

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Batley

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107732

Headteacher: Mr. A. Hanson

Reporting inspector: Katharine Halifax
25439

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th June 2001

Inspection number: 196227

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Upton Street
Crossbank
Batley
West Yorkshire

Postcode: WF17 8PH

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. L. Conlon

Date of previous inspection: 3rd March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25439	Katharine Halifax	Registered inspector	Art Physical education Foundation stage	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught. How well the school is led and managed. What the school should do to improve further.
13762	Norman Shelley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils. How well the school works in partnership with parents.
17681	Roger Sharples	Team inspector	Science Geography History Equal opportunities	
31963	Malcolm Padmore	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs	
19386	Trevor Watts	Team inspector	English Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Mary's is a voluntary aided school for pupils aged three to eleven and serves the parish of St. Mary of the Angels. Most pupils live close to the school in a mixture of council and private housing. With 317 pupils on roll, it is larger than most primary schools. Sixty-eight of the children are in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils are taught in the nursery and eleven other classes. Almost all of the population is white, though five are of European origin. All speak English as their first language. There are no refugees or children from travelling families. The number of pupils in receipt of free school meals is broadly average. Sixty-two pupils are on the school's own register for pupils with special educational need, this is average. Most have moderate learning difficulties, but an increasing number have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, this is below average. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of abilities, some can count and write their name, however many have little language and poor social skills. Overall, attainment on entry to the school is below that expected of children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Taking account of prior attainment, pupils achieve well and, by the age of eleven, results in national tests are well above those expected. The quality of teaching is good and this has a significant impact on standards. Behaviour is good. The school is led and managed in a cost-effective way and so provides good value for money

What the school does well

- Results in national tests in science and mathematics for eleven-year-olds are well above those expected.
- The quality of teaching is good and this is reflected in the quality of learning.
- Pupils are punctual. Their attendance is very good. This makes a good start to the day.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about school. They enjoy their lessons and are keen to join in all activities.
- The beliefs of the Catholic faith are reflected in the caring staff and the calm, purposeful way in which the school is run.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Good provision for their moral, social and cultural development prepares pupils well to take their place in the community.
- Relationships between pupils are strong. A particular contribution to this is the scheme where older pupils act as counsellors.

What could be improved

- Management responsibilities are not shared out evenly, and some managers are hard pressed to do all that is expected of them
- The way senior staff and governors monitor the effectiveness of the school including the impact of teaching on learning.
- The way in which teachers assess and record pupils' achievements in some subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in March 1997. Results of national tests for eleven-year-olds have improved. Results in national tests for seven-year-olds appear to have declined, but taking account of pupils' prior attainment their achievements are satisfactory. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching. At the time of the last inspection teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson in five. No unsatisfactory teaching was recorded in this inspection, and a much higher

percentage of good and very good teaching was observed. The key issue to improve provision and resources in the nursery class has been fully remedied. The adoption of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, and nationally recognised programmes means that there is continuity in pupils' learning as they pass through the school. Strategic planning has been extended, and systems to improve the quality of teaching have been introduced. The role of senior staff and subject managers has been extended, but many of these people do not have sufficient time allocated to fulfil what is expected of them. The role of subject managers is still not fully developed. There has been good improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual development.

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	D	C	C
Mathematics	B	C	A	A
Science	A	C	A	A

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Children achieve well in their early years in school with the majority reaching the Early Learning Goals in all the required areas. Many achieve higher than would be expected in numeracy and in their physical development. The results of national tests for seven-year-olds show standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well below those expected. When compared to pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance is well below average in mathematics and writing, and in the bottom 5 percent in reading. However, pupils' achievements are satisfactory taking account of the level at which they began. The above table shows that in national tests for eleven-years-olds, pupils achieved highly in science and mathematics, with their performance being well above that expected nationally and well above pupils from a similar background. Inspection findings indicate that by the age of seven, standards are broadly average in English and mathematics and that science is above average for pupils in the current Year 2. Standards for the current Year 6 are average in English and above average in science and mathematics. Trends in national test results have varied over the last four years reflecting the abilities of each year group. Targets set for last year were exceeded by 30 percent. This year's target of 73 percent is likely to be met and is realistic for the group of pupils. Pupils' achievements in geography, history, design and technology, information and communication technology and music are satisfactory and in line with those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards in physical education are average by the age of seven. Pupils' achievements and standards in swimming are satisfactory by the age of eleven. Pupils of this age achieve highly in games. It was not possible to make a judgement on dance or gymnastics for this age group. Pupils' achievements in art are good in both age groups. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs are commensurate with their age and ability.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved in lessons, in the playground and when they go out on visits.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils use their initiative. They often work independently in lessons. Pupils with responsibilities undertake their tasks conscientiously. Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good.
Attendance	Very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 ranged from satisfactory to very good being good overall. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 100 percent of lessons, no unsatisfactory teaching was recorded. Very good teaching was seen in 13 percent of lessons. Good and very good teaching was seen in all three age groups and in a number of subjects. There are no weak subjects. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in both the infant and junior department. However, the pace of mathematics lessons is slower in the infants and sometimes teachers use too many worksheets so pupils are not as interested. Teachers in all age groups plan work carefully to meet the needs of different ability groups, so pupils of all abilities are able to make the same rate of progress regardless of special need or gender. Numeracy and literacy are taught well and pupils make good gains in these areas because teachers plan for them to use their skills in other subjects. Overall, as pupils move through the school, they make good progress in the knowledge and skills they acquire. Whilst teachers use the new computer suite well when it is their turn, they do not plan to use computers in their classrooms as often as they should.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is reasonably well balanced with good emphasis on numeracy and literacy. Pupils have equal opportunities to take part in all activities regardless of ability, gender or cost. However, some pupils miss a large part of their numeracy or literacy lessons when they have musical tuition.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Good planning and effective use of resources helps pupils to work successfully towards their targets. Classroom assistants provide good support to help pupils achieve.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Close links with the Church, and work undertaken in school result in very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Provision for their moral, social and cultural development is good. The scheme where older pupils act as counsellors makes a significant contribution to their personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Staff work hard to make sure pupils are well cared for. Links with parents are satisfactory, but parents do not have enough information about their child's progress. Procedures to monitor pupils' achievements are satisfactory, though they could be improved in some subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The school is well led but there are weaknesses in the management. Senior teachers work hard, but areas of responsibility have not been shared out evenly. Some senior teachers are hard pressed to do all that is expected of them.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. All legally required policies are in place. Governors take an interest in all that happens.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Senior staff and governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Though some systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of the school these are not always used to best advantage. The school has made a useful start to applying the principles of best value.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Satisfactory. There are sufficient teachers, and enough equipment to teach all subjects. Though the accommodation for children in the nursery is still unsatisfactory, this will be improved when the new building is completed.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Teachers and support staff are suitably placed. Equipment is in good condition and easily accessible. Teachers do not make enough use of the computers in their classrooms.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good standard of teaching. • Teachers' expectations of the standards their child will achieve. • The progress pupils make. • Their children like school. • The school helps pupils to be mature and become responsible. • The values that the school promotes. • The links with the church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good number of parents would like the school to work more closely with them. • Some parents would like more information about the progress their child is making. • Some parents would like more out of school activities. • Some parents feel their child does not get enough homework.

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. In response to their concerns, Parents do not get enough information about their child's progress. Annual school reports do not describe pupils' attainment with relation to the National Curriculum except at the end of Years 2 and 6, and parents of pupils in the junior school are not formally consulted about progress sufficiently early in the year. The range of out of school activities is not wide, but is not untypical of many primary schools. The amount of homework given is similar to that in other primary schools. It usefully supplements class work and contributes to pupils' independence in learning. The school tries hard to work closely with parents but has not entirely satisfied some parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's abilities vary from those who have limited numeracy, literacy and social skills when they enter the nursery, to a small number who can count and write their name, but overall attainment is below that expected of children of this age. Achievement in the nursery and reception classes is good. Children settle well and make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the reception class, as at the time of the last inspection, the majority of pupils reach the expected standard in all areas of learning. There has been an improvement in the number of children achieving higher than would be expected in numeracy and physical development.

2. National test results for seven-year-olds for 2000 were well below those expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to pupils from schools with a similar number of free school meals, similar backgrounds, pupils' performance is well below average in mathematics and writing. Their performance in reading is in the bottom five percent. Though standards appear to have fallen since the last inspection, an unusually high number of pupils in this group are of a low ability. Their achievements are satisfactory taking account of the level at which they began. The results of national tests for eleven-year-olds show that standards in English are in line with those expected nationally and when compared to pupils from similar backgrounds. Pupils in this age group achieved highly in mathematics and science, reaching standards well above those expected when compared to national averages and when compared to pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection evidence indicates that by the ages of seven, standards are broadly average in English and mathematics, and that science is above average for the current Year 2. Standards for the current Year 6 are average in English, and above average in science and mathematics. However, although pupils in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress for most of their junior school career, there have been times when they have almost stood still in their progress, especially in English. Recent good teaching of this group of pupils has ensured greater progress than would have been expected in Year 6.

3. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs are good overall taking account of prior attainment. This is because of the good support they receive. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and individual education plans clearly focus on areas for improvement. Teachers and classroom support assistants work well together to provide good support. At the time of the last inspection work set did not always match pupils' ability. Teachers have improved this aspect of their planning and now set work that is carefully matched to pupils' interests and abilities and which is challenging yet achievable.

4. In English, by the end of the infants at the age of seven, most pupils have at least satisfactory and often good skills in speaking and listening. They listen to what they are told, and understand instructions and stories. Pupils of all abilities take part in class discussions. They listen carefully and enjoy the stories that are told or read to them. By the age of eleven, at the end of the juniors, pupils have developed their speaking and listening through good teacher interactions in many lessons besides English. Pupils mostly listen attentively and respond well to questions that make them think more deeply. Standards in reading are satisfactory by the age of seven, and many of the more able pupils read well. They read stories with confidence and expression, sometimes stumbling over the harder words, but enjoying their reading. Less able pupils learn to recognise many words on sight, and how to build other words up. By the age of eleven, most pupils are willing and

confident to read their own work or printed texts aloud in class, in assembly, or in church, and do so very well. They read a good variety of texts in class, using the library confidently to find books on any subject they want. Many pupils also obtain information from the computers for their work. More able pupils read with confidence and good expression from a range of different texts such as thriller stories, funny stories, the Bible or poems.

5. Many pupils in the infant department are slow to learn to write well, and standards are a little below national expectation at the moment. Even so, taking account of prior attainment, the achievement of most pupils is at least satisfactory. Less able pupils are learning to write. They copy words and sentences with varying degrees of accuracy and neatness. More able pupils write or print neatly, and are learning to spell short familiar words consistently accurately. They write in a range of different forms, such as letters, lists, instructions and stories, and they practice their writing well in other subjects. Pupils make satisfactory progress, and some show good improvement, in their writing by the age of eleven. They write for different purposes, such as a design brief in a technology lesson or recounting a story from the point of view of one of the characters. Most pupils' handwriting is neat, and some pupils develop a good style. They write with sound regard for grammar, punctuation and spelling for the most part. The handwriting of some of the oldest pupils has, however, declined during the past year.

6. In mathematics, by the age of seven, most pupils are confident in their use of number to 100 and beyond. They recognise patterns in number when, for example, the teacher gives them a sequence of numbers with one missing. They work with money up to one pound and carry out simple transactions. Pupils know the names of a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes and give their properties. When researching their favourite food, pupils communicate the results of their surveys in the form of bar charts and discuss and compare their findings. More able and average pupils use mathematical language well and write out problems in sentences. By age eleven, the majority of pupils have a good understanding of number and place value. They work with whole number problems with remainders. Pupils use appropriate methods to solve word problems, for example, when studying the budget of a notional High School and working out factors such as cost per pupil. Most show a sound knowledge of their tables. They work with fractions and answer questions such as what is three quarters of an hour in minutes. They understand multiplication and division and check their answers using various strategies to estimate them. Pupils of all abilities use tally charts and generate graphs and bar and pie charts to communicate their findings, for example in a topic on accidents involving cyclists. Though standards are high for the majority of pupils in Year 6 there is little evidence in their work of the use of information and communication technology. For example, graphs and charts are routinely drawn by hand.

7. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in science are above those expected by the age of seven. Pupils have a good understanding of 'living and growing'. Through growing cress, they understand that living things need water, food and light in order to flourish. As part of their work on sound, pupils know which instruments need to be plucked, which need to be shaken, and which need to be hit in order to produce a sound. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge well, for example to produce graphs of objects that are pushed and those that are pulled. Pupils of all abilities discuss how they would set up an investigation, and more able pupils explain how to make their test fair. Pupils continue to make good gains in their knowledge of living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes as they move through the junior classes. By the age of eleven, pupils have good knowledge of plants and animals and their habitats. Their knowledge of the human body is also good. Pupils know materials can be solids, liquids or gas and that some

changes in materials are irreversible, for instance, when an egg is cooked. Pupils have a suitable understanding of forces.

8. Standards in information and communication technology have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to be in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. By the age of seven, pupils use a word processor well, for example, to write their poetry. They make sound use of new technology when they use an online encyclopaedia to research living processes in science. Pupils have only limited understanding of how to build a database and there is little discussion of the impact of computers on society and in the world about them. By the age of eleven, pupils use desktop publishing software to produce a range of leaflets. A number of more able pupils have a fair understanding of how to use multimedia presentational packages. Though they have created a class database and have learnt how to store and retrieve information, their recall of the structures used and the terminology associated with databases is limited. Most use graphs and charts to communicate findings. Pupils of all abilities use the Internet to research topics and to visit revision sites. Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of the uses of information technology in the world about them.

9. Pupils' achievements in geography, history, design and technology, and music are satisfactory and in line with those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards in physical education are average by the age of seven. Pupils' achievements and standards in swimming are satisfactory by the age of eleven. Pupils of this age achieve highly in games. It was not possible to make a judgement on dance or gymnastics for this age group. Pupils' achievements in art are good in both age groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school. Their behaviour and personal development are good, and their attendance is very good. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection, and attendance has improved. Most parents are satisfied with the standard of behaviour.

11. Young children in the nursery and reception classes settle quickly into school routine. All are at ease in their surroundings and gain confidence, for instance, when choosing activities. They are very well behaved and eager to learn. Children are curious and enjoy investigating, for example, when sampling the plants growing on the school field, they worked well together in pairs comparing the similarities and differences of buttercups and dandelions.

12. Pupils in the infant and junior departments say they like school. This is confirmed by their parents, by very good attendance, and by their timely arrival at the start of the school day. Pupils like the way subjects are taught and enjoy other learning experiences such as sporting clubs, and visits to an outdoor centre and a world war history museum. Older pupils particularly valued the extra help they received to prepare for national tests. They appreciate the 'befrienders' scheme, and report it has helped to reduce poor behaviour and improve or retrieve friendships. Pupils of all ages say that the points system works well to encourage good behaviour, although there is some name calling, mainly amongst girls. Most believe that they are doing as well as they can, but think that the quality of their work is sometimes compromised by rushing it in order to meet deadlines set by their teacher. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and enjoy it. Most make a good effort with their work.

13. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and generally conduct themselves in an orderly manner. In a very small number of lessons the behaviour of some pupils deteriorates because they become bored when the subject is not being taught in an interesting manner or the activity not sufficiently challenging. Behaviour out of school is very good. For example, pupils in Year 2 visiting an outdoor education centre were particularly well behaved. They were polite and interested and helped each other find out information.

14. Relationships between pupils are very good. They work and play very well together, have a good deal of respect and tolerance for each other and will frequently help each other as a matter of course. There have been a few instances of bullying, but with the exception of one pupil, it is usually in the form of name calling or teasing and is not an issue in the school. There were no exclusions last year, but one fixed term exclusion has been incurred this year. Teachers are good role models, and through their advice and guidance and the opportunities for pair and group work, pupils develop a good measure of mutual respect for the feelings of others. Through religious education and listening to visiting speakers about charitable causes, they sympathise with the plights of others and develop sensible attitudes to some social issues.

15. Pupils respond well to the opportunities to take responsibility for some routine aspects in the daily life of the school. Pupils of all ages and abilities undertake their responsibilities conscientiously, helping in the classroom and in the dining hall. More than twenty older pupils who are 'befrienders' have received training as counsellors and are particularly conscious of the confidentiality and responsibility of their role. They are very conscientious and have successfully gained the respect and trust of all their peers. They make an excellent contribution to relationships in school and their own personal development. Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Most complete their homework in the set time, producing a good volume of neatly presented work.

16. Attendance is well above the average for primary schools, and unauthorised absence is below the average. Absence, owing to family holidays that are taken in term time, is slightly more than what is usually found in primary schools.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. At the time of the last inspection, unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one lesson in five. There was no unsatisfactory teaching recorded this inspection. The percentage of good or better teaching has increased from 25 percent to 65 percent. There has been significant improvement in teaching in the nursery. The quality of teaching has improved in a number of ways since the last inspection and this has had a positive impact on the quality of learning. Teachers now make sure that pupils know what they will be learning about at the start of each lesson. This ensures they know what is expected of them. Work is now well matched to pupils' abilities, this means that pupils do not find the work too easy or too difficult and lose interest. Teachers are now confident in the subjects they teach and are well organised in their classrooms, having equipment ready to hand so that no time is lost.

18. During the inspection, staff and pupils coped particularly well with the new building work despite disruption only metres from their classroom window including noise, dust, mud and a ruptured pipe which flooded the hall, causing water to cascade down walls ruining pupils' artwork. Literacy and numeracy lessons in four classes were conducted against a background of hammering, drilling, sawing and other associated noises. Nevertheless,

teachers persevered valiantly, using all their skills to maintain pupils' interest and concentration thus allowing pupils to make progress in their learning. Similarly, a music lesson in the hall was accompanied by hammering and banging, but the adept teacher conducted the lesson well and pupils made good progress in their understanding of minor and major keys.

19. Teachers are confident when teaching all subjects. Most lessons begin with teachers telling pupils what they will learn so pupils are aware of the purpose of the lesson. All teachers aim to provide interesting activities and are well prepared for lessons so very little learning time is lost. They make good use of visual aids and interesting objects to gain pupils' interest and to maintain their concentration. Where teaching is most effective, lessons are conducted at a good pace; teachers give clear explanations and ask targeted questions of all ability groups to test pupils' understanding and further their knowledge. Most lessons end with a useful review where pupils consider what they have learned. Where teaching is less effective, lessons lose pace and pupils do not learn as quickly. Some of this is because some teachers use commercially produced work sheets which pupils do not find interesting. This occurs more often in the infant department than the junior department. Some teachers in both age groups do not encourage pupils to correct spelling and grammatical errors in work that has been marked, so pupils do not learn from their mistakes. In a small number of lessons pupils become bored because work is not presented in an interesting manner and is not sufficiently challenging. Though teachers know their pupils well and assess their learning in lessons, the formal recording of pupils' knowledge and skills is only barely satisfactory in all subjects other than English and mathematics.

20. Teachers have a good knowledge of the teaching of numeracy and literacy. Literacy and numeracy lessons follow the recommended pattern so pupils have the opportunity to work as a class, in small groups or individually taking responsibility for their own learning. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other lessons. For example, pupils are expected to read worksheets and texts at the appropriate level in history, geography and science. Pupils are expected to write independently in other subjects, especially science in the junior school, and this allows them to make progress in writing. Numeracy skills are used well in physical education when measuring jumps, and when timing races in order to beat previous performance. Teachers expect pupils to use their knowledge of graphs and pies charts to present their findings in science and geography. Most teachers are still developing ways to include information and communication technology into other subjects. Though pupils use their computer skills well to word process work in most subjects, teachers do not plan and use opportunities for pupils to use new technology sufficiently, for example, to present data in science and mathematics, or to design and create in art and design and technology. During the inspection though computers were switched on in all classrooms, other than in the computer suite, few were used during lessons. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using CD-ROM and the Internet as a resource, and encourage pupils to research information.

21. In lessons where teaching is very good, pupils make very good gains in their learning. For example, pupils of both ages and all abilities in a mixed Year 3 and 4 class made very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of poetry from other cultures because the teacher had planned the work carefully to match the age and ability groups within her class. She had pupils hugging themselves with glee as she told them to "Get your passports ready we are off to another country". The teacher was very confident and read the poem with expression, amusing the pupils as she grimaced at phrases such as 'nostrils like mouse-holes'. Pupils hung on to her every word and increased their understanding of similes and rhyme. Careful questioning helped pupils to recognise the pattern of the poem, and to recall previous learning, prompting one to use alliteration in her verse. In addition to improving their knowledge of poetry, pupils were able to demonstrate their geographical knowledge by locating Nigeria, Pakistan and Japan on a map of the world. They made good progress in their personal development when rewriting the poem

'You' as they thought of positive statements to make about their friend as opposed to the insults in the poem.

22. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning in all subjects. The special educational needs co-ordinator works alongside classroom teachers to write individual plans that outline how the curriculum will be adapted to meet individual needs. Teachers and classroom assistants plan together, making sure activities are interesting, and that work is at the correct level. Any new vocabulary is discussed and possible problems highlighted. The good support provided by classroom assistants makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress. However, there are a few occasions when, because pupils are well behaved, they have little to do in shared class time and they could be usefully occupied, for instance by recording pupils' responses during this part of the lesson.

23. Most teachers use homework well to extend work undertaken in lessons. A scrutiny of pupils' homework books shows that, despite the concerns of some parents, pupils receive a good amount of homework in a range of subjects and this contributes to their progress. Because teachers have high expectations of the way pupils present their work. Work in homework books is usually of the same high standard as in other exercise books. Most work is completed and there is good evidence of pupils of all ages and abilities researching new information about the topics they are studying.

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

24. The school continues to provide a curriculum that meets legal requirements. It has sound breadth and balance, with all of the required subjects being covered. Sufficient time is given to make sure each subject can be covered adequately. The approach to each subject, and the balance within each subject, is also sound, with, for instance, a good approach to science through investigations, and good design work in design and technology. The Foundation Stage has been successfully introduced since the last inspection. Lesson planning continues to be good, but there is still scope to improve the longer term planning of many subjects. The school has made good advances in this area, and its development plan includes targets for improving long-term plans in a more structured form. These plans are well advanced for science and mathematics, but need to be moved forward in many other subjects. Planning for pupils in classes with mixed age groups has improved, and there is now more planning for how subjects will be covered from one year to the next, and between the infant and junior departments. Teachers have mostly moved away from teaching in topics, and there is now much better reference to the requirements of the National Curriculum than at the time of the previous inspection. Though curriculum planning is overseen by a senior teacher in each department, no-one has overall responsibility to check for gaps or to have a whole school overview.

25. The curriculum is relevant to the needs of its pupils. There is an appropriate emphasis on religious education for a Catholic school, and wider aspects of religion and a good awareness of other faiths spreading into spiritual, social and personal development. The Catholic ethos is a positive force through much of the curriculum. The provision of tuition for musical instruments is good, and adds much to the personal development of many children, as well as improving their skills in music. It does, however, take place in the mornings, and this means that pupils are constantly being withdrawn from literacy and numeracy lessons, which is not good.

26. The school's strategy for literacy is good and effective in raising standards in English. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted well and almost all teachers are confident in teaching to its guidelines. English skills are also reinforced and extended by widespread opportunities to read and write extensively in other subjects such as science, religious education, design and technology, history and geography. Additional lessons, such as class reading time, handwriting, spelling and extended writing, also take place in all classes each week. These are a valuable reinforcement of specific skills, and they do much to maintain a sound standard in literacy. They also reflect the school's very valid priorities for further developing pupils' skills and interest in wider reading, and, more especially, writing. There are also additional support groups for some slower learners, to help boost their learning.

27. The National Numeracy Strategy is also firmly in place. Teachers are confident in teaching to the guidelines, and this is seen in the raised standards throughout the school. The teaching is well structured, and there are many instances of mathematics skills being applied in other subjects, from timing and measuring events in physical education to drawing graphs to illustrate results in science experiments. More time has been given to mathematics and English than at the time of the last inspection and this is contributing to pupils' progress in these subjects.

28. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all subjects and all activities, including out of school activities. The school is successful in the way it adapts and adds to the curriculum to allow all pupils, regardless of their learning difficulties, to make the progress of which they are capable. The school has successfully taken on various local and national strategies to support both the intellectual and social development of its pupils with special needs. These are clearly outlined in the individual educational plans written by the co-ordinator with classroom teachers. Good planning and effective use of resources helps pupils to work successfully towards their targets.

29. Extra-curricular activities are satisfactory. There are regular sporting activities such as football, netball and rugby, and more occasional ones such as swimming galas and cross-country events. There is a computer club twice a week, at lunchtimes. The 'befrienders' system of encouraging older pupils to act as counsellors for other pupils who have temporary social and personal problems takes place two lunchtimes each week. This is a very valuable part of the school's provision for pupils' personal development, and their ability to take on responsibility.

30. In other respects, the school's curriculum for developing pupils' personal and social skills is satisfactory. This takes place partly through many lessons such as 'circle time' when pupils sit together in a circle to discuss matters of importance to them, and in religious education. This is successful in raising pupils' awareness of spiritual and world-wide issues. Personal and social skills are further developed through alcohol and drugs misuse awareness sessions in science, through educational visits by a police officer, and through visits by the local 'Figment' theatre group. Awareness of sexual matters and family values are suitably taught through lessons with the school nurse, science lessons, and the religious education programme. Pupils' development is influenced well by the atmosphere within the school, by relationships with all adults who work at the school, and by the example set by staff at all times. This contributes well to pupils' growing self-confidence and self-esteem. The school has recognised there is now a need to bring all of the different strands of personal development together into a more structured plan throughout the school.

31. The school's links with the wider community are good. In addition to the strong links with the adjoining church, and the links for personal and social development, the whole curriculum is enriched by the many visits to local places of interest such as a museum, a pizza parlour, a wildlife park and a wartime experiences camp. Visitors, such as an artist and an author, and by police and fire officers brings more life and relevance to lessons for many subjects. The sponsorship of the 'Irish National Democratic League' is a valuable contribution to the education and personal development of many pupils, as is the 'Fastlane' organisation that supports many parents in developing their own education skills, from looking after toddlers to using computers. Many pupils have taken part in raising funds for books and computers through collecting different kinds of vouchers from national supermarkets and catering companies. There are also links with several sporting organisations such as local football, rugby and athletics clubs.

32. Links with other schools and educational institutions are satisfactory. There are links with the other Catholic schools in the area, including the 'Mission Week' which saw a small number of pupils attending assemblies in each other's schools, and with a banner, proclaiming the unity of the schools. Sporting matches are organised regularly with other schools, and the school joins in the local area Technology Day each year. Links with the local secondary school, to which almost all pupils go when they leave at the age of eleven, are satisfactory. These include a half-day visit in Year 5 and a full day towards the end of Year 6. One teacher who recently spent two terms at a multi-racial school in a nearby school is developing 'pen-pal' links between her former pupils in that school and her present class.

33. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is very good and is a strength of the school. This is in marked contrast to the findings of the previous report which judged spiritual provision to be satisfactory. Acts of collective worship make a considerable contribution to pupils' development in this area. In school they fall into two types: the class liturgies and school assemblies. The class liturgies are good. Teachers affirm their own faith and support spiritual development by creating a special atmosphere for worship, for example through devotional music and the lighting of candles. They prepare special displays that through their icons celebrate the Church. In the time teachers allow for prayer and reflection, prayers come spontaneously from children and reflect their concern for others, especially the sick and needy. One child, for example, asked the class to pray for a mortally ill relative. School assemblies are similarly spiritual occasions. They vary in content as they follow and celebrate the Catholic Church's calendar of holy days. Pupils are encouraged to join in and they often accompany hymns with their musical instruments. Their singing makes these occasions uplifting. They sing with enthusiasm. Older pupils clearly affirm their faith and belief in the services that take place in the adjoining church. On these occasions the parish priest makes a tremendous contribution to the spiritual life of pupils through his inspired contributions, for example in a service for pupils to celebrate the Feast of the Body and Blood of Our Lord. On this occasion pupils showed reverence for the Church and demonstrated their commitment through their good behaviour and the high quality of their singing and reading aloud from the Bible.

34. Teachers encourage pupils to be amazed by their learning and to appreciate the wonder of nature. For instance, pupils in Year 5 were fascinated and most impressed when their teacher marked out the exact distance of Jonathan Edward's world record triple jump of 18 metres and 29 centimetres. On another occasion, children in the nursery class 'working' in the 'garden centre' were thrilled at growth of their seedlings, commenting that "God sent the rain and sun to make them grow."

35. The provision for moral development is good. The good behaviour about the school is promoted through a system of agreed rules which pupils are made aware of by class teachers at the beginning of the school year, and through reminders in class and in assemblies. Teachers and other adults who care for them demonstrate how to behave appropriately and who, on relevant occasions, affirm the importance of truth, honesty and concern for others. Teachers and other adults constantly praise behaviour that is kind and considerate. The scheme for 'befrienders' is an example of the good provision that the school makes in this area. In physical education pupils are taught the importance of rules and the need to play fair. They are reminded that they must think of the effect of their actions on others. Through the charitable work undertaken for CAFOD and other organisations, pupils are reminded of the need to care for those less fortunate than themselves, and of the moral implications of turning away from need.

36. The provision for pupils' social development is good, as it was during the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to work together co-operatively, for example, in art lessons when creating a collage or in science when they conduct investigations. They further develop their social skills when living as part of a community during the residential visits they make to Cliffe House. Most undertake a number of responsibilities in school that help with their social development. For example, each September older pupils help younger ones get over the initial fear of moving from the infants to the junior school. Pupils are taught how to cope with winning and losing through participation in a good range of sports competitions with other schools, and recognising that it is taking part which is important.

37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to appreciate their own cultural heritage. The strong presence in their lives of the Church and their involvement in the life of the parish is a good example of how the school helps them to celebrate their cultural roots. In English they are introduced to literature from other cultures. In art their work often involves the close study of the styles of mainly European artists such as Van Gogh and William Morris. There are some opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural influences from the world outside Western Europe, for instance through work done by CAFOD, but this is an area that could be further developed so that pupils can have a deeper understanding of the multicultural society in which they live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Arrangements for pupils' health, safety and general welfare are satisfactory overall. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' attendance, behaviour and personal development are good. These are similar findings to the previous report. Parents are pleased with the quality of care and support.

39. Most arrangements for health, safety and security are good, although at present checklists are not used when inspecting the school premises. Some first aid measures are well advanced, for example lunchtime assistants carry kits with them, but there are not enough staff qualified to administer first aid amongst full time staff. All staff are conscious of the need to be safe in lessons, for instance in gymnastics, they make sure the apparatus is safe and that pupils have the correct footwear and sports kit for physical education. In science, teachers warn pupils of the danger of putting their hands to their mouth when investigating and identifying plants. Child protection procedures are in place and all teachers are aware of them. However, some non-teaching adults have not been briefed about these matters. There is no entry about procedures in the staff handbook, and arrangements to inform new or temporary teachers of such procedures are informal.

Relevant external specialist agencies satisfactorily serve the school in order to meet the particular health and welfare needs of the pupils.

40. The school has effective systems in place to identify, assess, support and monitor pupils with special educational needs. This is so in all cases whether they be related to physical, behavioural or learning difficulties. Appropriate support is given to all pupils. Staff comply with the requirements of the special educational needs policy, and fully implement the requirements of the Code of Practice.

41. Teachers know their pupils well, and relationships between teachers and pupils are mutually respectful, trusting and constructive. This creates an environment that is conducive to learning, where pupils feel secure and valued. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored and procedures are good. Any significant unauthorised absence is raised with parents. Despite a number of strategies, the school has not been successful with a minority of parents who continue to take family holidays in term time.

42. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour, including bullying, are carefully logged. Good behaviour is effectively promoted through good teaching practice, teachers' advice and guidance to pupils. The awarding of points and weekly celebration assemblies when good work and achievements are recognised is successful in inspiring pupils to strive even harder. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' good behaviour, and constantly remind them of the behaviour code. Almost all instances of poor behaviour and bullying are dealt with effectively, though a few incidents have occurred that have not been resolved to the full satisfaction of parents. The school tries hard to provide appropriate support for pupils with behavioural difficulties but is not always able to provide the specialist support that is sometimes required.

43. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for organising themselves and for undertaking many routine tasks about the school. Some classes have office managers, other pupils help to clean up after lunch, older pupils help younger ones with reading, and Year 6 pupils help teachers to supervise during wet breaks when pupils have to remain indoors. The 'befrienders' group provides exceptional opportunities for more than twenty pupils to make a very real contribution to the quality of life in school and has been successful in helping them develop a great sense of commitment and counselling skills.

44. Systems for assessing how well pupils are progressing are satisfactory. The results of annual national tests and teacher assessments in English, science and mathematics are carried out well with pupils at the age of seven and eleven years. Gaps in learning identified by analysing the results have resulted in teachers introducing additional writing sessions, and extending the reading opportunities to help pupils improve further. Pupils also undertake optional tests at the end of each year when they are eight, nine and ten. This gives the school a lot of information on how well pupils are progressing, but this information is not used well to see where pupils' progress is too slow, whether in a particular year or particular subject. The school is beginning to see the value of analysing this information much more thoroughly in order to alter teaching and the curriculum more flexibly in the future. Parents are not informed of the results of optional tests and so do not have the full picture of how their child is progressing.

45. Systems for assessing and recording pupils' achievements are variable. Good systems are in place in the nursery. Attainment on entry is carefully recorded and used to plan programmes for each child. Careful records are kept of how children cope with each new activity and 'daily jotting slips' help the teacher decide what activities will help each child progress further. Satisfactory systems are in place in English where a number of tests and assessments take place at different times of the year, for instance in reading or spelling. A useful start has been made in producing more detailed checks of progress in English using checklists from the local education authority and a nationally recognised system. In other subjects, however, assessment is more informal and unstructured. Whilst there is a system of passing record cards with a summary of progress to the next class at the end of each year, few teachers have records of the knowledge and skills pupils acquire in different subjects. Subject managers for mathematics, religious education and science

have prioritised assessment as an area for urgent development, and other subjects have also included the development of assessment of progress in their own subject development plans. Staff recognise the need to give these plans a higher priority, to introduce a simple system of assessment for each subject that is quick and easy to carry out, is easy to understand and is used consistently in all classes. Though one senior teacher keeps on-going records of all pupils' progress in the junior department, this information is mainly used in case individual pupils develop special educational needs of any kind, rather than as an overall check on progress. Pupils who have special educational or behavioural needs have a set of individual targets in their individual education plan, but these are often not difficult to achieve and are not always easy to measure.

46. There are satisfactory systems in place for assessing how well pupils are progressing in their personal development, but these are often informal systems based on the good knowledge that teachers have of their pupils. Incidents are recorded when anything specific happens, and staff keep a close watch on some pupils with particular problems. However, much of the personal, social and moral development of most pupils is not assessed or recorded in any formal sense and on occasions this could limit pupils' achievements. This would be a valuable part of the development of the personal and social course of study.

47. The co-ordinator for assessment has been in post for only a year, and does not have sufficient time allocated to such responsibilities. Though she has spent two terms of this past year working in another school, she has now drawn up a suitable list of priorities for making assessment of pupils' academic progress more consistent and useful through the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents have a good regard for the school. The school has a satisfactory partnership with its parents. This is similar to the previous inspection. However, at the time of the last inspection parents felt inadequately informed about their child's progress and this is still the case.

49. Parents are generally pleased with the standard of education and the quality of care that the school provides. They believe that teaching is good, and that their child makes good progress, becoming mature and responsible. Parents are satisfied with the values that the school promotes and recognise that the close links with the church contribute to them. At a meeting held prior to the inspection almost all parents praised the commitment of the head teacher and staff. A significant number of parents say that the school does not work closely enough with them, and that they are not informed well enough about pupils' progress. Some parents would like a wider choice of out of school activities, and for homework to be set consistently. However, the range of activities available is similar to other primary schools. Homework is set regularly and contributes well to pupils' progress. Parents of pupils in one class are concerned about frequent changes of teacher and in another class about incidents of bullying, the large majority of views expressed are positive, and parents have a supportive and co-operative attitude towards the school.

50. Parents are generally well informed about the life and work of the school. The prospectus and governors' annual report meet requirements and provide helpful guidance for parents. Meetings for parents commence prior to pupils starting at school, and continue on at least an annual basis. Newsletters are informative and circulated to all parents. Recently, junior aged pupils have started to produce a class newsletter that is sent to parents. A talk to parents of young children entering the school covers a wide range of

topics, and helps parents feel comfortable that their child is being well looked after. A useful information evening for parents of pupils in Years 5 and 6 helps them understand what is required in national tests, and how staff set targets for pupils to achieve. Parents attending the meeting reported they would have found a similar evening for parents of seven-year-olds preparing for national tests most helpful. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly informed of their child's progress and are fully involved when appropriate in the review process. Teachers of younger pupils maintain close contact with many parents at start and end of the school day and are available daily. A large notice board is used well to inform parents of day-to-day happenings and where they may contact help if problems arise.

51. Annual school reports are compiled using computer bank statements and some parents feel they are not sufficiently personalised. Some information about what pupils know, understand and can do is very good, but this is not consistently so across all subjects. Other than at the end of Years 2 and 6, reports do not tell parents the National Curriculum level their child is attaining. Areas for improvement are included in some subjects, but parents feel this is too late because reports are received at the start of the long summer holiday. Parents are not being consulted at a sufficiently early time in a school year about targets for improvement and attainment so that strategies can be agreed for them to support their child effectively.

52. A small number of parents visit the school each week to help with reading, and accompany pupils on trips. Parents are invited to assemblies, although this has been temporarily suspended. Meetings are arranged for parents when children are taking part in their first communion. Workshops to help parents with their literacy and computer skills were held up until recently. These were very well attended, but have now ended because the funding has ceased. The parents, teachers and friends association organises events and raises useful funds to buy additional resources. Though the headteacher refers to this committee from time to time to seek their views, he does not periodically seek the views of all parents via, for example, questionnaires. The home-school agreement has been signed by almost all parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school continues to be sound. Leadership allows staff to perform well and have a sense of direction which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, there are weaknesses in the management of the school because a number of key staff have too many responsibilities. Governors and senior managers have taken steps towards the key issue from the last inspection of extending strategic planning to improve teaching and learning, and to have clear procedures to monitor and evaluate developments. Suitable procedures for classroom monitoring have been adopted and the quality of teaching has improved. Whilst some of this is attributable to classroom observations some is through the appointment of new staff. Very little classroom observation now takes place. The role of subject managers is still not fully developed.

54. The headteacher continues to promote a positive, caring environment where all pupils are valued. He has created an orderly community where children and staff are happy. The Catholic mission is reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher and his hard working deputy work well together. Alongside his responsibilities as deputy head he manages mathematics, physical education, oversees business links and has responsibility for pupils' well being and behaviour. In addition, whilst another key member of staff is doing work for the local authority, the deputy also manages information and communication technology and geography. The deputy teaches full time and, because

cuts in finances have meant the school has had to lose a part time teacher, now has no designated time outside of his teaching commitment. As a result he is no longer able to observe in classrooms and has to spend his own time catching up with tasks. The enthusiasm of the deputy for sport has resulted in pupils taking part in a wide range of sporting fixtures and winning a number of tournaments

55. Along with the headteacher and deputy, a senior teacher from the infant department and one from the junior department make up the senior management team. Both are extremely hard working and both display initiative in managing the school. Useful meetings held weekly result in good communication between departments on general issues. Each of the senior teachers takes responsibility for checking what is taught in each department but there is no overview and no check that what has been planned is taught. Senior managers made a very good start to classroom observations and provided helpful targets for teachers to improve their practice.

56. The manager for the infant department school has worked hard to provide support for the nursery following the adverse report of the last inspection. Along with the nursery teacher and the local authority advisor, she has been instrumental in improving the provision. The local authority hold this teacher in high esteem, recently using her skills for two terms to provide leadership in another school which was experiencing difficulties. The senior manager for the junior department is also the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for pupils with special educational needs continues to be managed well. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of pupils who need additional help. Documentation is in good order and reviews take place at the appropriate time. Identification, monitoring and review procedures are organised effectively as is the in-class support of pupils. These are significant factors in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator maintains good communication with teachers, classroom assistants and the various outside specialists who visit the school. She regularly meets with support staff to check the progress of individual pupils. In addition to her responsibility for pupils with special educational needs, she also manages science, has responsibility for staff training and the associated budget, and the curriculum for pupils in the junior department. She has no time allocated to keep an eye what is happening in different classes. Though this is not having an adverse impact on the progress pupils make at the moment it is not a desirable situation.

57. Governors fulfil their legal requirement. All required policies are in place. Governors suitably discuss and agree all new policies. A number of policies have been reviewed recently and the Early Years policy is now in draft form ready to be accepted by the governors in time for the move to the new accommodation. Some policies are out of date, for example, the physical education policy does not include information on assessment, there is no reference to health and safety or risk assessment other than for swimming, and very little guidance for pupils with special educational needs. Though not legally required, focused consideration has not been given to the identification and provision for gifted and talented pupils. Governors attend functions whenever they can, but have not had the opportunity to visit classrooms. Appropriate committees are in place. The headteacher and his chair of governors maintain close contact, and governors in turn are well informed of happenings within the school. The headteacher reports the chairman runs meetings efficiently and effectively, and minutes of meetings show that these are productive. Whilst governors clearly understand the strengths of the school, and are aware of the areas for development in the school development plan, they have not fully appreciated the uneven distribution of management roles and the effect this has on monitoring the effectiveness of the school. The school development plan continues to reflect needs of school. Managers have identified the need to improve standards in reading and writing and have suitable

plans in place. All involved in the work of the school are committed to every pupil having an equal chance to take part in all lessons and activities regardless of age, gender, ability or cost.

58. Subject management varies from satisfactory to good. Responsibilities are unevenly distributed. A number of capable teachers are without subject responsibilities whilst others are overloaded. Not all subject managers have had the opportunity to observe in classrooms, not all monitor teachers' planning and there has been no sampling of pupils' work to check that pupils of all abilities are doing as well as they should in all classes. Though the school is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils, other than in physical education where the manager makes sure girls play in the football team, subject managers do not check as a matter of course that this is so in practice.

59. The headteacher and governors are building the principles of best value into their work. They continue to make good use of information provided by the local authority to compare the results of national tests with those of other schools, and to set targets for improvement. To date there has been no consultation with those who have a vested interest in the school, such as pupils and parents. The practice of setting academic targets for individual pupils at the start of each year is working well and leading to improved standards. Whole school targets agreed with the local authority are sufficiently challenging and were exceeded last year because of the impact of funding for 'booster classes' and the determination of the Year 6 teacher. Whilst the headteacher monitors how well pupils are doing, insufficient use has been made of the results of optional tests to check the progress of individual pupils in the junior school, especially in relation to their results in national tests for seven-year-olds.

60. The number of staff employed in the school, including classroom support assistants, is satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified to teach all subjects. All have suitable opportunities to increase their professional knowledge by attending relevant training courses. The arrangements for the performance management of teachers have been introduced and are satisfactory. A good format to record the outcomes of this process and suggested areas for further development is in place. The school makes good use of visiting music specialists to provide instrument instruction for pupils.

61. The accommodation is satisfactory. Staff and pupils are coping very well with the disruption being caused by the building of the new infant department. As at the time of the previous inspection, the nursery facilities are unsuitable, but this will be remedied when the new block is completed in September. The interior and exterior of the buildings are cleaned to a high standard. High quality displays enhance pupils' learning and celebrate achievement. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support all subjects. Resources for science and physical education are good and equipment is easily accessible. Teachers make good use of the spacious grounds, for example to teach games and athletics, and to investigate plants in science. There has been an improvement in the learning resources in the nursery since the last inspection, and these are now satisfactory to teach all the areas of learning. Staff make good use of a local field study centre for day and residential visits to reinforce and develop pupils' academic and social skills. The number and range of music resources, for example percussion instruments, are limited. Subject managers for geography and history have recognised the need to increase and reorganise resources in these subjects to match the areas of study in the recently introduced national programmes. Overall, equipment is in good condition, well-cared for and easily accessible to staff and pupils. Whilst teachers use the computer suite well when it is their turn, they do not make enough use of the computers in their classrooms, this is an inefficient use of an expensive resource.

62. The school continues to make good use of its budget but income has dropped because of a fall in numbers and financial reserves are now low. The latest audit report recognised efficient financial management and the few recommendations made have been acted upon. Governors monitor what is spent and how it is spent well. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately. For example, money allocated to helping pupils who are struggling with numeracy and literacy has been used effectively and has brought them up to the expected level in national tests. Day-to-day administration is of a high standard. The school office is extremely well organised and managed and contributes to the smooth running of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to continue to raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should

- Improve the management of the school by:
 - ensuring responsibilities are shared out evenly, particularly where senior teachers are concerned;
 - providing sufficient time for managers to carry out their responsibilities;
 - the headteacher overseeing and pulling together the work of other managers, for example in the curriculum and in health and welfare matters.

(paragraphs 24, 47, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58)

- Improve the way in which senior staff and governors monitor the effectiveness of the school by:
 - formalising systems;
 - making greater use of the results of optional tests as pupils progress through the school;
 - providing senior teachers and subject managers with release time in order for them to fulfil their roles more effectively especially in monitoring what is taught and how it is taught.

(paragraphs 44, 58, 59, 87, 94, 99, 115, 120, 130)

- Improve the way in which teachers assess and record pupils' achievements by:
 - introducing simple assessment and recording procedures in all subjects;
 - making sure systems are consistent across the school;
 - linking achievements to National Curriculum levels.

(paragraphs 44, 45, 46, 99, 110, 115, 120, 126, 135)

In addition to the above key issues, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- Making sure that all adults, including staff who are at the school for only a short period of time, are familiar with procedures for child protection. (39)
- Providing more information for parents about the progress their child is making (51)
- Analysing and using the results of national tests and optional tests more accurately when setting targets for improvement. (44, 59)
- Planning and using classroom computers more. (20, 74, 126)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	52	35	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	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	293
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	62

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.4
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	23	19	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	19
	Girls	14	15	16
	Total	30	30	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (90)	71 (98)	83 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	20
	Girls	15	15	17
	Total	32	33	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (94)	79 (94)	88 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	25	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	19	24	25
	Total	36	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (69)	95 (73)	100 (84)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	18
	Girls	15	20	22
	Total	30	37	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (67)	84 (76)	91 (78)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	247
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	131

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	588,815
Total expenditure	595,031
Expenditure per pupil	1,837
Balance brought forward from previous year	£16,604
Balance carried forward to next year	£10,388

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	317
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	2	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46	43	4	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	53	9	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	46	10	10	2
The teaching is good.	41	52	4	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	42	26	9	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	46	4	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	1	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	23	43	25	7	2
The school is well led and managed.	40	42	9	5	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	48	6	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	37	17	9	14

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

64. There has been good improvement in the provision for young children since the last inspection when the quality of provision and resourcing in the nursery was judged to be ineffective. Since the previous inspection there have been several changes which have been successfully implemented. There is a suitable job share between two teachers who work well together in one of the reception classes, complementing each other's skills. The new Foundation Stage Curriculum has been introduced successfully. Standards have been maintained and children continue to make good progress in both the nursery and reception classes.

65. At the time of the inspection, 48 children were attending the nursery part-time. Of the 42 full-time children in the reception classes, 24 are in one class, with the oldest 18 children being educated in a mixed age class with a small number of the youngest Year 1 pupils. There are a few children with special educational needs. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall but is still limited by the inappropriate nursery building. Nevertheless, staff do their best to provide a wide range of rich learning opportunities. Provision will be greatly improved when all children in this age group are educated together in the purpose built Early Years Unit due to open in September. Teachers try very hard to compensate for the lack space, and as a consequence, children receive the full Foundation Stage Curriculum and teaching is usually good.

66. Children enter the nursery when they are about three and a half years old. Procedures to help children to settle are very good. Parents report they are very well informed and value the support staff offer. Notices, photographs, and information about work in the nursery and reception classes are prominently displayed for parents to see when they collect their child. Though variable, attainment on entry is below average for children of this age. Most children complete at least three terms in the nursery before joining the reception class. All children make good progress in the nursery, particularly in their social skills. Attainment on entry to the reception class is below average as measured by Kirklees assessment on entry. Children are re-assessed at the end of their reception year and most have made good progress, achieving the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning with many beyond in numeracy and in their physical development.

67. Teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good and is good overall in both age groups. Some very good teaching was observed in the lessons of one of the reception classes. This is good improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the nursery class. Planning is detailed, especially in the mixed age class, where the teacher plans conscientiously for both age groups. Staff in all classes create a rich environment using pictures, signs, photographs, words and captions. All staff make a very good contribution to progress in speaking. Adults use their voices well. They tell familiar children's stories and recite rhymes well with good expression, so that children quickly get to know key phrases quickly and derive pleasure from the activities. Procedures to assess and record children's achievements are good, especially in the nursery. Children's responses to different activities are carefully recorded and used when planning further activities. The system of "one-off" jottings is particularly valuable in recording evidence of learning and of children's comments. Individual photographic child records in the nursery provide useful information for the teacher, and a treasured record of their

child's development for parents. The record would be even more useful if dates and comments accompanied some of the photographs.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Children make good progress in this aspect of their development in both the nursery and reception classes with the majority achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Children in the nursery use equipment and resources very well. They quickly get to know the routines of the class and become independent, registering their attendance each day and choosing which activities they want to do at the start of each session. Children know how many are allowed to play in the various areas and wait their turn patiently. They choose whether or not they will have milk at snack time, and chose between different foods such as sandwiches which they have prepared earlier. When having their snack, they are polite and share the food sensibly. They help one and other. For example, when one child was struggling to manoeuvre his tricycle around the garden area his friend went to his rescue. Children respond well to the adults in both age groups, joining in or finishing activities when asked. They tidy equipment away helpfully and use the toilet independently. In the reception classes, most children listen very well during 'carpet time', though a small number can become restless on occasions. Children are helpful and share such as water play very sensibly. Most have the confidence to speak in front of the whole class or during imaginative play as when playing in the 'garden centre'. Children make good progress in their spiritual development as they consider God's Creation in their growing topic. They have an awareness that there are people who do not have enough to eat as they prepare their annual Lenten Lunch. An awareness of other faiths is encouraged through activities such as the planned Islam week.

69. The quality of teaching in both nursery and reception is very good. Staff encourage children to become independent and to play sociably together. Activities are provided to give children the opportunity to make choices and to play together. Routines are designed to promote self-sufficiency so children quickly gain confidence and become independent. All staff promote positive attitudes and values. They are confident in their knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and have a very good knowledge of those in their care.

Communication, language and literacy

70. The majority of children make good progress in this aspect of their development. Most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Children in both nursery and reception take a full part in imaginative play. For example, children in the nursery pretend to be fire fighters, skilfully 'driving' their engine around the playground to attend the 'fire' in the shed. Children in the reception class become adults out to lunch at the Clever Cat Café, discussing how their 'children' are progressing at school. Children are eager to engage visitors in conversation, giving details of their home life. They enjoy experimenting with language and rhymes. Children are confident when speaking to adults, describing what they are doing, for instance in the 'slime' area, where they were endeavouring to retrieve the dinosaurs who have fallen into the morass. Children in the nursery value stories and delight in sharing books with an adult. After listening to stories and looking at information books, such as a book about dolphins, they are able to talk about what they have heard. Whilst children are keen to demonstrate their knowledge by answering questions many respond using only single words or phrases. Children in the reception classes are beginning to read simple books. They recognise a good number of words on sight, using clues from the pictures to help them recognise new words. They are beginning to use their knowledge of letter sounds to read unfamiliar simple words and use

clusters of consonants such as 'sh' and 'cl' to help them in their reading. All children regularly take books home to share with their parents or carers and record their chosen library book on the 'book train'.

71. In both nursery and the reception classes, the teaching of literacy is well structured so that the children's learning is progressive. Teachers use short sections of the literacy strategy at various times of the day to focus the teaching of, for instance, letter sounds and blends. However, too little use is made of relevant computer programs to reinforce the learning of letter sounds. Good opportunities are provided for both age groups to write. For example, following a visit from the postman and his cat Jess, children in the nursery 'write' letters and fill in forms in a way that is meaningful to them. Children with special educational needs are supported well in literacy. Planning provides good coverage of communication, language and literacy and there is good ongoing assessment for all children. Staff make sure that writing materials, and story tapes and books are easily available for children.

Mathematical development

72. The majority of children make good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their development, with a good number of older children achieving within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. In the nursery, children sing many different number rhymes counting on from one, and back from five. They use their knowledge in the outdoor play area as they throw balls at numbered targets. They make repeated patterns using paint, prints and coloured pegs. Most recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes and identify these shapes and patterns in their classroom. Children use the work displayed to identify circles of differing sizes around the classroom

73. In the reception classes, children add and subtract to ten and use non-standard units to measure, as when comparing the capacity of various containers in the water area. Most use terms such as 'shorter' and 'longer', 'more' and 'less' accurately. Children are able to measure and sequence objects by direct comparison. More able children count in tens and build towers to show their achievement. During a lesson on coin recognition, children identify coins to £1.00. Most children count pence pieces to the value of 5p, with older children recognising the value of 20p when buying items from the 'supermarket'. They sequence the days of the week with a good number able to say that Monday follows Sunday. Most older children recognise numbers to 20 and give the o'clock time. Children enjoy singing the 'clock song', following each part, and making the time on their individual clocks. Very few children are sure of half past the hour.

74. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good being good overall. Classrooms are equipped with appropriate resources on display. Staff use every opportunity for children to count and recognise shapes and patterns. The numeracy strategy has been adapted well in the reception classes. In the lesson where teaching was very good, the teacher used lots of strategies to keep children's interest and to make them want to improve. For example, she used the tambour, speeding up the beat to help children count more quickly. Children in this group also made good gains in their knowledge of the order of numbers when they were asked to jump into a number line 'one before eight' or 'two more than seven'. In the lesson where teaching was satisfactory, there was no quick fire warm up session at the start of the lesson, so children were sluggish when they went straight in to the main activity of money sums. Classroom assistants and parent helpers are used very well for group activities to support the learning. They are well briefed, and classroom assistants take a full part in planning. However, staff make too little use computer programs to support children's learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

75. Progress is good and the majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their development. Children in the nursery enjoy investigating how plants grow. They examine their seedlings, looking for evidence of new leaves and hoping to find flowers. Children in the reception class observe well when they visit the local park, spotting different plants and creatures. They talk about their observations and sequence the life cycle of a butterfly. Children are curious and enjoy investigating, for example, when sampling the plants growing on the school field. They worked well together in pairs comparing the similarities and differences, and producing good observational drawings of their finds. Children in both classes are following the construction of the new Early Years Unit with interest. They use photographs to talk about how the building is progressing and more able children sequence the different stages. Children use a range of construction kits to assemble their own ideas of how their new classroom will look. In the reception classes children investigate forces, and consider whether when on the slide the force is 'push' or 'pull'. Children are successfully developing an idea of the passage of time as they consider changes since they were babies.

76. The quality of teaching is good in both age groups. There are many opportunities for children to explore and find out more about the world around them. Teachers know the importance of play and provide useful activities for children to develop their observational skills and scientific knowledge. Staff continually question children to improve their speaking and listening, and to make them reason their answers. Activities are well thought out to make children work as part of a group and take turns.

Physical development

77. Children make good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their development with more than would be expected achieving highly. Children in both nursery and reception become more skilful when using large apparatus. They twist and turn, climbing under and over rungs, and balance safely on the climbing frame. Their co-ordination improves as they play games of throwing and catching in the outside play area. Children in one of the reception classes are particularly skilful when working with large apparatus in the school hall. They are confident and agile, using the apparatus particularly well, especially when balancing and climbing. They chose to have a starting and end position to each action, and try very hard for instance when stretching to the extreme. Older children know they need 'warm up' for physical activity but opportunities to draw attention to the effect of exercise on, for instance the heartbeat, are not taken. When working on tabletop activities, children use construction sets successfully to make a model, and use scissors and hand tools with increasing control.

78. The quality of teaching is good. It is never less than satisfactory and on occasion very good. Where teaching is very good, the teacher reinforces children's learning in other areas, for example by counting, and by linking work on the benches to 'pulling' and 'pushing' work done in the classroom. She gives children suitable choices but still helps them improve by using demonstration effectively, so children make good progress in landing safely after a jump because they know to bend their knees. Good work is constantly praised, "That is an interesting way of curling round the bars", giving children the confidence to experiment further and make greater progress. Both nursery and reception have regular allocated times to use the indoor facilities. There is a large well-equipped outdoor play area, a garden, but very little grass and no soft play area. There is no

covered area outside for the children to use when it rains and this restricts the use of the outside play area.

Creative development

79. Children make good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their development by the end of reception. Paintings in the nursery show a range of skill expected of this age group. Children paint and crayon pictures of each other, and very successfully paint summer water reflections. Pictures vary in detail but all are completed carefully. The good progress continues in the reception classes, where the children paint and draw with increasing detail, as they did when completing observational drawings of the Memorial Building. They experiment with paints and mix new colours. Children in the reception classes use materials such as tissue paper and beads to make attractive paper flowers. Children in both age groups know many action rhymes with good recall of tune, words and actions. They start and stop on command, singing songs such as 'I hear thunder' with great enthusiasm.

80. The quality of teaching is good in both age groups. Staff provide numerous opportunities for children to be creative by using paint, materials, music and imaginative play each day. All children, including those with special educational needs, are given good opportunities to use the various areas of the classroom and staff praise their work regularly.

ENGLISH

81. In the year 2000 tests for seven-year-olds, standards in reading and writing were well below those expected nationally and when compared to pupils from similar backgrounds. By the age of eleven, standards of attainment were in line with national expectations and when compared to pupils from similar backgrounds. Though standards by the age of seven appear to have fallen since the last inspection, pupils' achievements are satisfactory taking account of the level at which they began. Inspection evidence indicates that standards by the ages of seven and eleven are broadly average for the current Years 2 and 6. Although pupils in the current Year 6 have made satisfactory progress for most of their junior school career, there have been times when they have almost stood still in their progress. Pupils in this class have made good progress over the last ten months. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers plan work for them at the appropriate level and they receive good support.

82. By the end of the infants at the age of seven, most pupils have at least satisfactory and often good skills in speaking and listening. They listen to what they are told, and understand instructions and stories. Pupils of all abilities take part in class discussions about the books they are using, or about religious stories, or about the science experiments they have conducted. Many have sensible contributions to make to discussions, and they enjoy the stories that are told or have read to them. By the age of eleven, at the end of the juniors, pupils have developed their speaking and listening through good teacher interactions in many lessons besides English. Pupils mostly listen attentively, and respond well to questions that make them think more deeply. Many are enthusiastic when discussing stories, or matters of interest, and are suitably serious when talking about personal or spiritual matters. They have a sound command of the English language, and most give sensible reasons for the point they are arguing in a discussion, such as when giving a presentation about a biased newspaper or television report.

83. Standards in reading are satisfactory by the age of seven, and many of the more able pupils read well. They read stories with confidence and expression, sometimes

stumbling over the harder words, but enjoying their readings. They make good sense of the books they read, whether they are fictional stories or reference books. Less able pupils learn to recognise many words on sight, and how to build other words up. They look for clues in the sense of the story or in the pictures, although this sometimes leads to guessing, instead of actually reading. Most pupils are willing to read their work aloud in class, or in assemblies, and more able ones do so with confidence, using a loud voice. By the age of eleven, most pupils are willing and confident to read their own work or printed texts aloud in class, in assembly, or in church, and do so very well. They read a good variety of texts in class, using the library confidently to find books on any subject they want. They know how to look articles up in encyclopaedias, and how to use a dictionary and a thesaurus. Many pupils also obtain information from the computers, either from CD-ROM or from the Internet, for their work. More able pupils read with confidence and good expression from a range of different texts such as thriller stories, funny stories, the Bible or poems. They understand the parts of a book such as the index, contents and the synopsis on the back cover, and are developing a satisfactory awareness of grammar and punctuation as it applies to their reading as well as their writing. Less able pupils also enjoy their reading in the main, and have had additional reading lessons to boost their learning. These have had the desired effect, and by the time they leave school, very few pupils now lag behind in their reading. Many pupils read at home for their own enjoyment. Pupils of all abilities use their skills well to read texts and worksheets in other subject. For instance, when they come across a new vocabulary they draw upon their knowledge to help them read the new word.

84. Many pupils in the infant department are slow to learn to write well, and the standards are a little below national expectation at the moment. Even so, taking account of prior attainment, the achievement of most pupils is at least satisfactory. Less able pupils are learning to write through 'emergent writing', putting pencil to paper to create their own stories and diary entries, without too much regard for the spelling and the letter formation at first. This has been a major initiative for the school in recent years, and is encouraging less able pupils to believe in themselves, and to begin to write. They copy words and sentences with varying degrees of accuracy and neatness. More able pupils write or print neatly, and are learning to spell short familiar words consistently accurately. They write in a range of different forms, such as letters, lists, instructions and stories, and they practice their writing well in other subjects, as well as in separate English lessons. Pupils make satisfactory progress, and some show good improvement in their writing by the age of eleven years. They write for different purposes, such as a design brief in a technology lesson, recounting a story from the point of view of one of the characters, or writing a piece of deliberately biased reporting about, for instance, fox hunting, immigration or vandalism. Most pupils' handwriting is neat, and some pupils develop a good style. They write with sound regard for grammar, punctuation and spelling for the most part. Most pupils continue to improve their writing through work in other subjects. For instance, they are expected to record their investigations independently in science and write accounts in history and geography.

85. The teaching of English is good, particularly in the junior department and this leads to good learning in lessons. This is improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory with some unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons are now better pitched to the needs of pupils of different abilities or ages within a class. Pupils learn well because almost all of the teachers are confident with teaching according to the guidelines of the National Literacy Strategy, and some are beginning to adapt it well to their own needs with their own classes. Where the teaching is particularly good, lessons are very well planned in a sequence of activities, with good resources that include 'big books' which all pupils can read together. Texts about what blue whales like to eat; being a tarantula spider in a pet shop, and the different rhythms in the works of one poet gain pupils' interest and, in

addition to improving reading, increase pupils' general knowledge. There are sufficient reading books for one each in a group. Sometimes teachers use computers or appropriate worksheets for different levels of ability – or different age groups in the mixed-age classes. Teachers generally begin their lessons with a clear statement of what the lesson is about, so all pupils know what to expect, and they use open questions particularly well to get pupils thinking and involved as much as possible. Their lively and flexible approach helps to make pupils well motivated and interested. Teachers have high expectations that all pupils are fully involved and putting good effort into their work. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with their pupils, and this helps pupils to learn well in a secure and supportive environment.

86. Although there were no unsatisfactory lessons, some, in different parts of the school did lose pace whilst the pupils were working on their own and the teacher was with a separate group. Sometimes, while the teacher is leading a whole-class session, support assistants have nothing specific to do because pupils are well behaved. On these occasions their time could be used more effectively for instance noting which pupils are not taking an active part, or noting if pupils with special educational needs are meeting their targets. More use could be made of computers, and teachers could have more expectation that pupils would correct the spelling and grammar mistakes that they have highlighted when they mark the pupils' work. In general, however, the teaching is lively, interactive and positive, especially in the Literacy lessons. Teachers generally make good use of reviews at the end of these sessions to reinforce what the pupils have learned. Additional time allocated to the teaching of English, such as quiet class reading sessions, individual reading with the teacher, handwriting practice, spelling homework and tests, and extended writing contribute well to pupils' learning. The way that all teachers expect pupils to do extended written work in other subjects especially science, history and geography has a particularly positive influence on pupils' learning; teachers do very well not to rely on worksheets that require little thinking or writing.

87. The leadership and management of English are good. The well-qualified co-ordinator has a positive outlook and a sound view of the subject through the school. Suitable assessment procedures are in place, and there is a good policy for each aspect of the subject, although these policies do need to be refreshed in view of recent changes. The subject development plan is very good and addresses the priorities for development, such as raising the profile of writing throughout the school. Resources are sound, with books easily accessible throughout the school. The accommodation is also satisfactory, with satisfactory library areas in the corridors of both departments. The co-ordinator is not given time to monitor the quality of teaching throughout the school. The curriculum is good in its overall breadth and balance, including the extended use of writing and reading in other subjects. Extension lessons for particular aspects of English, and the well-planned literacy lessons contribute well to pupils' achievements. The only drawback is the withdrawal of over twenty pupils from literacy lessons one mornings each week for their music tuition. This needs to be reconsidered with a view to changing the timetable of either the musicians or the literacy lessons. Work in literacy, such as the study of poems from other cultures, and works by well-known authors makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

88. In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were well below national averages. During the inspection, through analysis of the work of pupils in the present Year 2 and discussions with their teachers and the mathematics co-ordinator it is evident that the present Year 2 are attaining standards that are around the national averages. The difference between the 2000 results and this finding is due to the fact that the group which

took the 2000 tests is an exceptional group whose attainment in mathematics has been consistently much lower than age groups either side of it. In the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds, Year 6 pupils attained results that were well above the national average. This group was an exceptional year group. They attained the highest marks in the mathematics tests in the school since 1996. Pupils in the current Year 6 are not attaining these high levels. Nevertheless, from the evidence gathered during the inspection, it is clear that the majority of pupils are attaining standards that are above national expectations. This represents improvement since the last inspection when attainment for this age group was judged to be average.

89. By the age of seven most pupils are confident in their use of number to 100 and beyond. They recognise patterns in number when, for example, the teacher gives them a sequence of numbers with one missing. Most pupils differentiate between odd and even numbers. When they work with money up to one pound in class they carry out simple transactions. They know the names of a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes and give their properties. When researching their favourite food, pupils communicate the results of their surveys in the form of bar charts and discuss and compare their findings. In the lively question and answer sessions that often introduce lessons they offer explanations of the ways in which they tackle mathematical problems set by the teacher in their heads. They are developing their own ways of reaching answers. More able and average pupils use mathematical language well and write out problems in sentences. More able pupils are beginning to use brackets well to solve simple problems.

90. By age 11, the majority of pupils have a good understanding of number and place value. They work with whole number problems with remainders. They use appropriate methods to solve word problems, for example, when studying the budget of a notional High School and working out factors such as cost per pupil. Most show a sound knowledge of their tables. They work with fractions and answer questions such as what is three quarters of an hour in minutes. They understand multiplication and division and check their answers using various strategies to estimate them. Pupils of all abilities use tally charts and generate graphs and bar and pie charts to communicate their findings, for example in a topic on accidents involving cyclists. More able pupils know the formulae for working out the area of rectangles, and have a good knowledge of the names and attributes of triangles. They use co-ordinates competently when working with maps. Less able pupils are using all four operations in a variety of calculations and are checking their results to see if they are reasonable. Though standards are high for the majority of pupils in Year 6 there is little evidence in their work of the use of information and communication technology. For example, graphs and charts are routinely drawn by hand. Year 5 pupils make good use of information technology in a variety of ways including the revision and reinforcement of number and development work with co-ordinates. There is a need to share more widely in the school the various benefits new technology brings to the teaching and learning of the subject.

91. The teaching of mathematics is good in both departments. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Lessons follow the National Numeracy Strategy well in their planning and structure. Normally, lessons begin with teachers setting out what pupils will learn on the board so pupils are aware of the purpose of the lesson. These are often referred to at the end of lessons so pupils can see what progress they have made. Then follows a whole-class session which usually includes a rapid question and answer session, testing and extending pupils ability to work with numbers in their heads. Good methods are used which engage pupils' interest, such as the game in one Year 6 lesson involving cards dealt to each pupil that are the parts of one big inter-linked problem that rolls out around the classroom. Activities are well prepared and this means that pupils lose as little time as

possible for learning. There is some over reliance on worksheets with younger children. The pace of some lessons in Years 1 and 2, though satisfactory, is not as good as with older children. In a few lessons children take too long to settle to tasks and teachers have to work hard to make sure that all children obey the normal classroom conventions. In the middle part of lessons classes are usually broken down into groups and given differing tasks. These tasks are normally well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers prepare classroom assistants well and their contribution to lessons is good. Like the teachers they know their pupils well. Relationships are good and are based on mutual trust and respect. The best lessons featured good pace, clear explanations, well targeted questions that involve pupils of all abilities in the class and the use of visual aids such as time lines and tables charts to reinforce pupils' understanding.

92. The more successful lessons feature a variety of activities that kept the pupils' interest at a high level. Pupils rise well to the challenge of improving their time in a number game that they periodically try. This not only engages their interest but gave them an understanding of their progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress overall. They are mainly included in class activities though they are sometimes withdrawn for specific activities where it is better for them to receive more individual attention. Pupils generally have very good learning attitudes. They concentrate well and this contributes to good quality learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about lessons and respond well to challenge such as in a Year 5 lesson when they are asked to design a poster on the computer explaining decimals to younger children. Regular homework is effective in reinforcing what pupils learn in class.

93. There are good opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects such as in physical education when they are asked to estimate the distance jumped by an athlete to gain a world record. They also make good use of the stop-watch to time each other when sprinting, thus gaining a better understanding of time. The use of information and communication technology to reinforce and extend pupils' understanding of mathematics is still developing, though it is well used in a small number of classes. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge well in geography and science where they use graphs well.

94. The subject is well managed, though the person in charge, the deputy headteacher, is over-burdened with his subject and other responsibilities. He is a class teacher and does not have time to discharge his responsibilities. He has no free time, for example, to continue the well-devised programme of monitoring and evaluation of the subject and this is now suspended. There is a need to reinstate this programme to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistent across the school.

SCIENCE

95. The results in the year 2000 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds are well below the national average. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that this was a temporary lowering in the standards, because of the ability of pupils in the previous Year 2 class. The predicted results for 2001 are above the national average. Results in the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds were well above the national average, and well above those of pupils from similar backgrounds. Teachers have predicted that this will fall in the 2001 tests because of the ability of pupils in the current Year 6, but nevertheless will be above average.

96. By the age of seven, pupils display a good understanding of the parts of a plant, such as the leaves and petals. In one lesson they produce good observational drawings of plants in the school grounds. Pupils discover that pushes and pulls change the shape of

clay, and make model cars and boats change speed and direction. When studying a picture representing different types of forces, more able pupils describe how the shape of a bouncy castle changes when children jump on it. During a follow up lesson to a field study trip, pupils of all abilities successfully research how different water creatures move and what they eat. They understand the life-cycle of a frog and describe the changes from frog-spawn to adult frog. Pupils of all abilities have a satisfactory knowledge of physical processes and talk about different sources of light and sound. They name a range of materials and their uses stating that objects, for example, a table is made from wood and a computer is made from plastic.

97. As they move through the juniors, pupils continue to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes. By the age of eleven, pupils understand that the place where a plant grows has an effect on the size of its leaves and the stem. In a well-prepared investigation, pupils compare the size of dandelions growing in the open ground of the playing field to those in the deep grass by the perimeter fence. They correctly predict that the plants growing in the deeper grass will be larger. Pupils describe what happens following the pollination and fertilisation of the flower of the dandelion, and how the seed is distributed. When talking to pupils they show a good understanding of a broad range of scientific knowledge, for instance the effects of friction when riding a bicycle, and the names of planets in the solar system. Pupils investigate the effects of air resistance on how fast they can run. They draw on their previous knowledge as they recall previous work on water resistance and that flatter shapes take longer to sink to the bottom of a container of water. When they run holding a large piece of cardboard, pupils recognise that their speed is influenced by having to push the shape through the air.

98. The teaching in science ranges from good to very good and is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection where some of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The good levels of pupil achievement are a direct result of the overall good teaching seen in all age groups. Teachers make effective use of activities that are designed to meet the needs of the different abilities of pupils, for example the range of worksheets in a Year 2 lesson on water creatures. Less able pupils had to fill in missing words and write phrases about different creatures, whilst more able pupils were given a reference sheet and expected to find out further information about a number of creatures. Teachers use resources, such as a local field study centre, effectively to gain and maintain pupils' interest, and to give pupils the opportunity to take part in activities such as 'pond dipping'. Regular use is made of this facility for a range of activities about environmental issues, for instance the study of mini-beasts. Teachers prepare all scientific investigations well to encourage pupils to develop their skills in prediction and their understanding of the need for their tests to be fair. Work seen in books illustrates that teachers expect pupils to develop their writing and communication skills when recording investigations, so pupils make good gains in these areas. More able pupils are expected to work independently and complete their work with minimum adult support. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good additional support from classroom assistants. Pupils work well together and discuss their findings when working in pairs or as a group during investigations because teachers plan good opportunities for them to do so and expect them to co-operate. Pupils' books are marked regularly, but comments to support the marking are often too brief and provide little guidance for future work. Teachers in all age groups do not plan sufficiently for pupils to use computers to record their work and the results of their investigations.

99. The subject is well managed. The introduction of a nationally recognised programme for all classes has improved learning opportunities and given helpful guidance to teachers. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues well but does not have the chance to

regularly monitor the teaching of science. Staff have recognised the need to develop a more consistent method of assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school and intend to look at moderating work at the end of the infants to inform teacher assessment procedures more effectively. The quality of resources is good and they are well matched to the wide range of activities carried out in investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

100. It was only possible to observe two art and design lessons in the infant department, and one in the junior department. Judgements are based on these lessons, analysis of pupils' work displayed around the school, in their sketchbooks and following discussions with teachers, the subject manager and with pupils.

101. Standards in art and design are above those expected nationally by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards have been maintained in the infant department and have improved in the junior school. This is good improvement as less time is now devoted to art and design because of the demands of other subjects such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Children with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they receive.

102. By the time pupils are seven, their skills, knowledge and understanding are above those expected. Pupils mix paint to vary shades and tints successfully. They experiment with a range of techniques such as wax-resist and washes, and use a variety of media such as chalk, pastels and watercolours. Pupils use thick paint to paint portraits placing the features in the correct place. They extend their ideas and produce an eye-catching display to support their work on 'tongue twisters' in literacy. Good use is made of natural materials, for instance, pupils use seeds, leaves and other natural materials to produce work linked to the natural designs of William Morris. Pupils use charcoal effectively in their observational drawings of 'something special' such as a scooter. Pupils make good progress using a range of media in the junior department. By the age of eleven, they select materials most appropriate to their subject. For example, in studies 'a winter skyline', pupils used watercolours successfully to create a watery winter effect to contrast with the black silhouette of the buildings. More able pupils achieve a particularly high standard in observational drawings, with some very good examples on display. For example, following discussions on the work of Henry Moore, a drawing of a soapstone head, and a very good interpretation of Van Gogh's 'Yellow Chair with Pipe' were produced. In these and other pencil drawings pupils used shading very effectively to show shadow and create a three-dimensional effect.

103. Three-dimensional work is extended very well. For example, as part of their Viking project, younger junior age pupils have modelled realistic brooches using non-fire clay. Pupils in both age groups have produced high quality mosaics. Parents and pupils in the infant department designed and created an effective mosaic of the school from 1868 to 2001. They carefully drew their design on wood, glued on the tiles and grouted them to complete the work. In addition to producing a good record of the school's history, thus contributing to their cultural development, the activity allowed staff and pupils to work together as a team working towards a common aim. Following their study of Roman architecture, pupils in one of the junior classes have designed and produced a detailed mosaic of a fish. Although some pupils have experienced tie-dye, and another group has used pastels successfully to produce 'runic messages', pupils in both age groups have too few opportunities to appreciate, and work in, the style of artists beyond the Western world.

104. From the lessons observed, teaching is good overall. Teachers are well organised, with materials readily to hand and this avoids wasting time. Introductions to lessons allow pupils to understand what is expected of them. Good use was made of a video-tape to inspire pupils in an infant class in an introduction to collage. In another infant class, the teacher increased pupils' cultural knowledge by explaining the word 'collage' comes from the French for 'glue'. Pupils in both these classes worked well as part of a group, exploring ideas to produce their collage. Questioning to improve pupils' observation is very good. This encourages pupils to consider details such as shape and shadow, and develops their awareness of the composition of a picture to good effect. For example, pupils in Year 5 made good progress in their drawing of sports equipment because the teacher questioned pupils about the direction of the light and the drape of a scarf over the football. Pupils are encouraged to examine elements of texture as well as colour and shape before commencing their own work. Teachers share their own expertise generously to develop and extend pupils' skills. Pupils are very positive about their art and keen to show and explain their work. They show intense concentration and pay good attention to teachers' instructions and to each other's suggestions

105. The subject manager has considerable enthusiasm for the subject and a good degree of expertise. She monitors standards in art and design through looking at displays and at pupils' work, but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. Resources are adequate and used effectively to promote pupils' learning. Assessment is satisfactory. When used, pupils' sketchbooks show a clear development in skills. However, the use of sketchbooks as a permanent record of pupils' development is only just beginning. At present inconsistent use across the school means that much of their value is lost. Art and design is used well both to support work in other subjects and to extend the school's sense of community. Displays around the school have been well thought out, brightening the environment and celebrating pupils' efforts and achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. During the inspection it was only possible to see a limited number of lessons. From analysis of work on display, discussions with the co-ordinator and teachers it is clear that standards by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with those expected nationally. This shows a decline in the standards noted during the last inspection, which were above national expectations. Much of this can be attributed to the time and energy applied in developing the literacy and numeracy strategies which has led to teachers having less time to teach and maintain high standards in this subject.

107. By the age of seven, pupils have developed satisfactory practical and design skills, for example when they constructed their wheeled vehicles. They talk about each other's work and discuss the good and the not so good features. Most identify the main features of vehicles and make satisfactory labelled drawings. They explain to the teacher what they want to achieve with their designs. They also describe how their simple mechanisms will work, and produce evaluations that are recorded. They successfully design and make their own moving cards. Their research for this is good and features examination of existing products. Pupils of all abilities have a satisfactory understanding of foods which contribute to a healthy diet through an activity investigating fruit and vegetables.

108. By the age of eleven, pupils work to defined design briefs, and produce sketches and drawings which communicate what they intend to design. The projects that are most effective feature those where pupils record all stages of the process from initial designs through research findings, and on to final design and evaluations. Most elements of this occur in a Year 6 project to design footwear. Pupils undertake good research into existing

products. They produce sound evaluations that follow guidelines laid down by their teachers. In these they suggest ways in which their work can be improved. Typical of their homework in this project is the research into the basic designs of slippers and the materials commonly used in their construction. All pupils receive the benefit of food technology lessons that give them satisfactory basic cooking skills.

109. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both key stages. This is evident in the lessons observed, and from scrutiny of work on display around the school. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge and planning is sound. This leads to a well-ordered learning programme for pupils. The school has adopted a national framework for the teaching of design technology and this has improved planning and teachers' understanding of the standards of work expected of their pupils. Teachers have developed productive working relationships with their pupils and this helps to promote sound learning. The best teaching involves language that challenges pupils and extends their vocabulary and their understanding. This was so in a lesson with younger pupils when the teacher discussed with them the range of features which make up a vehicle. The control and management of pupils is at least satisfactory, and teachers and classroom assistants work together well to make sure that pupils follow the classroom conventions. This keeps pupils well on task and leads to satisfactory learning. Pupils enjoy working with the variety of materials and processes that teachers provide for them. Pupils in one class, who on occasion are prone to noisy behaviour, were noticeably quiet and purposeful in their design and technology lesson. In some lessons, however, the approach to the teaching of design technology is limited and does not allow pupils the freedom to experiment and to explore alternative ways of tackling problems through practical rather than academic activities.

110. The subject is managed by a very capable teacher who has only recently taken over responsibility. She now has the task of writing schemes of work and developing assessment and recording systems. She intends to develop support booklets to guide the efforts of both pupils and teachers. These will make sure that all elements of the design process receive the attention they require, and that consistently good records are kept of progress.

GEOGRAPHY

111. During the week of the inspection only two geography lessons were observed, both these were in the junior department. However, evidence gained from these lessons, and a detailed scrutiny of previous work indicates that both age groups make satisfactory progress and achieve standards in line with national expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards at the last inspection.

112. By the age of seven, pupils have studied different types of houses, they are aware for instance that dwellings can be detached, semi-detached or terraced. Pupils of all abilities use their mathematical knowledge well to draw a pictogram to show how class members travel to school. Pupils in Year 2 locate their holiday destinations in their 'travel agents' and have produced an audio-tape to describe their journey from home to school. Pupils gain an awareness of other countries and distances from displays such as 'Where in the world is Miss Toorawa?' showing a map of the world and the journey that a past member of staff is taking in Australia, with a display of interesting objects from each country visited.

113. By the age of eleven, pupils use geographical terms, such as 'estuary' and 'source' confidently as part of their study of the River Severn. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson understand the different symbols that are used to represent features on an ordinance survey map.

Older pupils research information from the Internet to give a presentation on different mountain ranges in the world. In this lesson pupils worked very well as a group, with each member contributing to the final presentation. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of other countries as they study the differences between village life in India and their own life styles.

114. Of the two lessons observed the teaching was good in one and very good in the second. In the lesson where teaching was very good, the teacher allowed pupils to make very good progress in using computers as well as developing high order and independent research skills. Pupils used their knowledge of mountain ranges and worked particularly well together selecting information and organising a group presentation. The teacher constantly checked pupils' knowledge of geographical facts and their understanding of the task. The scrutiny of work shows that teachers prepare relevant and stimulating activities and resources, for example, a good range of visual aids to support the interpretation of maps in Year 4. Pupils respond well to the high expectations set by their teachers and produce a good volume of neatly presented work.

115. The subject is currently managed in the short term, by the deputy headteacher, until the return of the co-ordinator at the start of the next school year. No time has been allocated for the manager to monitor developments and the teaching of geography. The school has recognised the need to review and extend resources in light of the new areas of study and to develop a system for recording the knowledge and skills pupils have acquired.

HISTORY

116. During the inspection only two lessons were observed and these were both in the junior department. Further evidence was gained from talking to the pupils, studying the work in their books, and from the good quality displays around the school. This information suggests that, as at the time of the last inspection, standards are in line with national expectations by the age of eleven, and that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards by the age of seven.

117. The examination of pupils' work indicates that by the time they are seven, pupils have a basic understanding of the influences and the roles of several historical figures and events, for example Florence Nightingale and the Great Fire of London. They have compared toys in the past and in the present and looked at evidence, for instance old photographs, to find information about the types of holidays in the past. Pupils in Year 2 have constructed a simple time line from 1000AD to 2000AD and have recorded one major event to represent each century.

118. By the age of eleven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of a number of historical periods, for example Britain since 1948, the Vikings and the Victorians. Pupils' have increased their understanding in recognising the importance of different interpretations of past events and this is now satisfactory. Pupils studying Ancient Greece accurately place the period on a timeline and are acquiring detailed information covering a wide range of facts about the topic. During this lesson the pupils work well in groups using written material to discover information about city states and the activities represented in a market scene. Representatives of each group give a short presentation on their findings. Other pupils conduct a similar activity on the Indus Valley civilisation using information they have researched from the Internet.

119. In the two good lessons that were observed teachers had prepared the research information in detail and the expectations of pupils were very clear. Pupils responded in a positive manner to the challenging questions they were posed and worked very well together in the group activities. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements and encourage them to make an active contribution to all lessons. For example, the Year 6 lesson commenced with pupils being asked 'quickfire' questions about facts from previous topics, such as where the Second World War came on the timeline and the dates of Queen Victoria's life. Good opportunities are provided to allow pupils to develop independent learning skills through the use of research material.

120. There is a new policy for history and the scheme of work throughout the school is based on a nationally recognised programme of study. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was no scheme of work in place. The co-ordinator has recognised the need to clarify the areas of study for the mixed year classes, to create a system of assessment and to develop relevant resources to support the range of topics. There is no specific time made available for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching of history in other classes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

121. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to be in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven.

122. By the age of seven, pupils use a word processor well, for example, to write their poetry. Some use their information and communication technology skills appropriately to design on screen the vehicles they intend to make in design and technology. They make sound use of new technology when they use an online encyclopaedia to research living processes in science. Pupils have only limited understanding of how to build a database. Pupils in Year 2 work successfully with simple models of the real world to find out more about their own.

123. Information and communication technology lessons make a valuable contribution to literacy as the teacher encourages extended responses to questions about their onscreen explorations. Pupils command a robot to move in a predetermined course about the hall floor and they model geometrical shapes on the computer screen. Through this they gain a fair understanding of ways in which a computer can control the movements of machines. Pupils of all abilities play with spelling and number games and so improve their literacy and numeracy. However, there is little discussion of the impact of computers on society and in the world about them. This is a weakness in all years.

124. By the age of eleven, pupils use desktop publishing software to produce a range of leaflets. Some advertise imaginary holidays in a hotel. Others explain the ozone layer, or describe the Indus valley. A number of more able pupils have a fair understanding of how to use multimedia presentational packages. Though they have created a class database and have learnt how to store and retrieve information, their recall of the structures used and the terminology associated with databases is limited. Most use graphs and charts to communicate findings. Pupils of all abilities use the Internet to research topics and to visit revision sites. Most have learnt how to model financial information as part of an exercise on currency conversion and managing holiday finances. Though pupils have had no direct experience of the use of sensors linked to computers they have a suitable understanding of how the common types work. They have suitable experience of modelling choices in a software game and have built procedures which control the movements of a 'screen turtle'. Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of the uses of information technology in the world about them. The school makes sound use of a number of software packages to develop and extend the basic skills of pupils with special educational needs.

125. Teaching is good overall in both age groups. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers give clear explanations and this helps pupils to make good progress. Pupils are well motivated by the technology and their attitudes to learning are good. They concentrate well and stay on task for much of the time. Pupils enjoy good, productive working relationships with the adults who teach them about information technology. One of the learning support assistants makes a particularly valuable contribution to the teaching of information and communication technology in the school. She teaches small groups of children while the teacher takes the rest of the class and she also supervises the computer club.

126. Because the permanent subject manager is working for a short period with the Local Education Authority helping other teachers in schools, the subject is under the supervision of the deputy headteacher. His subject knowledge is satisfactory. He is very enthusiastic about the subject and this is conveyed to pupils and helps to encourage them. However, his wide range of responsibilities means that he cannot undertake any classroom observation. During the inspection there was little use of the computers situated in classrooms. This is not an efficient use of these resources. The developing schemes of work for the subject closely follow national guidelines. Assessment and recording procedures are developing and, whilst satisfactory, need further work. The permanent subject manager who is soon returning to school after secondment has used his experience

as an advisory teacher to write a manageable assessment process for the school which he will introduce on his return. He has a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards and is preparing a programme of training to further raise staff expertise in the area.

MUSIC

127. Standards are satisfactory by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory when compared with their previous level of skill and musical awareness. There has been a satisfactory maintenance of standards since the last report. As before, pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations, although there is still a lack in the composing aspect. Pupils still enjoy their lessons, and the teaching continues to be at least satisfactory, and is now more often good.

128. By the age of seven, most pupils have appropriate awareness of pitch and rhythm, and sing a number of songs and hymns enthusiastically. They accompany their singing with percussion instruments such as tambourines, tambours, cymbals, rain sticks and Indian bells. They use these to create sound effects to imitate moods of the weather, such as rain, wind and thunder. They also use clapping, patting their knees or blowing to enhance the effects and moods of the songs they sing. Pupils sing with enthusiasm rather than style, but they enjoy their music and have a good attitude to their lessons. There was a suppressed "yessss!" from the pupils in one class when the teacher told them what the next hymn would be. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, they sing well, in harmony, in a good range of songs and hymns, with very good feel for the mood of the piece, from reverential hymns to 'pop' songs. Their instrumental accompaniments are more in time and in tune with the mood of the music, and they understand some elements of tempo, musical appreciation and musical notation. Pupils generally have a good attitude to music and singing, and they mostly behave well in lessons. Some pupils are learning to play the flute, guitar, electronic keyboard or violin as part of the additional tuition that is available, and they are learning well, gaining good grades in their chosen instruments. Unfortunately, these tuition periods take the pupils out of their literacy and numeracy lessons, and this causes problems with continuity of teaching back in the class. More opportunities could be made to explore music experimentally and creatively, in composing pupils' own pieces in different ways.

129. Music is taught well in the main, and this leads to good learning in individual lessons, with teachers having satisfactory knowledge of the subject, and running their lessons at a good pace for the most part. Where the learning is best, teachers have planned a clear sequence of activities of increasing difficulty, each building on the next, and all being developed from learning in previous lessons. One such lesson saw pupils singing about the different kinds of weather, having listened to the music of Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' symphony. They were then learning to make accompanying sounds by patting their knees or clapping, and then learning to use instruments such as cymbals, bells and tambourines to enhance the effects. The pace of the lesson was good throughout, and the teacher was enthusiastic and had good subject knowledge, as well as good control of two classes of children. Where the pace of lessons was slower, it tended to be because the teachers took a lot of time in organising the pupils into groups according to their instruments or the part they were going to sing, and the pupils became distracted and inattentive for a time.

130. The leadership and management of music are satisfactory, although the co-ordinator does not have any time in which to organise the subject or to monitor the standard of teaching and learning throughout the school. There are good plans for

developing the subject, including getting a simple and effective form of assessment into place consistently throughout the school. This could be used effectively to develop the curriculum each year according to how well pupils are progressing, and to keep parents well informed about their children's progress in nationally recognised terms. Resources are satisfactory, taking into account pupils' own instruments and those provided by the music service. More use could be made, however, of more instruments from different cultures, and electronic instruments and sound-makers, to give more breadth and variety to the music lessons and performances. The accommodation is good, with a separate room that is used for music lessons and for individual tuition, as well as for storage of equipment and resources. The taught syllabus is satisfactory, being based on nationally recognised guidelines and two commercial schemes, but there is a need to draw up a clear plan of what will be taught in each year, rather than simply dipping into the different schemes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Standards in physical education continue to be in line with those expected by the age of seven. By the age of eleven, standards are average in athletics and swimming and above those expected in games. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in dance and gymnastics in the junior school because no lessons were observed and there are no accurate records of pupils' achievements or photographs of evidence of standards in these aspects. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to compare standards for eleven-year-olds with those at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress in acquiring new skills and improving their stamina.

132. Pupils of all ages and abilities understand the need to warm up for exercise and are aware of the impact of strenuous activity on their bodies. By the age of seven, in gymnastics, pupils co-ordinate and control their bodies well when working on the floor and when using large apparatus. They use the space well and show imagination when curling and stretching. Pupils transfer their sequence successfully to the apparatus, using all levels, and having a start and a finish. Because teachers give classes effective guidance to reflect upon their own and each other's performances, pupils have definite ideas about their strengths and where they could improve their skills further. Pupils talk clearly about the work they have done in games and dance. They show reasonable accuracy when throwing and catching balls in the playground, and more able pupils control the direction in which they hit their ball.

133. Pupils swim in Year 5. Any pupils who have not met the required standard are able to continue their swimming lessons in Year 6. By the age of eleven, most pupils swim the required 25 metres. Pupils experience orienteering on their visit to Cliffe House as part of their outdoor and adventurous activities. In athletics, pupils improve their personal performance in running and jumping because of the techniques shown by their teachers and because, for instance, after timing their run they are challenged to improve on their previous performance. Pupils achieve well in games. All abilities take part in a number of games, improving their ball control, the way they play as a team member and improving the accuracy of their shooting. School teams have been very successful in winning local leagues but recognise that it is the taking part and not the winning that is important.

134. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good, being good overall in both age groups. Most lesson plans give clear directions for developing pupils' skills. The majority of teachers skilfully structure their lesson so that pupils face increasing challenges and develop their skills fully. They make good use of pupils' performance to demonstrate achievement and encourage others. Several staff have evident enthusiasm for sport and

are keen to share this with pupils. They are good role models and change into appropriate clothing for physical education lessons. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to the activity. Teachers take care to make sure pupils have the correct sports kit and that hair is tied back and jewellery is left with an adult for safety. In lessons where teaching is less effective there is insufficient pace to the lesson and pupils sit around waiting for their turn, often cooling down. In lessons where teaching is very good, for example, in a Year 5 athletics lesson, pupils made very good progress in jumping because the lesson had been very well planned. The warm up included suitable activities to loosen the leg muscles and structured teaching, for instance, the use of the arms to 'power launch' helped pupils improve their performance. Because the teacher awarded points for each jump, pupils were eager to gain team points and celebrated the achievements of all. Pupils appreciate each other's efforts because teachers give them opportunities to reflect upon their own and each other's performances. They take part enthusiastically in physical activities and co-operate well when working in pairs, groups and teams. Most pupils concentrate well and use lesson time to the full. However, a significant minority in some classes is unwilling to be involved and sometimes this interferes with the learning of the rest of the class. All staff emphasize the need to play by the rules and to play fair. This makes a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development.

135. The subject is managed by the deputy headteacher who gives freely of his time in a number of out of school activities, and to take pupils to tournaments. Good use is made of the school grounds to teach games and athletics. The school benefits from having two good-sized halls which helps with timetabling. Planning shows pupils are taught all aspects of the subject systematically. School teams participate successfully in local tournaments for football, rugby and netball. Staff encourage pupils to take part in a good range of sports outside lesson times. These include football, cricket, netball, athletics and cross-country running though most of these are planned for older pupils. The school is active in promoting equal access to all sports for all pupils. For example, a number of girls play in the football teams. A suitable programme is in place for all age groups. However, the subject policy is out of date and does not include sections that are now expected to give guidance to colleagues. Whilst staff know their pupils well and are confident of the capabilities of pupils, other than in swimming, there is no system for recording the skills pupils have acquired. The co-ordinator recognises that the assessment and recording of pupils' skills and achievements is an area for development.