

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **West Vale Primary School**

Greetland, Halifax

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 107573

Headteacher: Mrs P. Tymchak

Reporting inspector: Mr P. M. Allen  
OIN 17531

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 196224

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stainland Road  
Greetland  
Halifax  
West Yorkshire

Postcode: HX4 8LS

Telephone number: 01422 372804

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs L. Lynch

Date of previous inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17531	Mr P. M. Allen	Registered inspector	English Music Physical education Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
8922	Mrs B. McIntosh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17310	Mrs A. McAskie	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Design and technology Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22482	Mr B. Potter	Team inspector	Science Art and design Geography History	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

West Vale school is a below average sized primary school at the centre of an industrial village three miles to the south of Halifax. The school recently came back to the local education authority as a Foundation School following a period of Grant Maintained Status. The pupils come from a mixture of social backgrounds and a mixed area of housing, including Victorian terraces and local authority housing. Of the 148 pupils on roll, there are more boys than girls. In the last few years increased pupil mobility has meant that more pupils are arriving at the school than are leaving it. There are six classes, one for the Foundation Stage (Reception year), two for Key Stage 1 and three for Key Stage 2. Due to significant recent staffing changes, three of the six classes are taught by teachers new to the school, although at the time of the inspection one of these classes was shared by two supply teachers, both familiar with the school. Virtually all the pupils are of white ethnic origin. There are 50 pupils on the register for special educational needs, this number being above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. Most of the children have received pre-school education, many in the playgroup run within the school building. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is broadly in line with what could be expected. The school aims to develop each child to his or her full potential. The school has set priorities for the future including the further raising of attainment and the further improvement of the quality of the teaching and learning.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Overall, this is an effective school which is becoming more effective. The children make a very good start to their schooling. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are sound and in line with national averages at the end of both key stages, except in English at Key Stage 2 where standards are below. The staff are very committed to the school and the headteacher is providing positive leadership. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and very often better. In light of the costs involved and the quality of education provided, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- ◆ The children in the Reception class are given a very good start to their schooling.
- ◆ Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved over recent years, especially in mathematics and science.
- ◆ The quality of teaching has improved significantly, especially at Key Stage 2.
- ◆ The provision for spiritual and cultural development is good and the provision for moral and social development is very good.
- ◆ There is very good provision for personal, social and health education.

#### **What could be improved**

- ◆ Standards in English at Key Stage 2.
- ◆ Standards across the school in reading and especially in writing.
- ◆ The match of work set so that it more closely meets the needs of pupils of various abilities.
- ◆ The curriculum for the foundation subjects, especially at Key Stage 2.
- ◆ The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has shown a good improvement since its last inspection report in April 1997, which was very critical of the school. The issues have largely been addressed. The standard of teaching at Key Stage 2 has improved significantly. Standards in mathematics and science have improved but more remains to be done in reading and especially in writing. A start has been made in monitoring and evaluating teaching, although a more rigorous and focused approach is needed. The school now complies with statutory requirements for the delivery of the information and communication technology curriculum. The quality of education provided and the management and efficiency of the school have both improved. The staff are very committed to the school and have the will and capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Children at the Foundation Stage (Reception year) make good progress. By the end of the year, it is likely that most will have attained the new nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals and a significant minority will have exceeded them, especially in mathematical development. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are sound and broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. These judgements are clearly reflected in the results when considered over the past three years. Standards in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are sound and in line with national averages. Standards in English are judged to be below the national average. These judgements are reflected in the results over the last three years in English but not for those in mathematics and science where standards have been higher than those observed during the inspection. Given the relatively small year groups, standards can, and sometimes do, vary from year to year, due to the relative proportions of pupils who have special educational needs or who are higher attainers; for example, the 2000 results at Key Stage 2 reflect a higher attaining group than is usual. There is a consistent pattern of higher attainment in mathematics and science than in English. Standards in information and communication technology are sound across the school. Standards in religious education are sound and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has begun to target the raising of standards in the core subjects at both key stages but more remains to be done in reading and especially in writing.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Nearly all pupils show enjoyment for school and positive attitudes to learning. There are times when a small number of boys display less positive attitudes.



Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Whilst the behaviour of the vast majority is good and sometimes very good, there are instances of inappropriate behaviour by a small minority of boys, mainly in one class.
Personal development and relationships	The provision is good, with good relationships between adults and children. Most pupils show respect towards the adults and towards one another.
Attendance	Attendance is good. The vast majority of pupils arrive promptly enabling a positive start to the school day.

The positive attitudes and good behaviour of the vast majority together with the good relationships have a positive impact on the quality of school life.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	very good	good	good

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

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and very often better. It was very good in 23 per cent of the lessons observed, good in 50 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, especially at Key Stage 2. Very good teaching seen in Reception brings about the good progress made in that year. The teaching at both key stages is mainly more effective in numeracy than it is literacy where standards are not as high as they could be in reading and especially in writing. There are times when the work set does not sufficiently meet the needs of the pupils, including those who are higher attainers. The quality of the additional literacy support and booster classes is having a very positive impact on pupils' attainment.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced with a clear emphasis on the basic skills. There is a need to review the topic approach and further develop the curriculum for the foundation subjects, especially at Key Stage 2. There is underuse of information and communication technology equipment which means that valuable time is lost for pupils to learn and practise skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Where additional support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, pupils achieve well but there are times in class lessons where tasks are not matched to abilities, and so less progress is made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for spiritual and cultural development is good and that for moral and social development is very good. The quality identified in the previous report has been maintained and improved.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff ensure the safety, health and protection of the pupils, and provide a good level of care
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The impact of parental involvement with the work of the school and in their child's learning is satisfactory. The school cares well for its pupils and staff have a good knowledge of individual children and their needs.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, assisted by the deputy headteacher, is providing clear and positive leadership. Both are well supported and respected by the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory duties appropriately. The chair of governors provides consistently good support and is a loyal and enthusiastic friend to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made a good start in monitoring its performance through analysing its results and setting targets. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching needs to be more rigorous.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources except in information and communication technology. Much of the surplus income has been well used to maintain the six classes.

The school is adequately staffed with mainly good accommodation, including good sized classrooms. The school is well resourced, but there is a need to continue the development and renewal of its information and communication technology resources. Appropriate consideration is given to the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The children like school and are making good progress.</li> <li>◆ The approachability of the school.</li> <li>◆ The way the school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>◆ The teaching and leadership and management of the school are good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ There were a number of individual concerns.</li> <li>◆ There were indications that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some parents do not feel well informed about how their children are getting on;</li> <li>- some do not feel that the school works closely with parents;</li> <li>- some would appreciate more extra-curricular activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The vast majority of views expressed were supportive of the school and inspectors broadly support these views. The inspection team found that parents are kept relatively well informed on progress and note that there are plans for an extra consultation evening. The school aspires to,

and does, work closely with the majority of parents. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities compared with schools of a similar size with plans to offer extra sporting provision.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Baseline assessments indicate that within the relatively small number of children, whilst levels of attainment vary from year to year, overall attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with what could be expected. Children at the Foundation Stage (Reception year) make good progress. By the end of the year, it is likely that most will have attained the new nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals and a significant minority will have exceeded them, especially in mathematical development.
2. The previous report was very critical of standards and progress at Key Stage 2, in particular in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. This criticism led to issues for the school concerned with raising standards in these subjects, together with standards in reading and writing. Standards have risen in the core subjects since the time of that inspection, most significantly at Key Stage 2. There is still a need for the school to target both raising standards in English at Key Stage 2 and standards across the school in reading and especially in writing.
3. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are judged to be sound and broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. These judgements are clearly reflected in national performance data when the results over the past three years are considered. Whilst most pupils achieve the expected level 2 in these subjects at the end of the key stage, and an appropriate number reach the higher level 3 in mathematics, the number of pupils achieving level 3 in reading and writing is usually below the national average.
4. Standards in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are sound and in line with national averages. Standards in English are judged to be below the national average. National data shows that this judgement is reflected in the results over the last three years in English, but not in those in mathematics and science where standards have been higher than those observed during the inspection.
5. Given the relatively small year groups, standards can, and sometimes do, vary from year to year, due to the relative proportions of pupils who have special educational needs or who are higher attainers. For example, the 2000 results at Key Stage 2 reflect a higher attaining group of pupils than is usual in the school. Nevertheless, there is a consistent pattern of higher attainment in mathematics and science than in English. There is no evidence of any significant difference in performance by gender at either of the key stages. The school has set realistic predictions for English, mathematics and science national test results between now and 2002, but they need to become more challenging, especially in English at Key Stage 2 and in reading and writing across the school.
6. Speaking and listening are fostered well; for most pupils standards of speaking and listening are in line with what could be expected and, for a significant minority, they are good. Pupils listen attentively in assemblies. As they progress through the school pupils show increased competency in their spoken language. Standards in reading are insufficiently high at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, for most pupils, although not all, the reading of simple passages of text demonstrates understanding. By the end of Key Stage 2, whilst many

pupils are beginning to become reflective readers who can read a range of texts fluently and accurately and who can use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate books and find information, there is a significant minority who have not reached this stage. Reading needs to be given a higher priority across the school.

7. Standards could be higher in writing at both key stages. Much of the written work in English and in the foundation subjects is based on the completion of worksheets. These are not always matched to the needs of the pupils and can prevent them from having regular opportunities to make a personal response in writing. The school needs to continue to raise the profile of writing, including the promotion of extended writing and the development of detail. Writing tasks need to be built into work in subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils' writing skills will benefit from more regular opportunities to write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences. Teacher expectations are sometimes insufficiently high in spelling. Standards of presentation and handwriting are variable across the school and for many pupils they are unsatisfactory.

8. Standards in mathematics are in line with national averages at the end of both key stages. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make a positive start in mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 1, numeracy skills are developing well. Most pupils have a good understanding of number facts to 20. They are confident in doing mental calculations, using their knowledge of number bonds to solve simple problems. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100. They estimate and measure appropriately and use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts.

9. Currently, standards in science are in line with national averages at the end of both key stages. The pupils show enthusiasm, especially for practical tasks. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils gain good knowledge about such topics as 'Our Senses'. They can name various light sources and can group materials according to their properties. Pupils continue to develop sound and often good investigative skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are able to make, to test and to prove or disprove a hypothesis, something the pupils did in experiments on sound observed during the inspection.

10. Standards in information and communication technology are sound across the school and in line with what can be expected nationally. Pupils make sound progress, although learning could be further enhanced if more use was made of the equipment during the morning literacy and numeracy sessions, especially in the older classes. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can use the arrow keys and the mouse and have developed word processing and picture making skills. They use programs to reinforce work done in English and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experience in all the required areas. They can draft and edit written work, using text and graphics. The school now needs to target maximising the use of the computers to give the pupils more opportunities to learn and practise skills.

11. Most of the very good teaching was seen at the Foundation Stage and it is here that progress is most marked. Standards in art and design are good at Key Stage 1 where pupils make good progress and are sound at Key Stage 2. Progress is sound and standards are satisfactory across the school in the foundation subjects of design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Standards in religious education are sound across the school and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. All the evidence indicates that pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have improved since the last inspection. Throughout the school the vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. In many lessons these features contribute to the pleasant atmosphere in which learning is supported.

13. Children in the Reception class have very positive attitudes towards school and are very well behaved. They soon settle into new routines, establish friendships and really enjoy their learning. Staff are very supportive and encourage them to become increasingly independent. This helps them gain in confidence and self-assurance. Children are very enthusiastic, showing a high level of involvement in their activities. They join in discussions with confidence; for example, they particularly enjoyed looking at photographs of both themselves and the teacher when they were babies, talking about their features with great interest and noting how they have changed. Children enjoy looking at books and, during a library session, gained much pleasure in deciding which book they would take home to share with their parents. At the end of lessons children know it is their responsibility to clear resources away and they do this well.

14. Most Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils have good attitudes to their work and are motivated to learn. They respond particularly well when the work interests them and provides a degree of challenge; for example, Year 5 pupils became fully engrossed in their practical activity of investigating and comparing sounds made by vibrating air and sensibly predicted the outcome of their investigations. In many lessons pupils are keen to answer questions and ask relevant questions to enhance their learning. In a Year 2 art and design lesson, pupils discussed particular aspects of an illustration learning how artists achieve pale colours for a background and why characters stand out. The noteworthy feature was the teacher's approach and questioning which gave them confidence to share their ideas, as they knew their answers would be valued. Most pupils show good levels of concentration and listen attentively. There is a small minority of boys, mainly in one class, whose attitudes to work are sometimes less positive. They do not always listen carefully enough to instructions and, as a result, they are unsure of what to do next leading to a lack of concentration. This disrupts the work and progress of others.

15. The majority of pupils behave well both in and out of the classrooms. They react sensibly to the school rules and conventions. The vast majority know what constitutes appropriate behaviour. In many lessons the good behaviour is a positive feature and contributes well to pupils' learning. For example, Year 1 pupils worked very well on their floral collages using tools sensibly and giving careful consideration to the choice and colour of fabrics used. When teachers' expectations are high and behaviour management strategies are secure, pupils' behaviour is consistently good. When moving around the building pupils behave in an orderly and sensible way, although this is less so in the Key Stage 2 cloakroom before and after break times. Behaviour at playtimes is good and has improved since the 'Play Leaders' scheme began; pupils from Year 6, supported by a non-teaching assistant, successfully organise and lead games at lunchtimes. Pupils say they enjoy the games and try hard to be well behaved, as they want to be invited to lunch with the weekly 'special visitor'.

16. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils are usually friendly, polite and often without a second thought they stand aside for adults and hold the doors open. They share resources, take turns and support each other. During plenary sessions pupils are keen to share each other's successes and achievements. Pupils mainly show good levels of co-operation in group, class and individual activities. The school is a happy, friendly community and parents say that rare cases of bullying are dealt with promptly. During 'circle time' pupils are learning to

speak confidently about their values and feelings. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into school life.

17. Pupils' personal development is good. They like to be helpful and enjoy the opportunities given to them for duties around school, such as tidying the classroom and taking registers and messages to the office. Older pupils are rightly given a good range of more responsible duties, such as setting up the hall for assemblies, running the school bank, and being 'Play Leaders' and 'Helping Hands'. Pupils use their own initiative and organise and run events in school, raising money for charities. In lessons, even the youngest children readily accept suggestions for improvements to their work and are able to select, use and return resources; for example, in an art and design lesson pupils showed a good degree of independence and sensibly lined their tables with newspaper and put out and prepared the materials they needed. Pupils are interested in the life of the school and enjoy the extra-curricular activities.

18. Levels of attendance are good and above the national averages. The majority of pupils arrive at school on time and there is a prompt start to the school day. The few persistent latecomers are monitored closely. Incidents of lateness are appropriately dealt with and discussed with both parents and pupils involving the educational welfare officer when required.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

19. During the inspection 52 lessons and activities were observed. The quality of teaching observed was at least satisfactory, often good and sometimes very good. It was very good in 23 per cent of the lessons observed, good in 50 per cent and satisfactory in all the remainder. Although credible overall, these figures reflect a clear variation in the quality of teaching. The last inspection was critical of teaching, with a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching, mainly at Key Stage 2. Teaching has improved significantly, especially at Key Stage 2, which addresses an issue from the previous inspection.

20. Most of the very good teaching was seen in the Reception year and this brings about the good progress made in that year. At Key Stage 1 and 2 the teaching is mainly more effective in numeracy than it is in literacy where standards are not as high as they could be in reading, and especially in writing. Numeracy skills are taught well. The needs of the pupils, including those who are higher attainers, are not always sufficiently met; for example, there are times when all pupils are given exactly the same task to do, when some pupils are capable of much more. This often happens in the foundation subjects where, often, there is an over-reliance on work sheets. The quality of teaching can improve in these subjects by more carefully ensuring that the work set matches the learning needs of all pupils, including those who are higher attainers.

21. Most of the teaching is purposeful. Where teaching is particularly effective, there are clear learning objectives which set a high level of expectation for pupils of differing abilities. The lessons move at a good pace and the pupils stay on task and produce work which reflects their capabilities. The teacher's approach gives the pupils confidence to know that their work will be valued; the teaching demands a high quality response. These were strong elements in a well organised science lesson for the oldest pupils on sounds made by air vibrating, where the teaching enabled the pupils to learn, achieve and attain through relevant and well matched activities.

22. Very effective teaching was observed in the Reception class. In a literacy session which began with a focus on the story of 'Titch', all the activities promoted the pupils learning with focused questioning and purposeful tasks. The management of pupils was of a very high order

and the behaviour was excellent. In this lesson, the quality of teaching had a very clear impact on the quality of learning, the pupils behaviour, the care they gave to their work, the co-operation between them and, importantly, how they attained and the progress they made.

23. Where teaching is less effective, the management of pupils is not as skilled, so that there is less insistence on pupils working as well as they could. There are insufficiently high expectations of the pupils; for example, there were occasions during the inspection when the work was not challenging enough for the higher attainers and when there was too little for them to do. Consequently the pupils did not do a great deal of work and some time was spent off task. A scrutiny of pupils' work reflects this picture. There is sometimes insufficient matching of the tasks to the needs and differing abilities of the pupils and some do not work as productively as they could do.

24. Teachers generally make good use of the support staff who usually work effectively with small groups of pupils or individuals in accordance with the plans prepared by the teachers. Support staff carry out their work calmly and efficiently, although there are times when more productive use could be made of their talents; for example, in the literacy hour when support staff sometimes have the role of onlooker instead of being involved with the pupils. The quality of support in the additional literacy lessons and the booster classes is having a very positive impact on how well the older pupils are achieving.

25. All teachers set homework with regular reading practice and practising of skills to help pupils in their work in school and most parents are supportive of the arrangements. Teachers encourage parents to take an active part in their children's learning at home and most, though not all, co-operate in this. The school needs to target the raising of standards in reading and to continue to promote its partnership with parents to support this aim. Teachers need to have higher expectations of their pupils in spelling, handwriting and presentation. The teaching needs to target the development of writing across the curriculum. In some lessons use is made of software to support the teaching, enabling pupils to reinforce learning and practise skills, although this is an area for development. Work is marked regularly, although the quality of the marking varies.

26. Although a start has been made, there is a need to develop rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching, especially for new staff. During the inspection the quality of teaching varied from satisfactory to very good. The school has clear aspirations to benefit all its pupils from the best teaching possible. The focused monitoring of teaching, linked with the issue of raising standards in reading and writing, can provide targets for improvement; it can support and guide effective practice which can enhance teacher performance, thus impacting on pupil attainment and progress. In this way this overall effective school can be made even more effective.

27. There are a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, whose work benefits from useful individual education plans. Where additional support is provided for special educational needs, the pupils achieve well. There are times in class lessons when the tasks are not well matched to abilities and so the pupils' needs are not well met and less progress is made.

28. The teachers and support staff work very hard for the good of all pupils, promoting the development of social skills, including co-operation. Staff show good knowledge of individual pupils and their needs. The staff as a group are very committed to the school and its pupils and the good quality of their work has a significant impact on standards and the quality of education provided.



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

29. Overall the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum of worthwhile activities with a clear emphasis on the basic skills. It includes all the National Curriculum subjects and religious education and generally ensures equal access and opportunity for all pupils. The curriculum for the very young children is very good and takes good account of the newly prescribed Early Learning Goals.

30. The school has worked hard to address the issues raised at the previous inspection. All policies and schemes have been reviewed or are in the process of review and those which are complete provide clear guidance. The National Numeracy Strategy forms the basis of planning in mathematics and teachers provide opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations in both mathematics and science lessons. A policy and scheme have been created for information and communication technology and teachers now deliver all strands of the programmes of study. Insufficient use is made of computers during morning lessons and valuable time is lost for pupils to learn and practise skills.

31. All teachers follow the same basic structure for medium and short term planning but there is still some inconsistency in the quality of lesson plans. Sometimes objectives are not sufficiently focused and tasks set are not always well matched to the needs of the pupils, particularly the higher attainers. Planning has been particularly difficult in Key Stage 2 where, because of fluctuating pupil numbers, teachers have had to repeatedly make changes to cater for varying age ranges in each class.

32. The topic structure used for teaching art and design, design and technology, geography and history needs to be reviewed to ensure that pupils learn skills and progress in a systematic way and that there is appropriate coverage of the programmes of study. The school gives clearly focused time to literacy and numeracy but standards of written work, in handwriting and in presentation are not sufficiently high. Pupils with special educational needs have useful individual education plans which contain targets for their learning.

33. The governing body is very supportive and fulfils its statutory duty to oversee the curriculum. The curriculum committee works closely with the headteacher and teaching staff to review and plan the curriculum and they are appreciative of the lead that the headteacher gives in this work. They have little involvement in monitoring work in the classrooms, an aspect of their role which needs further development.

34. Pupils' personal development is given high priority in the school. Personal, social and health education is a strength of the school and regarded as a very important part of the curriculum. The school has produced a well thought out programme of topics. Teachers give weekly lessons on a range of subjects, which include health education and citizenship. Sex education is included at appropriate times and teachers make pupils aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs. The school is working towards the 'Healthy School's Award' by training pupils as play leaders to encourage other pupils to join in games activities at lunchtime. Pupils have regular swimming lessons which continue until they are able to swim competently. Older pupils benefit from a residential visit to an outdoor pursuit centre.

35. The school provides a good range of activities for pupils out of school time. The recently established out of school club in the mornings and evenings is proving popular and numbers are growing. Other activities include recorders, netball, crafts, gardening, drama

and bank club which is organised by Year 6 pupils with the help of the school secretary. A future aim is to provide more out of school sporting activities, an initiative which would be welcomed by some parents.

36. The school is keen to be part of the community. The school choir, the 'Happy Songsters', perform to local residential homes and sometimes sing with a local male voice choir. Visitors to school include local residents, some of whom help in school. Local clergy visit regularly and take assembly and the school often uses the local Baptist church for services. A Greek dance and drama group visited school during topic work on the Greeks. A local business sponsors prizes at school events and lends artefacts for use in classrooms and school productions and a rugby club allows pupils to use its nearby field for games and sports days. All these initiatives help to enhance learning.

37. The school values the links it has with other schools, especially the local secondary school. Much useful work is done to boost pupils' confidence and to ensure an easier transition when pupils begin the next stage of their education. Teachers hold curriculum events which are appreciated by the parents. In the recent past these events have included a music day, a mathematics morning, a book fair and a boots and bugs walk.

38. Pupils undertake homework on a regular basis including reading, spellings, tables and sometimes simple research tasks based on topics being studied. Parents are generally happy with the amount and frequency of homework and offer support with the tasks.

39. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good and that for moral and social development very good. The quality identified in the previous report has been maintained and improved. Pupils develop spiritual awareness and self-knowledge through the high quality daily acts of worship, where they are encouraged to reflect on questions about themselves, their family and friends and also their place in the community. In an assembly about the story of Moses, pupils were asked to think about how they would feel to be slaves and were given time to reflect on their own opportunities for freedom. The teacher used the story to reinforce the schools' belief in respect for the individual. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective through music, dance and their personal writing; for example, 'What makes a good leader' and 'My hopes for the future'.

40. Much useful work is done to promote self-discipline and an awareness of sensitivity to the needs of others. These qualities are reinforced in 'circle time' which forms the basis of focused lessons each week. A lesson on 'what makes people unique' aimed to build up pupils' confidence when they were asked to list their special qualities and to consider the important things in their lives; pupils worked well in groups listening to each other's ideas and adding their own observations. The good relationship between pupils and the teacher helped to make them feel at ease and enabled them to explore their own feelings and observations.

41. The school works hard to foster good behaviour and co-operation through various rewards and sanctions and through the successful play leader scheme where older pupils help others to enjoy co-operative games at lunchtime. Pupils are generally confident in their relationships with adults. The 'have lunch with a guest scheme' recently introduced, rewards pupils for the way they behave at lunchtime and helps to develop social skills. One guest has

been the local community policeman who also makes a valuable contribution to anti-bullying work. Pupils happily take responsibility for doing jobs. Older pupils have weekly duties which are listed on a notice board. They act as bankers and librarians and everyone gets a turn. They choose charities to support and organise events such as

collecting stamps. The younger Key Stage 2 pupils wrote letters to their parents asking them to make buns which they then sold to raise money for Macmillan nurses. All initiatives are carefully thought out to help pupils' personal development and to prepare them for later life.

42. Through purposeful use of the local environment, including the immediate and surrounding area, pupils gain good insight into their own local heritage. They have links with the churches in the area and celebrate local annual festivals. The school building is Victorian and the local area has much industrial architecture. Pupils regularly visit the good range of museums. The school's association with the Halifax Rugby League Club led to parents and pupils enjoying an afternoon supporting the team at one of their league matches. Pupils made their own banner in school and paraded on the field at the end of the match. An appreciation of the diversity of other cultures is taught in religious education through the study of the Muslim, Jewish and Hindu faiths and through music and dance from other countries. Teachers organise visits to a temple and a synagogue. Cultural work is being enhanced by work in information and communication technology where pupils have access to information via CD-ROMs and the Internet.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

43. The school has maintained many of the positive features of care for pupils' personal well being identified at the time of the last inspection. Some good improvements have been made in behaviour management but there are still instances when inadequate management of disruptive behaviour affects the learning of other pupils. There are good ways of assessing pupils' attainment and progress and improvements have been made in the way the teachers use assessment information. The improvements needed in the marking of pupils' work have not been fully addressed, so that there is still some inconsistency in the amount of supportive comments which take learning forward.

44. Pupils' well being and personal development are given a high priority by the school. Both teaching and support staff provide a good level of supervision and carry out their duties in a caring way. If pupils accidentally fall or hurt themselves during play, swift action makes sure that any distress is reduced and, when necessary, first aid is administered appropriately. The governing body is aware of ensuring that the school is a safe environment and governors on the premises committee work with the headteacher to ensure any potential risks are noted and removed. There is a very detailed Health and Safety policy which follows local authority guidelines. Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is a good awareness of them throughout the school. The designated person receives regular training which ensures awareness of current issues and changes in procedures.

45. There are clear procedures for the early identification of pupils with special education needs. The overall provision is good and pupils generally make good progress; they are fully integrated into the life of the school. Those pupils receiving additional literacy are well supported during the focused teaching time. Support within classes is not always sufficiently focused when work is insufficiently matched to the range of abilities. Individual educational plans provide adequate information although some could be developed to include more targets.

46. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced new strategies for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and these have been largely successful in improving the behaviour of the majority of pupils. There is an effective policy that is reinforced by a good system of rewards and sanctions which is well understood by the majority of pupils. Most staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and provide good role models to the pupils. The school's management of behaviour is satisfactory overall but it is not consistent and instances still occur when the management of pupils' behaviour is inadequate. The strategies used by some staff are insecure and incidents are not always dealt with effectively. This occasionally results in inappropriate behaviour from a significant minority, usually boys in one class, which disrupts the learning of the whole class. The pupils who show persistent behaviour problems are monitored and supported well through the special needs system. The school values the regular support it receives from the local education authority Behaviour Support Team. The procedures for dealing with bullying are good and 'circle time' and assemblies are used effectively to raise pupils' awareness. The school has not had cause to exclude any pupils recently.

47. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Regular attendance and punctuality are promoted well. It is made clear to parents that they must give reasons for their child's absence, including written requests if it is necessary to take holidays during term time. Parents are contacted within the first hour of school if their child fails to turn up without any explanation. This is an extremely prompt and effective measure and evidence from registers suggests that the incidence of unauthorised absence has lessened. Despite the school's efforts in promoting punctuality, there is still a need for frequent reminders to those few who regularly arrive late.

48. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The academic needs of individuals are being well addressed and recorded in a systematic way especially in English and mathematics. A good range of formal and informal systems have been put into place. National and standardised tests are used to monitor progress in English, mathematics and science in most classes. Analysis of tests and ongoing assessments alert teachers to pupils who will need extra help and, in addition, information is used to set realistic targets for the future. The records that teachers keep on attainment and progress and tests are thorough, well organised and consistently maintained throughout the school. Furthermore, the records provide an efficient tracking system of pupils' test performances so as to form an overall picture of their progress as they move through the school. Teachers maintain comprehensive reading records. Systems are in place to monitor and record pupils' attainment in all other subjects. The school has a portfolio of pupils' work assessed against National Curriculum levels in English and has plans to do this in other subjects.

49. Teachers usually make good use of assessment to guide the planning of the curriculum and there are good examples of assessment being used to plan subsequent work for pupils. Educational support for pupils is satisfactory. Information gained from analysis of tests is used as a management tool to target specific pupils or groups of pupils; for example, through booster classes and additional literacy support for those pupils who are on the threshold of reaching a higher level of attainment in the national tests, thus having a positive impact on raising their levels of attainment. There is a marking policy in place but this has not been shared with all staff. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always advise pupils of their strengths or where they can improve.

50. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. In classrooms, teachers provide effective day-to-day support and guidance for pupils. The personal, health and social education programme supports pupils' personal development very

well and makes a good contribution in raising their self-esteem and confidence. Assessments are made of pupils' personal qualities such as attitudes, behaviour and attendance. The school recognises and rewards individual achievements and successes and these are celebrated through a weekly 'Praise assembly'. Staff carefully monitor which pupils receive certificates or receive a special mention in assembly. The school has shown a firm commitment to continue developing assessment procedures in the school improvement plan.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

51. Parents' views indicate a good level of satisfaction with the school. The responses at the parents' meeting and in the answers to the questionnaire are mainly supportive of the work done by the school. Parents feel the school is well led, staff are approachable and value the headteacher's presence in the playground in the mornings to greet them and their children as they arrive. They see their children as liking school, making good progress and working hard to achieve their best. Parents consider that the school is now a more open and friendly place with a family atmosphere. Inspectors' judgements broadly agree with parents' positive views.

52. Some parents indicated they would like more information about how their child is getting on, some feel that the school does not work closely with them and some think there is a need for a more interesting range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors' judgements are that parents are kept relatively well informed on progress and they note the planned additional consultation evening at a more useful time. The school works hard to encourage and welcome parents into school and seeks ways to further involve more parents in the life of the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities compared with schools of a similar size and the school is considering offering extra sporting provision.

53. The day-to-day communication between the school and home is good. The school sends out regular useful newsletters and communications to parents about specific events and activities. The prospectus and governors' annual report provide useful information about the school's daily life and are very well presented. Details of topics and work to be covered are provided at the beginning of each half term and teachers suggest activities and ways for parents to support their child at home with additional learning. Pupils' annual reports provide a satisfactory summary of pupils' attainment and progress but do not give sufficient constructive comment and indication of steps to improve. The school has provided several meetings such as those to explain curriculum matters, one on how parents can support their children at home and one on the school's approach to reading and writing, but these were poorly attended. As a result of this, the school constantly seeks ways of encouraging more parents into school and successfully combines some events with consultation evenings to improve parental attendance.

54. Parents' consultation evenings are usually well attended and where parents do not request an interview, alternative dates are offered. The school has acted upon parents' request and is now providing an additional consultation evening at a more useful time during the spring term. More informally, parents are encouraged to see teachers at the end of the school day or at other times by appointment. Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy and find staff approachable. The induction meeting for new parents is very well attended and receives very favourable feedback from parents. The meeting provides a good opportunity for parents and their children to look around school and see the various activities and demonstrations which are set up in the classrooms.

55. The impact of parental involvement with the work of the school and in their child's learning is satisfactory. The school tries hard to generate greater parental contribution but the majority do not participate actively on a regular basis in the life of the school. Only a few parents help voluntarily in the classrooms. The parents' association is run by a small core of parents who are committed to raising substantial amounts of money for school funds. Parents do support their children in other ways. They respond well to the fund-raising events and to any school production or performances where their children are directly involved. They help readily with school visits and many accompany their children on these. One parent provides invaluable assistance teaching netball skills in physical education lessons. Many parents are happy to support their child when work is sent home and in particular comply well with the school's request to read with their younger children regularly. Parents are happy with the attitudes of staff towards suggestions and complaints and find the suggestion box in the school entrance a useful way in communicating informal suggestions to the school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

56. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective team and are providing the school with sound leadership. Both are well supported and respected by the staff. There are very positive, clear and shared ideas of what still needs to be done to build on the significant improvements already made.

57. The previous inspection report of April 1997 highlighted a number of issues that needed improvement. The majority of these key issues for action, which followed the report, have been well addressed. Some major concerns regarding the standard of teaching at Key Stage 2, behaviour management and standards in core curriculum subjects are much improved. Some work remains to be completed, such as raising standards in reading and writing, but the school has the will and capacity to achieve these. The work of additional literacy support and very well organised booster classes are contributing significantly to the progress being made.

58. The school is managed effectively and its aims and values are well reflected in its work. The headteacher's clarity of thought, as shown in the very good documentation, has enabled the staff to respond with effective action and enthusiasm to the challenges posed by the previous inspection. There has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 2, and this has had a positive impact on the quality of achievement and learning. Some monitoring of teaching has been introduced but at present this is insufficiently rigorous and focused. Members of staff have responsibility for particular subjects; many are very new to their role but have already started to make improvements to the curriculum, especially at Key Stage 1. This work is not yet impacting on some subjects in Key Stage 2 but there are firm plans to review the curriculum in the foundation subjects. These plans are identified in the school's targets for improvement.

59. The school's administrator efficiently manages the school's budget. Educational priorities are supported through careful financial management. Much of the surplus carried forward from the previous year has, appropriately, been used to maintain the six classes. Procedures are well established and contribute well to the smooth running of the school. Funds provided through specific grants are used well to enhance the educational opportunities for pupils. Efficient use is made of funding for special educational needs and enables pupils to make overall good progress. Appropriate use is made of new technology and systems are in place by which a very close watch can be kept on the day-to-day spending of the school. In this

area of new technology there is scope for further development in the field of analysing data on pupils' performance.

60. There are adequate numbers of appropriately qualified staff and they work in spacious classrooms supported by good learning resources. The provision of a separate room for dining gives the school flexibility, which it uses to good effect, although there is little other spare space and accommodation. Play areas are adequate and there is use of a nearby field for football and other activities. Classroom assistants perform their duties well which has a very positive impact upon pupils' learning and improving standards.

61. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is fulfilling its statutory duties. Its members are well informed of the work of the school through the regular reports of the headteacher and through the visits they make to the school, although more use could be made of these visits to monitor the work of the school. The chair of governors is a very regular visitor and is a loyal and enthusiastic friend to the school. The governing body has an understanding of both the school's strengths and its areas for development and is satisfactorily fulfilling its role in determining the direction in which the school is moving. The governors are very supportive of the headteacher and have confidence in the quality of her day-to-day management of the school. Consideration is given to how to get the best value for money, thus ensuring that prudent spending supports the school's priorities. In light of the costs involved and the quality of education provided, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed.

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ target raising standards and test results at Key Stage 2 and in reading and especially in writing across the school by:
  - *raising the profile of reading and writing;*
  - *raising expectations of what pupils can achieve and their productivity;*
  - *consistently providing more challenging work for the higher attainers to help them to achieve the higher National Curriculum levels;*
  - *reviewing the level of adult support and where it is most needed;*
  - *continuing to develop the good quality support for pupils with special educational needs;*
  - *involving parents more in the home-school reading partnership;*
  - *continuing to develop and improve resources;*

(paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 7, 25, 57, 72, 76 and 77)

- ◆ improve the planning and teaching by matching work more closely to the needs of the pupils;

(paragraphs 7, 20, 23, 31, 77, 79, 80, 85, 95 and 108)

- ◆ develop the curriculum for the foundation subjects especially at Key Stage 2 by:
  - *undertaking an audit of coverage provided through the present system of topics;*
  - *allocating the time proportionately for each subject;*
  - *taking account of the coverage included in the National Curriculum 2000.*

(paragraphs 32, 119, 123 and 129)

- ◆ improve and extend the monitoring of teaching and learning by:
  - *providing more rigorous and focused monitoring with the development of clear strategies, targets and review to promote more effective teaching and learning;*
  - *linking the monitoring with the issue of raising standards in reading and writing.*

(paragraphs 58 and 81)

In addition to the above areas, the following less critical areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 7, 10, 25, 30, 49, 78, 79, 96, 99 and 123:

- ◆ the time given to develop pupils' develop information and communication technology skills;
- ◆ standards of presentation and handwriting;
- ◆ marking practices.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23	50	27	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### 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)	148
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	50

English as an additional language	Number of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	Number of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	8	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	15	15	15
	School	94 (91)	94 (91)	94 (100)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	15	15	16
	School	94 (100)	94 (100)	100 (100)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

The numbers of boys and girls are not included as, in each case, there was less than 10.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	12
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (45)	87 (75)	91 (80)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (50)	87 (70)	87 (90)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	129
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.7 : 1
Average class size	21.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	306,040
Total expenditure	307,218
Expenditure per pupil	2,035
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,804
Balance carried forward to next year	22,626

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

154

Number of questionnaires returned

53

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	49	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	51	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	58	6	4	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	60	11	6	2
The teaching is good.	27	45	6	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	42	16	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	30	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	43	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	45	21	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	47	42	5	6	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	45	11	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	48	9	9	6

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

63. The very good teaching and learning in the Reception class ensures that the children are given a very good start to their school lives. The new national Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Reception Year. The school has made a very good job of reviewing and developing its curriculum to focus on the new goals which are presented in six areas of learning.

64. Children enter school on a full time basis at the beginning of the school year in which they become five, having made induction visits the previous term. Although levels of attainment vary from year to year, overall attainment on entry to school is broadly in line with what could be expected. At the time of the inspection, nearly two thirds of the way through the school year, the children were well settled into school life and routines. By the end of the Reception year, most of the children are likely to meet the goals and it is likely that a significant minority will exceed them in most of the areas, especially in mathematical development.

#### ***Personal, social and emotional development***

65. The children's personal, social and emotional development is seen as a very clear priority. Attainment in this area is good and improving all the time. The children benefit from the caring ethos of the classroom and quickly grow in confidence. They are establishing effective relationships with other children and adults. Children work contentedly individually and in small groups and enjoy good opportunities for making personal choices in their learning. Children are eager to explore new learning situations and when doing so their enthusiasm is clear to see. Very good levels of co-operation were seen throughout the inspection, including the outdoor play session when children took turns and shared bikes, mindful of the need to co-operate with the 'lollipop person'. The classroom organisation and management enables children to independently access resources and make choices at various specified times during the day.

#### ***Communication, language and literacy***

66. Importance is given to communication, language and literacy and the children make good progress. Evidence indicates that many are beginning to develop good speaking and listening skills, learning the importance of taking turns and listening to each other; for example, in role-play in the 'hairdressers'. They listen attentively remembering details of stories they have enjoyed, such as 'Titch' and 'Mrs Mopple's Washing Line'; they respond well to the teacher's questions and explanations. Early reading skills are developed with children learning that text conveys a message and that it is read from left to right. They are starting to associate sounds with letters and combinations of letters. Most children are able to read simple text using these skills. Children can recognise and write their names and are able to copy their teacher's writing. They enjoy contributing to class books such as ones on 'Blow wind, blow' and 'Autumn Time'. There is a good range of books available, including many large picture books. Good use is made of resources which promote speaking and listening, such as tapes for the listening station, puppets, small world equipment and the role-play area. Children are confident when speaking to the whole group; for example, when studying photographs of themselves as babies, they are happy to talk about their features and how they have changed. The work in this area promotes learning in the other five areas and is benefiting from a version of the literacy hour.

### ***Mathematical development***

67. In mathematics, the children attain better than they do in communication, language and literacy. They are beginning to work towards appropriate National Curriculum targets and their attainments are generally good. They are given good opportunities for counting, sorting and matching activities. In outdoor play they 'tally' scores when playing football and skittles. They can count reliably up to 10 using everyday objects, recognise numerals 1 to 9 and find one more or less than a number from 1 to 10. They are given a good range of mathematical experiences and are learning to use appropriate mathematical language. They are beginning to understand concepts such as heavier than and lighter than. Resources are good and provision for sand and water is well developed. Children enjoy numeracy sessions where there is direct teaching of simple concepts which is well supported by tasks and activities that enable the children to count and manipulate objects. Good use is made of counting rhymes and songs.

### ***Knowledge and understanding of the world***

68. Children are encouraged to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are given opportunities to explore their own locality; they visit the park, including one visit for a teddy bears' picnic and they enjoy travelling by coach to a local farm. They enjoy finding out about the past through looking at artefacts such as Victorian kitchen utensils. They look at Jewish artefacts relating to the Sabbath. They acquire appropriate vocabulary to express the passage of time. They learn about the seasons of the year and the characteristics of each one. They learn about living things; for example, through planting bulbs in the autumn. They do simple experiments and build using construction kits. Although technological understanding benefits from regular computer access, this area could be further developed to make use of a wider range of programs.

### ***Physical development***

69. Planning of physical activities allows for a range of tasks to help children improve their manual skills; for example, drawing, painting, writing, cutting and gluing. Children have good opportunities for running, jumping and climbing through regular hall work using the structural apparatus. Although there is no designated secure play area, the teacher is able to provide regular and well supervised outdoor play which involves time for preparation and time for clearing up. Using a wide range of resources including bikes, cars, scooters, small apparatus, including balls, gardening materials and an activity involving washing the dolls' clothes, children have time to explore and experiment with activities which support other areas of learning. In the session observed the children worked together harmoniously, sharing and co-operating well together with very obvious pleasure.

### ***Creative development***

70. In their creative work, children paint and make pictures, sometimes related to their topic. Good opportunities are sometimes given for children to make a personal response in paint with a freedom to express themselves and investigate the media being used. They become competent at modelling with a variety of materials. There are good opportunities for children to cut, stick and make models, making decisions and choices when selecting and using materials. During valuable time supported by the music specialist, they sing a range of songs enthusiastically and begin to develop good musical skills where each child plays a percussion instrument. They enjoy the stimulating learning environment and the opportunities to be creative.

71. The teacher, sometimes supported by the valuable help of a classroom assistant, focuses on particular individuals or groups but manages at the same time to keep oversight of the whole area, intervening when appropriate. The children's pleasure in learning is clear. There are very high expectations and this means that the children behave very well and co-operate well with one another. The quality of the teaching and learning is enriched by the caring and supportive quality of the relationships and by the way that each child is valued as an individual. Parents appreciate the quality of the provision and the opportunities given to their children. This teaching leads to quality early learning, which lays the foundations for future learning and is a strength of the school.

## ENGLISH

72. Overall, standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to those described in the previous report, whilst standards at Key Stage 2 are slightly higher than previously. There are no marked differences between the performance of boys and girls. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are currently sound and in line with national averages in reading and writing. These judgements are not reflected in the 2000 National Curriculum test results, which were below the national average, but they are broadly reflected in the national performance data, which considers the results over the three years from 1998 to 2000 together. During that period of time, most pupils achieved the expected level 2 in the reading and writing tests, whilst the numbers achieving the higher level 3 were below national averages, especially in writing.

73. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below the national average. Given the relatively small year groups, standards can, and do, vary from year to year. Nevertheless, this pattern of attainment is clearly reflected in pupils' performance over recent years. National performance data indicates that, taking the three years from 1998 to 2000 together, the performance of pupils in English was clearly below the national average. Over the same period of time, performance was slightly above national averages in mathematics and science. This gives some indication of underachievement in English. As standards in speaking and listening across the school are broadly in line with what could be expected, all the available data points to the need for the school to target raising standards in reading and especially in writing.

74. Judgements in English are in part based on lesson observations, mainly those made of the literacy hour in each of the classes, talking with pupils and hearing readers. They are also based on a close and detailed examination of pupils' work, including booklets and topic work, on work on display and on data and information collected from the school's records and assessments and those of individual pupils.

75. Speaking and listening are fostered well; for most pupils, standards of speaking and listening are in line with what could be expected and, for a significant minority, they are good. Pupils were observed listening very attentively in assemblies about the Passover. Pupils are generally confident when answering questions and giving explanations and often engage well in conversation with adults, including visitors. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, when talking informally, playing and working, most children communicate effectively, using a growing vocabulary. In a Year 2 art and design lesson which made use of the artwork in the 'Anancy' and 'Mr Big Bones' books, pupils listened carefully and made good contributions to a discussion on the effects and merits of the illustrations.

76. As pupils move through the school they show increased competency in their spoken language. Some of the oldest speak with confidence. They reflect well on previous experiences;

for example, a visit to the Dome in London, exploring caves in Derbyshire, walking round Skipton Castle and performing in the Christmas productions. They talk with particular enthusiasm about their residential stay in Llanberis. They talk with affection on their time at the school and share anxieties about the move to secondary school. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils talk and listen with assurance in a range of situations.

77. Although the National Literacy Strategy is beginning to have an impact on standards, there is perception in the school that it allows less time to hear and monitor pupils' reading. Reading needs to be given a higher priority across the school. Most pupils are supported by their parents in reading, especially in the younger classes, but this partnership could benefit from further development as part of raising of the profile of reading. In the Reception class, the pupils begin to learn how to read. At Key Stage 1, most develop a sound understanding of letter patterns and although they begin to learn to use illustrations, phonics and word recognition skills, for a number of pupils these could be further developed. By the end of the key stage, for most pupils the reading of simple passages of text demonstrates understanding and is usually accurate. By the end of Key Stage 2, whilst many pupils are beginning to be reflective readers who can read a range of texts fluently and accurately and who can use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate books and find information, there is a significant minority who have not reached this stage.

78. During the inspection some evidence of personal and creative writing in exercise books and in work on display was seen but there is still a need for more to be done. Much of the written work in English and in the foundation subjects is based on the completion of worksheets. These are not always matched to the needs of the pupils and can prevent them from having regular opportunities to make a personal response in writing. The school needs to continue to raise the profile of writing, including the promotion of extended writing and the development of detail. Writing tasks need to be built into work in subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils' writing skills will benefit from more regular opportunities to write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences.

79. In formal English work, pupils are encouraged to give appropriate consideration to punctuation and grammar but they need more opportunities to develop their own writing. Teacher expectations are sometimes insufficiently high in spelling. Standards of presentation and handwriting are variable across the school and for many children they are unsatisfactory. Untidy handwriting and presentation of work does not fit in with the school's ethos of effort and care in work.

80. The quality of teaching is sometimes satisfactory and sometimes good, in similar proportions. In the more effective lessons seen, there was good pace, high expectations and a good quality of learning; pupils were productive and making good progress. In the less effective lessons, expectations were lower and pupils were less productive. Most pupils have positive attitudes and behave well; a small minority of boys, mainly in one class, sometimes behave inappropriately which distracts other pupils, most of whom want to get on with their work. The quality of the additional literacy support and the booster classes is having a very positive effect on pupils' attainment. Work in exercise books indicates that sometimes the same activity is set for the whole class; this does not sufficiently meet the needs of all the pupils, including the higher attainers who could produce much more. Where additional support for pupils with special educational needs is provided they achieve well, although there are times in class lessons where tasks are not matched to abilities and pupils make less progress. Although work is marked regularly the quality is inconsistent, the best providing helpful comments which move learning forward. The teaching now needs to target the development of writing across the curriculum.



81. The literacy hour has been adapted to meet the needs of the school and is now a routine part of school life, it can now benefit from review to determine which aspects are working best. There are times when the time given for talking to the whole group goes on too long, when pupils are more than ready to actively undertake their learning tasks. Although the teaching is well supported by the classroom assistants, there are sessions during the literacy hour when more effective use could be made of their support, with less time spent in a passive role. Teachers usually make use of an interesting range of texts and materials. They are beginning to use the literacy hour for teaching about other subjects; for example, in a Year 1 class, good use was being made of the book 'From a Seed to a Sunflower' as basis for the work. Although teachers use an agreed approach to planning, this could more consistently identify what is intended for the different ability levels.

82. The level of resourcing is very good with a good range of big books and sets of books. Pupils could benefit from more opportunities to develop word processing skills. Wider provision of both hardware and software, together with more time allocation, would better enable skills to be practised and information to be accessed; during the inspection little or no work was seen on computers during English time. The newly reviewed policy needs putting in place. Good use is made of both a standardised reading test and the optional national tests and good assessment strategies have been developed to enable the school to closely monitor the attainment and progress of pupils. Many pupils enjoy taking part in the weekly drama group and the curriculum is enriched by visits from theatre groups, visits to the theatre and by the pupils' involvement in the annual Christmas productions. There has been some monitoring and evaluation of teaching in the literacy hour; this needs to be more rigorous, providing feedback and targets for development as part of the school's drive to raise standards of teaching and learning especially in reading and writing. The co-ordinator needs to take a key role in this.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. Standards in numeracy and other areas of mathematics are sound and in line with national averages at the end of both key stages. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and other areas of mathematics. These judgements are reflected in the test results at the end of Key Stage 1, when considered over the past three years, but not at the end of Key Stage 2 where standards have been higher. Given the relatively small year groups standards can, and sometimes do, vary from year to year, due to the relative proportion of pupils with special educational needs together with the relative proportion who are higher attainers; for example, the year 2000 results reflect a higher attaining group of pupils. There are no marked differences between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well when tasks meet their needs and when extra support is provided.

84. Young pupils make a positive start and develop a good grasp of number. They learn to count and order numbers reliably and, with the help of a number line, begin to do simple addition and subtraction calculations. Teachers encourage them to make up their own real life problems and write them as number stories. They know the value of basic coins and can use different combinations of coins to make up a sum of money. By the end of Key Stage 1, numeracy skills are developing well. Most pupils have a good understanding of number facts to 20. They are confident in doing mental calculations and are developing strategies for quick recall, using their knowledge of number bonds to solve simple problems. The higher attainers have good recall of

two, five and ten times tables. Pupils are developing an understanding of place value to 100 which they apply to calculations involving money. They know the properties of some two- and three-dimensional shapes.

85. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on their skills and knowledge. Most can make accurate predictions and estimates and can explain clearly the reasons for their choices. They compute with large numbers and understand the relationship between fractions and decimals. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are developing quick recall of tables and using patterns in numbers to help in calculations. They are able to describe the methods they use to help them. They estimate and measure appropriately and use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. They become skilled in using calculators to help them to count or check their work.

86. Teaching and learning are good at Key Stage 1 and at least satisfactory and often good at Key Stage 2. Overall, teachers are using the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and are giving pupils regular opportunities to carry out investigations. The three part structure is well established, although planning of independent written tasks is not always appropriate when there is insufficient difference in the level of work set for pupils. In particular, teachers do not always expect enough of the higher attaining pupils. Teachers share the learning objectives for the lesson with pupils before the lesson begins and introductions are usually well done. Teachers try to make the mental sessions at the beginning of lessons fun and pupils enjoy the challenges and puzzles. Consequently, most pupils listen well and show interest in what they are doing and achieve well.

87. Teachers encourage pupils to explore the patterns in numbers which will help them to develop quick recall of tables. They are encouraged to solve problems in their own way; for example, older pupils were learning various ways of calculating the difference between 2.65 and 83.2. Emphasis is rightly placed on developing mathematical vocabulary. Clear questioning at the end of lessons assesses what pupils have learned. In one lesson, this included revision of the 'word of the week'. Booster classes, where older pupils work in smaller groups, are having a very positive impact on learning for these pupils. They are grouped according to their needs and the very good communication between the teachers and support staff involved ensures that challenging work is provided.

88. In the most effective lessons, activities are appropriate and well focused and the teacher is very effective in anticipating difficulties and in helping individuals and has high expectations of the amount and quality of work done. A firm but fair manner, together with a touch of humour, helps pupils to enjoy the sessions and encourages the minority of boys who are easily distracted from their work, to behave better. Individual apparatus used in the mental sessions enables all pupils to take a full part and allows the teacher to easily monitor pupils' achievement.

89. The school has sufficient good quality resources and, overall, the work is well co-ordinated. Throughout the school, but especially at Key Stage 2, teachers make insufficient use of information and communication technology during lessons to enrich pupils' mathematical skills, although opportunities are sometimes provided at other times of the day. Teachers regularly assess pupils' work and use non statutory tests to monitor progress. The policy is being reviewed to make it more relevant to work in the national strategy.

## SCIENCE

90. Pupils' attainment in science at Key Stage 1 is similar to that identified in the previous report and higher at Key Stage 2. The current standards are in line with the national averages at the end of both key stages. This judgement is reflected in recent Key Stage 1 results but not at Key Stage 2 where in the 2000 tests and in those of recent years, standards have been higher than those observed during the inspection. This is partly due to the variable standards of the relatively small year groups. Pupils are making satisfactory and often good progress in their learning and all groups, including those with special educational needs, are achieving appropriately relative to their abilities.

91. The overall steady improvement in results at Key Stage 2 and the current satisfactory standards being attained at both key stages are due to much improved teaching of scientific knowledge and enquiry, especially at Key Stage 2. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below national expectations and when improving standards in science was a key issue.

92. Activities carried out by the pupils are based upon national guidelines and the suggestions of an appropriate commercially produced scheme of work. These plans have ensured there is progression in all aspects of science across the school. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils recognised various kinds of seeds. They have planted broad bean seeds and enthusiastically recorded the growth of their plant. The measurement this involved, well supported by a classroom assistant, provided good opportunities to practise mathematical skills.

93. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have had the opportunity to gain good knowledge about such topics as 'Our Senses'. They can name various light sources and can group materials according to their properties. In a Year 2 lesson some very good learning took place in understanding that pushing and pulling can make things speed up, slow down or change direction. The lesson also gave the pupils good practical involvement in fair testing and in the requirement to record findings in a variety of ways.

94. Pupils continue to develop sound, and often good, investigative skills. They learn in the Year 3 and 4 class about sound and its relationship with air vibrating. They learn, through practical investigations, important scientific knowledge; for example, that the shorter the object vibrated the higher the pitch. By the time they are in Year 6, this knowledge has been extended and pupils know how to alter pitch. There is a growing ability to predict outcome, such as in a Year 4 and 5 lesson when pupils used various materials to muffle the sound of a radio. The majority of pupils are able to make, to test and to prove or disprove a hypothesis. All pupils in the current Year 6 have benefited from a wide range of activities and have developed satisfactory skills, scientific vocabulary, knowledge and understanding. There are indications that the younger pupils in the school who have had more time to benefit from the improved teaching and curriculum will achieve even higher standards.

95. Pupils enjoy the activities presented to them. Their behaviour is good, except in one class where a minority of the boys are not always fully involved. Virtually all pupils show a positive approach to science; they are well supported by the teacher and support assistants. Their ability to work independent of direct adult supervision was seen when a large group of Year 3 and 4 pupils busily recorded the previous day's findings, whilst the teacher worked practically with a smaller group. Their concentration, sustained interest and good behaviour was reflected in the quality of work they produced and then shared with all the class in the plenary at the end of the lesson.

96. The teaching at both key stages is good with some of the science lessons seen being judged very good. This good teaching is ensuring that learning is good and that there is always satisfactory attainment. The lesson planning is sound and the activities are interesting with good involvement of the pupils in their learning. Many of the activities are challenging to all but the highest attaining pupils, who could sometimes be given more responsibility for organising their own learning; for example, some could be given more opportunity to devise and set up their own experiments and investigations. Pupils are taught to use correct scientific vocabulary which they are encouraged to use when describing what they have found out.

97. Teachers are not consistent in insisting upon a high enough quality of presentation; this results in work, especially at Key Stage 2, which although often good in content, looks untidy and disorganised. Teachers' organisation and management of pupils is mainly good. Opportunities to link science with other areas of the curriculum are well exploited, for example, sound is linked with music, forms of graphic recording employ numeracy skills and there are some opportunities to develop literacy skills in research and writing reports of investigations. Teachers know their pupils well and have good procedures for assessing attainment and progress. Homework is appropriate to the ages of the pupils.

98. There are plans for further development of the curriculum. From these plans there is a need to provide opportunity for an increase in the use of information and communication technology to provide regular support for the science teaching. The resources for the subject are good and used effectively in lessons to develop pupils' ideas. During the inspection the headteacher was acting as science co-ordinator in the absence of the person new to that role.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

99. Pupils' overall attainment in information and communication technology is sound across the school. Good progress has been made since the last inspection to address the issues raised. The school has a useful scheme of work based on the nationally prescribed guidelines and all strands of the curriculum are being taught, although the school acknowledges that more work still needs to be done on control technology.

100. The teaching and learning seen was good overall. Teachers have worked hard to increase their expertise. They take care to ensure that pupils understand what is required of them. Each class has a well planned weekly lesson, where a structured task is introduced and pupils are then given time to practise during the week. Learning would be further enhanced if more use was made of the equipment during morning literacy and numeracy lessons especially in older classes.

101. The youngest pupils are given a good start in their learning. They operate simple programs, follow instructions and use keyboard commands. They paint simple pictures and can make buildings from geometrical shapes. Teachers are being creative in trying to find ways of providing opportunities for practice. In one class, pupils were playing word games with paper models of keyboards to make them more familiar with the positions of letters. In another class the icons to be used had been drawn on a board and the teacher explained how they were to be used. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can use the arrow keys and the mouse and have developed word processing and picture making skills. They design greetings cards. They can change the style, size and colour of their writing. They give simple commands to a programmable robot, placing the instructions in the right order, and draw the path it will take. They use programs to reinforce work done in English and mathematics.

102. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experience in all the required areas of information and communication technology. They can draft and edit written work, using text and graphics. Teachers are using information and communication technology well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. They use CD-ROMs to gather information on a variety of subjects; for example, during the inspection, pupils found out about the instruments in various sections of an orchestra and about aspects of Christianity. In one class, pupils had surveyed the building materials used in the streets around the school, made their own choices of what to record and plotted graphs of their findings. They then wrote a list of questions for other pupils to answer about their findings. Another class were using commands to produce electrical circuits which switched on and off. Mathematical work on rotation was being reinforced by creating pictures of flowers.

103. The oldest pupils use spreadsheets where they change the data and make predictions about the outcomes. Pupils have recently begun using the Internet. One class of pupils are sending e-mails to pupils at a nearby school and older ones have learnt how to download. For example, when accessing information about the Clay House War Memorial as part of a topic on the local area. They are beginning to use a digital camera as part of this work. This term, older pupils have benefited from some specialist teaching and this has enhanced their learning.

104. Pupils enjoy their information and communication technology sessions and this ensures that they usually concentrate well on the tasks. They are willing to share and take turns and keen to show what they can do. A significant number of pupils are helped by having computers at home. Pupils with special educational needs sometimes have access to computers and support assistants help them to achieve well.

105. The enthusiastic, newly designated co-ordinator recognises the growing importance of information and communication technology as a core subject and its role in helping to raise standards across the curriculum. The policy and the guidelines, based on the nationally prescribed scheme of work, show how pupils learning will progress in the range of skills to be taught. Records are kept of the pupils' achievements. Although resources are adequate, the school recognises the need to continue the development and renewal of both software and hardware and this is reflected in the information and communication technology action plan.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

106. No lessons were seen in religious education at Key Stage 1, so no comparisons can be made with teaching and learning at the last inspection. The few lessons seen at Key Stage 2 indicate that that all teaching and learning is now satisfactory. Further evidence from the scrutiny of work, teachers' planning and photographic evidence, suggests that across the school standards are sound, pupils are receiving a relevant curriculum based on the locally agreed syllabus and learning sufficiently well.

107. At Key Stage 1, emphasis is given to ways of observing the world and to the value of belonging to a family and a caring community. Pupils learn about people who commit themselves to good causes such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. They are introduced to the Christian festivals and those of the Jewish faith. By Year 2, pupils are becoming aware that for many people, religion is an important part of their lives. They learn through stories, such as the Buddhist story of the Blind Man and the Elephant, that the teachings

of religion include the importance of the world and all living things. Great emphasis is given to the idea that people are special and need to be cared for and their feelings respected.

108. At Key Stage 2, pupils study the similarities and differences between Christianity and other religions. They begin to understand the significance of celebrations and of symbols used, through studying pictures, photographs and religious artefacts. They are told about the importance of pilgrimages to sacred places; for example, the Hindus visit the River Ganges and Muslims visit Mecca. Pupils express their feelings both verbally and in writing through imaginative stories, poems and prayers. Some pupils have written a job description for Jesus. By the age of 11, pupils begin to appreciate the reasons for different faiths and to reflect on their own beliefs.

109. Learning is greatly enhanced by the link between the high quality assemblies and lessons and by the teachers' ability to create stimulation and interest by giving pupils the opportunity to handle and talk about artefacts. During the inspection week, work focused on Easter and, in particular, the meaning of the Passover. Pupils heard the story of Moses and in follow up lessons, younger pupils were shown the artefacts, such as the bread, goblet, candle and spices, used in the Shabbath service which celebrates the Passover. They learned that people clean their houses and wear their best clothes as a mark of respect. They were given the opportunity to reflect on the difficulty of deciding right and wrong by learning about how Jesus broke the laws of Shabbath when helping people. Older pupils considered the issue of justice and freedom through the acts of God which enabled the people to leave Egypt. The contribution made to achievement in pupils' literacy skills would be greater if teachers planned written work which more closely matches pupils' needs. Too often pupils of all abilities are given the same task.

110. Pupils' learning is broadened by visits to the local churches and churches of other faiths. The school is fortunate to be situated next to the local Baptist church where pupils hold special services. The ministers of the Baptist, Methodist and Anglican churches take assembly on a regular basis and this further enhances learning. Resources are adequate but the school has plans to provide more pictures and artefacts for other faiths and also to invite more people from other faiths to school, to talk about their beliefs. Assessments are made of pupils' learning each half term.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

111. Standards in art and design are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This very much reflects the findings of the previous inspection.

112. At Key Stage 1, pupils work in both two and three dimensions, creating pictures, patterns, clay models and cardboard box models. Progress is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils are given opportunities to appreciate the work of famous artists and a good example was seen in which pupils painted flowers using dots in the style of Georges Seurat. The pupils did not copy the work but rather they emulated the style. In Year 1, pupils learn skills associated with the style of van Gogh such as using thick strokes to build up strong colours. Year 2 pupils responded well to the teacher's questions about how an illustrator achieves the effect of making the characters stand out. The work which followed from this discussion showed that the pupils had understood and applied the skills of colour-washing and

blending colours. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have acquired many skills upon which to build.

113. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 2 but evidence available, including planning, indicates that pupils are making appropriate progress. There are many examples of good work; for example, a beautiful painting of a sailing ship produced by a young Key Stage 2 pupil. An example of the good contribution art and design is making to other subjects is in an illustrated booklet on 'My Life'. The use of a sketchpad is beginning to have a positive impact on the care and pride pupils take with their work. Evidence of good progress in the understanding of perspective and creating a three-dimensional effect was seen in a wall display in which these techniques are used to display pupils' own names. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have made some attractive vases using plaster.

114. The teaching in the two lessons seen, both at Key Stage 1, was good. Pupils are helped to look critically at their work and there is a good emphasis on developing skills. Pupils' efforts are well recognised and praised and there are high expectations of good behaviour. Teachers have good subject knowledge, are well prepared and have very clear objectives. They support their pupils well through guidance and demonstration. From these positive features of teaching, pupils have developed interest and positive attitudes. The majority are interested and do their best. The artistic skills they learn often enhance their work in other areas of the curriculum.

115. The curriculum for art and design is being developed effectively but the positive effect of this is still only impacting upon Key Stage 1 since developmental plans for Key Stage 2 are not yet complete. The work is well resourced. Simple assessments are undertaken and teachers use the knowledge they have of their pupils to plan appropriate work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

116. No lessons were seen in design and technology, so no comparisons can be made with teaching and learning at the last inspection. Evidence from the scrutiny of work, teachers' planning and photographic evidence, suggests that pupils are receiving a relevant curriculum covering the required programmes of study and are generally making sufficient progress.

117. Design and technology is linked well with other areas of the curriculum, especially science, geography and history. Young pupils use construction kits, textiles and recycled materials to make models. As part of a study of the local area, one class made a model of the school building, adjoining roads, a mill and the Clay House. Pupils learn how to choose appropriate materials and to join components to make puppets with moving parts. As part of a science topic, they had to make up their own recipe for crispy buns from a variety of ingredients given. They then had to evaluate their work by giving the products a 'yummy rating'. Annual events such as Christmas, Mother's Day and Easter are celebrated by designing and making greetings cards.

118. A study of the Greeks has been the basis of much work done by older pupils this term and they have made Greek vases and masks from papier mâché or plaster. One class produced stencils which they used to decorate vases and the hems of Greek costumes having studied Greek art, noting how it celebrated the Olympic games; links with the present day had been made by incorporating a modern sport into the designs on their vases.

119. The evidence shows that pupils are given the opportunity to work with a wide range of materials. The extra help they get from classroom assistants and volunteers helps them to improve their skills. In one class, pupils had made small fabric collages at home and then these were being joined together to make a class picture. Other examples of work seen included slippers and pump bags.

120. The school has a good range of resources. Simple assessments are made each half-term. A scheme of work is being prepared, based on the nationally prescribed guidelines. The use of the topic as a basis for planning needs review to ensure that there is sufficient difference in the level of work provided from year to year.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

121. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. This judgement is similar to that made at the previous inspection. Only two lessons were observed during this inspection, one at each key stage.

122. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 is delivered through a topic approach which aims to develop knowledge and early geographical skills such as the ability to compare and contrast. This is delivered through an appropriate concentration on the pupils' own and familiar local environment such as seen in a Year 1 lesson in which the features of the local park were studied. Pupils developed associated vocabulary and understand the word 'features' which they identify as trees, wall, playgrounds and even benches. Good use was made of an aerial photograph to add another dimension to the lesson. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have had the opportunity to benefit from geography related visits such as the one to Wycholer, enabling them to compare a different locality with their own. Some good knowledge is clearly gained, for example, scrutiny of pupils' work show that many are aware and can name the continents and teachers' plans for a Year 2 lesson include the study and use of maps and plans.

123. The curriculum for Key Stage 2 is less coherent; it is based on a four year cycle of topics with each topic adapted to be appropriate for the various age groups. There are good opportunities to gain knowledge, understanding and skills. Studies of other countries extend to European countries and places such as Brazil. Some good examples of where the curriculum is progressively planned are evident from the study which focuses on water. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 investigate local rivers and those of the United Kingdom, whilst Years 4 and 5 extend their work to European rivers. Key Stage 2 pupils gain first hand experience of contrasting localities through their residential visit to Llanberis. The posters they produced following their visit extol the virtues of the place and indicate their enjoyment. Good learning took place in a Year 5 and 6 lesson in which pupils chose a European country which they researched with the objective of producing a booklet for other pupils. This lesson provided good opportunities to develop literacy skills, including ways of quickly finding specific information from books.

124. The quality of teaching in both lessons seen was good and allowed pupils at their different levels to work steadily and independently. Good and secure relationships in the classroom encourage the pupils to talk with confidence about what they were doing. Within the existing framework, teachers are planning well and are providing interesting and stimulating activities using a good range of resources. Simple assessments are undertaken. The quality of marking is variable and it does not usually give sufficient guidance on how pupils can improve the quality



of their work. The co-ordinator, who is very recently appointed to the role, is aware of the need to restructure the curriculum at Key Stage 2 and has firm plans on how this will be done.

## **HISTORY**

125. Due to the way in which the work is timetabled it was not possible to see history being taught during the period of the inspection. Evidence has been collected from the scrutiny of pupils' work, talking with pupils, discussion with subject co-ordinator and looking at teachers' planning and other documentation concerning the history curriculum.

126. The standards of the work reflect the findings of the previous inspection when they were judged to be sound. Pupils are given opportunities to investigate the past, gain knowledge of persons and events, pursue some historical enquiry and develop an understanding of how things change over time.

127. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have seen and used a range of artefacts from the Victorian era. They have made observational drawings of such objects as a Victorian box iron and have learnt to appreciate how the discovery of electricity has changed life in the home. They know about some historical events such as the Great Fire of London and where it started. Higher skills needed to fully appreciate the effect of the fire and how it gave opportunity to build a better London are not fully developed. There is awareness and some knowledge of such people as Florence Nightingale but no evidence could be seen of higher order related learning, such as her impact upon the role of nurses.

128. Much of the evidence from Key Stage 2 is from a whole school topic on the Greeks. Within this narrow context, the work is satisfactory and progressive. Work ranges from Year 3 and 4 pupils' study of domestic life in Ancient Greece to the more extensive work of Years 5 and 6 during which subjects such as the origins of the Olympic games are studied. The topic focus approach incorporates geography alongside history resulting in the opportunity for the younger Key Stage 2 pupils to compare Britain with the Greece of today.

129. In addition to the work on Greece, there is some good work by Year 6 pupils on the Blitz and evacuees. Good development of literacy skills are achieved thorough the use of the book 'Goodnight Mr Tom'. This has been well used to bring this period alive for the pupils resulting in some imaginative writing of good quality on what it was like to be an evacuee. A visitor to the school also enhanced the pupils' knowledge and interest by bringing first hand knowledge and experience, which is a good example of a primary historical source.

130. The subject is well resourced and simple assessments are undertaken. There is a need to review the history curriculum as part of a review on the curriculum for the foundation subjects.

## **MUSIC**

131. During the inspection, several music lessons were observed which involved the support of the school's part time local music teacher who is employed to plan and teach music and to provide piano accompaniment for singing. She works for most of one day each week with time spent with each of the classes.

132. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn a good range of interesting and imaginative songs, such as 'Rosie touch your toesie' and 'My Voice', which they sing tunefully and enthusiastically. Some are linked with the topic being studied such as one on 'In the Garden', and some are seasonal. Pupils develop an awareness of pitch through a variety of activities. They add percussion accompaniment to a variety of catchy songs. They can recognise and make long and short sounds and high and low sounds, which they identify using signs and symbols. They create

'voice scores' where they make high and low sounds relative to the pattern on a line. In the Year 2 lesson observed, pupils were playing a 'stepping stones' game where they took a step forward with each 'magic' high note. As pupils move through the key stage, they start to use musical vocabulary and develop listening and remembering skills.

133. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on earlier skills; they further explore pitch through voices and tuned percussion. Through a well resourced workshop approach, pupils work in groups supervised by the class teacher and the music specialist. Using a range of instruments, including keyboards, the computer and CD-ROMs, pupils invent a short rhythmic phrase on a chosen instrument, compose a section with four parts on the keyboard using different effects and access information from the CD-ROM about the various 'families' of instruments. By the end of the key stage, pupils are attaining appropriately and there are a number of pupils who show good musical ability.

134. The pupils observed mainly responded well, showing good listening skills and some ability to appraise their own work. They sang with enthusiasm and enjoyment and most co-operated well with one another. Pupils are confident in performances and enjoy taking part in concerts such as 'The Millennium Heroes' and 'Love in a Box', events which are highlights of the school calendar. Video evidence indicates the good quality of these performances. Pupils made sound progress in the activities observed.

135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good and benefits from the musical ability of the specialist, involving good quality singing and piano playing. Lessons make appropriate use of resources and are well prepared, although the workshop sessions gave a very similar provision for the three Key Stage 2 classes. The teaching observed provided good support for pupils with special educational needs. In most of the practical sessions every pupil valuably had access to an instrument. The quality of the learning is enhanced by the good relationships. Where the quality of the teaching was good, this had a very clear impact on the quality of the pupils' response, the levels of attainment and the progress being made.

136. The subject is well resourced with tuned and untuned percussion instruments, including a number of unusual ones. The work is guided by a policy and a very helpful scheme of work. Simple assessments are undertaken. The school could consider extending the work that is covered to other times in the week. Apart from the concerts performed in the school which involve all the children, the school choir, called 'The Happy Songsters', have performed with a choir at Bethesda and perform each year for the local elderly. Additionally they perform in an annual show, performing such pieces as 'Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat', 'Oliver' and 'Bugsy Malone'. Music is very well used in assemblies.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

137. The previous report was critical of standards, progress and teaching in physical education at Key Stage 2. There has been improvement so that, at the time of the inspection, standards at Key Stage 2, like those at Key Stage 1, are judged to be sound with pupils achieving appropriately in light of their abilities.

138. At Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop an awareness of space, of themselves and of others. They begin to develop and practise the skills of aiming, throwing and catching. They begin to link a series of movements using different body parts with contrasts of speed and level; they transfer these movements to their work on the apparatus. They create simple dance

sequences based on a poem they have heard; for example, one on the seasons of the year and one on machines. They enjoy learning and practising the movements involved in some Scottish country dancing. By the end of the key stage, the pupils are able to reproduce and explore simple actions safely and with control.

139. At Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their dance and interpretation skills; they create dance sequences with a beginning, a middle and an end. They express feelings and moods, responding to music concerned with snow and a winter dance. During the inspection, pupils worked together co-operatively in a sequence of movements to create a water pattern dance. In games, pupils continue to develop passing and receiving skills and apply these skills to formal games such as netball and versions of rugby. They understand and demonstrate five basic jumping actions, transferring flight safely to apparatus work. The oldest pupils make up and play competitive games with a small number of players. They practise skills and tactics appropriate to attacking and defending. They create and perform dances based on an interesting range of different times, places and cultures. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to connect skills, techniques and ideas appropriately.

140. The quality of most of the teaching is good and this has a positive impact on the progress being made and the attitudes of the pupils towards their work. Pupils enjoy the lessons and co-operate well together; for example, when practising the Scottish country dances. Good use is made of warming up for and recovery from exercise. Lessons are usually taught at a good pace with good use made of demonstration. Teachers encourage and usually receive good behaviour, offer good encouragement and are very mindful of safety.

141. The work benefits from a clean and well maintained hall which has the advantage of not being utilised as a dining room. There is good playground space for the work but no grassed areas; the school occasionally makes use of the nearby rugby field. Overall the subject is well resourced with a good range of structural apparatus in the hall. A scheme of work is being developed which is providing clear guidance for lesson planning. Weekly swimming lessons start in Year 3 and generally continue until each individual is a competent swimmer. There is a popular extra-curricular netball club, with plans to extend extra-curricular sports, including those which engage the interests of the boys.