvement.
91. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a satisfactory mathematical understanding. They carry out written calculations accurately and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number facts to 100. They have a good understanding of shape and space, and can name and discuss the properties of some two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. For example, they know the differences between a cube and a cuboid, and that a square has four equal sides. Pupils estimate a wide range of measures, including length and weight, and check their answers by accurate measurements. They order the times of activities during the day and can record times to the hour, half-hour, quarter to and quarter past. The weakest aspect is the pupils' abilities in mental mathematics.
92. At the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have a satisfactory grasp of multiplication tables. They understand place value and add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers satisfactorily. During the inspection, they learned long division by numbers up to 20. Although pupils have an appropriate understanding of place value and numerical processes, their knowledge and application of mental mathematics are the weakest elements and prevent them from working as confidently as possible. For example, they have learned a wide range of numerical processes and understand them, but lack the necessary skills of mental mathematics which allow them to

estimate and work quickly. Although the school has begun to address pupils' unsatisfactory skills in this aspect, which was a key issue at the previous inspection, it has not successfully achieved this yet. There is still more work to be done in ensuring continuity and progress in mental skills by placing higher demands on pupils and ensuring that their knowledge and understanding are rigorously monitored.

93. By Year 6, pupils have good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes, using accurate mathematical terms. They calculate the surface area and volume of some three-dimensional shapes, and the area and perimeter of two-dimensional shapes. Some pupils understand negative numbers in terms of temperature and apply their knowledge satisfactorily. They understand the equivalent values of fractions, decimals and percentages.
94. Although the quality of teaching and learning in half of the lessons observed was good, the analysis of pupils' work shows only satisfactory teaching and learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets because they are well supported by the teaching assistants and the plans for them are detailed. Most teachers ensure that pupils listen attentively and behave well. They ensure that information and communication technology is used well, particularly in data handling, to support learning. As a result, the pupils work to the best of their abilities. The teachers are very conscientious and concerned about standards. The analysis of pupils' work, however, shows many occasions when they move their pupils on through new processes without ensuring that they have the necessary mental skills to apply them.
95. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6. All teachers follow the National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily. They give pupils opportunities to explain their reasoning. However, the majority of teachers do not implement the mental aspect of the Numeracy Strategy either thoroughly or consistently. In some classes, pupils are given small whiteboards in order that they can all answer at the same time and teachers can assess their understanding. In other lessons, however, the mental activities are too slow and too undemanding for most of the pupils. In some classes, pupils are given too many visual prompts and insufficient methods for successfully learning and using mental skills.
96. Although most teachers give appropriate activities and support for the different ability levels in their classes, the work planned for the more able pupils is the weakest element. This is reflected in the analysis of work, where there is insufficient difference between the more able and average attaining pupils. Teachers use mathematics in other subjects across the curriculum, for example timelines in history, using scale in geography and measuring in physical education and data handling associated with the Commonwealth Games. As a result, pupils understand the relevance of mathematics to everyday life.
97. The quality of marking is satisfactory. Where it is very good, the helpful comments result in high levels of improvement. Although some teachers place high demands on presentation, especially in Year 4 and Year 6, this is not consistent throughout the school. In spite of the very good teaching in Year 6, there are too few pupils working at the higher levels.
98. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has developed a detailed and relevant action plan. She monitors and analyses the results of National Tests and plans to use this information when guiding teachers' planning next year. However, the monitoring of mental mathematics is the weakest element. She has developed a policy and a scheme of work that follows the National Numeracy Strategy. There is a satisfactory assessment and recording system in place and pupils are given targets that they understand. Resources have been improved recently and they are good. They are well stored and used carefully by staff and pupils.

SCIENCE

99. Attainment in science is average overall for the pupils at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The differences in attainment are due to fewer pupils working at higher levels at

the end of Year 2, although most pupils make satisfactory progress. Overall, the pupils' progress in the junior classes is good. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection.

100. Learning through scientific enquiry and experimental work contributes strongly to the good progress throughout the school. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress, with the extra help they receive from the staff who support them. The main strengths of the subject are the good quality of teaching in the junior classes that ensures the pupils' good progress and the very good standards of behaviour of the pupils.
101. Pupils are provided with opportunities to engage in a range of experiences through experimentation and investigation. The pupils in Year 2 observe how forces can make moving objects go faster, change direction and slow down. In investigating the school grounds for mini-beasts, the pupils discover the different types of animals in the local environment. They learn to predict, for example, how high their sunflowers will grow and then carefully measure and record their findings, comparing the results. The pupils understand fair testing when melting ice, concluding that the ice cubes must be of same size if their test is to be fair.
102. As the pupils go through the school, they build upon their knowledge, skills and understanding through the good teaching that they receive. By Year 6, the pupils have a clear understanding of how to construct a fair test, changing only one factor. They make predictions on the basis of their observations and carry out their experiments, carefully recording their findings, on a line graph. In an experiment on forces, the pupils set up their experiments in a scientific manner. They marvelled when the lids were blown off the film cases. The teacher continued to challenge their understanding by asking questions skilfully, such as which of the records they had made were easiest to read or why it is important to record results carefully. The pupils understood that these would help them 'for future testing'.
103. The investigative aspect of science lies at the heart of the pupils' good progress. In Year 5, for example, the pupils make careful observations when exploring solids. They begin to understand that solids can be separated by sieving and by using a magnet. Scrutiny of work undertaken during the year shows that the pupils study the full range of the curriculum. In Year 4, for instance, the pupils show good understanding of the solar system and what causes seasons to change. They investigate how sound is made and how it travels. In discussions with the pupils, it is clear that they have a secure knowledge and understanding of science through practical experience.
104. The teachers make lessons interesting through imaginatively planned activities to meet the learning needs of all pupils. They ensure that the pupils take a scientific approach through the use of appropriate vocabulary associated with the topic. In Year 5, for example, the teacher talks about filtration, air molecules and hydrogen, and the concluding session helps the pupils to articulate their findings and to consolidate their learning. The teachers' good subject knowledge is an additional factor to the pupils' good progress.
105. The teachers ensure that science is taught in familiar contexts and they make good links with other subjects, particularly with literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Throughout the school, there are good examples of the pupils applying their skills to record their findings. The pupils use familiar contexts, such as the school grounds to examine the habitats of mini-beasts living there and to broaden their scientific knowledge of their own surroundings. By Year 6, following their experiments on electricity, the pupils understand how electric components work in different ways. One pupil records, for instance, that 'Bulbs work by lighting up and batteries work by pumping power'. The pupils are given opportunities to consider whether their conclusions justify predictions, in growing seeds, for example.
106. The pupils thoroughly enjoy science, particularly when they are investigating. They work very well and co-operate well in their groups, despite the cramped conditions in some of the classrooms. The pupils take great care when using equipment and throughout the school, they know and understand rules of safety in their experiments. They treat live creatures with respect. The subject, therefore, contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

107. The headteacher is presently the co-ordinator for science. He feels very strongly that 'real science' should underpin the curriculum and this is clearly shared by the staff. The school has rightly identified assessment as an area for further development, in order to improve teaching and learning in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

108. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its standards.
109. Too few lessons were seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching but the standard of work seen in lessons and on displays is average. There are some good examples of art after the styles of various artists. In Year 2, the pupils paint in the style of Paul Klee, using squares of paper for the background and painting fish as the natural central point. Year 5 pupils use acrylic paint to reproduce van Gogh's 'Sunflowers'. In Year 6, the pupils explore different shades of paints, crayons, pencils and water-colours, to portray paintings in the style of L.S. Lowry. There are examples of the pupils having opportunities to illustrate folk tales from Bengal, in Year 2. Following a history topic on the Romans, the pupils in Year 4 design a floor mosaic.
110. There are very few examples of three-dimensional work in the school. In Year 1, the pupils use mouldable material to make model teddy bears and snakes. Altogether, this area of the pupils' curriculum is limited, as insufficient time is spent on art. The reason for this is the increase of time allotted to literacy and numeracy.
111. The pupils enjoy their art, as observed in Year 2 during the inspection. The pupils used a variety of media to produce seaside scenes. They showed high levels of interest when the teacher asked them about familiar experiences. They made good use of picture books to research ideas, to produce effective seaside pictures.
112. At present, the deputy head manages the subject with the help of the nursery nurse. However, her heavy responsibilities for other areas of the curriculum and of the school leadership, simply do not allow for the full role to be appropriately developed. She is aware of the need to produce a system of assessing pupils' progress, so that skills, knowledge and understanding can be progressively built as the pupils move through the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards are in line with expectations, both at the end of Year 2 and of Year 6. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, generally make satisfactory progress. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its standards in the subject.
114. It was possible to see only two lessons during the inspections. Judgements have been made through the scrutiny of work and discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and their pupils.
115. The pupils throughout the school have sound skills in designing and in making. Their finished products are usually appropriately constructed and attractively finished. Year 2 pupils make pleasing paper models of cats, with moving parts. Year 5 pupils construct an effective fabric freeze, using a variety of materials, to depict the Greek myth of Perseus and the Gorgon. Year 6 pupils design and make a vase and some realistic flowers. They consider the problem that they encounter and changes that they could make next time. Food technology is also taught and often arises out of other topics such as the Chinese New Year, when the pupils learn how to make a Chinese fry.
116. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The pupils are interested in their work, as observed in Year 3. They disassemble and evaluate cardboard containers for suitability of purpose. The

pupils consider how the container protects the product and how effective it is for selling and marketing. The pupils identify strengths in the designs, the eye-catching appeal and evaluate their container for mobile phones with their partner.

117. The subject co-ordinator has produced a good policy and schemes of work, which have been updated in September, 2001. He monitors teachers' planning every half term but he recognises the need to develop the subject further. As yet, little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning. Moreover, there are no procedures for assessing the pupils' work nor good systems for recording it.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Standards are satisfactory throughout the school and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The standards are similar to those found during the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils identify similarities and differences between coastal and inland regions of Britain. They also know how the physical features of different areas impact on lifestyles. Pupils are beginning to use accurate geographical vocabulary. During the inspection, they contrasted the seaside resort of Bournemouth with Oldham and know the main geographical features of a seaside resort. Having read the book 'Katie Morag', pupils compared and contrasted lifestyles on the mainland of Scotland with an island in terms of transport, postal services, occupations and shopping. This also resulted in a good range of writing. Pupils studied some geographical and cultural aspects of life in China and related this to their celebrations of the Chinese New Year.
119. At the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of their immediate area through a wide range of visits and mapping activities. This is a strong feature of the teaching which is satisfactory overall. The pupils' geographical knowledge is extended by studying parts of Europe and Asia. Pupils have studied rivers, mountains, different climates around the world and environmental issues. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from the links with the pupils at a local primary school with a different ethnic mix to increase their understanding of many of the geographical features of Pakistan and their influence on lifestyles, homes, vegetation and occupations. In Year 4, the pupils' mapping and geographical skills are developed well through their studies of life in an Indian village. In a lesson on this, the teacher successfully enhanced pupils' multicultural development by challenging opinions not based on facts and increasing pupils' skills in using geographical information.
120. Pupils benefit from the use of the locality and visits further afield to develop mapping skills and understanding the different geographical features of Britain. They identify many countries in Europe, most continents and some countries within these continents. Although few geography lessons were observed, evidence was taken from pupils' written work and displays, and discussions with pupils and teachers.
121. The teachers plan half-termly topics from a scheme of work which follows the nationally produced guidelines. The planning is satisfactory overall, but there are too few challenging activities for more able pupils in most classes. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and they make good progress towards the targets set for them.
122. The co-ordinator gives satisfactory leadership and management. She monitors planning and has developed a policy and scheme of work based on national guidance. This is an improvement on the last inspection. At present, there is no whole-school system of assessment of geographical skills, knowledge or understanding. The scheme of work, while ensuring that pupils do not repeat the same content, does not give sufficient detail about the range of skills to be taught in each year.

HISTORY

123. Standards in history are good overall, especially for pupils at the end of Year 6, where they are above the levels expected for pupils in this age group. These standards show an improvement compared to the last inspection. Standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and more able pupils, make good progress in Years 3 and 6. Pupils in the other years, however, make only satisfactory progress overall.
124. Although few lessons of history were observed during the inspection, additional evidence was taken from pupils' completed work, teachers' planning, classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers.
125. By the end of Year 2, pupils have covered an appropriate range of historical topics. They understand the concept of time; "now", "then" and "a long time ago". They successfully consider the differences that characterise events, artefacts and lifestyles from the past when compared with the present. Pupils also show an increasing confidence in understanding how we know about the past. For example, in a Year 1 history lesson, pupils compared family holidays during Victorian times with those taken today. They were amused and interested when they compared bathing machines and bathing costumes of Victorian times with the seaside activities of day. The pupils compared and contrasted activities such as paddling in the sea, reading and making sandcastles, with the more adventurous activities of today.
126. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the periods they study. For example, they compared the events which occurred in Britain since 1948 with those of today. Of particular interest to them were the different styles of music from big bands and jazz to rock'n'roll and juke boxes. They showed great interest in the events following the Second World War and, as a result, understand the dangers of racism and its impact on different groups of people.
127. Pupils in Year 3 show a good range of knowledge of the significant events and lifestyles of the Ancient Egyptians. They enjoyed preparing an Egyptian feast and spoke with interest and knowledge about the visit to the Museum of Egyptology. They enjoy the imaginative elements about history and respond well to artefacts and pictures. For example, pupils in Year 3 compare Viking clothing with the clothing worn today in terms of style and material. However, the junior pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to research information independently either from books or from information technology sources and, although they listen carefully and speak with high levels of understanding, they have too few opportunities for writing.
128. Standards and progress in history are good because of the quality of teaching, range of visits and pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils are observant, interested and keen to share their experiences and opinions. However, pupils' learning would be improved by greater consistency and continuity in the sequencing of historical skills to be taught.
129. Although the quality of teaching is good overall, there is a wide range of teaching approaches and skills. There is a high level of stimulating teaching that fires the pupils' interest and enthusiasm and results in good recall of events and key personalities in history. Many teachers successfully use the imaginative richness of the subject to bring it alive for pupils. This was reflected during the lessons observed in Years 1 and 3 and in the analysis of work in Year 6. Where teaching is good, pupils think historically and consider events and decisions and the effects of these on other people. As a result, these pupils achieve well, but not as well as they might if this quality of teaching were consistent throughout the school. In some classes, there is too much emphasis on factual information and illustrations rather than the expectations that pupils will reason logically. Here the teaching lacks intellectual rigour and challenge.
130. The subject co-ordinator has responded to the weaknesses found at the previous inspection, especially the need for a policy and scheme of work. However, the new scheme does not give sufficient direction on the teaching of historical skills. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visits and some information and communication technology resources. At present, there is no assessment system in place and insufficient monitoring of pupils' work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131. By the time pupils leave St Mary's, most have a knowledge and understanding of information technology that is broadly average. The pupils respond well to the systematic teaching of information technology skills in the computer suite and are making sound progress overall.
132. Pupils of all ages understand that information technology is an integral element of their learning, just as much as a book or a pencil. The teachers' planning ensures that the computer suite is used to develop the pupils' keyboard skills as well as to enhance the pupils' learning in other subjects. However, as yet the teachers' planning takes little account of the class-based computers and consequently their use to support learning is inconsistent. Information and communication technology has a satisfactory impact on standards in literacy and numeracy because the teachers make effective use of the computer suite and relevant programs to support learning.
133. In the infant classes the pupils use programs to support their understanding of dinosaurs. They use their knowledge of alphabetical order and their reference skills to establish facts and figures about different creatures. The pupils are beginning to word process simple statements and experiment with different fonts. The more able pupils know how to import graphics and combine these images with their text. They use computers to support their work in mathematics particularly in organising information and displaying it in diagrammatic form. In each case, the pupils are well motivated and research and record their work well. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, persevere with their work and are reluctant to leave the computers at the end of each lesson.
134. In the junior classes the pupils continue to be taught systematically. The pupils in Year 3 learn how to interrogate a data base to classify information. They know how to assemble a personal fact file and use information and communication technology to generate graphs to illustrate favourite colours, pop stars and football players. Older pupils learn how to edit their work by using the cut, copy and paste facilities. They study excerpts from the Jack and the Beanstalk tale and move them on the screen to form the correct sequence. In Year 5, the pupils use information and communication technology to support their work in science when they label different parts of a plant. In Year 6, the pupils use computers to research planets and their moons and use spread sheets to analyse football results. Others complete a data base, entering specific information under precise headings to build up a profile of a suspected murderer and eliminate others under suspicion. The pupils respond well to this task and undertake their work with confidence and enthusiasm. They understand that computers play a vital part in our everyday lives and through their work in control technology learn how to sequence a series of moves to enable a screen vehicle to negotiate a circuit.
135. The quality of teaching in the computer suite is good. Although the computer based interactive whiteboard located in the computer suite is poorly sited for large groups, the teachers make good use of it to support learning. The computer suite is very well timetabled to ensure that all of the pupils receive equal access. The teachers have been well trained so that they have grown in confidence and in expertise. The school has shrewdly invested in good technical support to ensure that help is readily available should the systems develop a fault. Most lessons are conducted at pace in the suite and the teachers are well organised. The teachers use their questioning skills to good effect to ensure that the pupils are clear about what they are expected to do. The pupils respond and concentrate well, and make good progress. A characteristic of each lesson is the high level of motivation. The school has plans to make assessments of what the pupils know, understand and can do but as yet this information is not used to set different work for different levels of attainment within each class. However, support is provided for those pupils with special educational needs who find some of the processes difficult.
136. Information and communication technology is well managed by the subject leader. She has ensured that the school's major investment in new technology is used to good effect. The co-ordinator recognises the need to introduce a coherent policy for assessing the pupils'

development and to ensure that class-based computers are used to full effect to support learning across the curriculum.

MUSIC

137. Standards in music are in line with expectations, overall, by the end of Year 2 and of Year 6. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its standards.
138. The pupils' singing is enthusiastic, tuneful and harmonious. This reflects the quality of teaching by the deputy head and a particularly able classroom assistant. Through their infectious enthusiasm, they inspire the pupils to improve phrasing, expression and accuracy, so that their singing is of the highest quality of which they are capable. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, join in with the singing enthusiastically.
139. This high level of achievement in singing continues as the pupils progress through the school. Their skills are successfully applied to singing a variety of hymns in assemblies, often in two parts. The pupils successfully sustain their pitch and sing with considerable accuracy. They are aware of other singers, start on time and finish crisply, as directed by the teacher-conductor. Very skilful teaching by the deputy head and the classroom assistant enables the pupils to sing in harmony and to accompany singing with percussion instruments.
140. The quality of composing and performing is satisfactory. The main weakness lies in the allocation of time for music outside specialist music teaching. This fluctuates from class to class, thereby providing the pupils with too little time to develop their music successfully. The school recognises the need to review and develop a consistent approach to the teaching of music throughout the school. As yet, there are too few procedures for assessing the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, so that future teachers can build upon pupils' learning. These factors slow pupils' progress and subsequent attainment in music.
141. The quality of specialist instrumental teaching by visiting teachers is excellent. The pupils learn to play a variety of instruments, such as woodwind and brass, through the expert tuition by the teachers from the Oldham Music Centre. During the inspection, several examples were observed of visiting teachers enthusing and inspiring their pupils to learn to play instruments. Presently, the school orchestra is preparing to record a performance onto a CD. In addition, the pupils entertain groups within the school community and participate in a number of festivals with considerable success. This aspect of the pupils' music curriculum makes a very good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

142. Pupils' achieve high standards throughout the school, with very high standards in games, athletics and swimming. Progress is good overall, with some very good features. As a result, standards have improved since the previous inspection. The wide variety of physical education activities reflects the school's very strong commitment to developing all aspects of pupils' healthy lifestyles and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
143. By the end of Year 2, pupils' high standards are reflected in their abilities to move with agility and use space well. They throw accurately and powerfully and move into appropriate positions for catching them.
144. By the end of Year 6, pupils have refined the ways in which they move, throw and catch the ball. They achieve levels of attainment in games that are well above those expected for pupils of their age group, especially in badminton, where they control the shuttlecock on the racquet head well and learn more refined skills of the game. In rounders and other throwing activities, they learn to throw accurately, using both underarm and overarm actions, with equally good control. They also position themselves well and catch the ball securely because of well taught knowledge and skills.

145. The high standards in games and athletics reflect high expectations of the teachers and the effective use of demonstrations by teachers and other pupils. In athletics, pupils jump, land and run very well, showing a good range of skills and determination to improve. They understand the importance of using power from their arms, bending their knees and landing lightly when jumping. Pupils achieve well in a wide range of ball skills, with strengths in their knowledge of position, possession, marking and passing. All pupils concentrate very well and use the time available to the full. From the reception year upwards, pupils understand the reasons for warming-up and cooling-down exercises in terms of the effects on muscles and breathing. This progresses to Years 5 and 6 where they understand the advantages of physical activity as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle.
146. The time allocated to and the rich variety of physical education activities reflect the school's commitment to developing all aspects of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and extra-curricular activities. They behave very well, listen attentively and are keen to succeed. All pupils are well included in all aspects of physical education. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because of the level of support and the equipment used. The pupils with both physical and learning needs are consistently supported throughout and, as a result, make good progress. The more able pupils also make good progress, with very good features because of the high level of challenges and opportunities for them to improve.
147. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with some very good features, especially the teaching of games, athletics and swimming. All teachers give clear instructions and ensure the maximum pace of activity and rate of new learning in all lessons. For example, the teachers in Years 4 and 5 taught a wide range of skills to improve pupils' throwing and catching. They gave good examples and, as a result, pupils learned to throw with good control, speed and accuracy. Teachers observe pupils regularly, making detailed comments which have both immediate and lasting effects.
148. Pupils benefit from the commitment and knowledge of their teachers who are extremely well supported by the headteacher who is the co-ordinator. His personal ability and commitment are reflected in the level of his participation, not only in extra-curricular activities but also in lessons by coaching both basic and advanced skills. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities and the school teams are highly successful in competitions and tournaments with neighbouring schools.
149. The main factors that contribute to pupils' high levels of success include good teaching, very good leadership and management, pupils' very positive attitudes and the curricular and extra-curricular time given to physical education, which is greater than that found in most schools. The co-ordinator leads by example, personal skills and commitment to the encouragement of all pupils' physical, social and moral development.