

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107749

Headteacher: Mr A A Parker

Reporting inspector: P B McAlpine  
21552

Dates of inspection: 5-8 November 2001

Inspection number: 196598

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:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Grosvenor Road Dalton Huddersfield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HD5 9HU
Telephone number:	01484 531669
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John McGee
Date of previous inspection:	21 April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21552	P B McAlpine	Registered inspector	Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19320	B Attaway	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29262	N Hardy	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23453	C Cressey	Team inspector	Foundation stage English as an additional language	
11419	J Underwood	Team inspector	English Music Equal opportunities	
31790	M Jones	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	
27292	B Knowles	Team inspector	History Geography	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

There are 321 full-time pupils. This is bigger than most other primary schools. A further 24 part-time pupils attend a nursery class. The number of pupils attending the school has fallen by about 12 per cent since the previous inspection. The pupils were organised into 10 classes plus a nursery class at the time of the inspection, rising to 11 classes in January 2002 with a further intake into the Reception Year. Three of the classes for full-time pupils contain pupils from two different year groups. Admission to the Reception Year takes place in September and January, depending on the age of the child. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal varies from year to year and is currently about 22 per cent, which is above average. About 15 per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register and this is well below average; less than one per cent have a statement of special needs, which is also well below average. The bulk of the pupils with special needs have difficulties with literacy, a few with numeracy, and a small number have emotional and behaviour difficulties. A small proportion of the pupils, about five per cent, come from a minority ethnic background, mainly black Caribbean, with two who are white European and one Indonesian. Four children speak English as an additional language; the proportion is about average. Their first languages are Polish, French, and Indonesian. They speak English fluently and do not need extra support. There are no Travellers or refugees. The proportion of pupils whose attainment on entry is typical or better for their age is about average in most years but there are annual variations and occasionally the proportion is below average.

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

This is a satisfactory school with room for improvement. The teachers' relationships with pupils, the powerful Christian ethos, the high priority given to moral and social development and the good level of general care are major strengths, firmly led by the example of the headteacher. Nearly all pupils behave very well, work hard, and like school. Standards and achievement in subjects, however, are mixed; they are average in the main, good in reading, but not rising as fast as they should in every subject. The basic quality of teaching has improved substantially since the previous inspection though the good and high quality teaching is unevenly distributed between year groups. Leadership and management have effectively created a secure, stable, welcoming environment but have not focused enough on raising standards. Even so, standards are comparable to those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds and value for money is satisfactory.

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

- Standards in reading are above average in Year 6.
- The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently good or better.
- Large numbers of pupils enjoy school and work hard; nearly all of them behave very well.
- The provision for spiritual, moral and social education is very good.
- The procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour, including bullying, racism and sexism are very good.

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

- Standards in writing, particularly among boys, are not as high as they should be.
- Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, and design and technology are below average in the junior age group.
- There is too much variations in the quality of teaching between year groups.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs lacks rigour and does not have enough regard for the Code of Practice.

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

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

The school was last inspected in April 1997. In addition, there have been visits by Her Majesty's Inspectors to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Numeracy Strategy. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented with satisfactory effectiveness and this is a major improvement to the curriculum. The effective implementation has helped to raise standards in reading, increase the proportion of pupils attaining the expected national level in mathematics, and improve the basic quality of teaching. Standards in music have improved and are now satisfactory. Standards in writing and information and communication technology, however, have not improved and are below average in the juniors. Standards in art and design and in design and technology have fallen to below the average in the juniors. Action is being taken to raise standards in writing and to improve resources and teacher expertise in information and communication technology but the action has not yet had time to raise standards. The very positive attitudes of the pupils and very good relationships have been sustained and the overall standard of behaviour has improved. The effectiveness of the senior management's and governing body's responses to the issues for action from the previous inspection has been satisfactory overall. Subject leadership roles are clearly established and satisfactorily understood; relevant curricular documentation and schemes of work are now in place; the curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been improved; monitoring takes place. Assessment procedures have improved and are now satisfactory. The proportion of pupils exceeding national expectations in mathematics and science

has increased but more needs to be done to improve the achievement of the pupils who are more able. The procedures for school development planning have not improved enough. On balance, with the reservations noted above, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Since 1996, results in science at the end of Year 6 have gradually drawn closer to the national average. Results in mathematics, although fluctuating, have caught up with the national trend over the previous five years. Results in English were overtaken by the strong national increases in 1999 and have not improved quickly enough since then because of low standards in writing. Although the overall standard in English in Year 6 has not improved since the previous inspection, standards in reading have risen satisfactorily. At the end of Year 2, the 2001 results were above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading; they were lowest in reading because too few pupils exceeded the expected national level. Since 1997, results in Year 2 have risen satisfactorily in reading and mathematics and significantly in writing.

The standard of current work in Year 6 is above average in reading, average in mathematics and science but below average in writing. When current standards in reading and writing are viewed together, the overall standard in English is close to average in Year 6 and higher than in 2001. Current standards in science are also higher than in 2001. Not enough has been done since the previous inspection to raise the attainment of boys in writing or support those with potential for high attainment in mathematics and science. In the non-core subjects, standards in Year 6 are average in history, geography, music, and physical education, but below average in art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology. Standards in music have improved. There has been no improvement since the last inspection in standards in information and communication technology and this is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen in art and design, and design and technology; in the juniors and this, too, is unsatisfactory. The standard of current work in Year 2 is just above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics, and science and average in all of the non-core subjects. Religious education is inspected separately. In the Nursery and Reception Year, standards in each of the Foundation Stage areas of learning are average.

The long-term achievement of the pupils when compared to their attainment on entry is mixed. Achievement is good in reading; satisfactory in mathematics and science overall although the more able pupils are underachieving in both subjects; and poor in writing, particularly for boys and for pupils who are slightly less able. Standards were broadly the same in 2001 as schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The achievement of pupils with statements of special needs, reflecting literacy, language, behavioural, and physical difficulties, is satisfactory. The achievement of other pupils on the special educational needs register is variable but satisfactory overall. The systems for identifying pupils who should be on the register of special educational needs lack rigour and pupils with low attainment who are not on the register are not making the progress that they should. There are no significant variations in the achievement of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school did not achieve its targets in 2001. Although current standards are higher in Year 6, they are not yet on course to achieve the very challenging targets for 2002.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Enthusiasm for school is high. Pupils like their teachers and work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils behave well at all times. Playtimes are very orderly. Dinner times are civilised.
Personal development and	Good. Pupils are polite and courteous. Willingness to show initiative and take responsibility



relationships	are good. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Average.

No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was seen. Very little is reported. Parents and pupils are satisfied that if bullying occurred, it would be dealt with effectively by the headteacher. One pupil was excluded during the reporting period. Correct procedures were followed and he was successfully reintegrated into school. The very good relationships within the school contribute to the orderliness of the community.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The amount of teaching that is satisfactory or better is very similar to that of the typical school but there is less teaching that is good or better than is usually found. Overall, the teaching has improved since the previous inspection, reflecting the satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The quality of teaching varies between the year groups, however, and this unevenness is leading to inconsistencies in learning that are preventing standards from being as high as they should be by the end of Year 6. The teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is generally effective. Learning is relatively quick in the nursery, slower but satisfactory overall in the Reception Year, and is satisfactory, sometimes good, in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is very mixed in quality and too much is poor or very poor in Year 4, slowing learning considerably. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good and learning accelerates to a rapid pace. The teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory in most classes and good in Years 5 and 6. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are generally well taught, though there are a few exceptions. The teaching is meeting the needs of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language. The relationships that teachers have with the pupils are good, often very good, and this is a strong characteristic of the teaching. Behaviour management is mainly good and teachers lead by example. Specific learning objectives for pupils with different levels of attainment, however, are not consistently built in the weekly lesson planning or sufficiently evident in all of the teaching or work provided and this is the main reason for the variations in learning, achievement, and standards noted elsewhere. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is not consistently effective. Where teaching is poor or very poor, the interest of the pupils is lost and their time is wasted.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Not as broad as it should be in Years 3 to 6. Satisfactory in English and mathematics throughout. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 contains all of the required elements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Mixed and unsatisfactory overall because of shortcomings in the identification of pupils with special educational needs, the partnership with parents, and the monitoring of progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. There are very few bilingual pupils and none needing extra support with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. A strong aspect of the school. Spiritual development is woven into every aspect of school life. Pupils are very effectively taught right from wrong and given values upon which to base moral decisions. A very broad range of opportunities is provided for pupils to learn to live in a community. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Child protection procedures meet requirements. Attention to health and safety is good.

The headteacher and his staff promote spiritual, moral and social values very effectively. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Frameworks guide the teaching in English and mathematics. All of the National Curriculum subjects are taught but investigative skills in science, knowledge of control and modelling in information and communication technology, and basic skills and techniques in art and design and in design and technology are not taught in enough depth. The systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs, monitoring their progress, and involving their parents lack rigour. Throughout the school, assessment systems have improved and are now satisfactory. The data is analysed and used to allocate pupils to additional literacy support groups and to booster classes. The data is not yet used enough to track the

progress of individual pupils and identify those pupils whose progress is not sufficient. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are mainly very positive in their views about the school but a substantial minority, while stressing their overall support, raised concerns about specific aspects.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall but with aspects for improvement. Aims and values are strongly established. There is a shared commitment and a capacity to succeed. Strengths and weakness are known and action taken to improve. Procedures to develop the teachers have not improved quickly enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors know the school and influence its direction. Most relevant statutory requirements are met except for the governors' annual report and meeting, which is a significant omission.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory but late in the day. Test results are analysed, lessons monitored, and the information used to evaluate performance. These systems are new and only recently helping to identify the priorities for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. School development planning has improved and is now adequate. Income and expenditure per pupil are average. The pattern of expenditure is typical of most schools in the main. Principles of best value are applied to purchases but not to the evaluation of major school developments.

Teachers are sufficient in number for the size of the school. The amount of classroom assistance provided is low compared to other schools. The accommodation is good. Resources are satisfactory in most subjects but not in English, where the library is under-stocked, especially for reference books, or in information and communication technology, where there is a significant lack of resources. The latter is recognised and being remedied.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The very good behaviour of the pupils.</li> <li>• The attitudes and values of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The test results.</li> <li>• The provision for pupils with special educational needs.</li> <li>• The opportunities for pupils to use computers and to make music.</li> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• Pupil reports.</li> <li>• Extra curricular activities.</li> <li>• School transport.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with parents that children like school; behaviour is good; and the attitudes and values of the school permeate all aspects of its work. The inspectors do not agree with parents about standards in music, which have improved to average. Nor do they agree with them about extra-curricular activities, which are satisfactory. Inspectors agree with parents that test results could be higher and that more use of computers needs to be made. Inspectors find that most pupils currently on the register of special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties but agree with parents that the provision for special education needs has several shortcomings that need to be quickly remedied. Homework arrangements are about average but inspectors recommend that communication with parents about homework be improved. Inspectors agree with parents that pupil reports are inconsistent, too often poor in quality, and misleading in some instances. The headteacher has listened to parental concerns about school transport and acted effectively to bring about improvements.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Current standards in Year 6 are average in English; within this overall finding, standards are good in reading, satisfactory in speaking and listening, but below average in writing. In mathematics and science, current standards in Year 6 are average. The standard of current work in English and science in this age group is higher than the 2001 test results partly because there are fewer pupils with special educational needs; current standards in mathematics are about the same as 2001. Standards in Year 6 are average in geography, history, physical education, and music; standards are below average in art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology. Since the previous inspection, standards in Year 6 have improved in reading, mathematics, and science but not in writing. In the non-core subjects, standards have improved in music. There has been no improvement in geography, history, or physical education. Nor has there been improvement in information and communication technology and this is unsatisfactory because standards remain below average. Standards in art and design and in design and technology are lower than the previous inspection primarily because there is insufficient curricular priority given to these subjects; this, too, is unsatisfactory. Current standards in Year 2 are just above average in reading, and average in writing, speaking and listening, mathematics, and science. In the non-core subjects in Year 2, current standards are average in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.
2. The results of the 2001 national test in English were below average in Year 6. The proportion of pupils that attained or exceeded the expected national level in English, about two-thirds of the cohort, was very close to the proportion that did so in each of the previous years since 1996. In 1996, that proportion was much higher than the national average. Each year, however, the national average in English has increased while the school's results have remained static. The results in English were overtaken by the average national performance in 1999 and have gradually been left further behind. Results in 2001 at the end of Year 6 in reading were much better than writing. In reading, nearly four-fifths of the Year 6 pupils attained or exceeded expectations in 2001 whereas fewer than half did so in writing; in reading, 22 pupils, two-fifths of the cohort, exceeded expectations but only two did so in writing. While the effectiveness of the teaching of reading has improved over the past two years because of the satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, not enough has been done to improve the effectiveness of the teaching of writing. The poor performance in writing in 2001 mainly affected boys, many falling significantly behind expectations over the four junior years. Performance in writing had a major impact on reducing the proportion of pupils who exceeded expectations in English overall, dragging it down to less than half the national average. The need to raise standards in writing is recognised by the school; teachers have acted to improve handwriting and extensive staff training to tackle other aspects is planned with local authority support for later this school year.
3. In mathematics, the results of the 2001 national tests were average at the end of Year 6. The results in mathematics have improved each year since 1997, reflecting the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. This has helped the teachers to raise standards from well below average in 1997 to average in 2001. In particular, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected national level in mathematics has increased and is now similar to most schools. Results in science were below average but have improved each year since 1997 at a slightly faster rate than national improvements. Even so, the increases have not been enough to catch up with national standards; they have nevertheless lifted performance from being well below average in 1997 to below average in 2001. The teachers have managed to increase the proportion of pupils who attain the expected national level each year in science and it is now slightly larger than the typical school; they have not, however, increased the proportion exceeding expectations and this is why standards overall are below average. The lack of high attainment in science was an issue at the previous inspection and this aspect has not improved enough since then. Results of the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 2 were above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. Results in each of these subjects have improved since the previous inspection.
4. Achievement in reading is good in the juniors. The vast majority of the Year 6 pupils tested in 2001 had made the expected national amount of progress between the ages of seven and eleven and a relatively large proportion did better than that. The achievement of a significant group, mainly girls, exceeded expectations in reading; they were average in their attainment in 1997, when aged seven, and above average in 2001, at the age of eleven. This lifted the overall performance of the cohort in reading from below average in 1997 to average in 2001. The good achievement in reading reflects improvements to teaching that followed the school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. In stark contrast to reading, achievement in writing is poor and the improvements in reading have not been enough to raise standards in English overall. Only about half of the Year 6 pupils tested in 2001 had made the expected amount of progress in writing since the age of seven. Pupils with all levels of prior attainment were included in the underachieving group in writing. Mainly, however, they were boys who had been marginally behind the others at the age of seven,

though still attaining the expected national level, but ended up being two years behind expectations by the age of eleven.

5. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory, particularly for pupils with average or better attainment. About seven in ten pupils in Year 6 in 2001 extended their attainment by the expected national amount and a small group, mainly boys, did better than expected. Lower attaining pupils, however, do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics; a group of pupils who were only a few months behind expectations at the age of seven ended up being two years behind by the age of eleven. Achievement in science is satisfactory for pupils of average ability but many of the pupils that are more able are underachieving. The achievement of pupils from black Caribbean and white European backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory in all of the core subjects.
6. The vast majority of Year 6 pupils are independent readers capable of tackling a range of texts confidently. They are generally able to compose ideas in writing and organise them appropriately but their skills of grammar, punctuation, and spelling are generally below average. In mathematics, the substantial majority have well developed skills of mental calculation, can carry out mental and written operations competently and confidently to the level expected in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and have appropriate knowledge of shape, space, measures, and data handling. In science, the Year 6 pupils have an appropriate factual knowledge of life forms and living things; materials and their properties; and physical processes. Their knowledge of experimental and investigative science is not as high as it should be because the teaching methods rely too much on teacher demonstration and shared experiments.
7. In art and design, basic drawing and painting skills in Year 6 are below average, knowledge of different media is narrow, and knowledge of the work and lives of great artists is limited. In design and technology, knowledge of techniques and design skills are underdeveloped, reflecting insufficient curricular provision. In geography, Year 6 pupils are developing a good understanding of place and location in the United Kingdom and around the world. In history, they have a satisfactory knowledge of events and of particular people from different periods and good skills of interpretation and enquiry. Information and communication technology skills are limited by a lack of well planned opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to use computers and, with only a few exceptions, they lack the confidence and competence expected for their ages. The curriculum in music is now taught in full and this has raised attainment in performing, composing and appraising to the expected levels since the previous inspection. In physical education, the Year 6 pupils attain good standards and perform complex sequences in gymnastics and are developing appropriate coordination and knowledge of various games.
8. Almost all of the Year 2 pupils are well launched into reading. Comprehension skills are appropriate and they are beginning to tackle many unfamiliar words without adult help. Written composition is typical for their age but they are not as consistent or as accurate as they should be with punctuation and spelling. Nearly all of the pupils in Year 2 have appropriate knowledge of number, are competent with addition and subtraction to the expected level, and have a satisfactory knowledge of shape, space and measures; mental calculation skills are good for their age. In science, Year 2 pupils are acquiring knowledge of life processes and living things, and developing satisfactory observational and investigative skills. In art and design, the Year 2 pupils are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of media and have developed the expected drawing and representational skills. In design and technology, they have appropriate designing and making skills. In geography, they are acquiring knowledge of places around the world and appropriate enquiry and mapping skills. In history, they are beginning to distinguish between ways of life at different times and can use a range of different information sources. The ability of seven-year-olds to operate computer programs using keyboard and mouse is generally satisfactory. In music, pupils sing confidently and enjoy making music. In physical education, awareness of space and control when moving and balancing are appropriate.
9. Current standards in the Nursery and the Reception Year are average overall. The substantial majority of children enter both of these year groups with typical or better attainment for their age; with about a quarter of the children having attainment that is better than expected. In most years, attainment on entry in literacy and numeracy is broadly average. Where there are annual variations, it is mostly in the proportion of pupils with attainment that is higher than expected. In some years, this proportion is small. The pace of learning is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the Reception Year. The differences in pace reflect variations in the effectiveness of the teaching. Overall, achievement in the Foundation Stage is consistent with expectations and about eight in every ten pupils in each year group are on course to attain or exceed the nationally agreed early learning goals in each of the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year.
10. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is well below average and there is strong evidence that the teachers have not accurately identified all of the pupils with significant difficulties in reading and writing who should be on the register. The vast majority of pupils on the register of special needs are at the first and second assessment stages because of difficulties with literacy. A few have difficulty with numeracy. These pupils are generally more than a year behind expectations and many of the older pupils are at least two years behind. For many of these pupils, their difficulties are largely temporary in nature and correctable with extra support. More than half of them are making steady progress in reading and number, particularly where extra support is provided, but their needs in writing are inconsistently met and progress is not as good as it should be. The three pupils with a statement of special

educational need receive effective support and make good progress. One pupil with a statement made excellent progress in improving her writing skills when in Year 2. Another with behavioural difficulties has improved his behaviour, concentration, reading and writing over the course of the past year. The school identifies a few gifted and talented pupils in Key Stage 2. Very little extra provision is made for these pupils. Their overall rate of progress is consistent with expectations.

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

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to school; this has been sustained since the last inspection. The school's Christian ethos has created an atmosphere in which relationships throughout the school have a major impact on attitudes, values, and behaviour. In lessons, pupils invariably work hard and keep working until the task is complete.
12. Behaviour is good and many instances of very good behaviour were observed; for example Year 6 pupils, on a wet morning when their teacher was on duty, arrived in the classroom, selected books and chatted quietly to friends. Playtimes and dinner times are very orderly. At playtimes, pupils respect the needs of others. Pupils are able to work and play free from oppressive behaviour. No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was seen and pupils and parents report only a few instances. Although bullying of any kind is rare, older pupils can clearly explain what constitutes bullying and would not hesitate to report any incidents. A pupil from a minority ethnic background said there had been minor instances of bullying, but it was low key, and dealt with effectively by the headteacher. One pupil was excluded for a fixed-term during the reporting period. The family was closely involved, procedures followed correctly, and the pupil successfully reintegrated into school.
13. Parents expressed concern about standards of behaviour on the school bus; this is a service bus on which a few members of the public travel and almost all pupils are from St Joseph's. The school has made a determined effort to improve the situation. They have had discussions with the bus operator who now ensures that, as far as possible, the same driver is available each day. The driver knows most of the children by name and reports that the problems concerned former pupils who no longer use the bus. There is a good relationship between the school and the driver. Older pupils have been asked to report any problems.
14. There are very good relationships throughout the school and visitors are warmly welcomed. Pupils are encouraged to help each other and comply with the school's mission of caring and sharing; this was well demonstrated in the playground when one pupil was hurt. Personal development is good. Pupils are happy to share and very willing to take responsibilities. They are eager to join the school council, for example, and take and live by democratic decisions. On a rota basis, pupils take responsibilities in class, for example, milk monitors, and nearly all of them show willingness to help in any way they can. Older pupils demonstrate initiative in matters of courtesy and good manners, such as finding a chair for a visitor, and in contributions to the wider community, such as selling remembrance poppies during break. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. There is little unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive punctually and most know registration routines well.

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

15. The teaching is satisfactory and successful overall but with aspects for improvement. The amount of satisfactory or better teaching, 95 per cent, has increased substantially since the previous inspection and is now in line with the typical school. The amount that is good or better, nearly half, is a slight increase on the last inspection but not as high as the typical national picture described in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools' latest annual report. The less than typical amount of good or better teaching, inconsistencies in teaching between classes, and a lack of specific learning objectives for pupils with different attainment in a substantial minority of lessons are the main reasons why standards are not always as high as they should be.
16. Teaching is satisfactory in English; just over half is good or better. The teaching of reading is generally effective but the teaching of writing is inconsistent in quality. In writing, the learning needs of the pupils are not always well met and it is the learning needs of low attaining boys in particular that are least well met. In mathematics, the teaching is satisfactory overall; it is good in Years 5 and 6, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but too inconsistent in Years 3 and 4, where work is not always well matched to the learning needs of every pupil. Teaching in science is satisfactory in the main but a small amount in Year 4 is very poor. The teaching quality does not consistently meet the needs of the pupils who are more able, especially in investigative and experimental science. Teaching is good in history and physical education, and satisfactory in design and technology, information and communication technology, and music. In art and design, and in geography, the evidence of teaching in the infants is limited; in the juniors, lessons in art and design are satisfactory, and the one lesson in geography was very good.
17. Where teaching is very good, high expectations of what each pupil is capable of learning, together with a teaching style

that enthusiastically engages the attention of the pupils, leads to quick and rigorous learning throughout the lesson. In a very good English lesson in a mixed Year 5 and 6 class, skilful questioning aimed at different levels and specific pupils helped all children in the class quickly to understand how an author uses well chosen words and phrases to characterise boys and girls. During the discussion, the teacher's methods promoted lengthy and thoughtful answers and encouraged pupils to question and respond to the ideas of others. Independent work was quickly completed. Pupils had so enjoyed the lesson that they showed considerable enthusiasm when the teacher explained what they would do in the next lesson.

18. Where teaching is good or better, the subject expertise of the teacher is sufficient to involve all of the pupils and promote effective learning. In a good English lesson in Year 5, a well focused and managed discussion led to all pupils learning the basic characteristics of writing that informs the reader about past events, such as a newspaper article. The teacher was prepared well, used resources informatively, and provided tasks that were appropriately challenging.
19. A major characteristic of the teaching throughout the school is the strength of relationships between teachers and pupils. In almost every class and almost every lesson the pupils like, show respect, and respond appropriately to their teacher, reflecting the fair and firm way in which teachers treat the pupils. Teachers are prepared for lessons and make good use of resources. All teachers complete basic planning for the week ahead and objectives for lessons are generally achieved. Only a few of the weekly plans, however, consistently identify separate objectives for pupils with different levels of attainment. In practice, lessons of good or better quality generally have specific work for high, average, and low attaining pupils and the teaching includes these different groups effectively and purposefully in the learning. This is often not the case in lessons that are of satisfactory quality. Although the learning needs of the bulk of the pupils with average attainment are met in these lessons, which is why they are satisfactory, work is often too easy or too hard for high or low attaining pupils respectively, and they do not learn as much as they should.
20. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the pace of learning is too slow and activities lack purpose and challenge. In one lesson, this was because the teacher was insufficiently prepared. In another, because the teacher talked for too long. Where teaching is poor or very poor, the teacher's management of the pupils is ineffective, their interest in the subject is lost, attention wanders, and productivity is very low indeed. The less than satisfactory lessons reflect the work of two teachers. The work of one of these teachers was mainly satisfactory, with the unsatisfactory lesson being an exception to the rule. The poor and very poor lessons are the work of just one of the two teachers.
21. The pace of learning varies between the year groups. Learning is quick in the nursery. Activities are well planned in that age group, the importance of high quality play is fully recognised, and there is an appropriate balance between directed and independent activities. Learning in the Reception Year is slower than the nursery but is satisfactory overall. In the Reception Year, activities are not always as challenging as they should be, reflecting insufficient use of the nationally agreed stepping stones for learning in the Foundation Stage when assessing pupils to identify gaps in knowledge and when planning what children should learn next. When the adults in the Reception Year work directly with the pupils they use questioning and explanations effectively but the independent activities that they provide are sometimes too mundane to extend pupils' understanding and skills.
22. Learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are generally well planned and effectively taught in these year groups, with appropriate emphasis on basic skills. Learning slows considerably in Years 3 and 4, especially Year 4. This reflects considerable inconsistency in quality between the teachers in these year groups. None of the teaching in Year 3 is unsatisfactory but work is not always well matched to learning needs, especially in mathematics. In Year 4, too much of the teaching is of poor quality, failing to hold the attention of the pupils, or to challenge and motivate them, and this slows learning significantly in all subjects. Learning accelerates to a very good pace in Years 5 and 6. The teaching here is mainly good or better and much of it is high quality. Pupils in these two year groups generally increase their knowledge at expected or better rates but this is not always enough to make up for ground lost earlier.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mainly satisfactory but is not consistently effective. For pupils with statements of special educational needs, teaching, including the work of assistants, is effective and these pupils make good progress in relation to their difficulties. The teaching of other pupils on the register of special educational needs is uneven. Well-trained assistants provide additional literacy support, which is funded by central government. This support is usually given to pupils when they are withdrawn from the classroom and the assistants organise the learning efficiently effectively. Additional support is also provided in the classroom. This support is inconsistent in quality because not all of the assistants have been trained to the level necessary; this should be remedied quickly. When no extra support is available, the learning needs of pupils with special needs are sometimes poorly met. This is particularly the case in lessons where the work is set at only one level instead of being differentiated according to need. Additional support is not provided for the few pupils with English as an additional language because their proficiency in English is sufficient for them not to need it.
24. Homework is provided but the policy is not clearly established. In Years 1 and 2, reading homework is provided twice a week, together with spellings, and other work is provided occasionally. Instances of homework being set in Years 3 to 6 were seen. In Year 5, for example, the pupils were given spelling and vocabulary extension work to do at home. The

amount and range of homework is typical of many schools. The teachers do not use a home-school liaison book or similar system to keep parents informed about homework and this is unsatisfactory. The lack of a satisfactory two-way communication system is one of the reasons why parents feel uninformed and have concerns about homework.

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

25. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is broad and meets requirements. The amount of time spent on teaching each subject in both of these key stages matches the needs of pupils appropriately. Improvements throughout the school have been made to the curriculum since the last inspection. All subjects now have a scheme of work to guide planning and to improve the continuity and progression of learning. The Reception Year curriculum has also been improved to include creative, physical and scientific areas of learning. Religious education is inspected separately.
26. For pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, curricular requirements are adequately met in English and mathematics and in history, geography, music, and physical education and the work provided is mainly interesting and worthwhile. Although all of the other subjects are taught, elements of their programmes of study are not taught in full or to the depth necessary. These are the control and monitoring aspects of information and communication technology, the teaching of basic skills in art and design and in design and technology, and the practical and experimental aspects of science. Currently there is no sex education taught in the school although a policy to guide teaching in this area has been recently approved.
27. The National Literacy Strategy has been satisfactorily introduced and is beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards especially in reading. Improvements in the development of writing skills have taken place but more work is still needed and has been identified in the school improvement plan. The National Numeracy Strategy has also been satisfactorily introduced. Most teachers use successfully the recommended three-part structure to aid lesson planning and follow the Framework for teaching closely. The introduction of mental and oral mathematics sessions has been successfully incorporated into lessons and is helping to raise standards.
28. Although more than half the pupils on the register of special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their difficulties, not all of those having trouble with literacy have been accurately identified and the progress of low attaining pupils who are not on the register is slow. This is a significant weakness in the provision. A few children on the special educational needs register are not making enough progress, even when extra support is provided, yet have remained at the same assessment stage for three or more review meetings; this is unsatisfactory. The teachers have improved the quality of individual education plans. These now include specific, short-term learning objectives, which is good practice. Not all of the individual plans, however, specify the type and frequency of the extra support, or the resources, and this leaves too much room for misinterpretation and makes it difficult to measure and account for progress or the lack of it. The record system used does not systematically include the dates of all meetings with parents or the views that they express. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs, together with parents of pupils at the advanced assessment stages for special needs, are involved in appropriately in review meetings. Parents of pupils at the early assessment stages, however, are not included sufficiently in review meetings. The various shortcomings show a lack of regard for the Code of Practice and this is unsatisfactory.
29. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities through extra curricular provision. Pupils regularly attend sports and music clubs, many of which are held at lunchtime. Additional mathematics sessions are also provided and help to raise standards in the subject. Educational visits to museums, to Oakwell Hall and to Cannon Hall, as well as visits from theatre groups and from historical enactment societies, help to extend and enliven pupils' learning.
30. Not all pupils have an equal access to the curriculum. In some classes, especially for those pupils aged eight and nine, work that is suitable for the needs of all pupils is not provided. In both English and mathematics, pupils are provided with the same work, regardless of ability or need. There are also examples of pupils being withdrawn from lessons for additional music tuition and regularly missing the same subject.
31. Provision for pupils' personal education is satisfactory. Time is given for pupils to discuss issues that concern them such as bullying and the themes in assemblies are used well to explore ideas such as friendship. Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in sporting competitions to improve their sporting and social skills. There is no formal method in place to record pupils' personal development. Overall, pupils' social and health education is satisfactory. Health education is provided through science, where they study the need for healthy diets and know the reasons for taking exercise. Drugs awareness education is provided for older pupils through the school's links with the police service.
32. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. The school has links with a local newspaper and pupils write articles and have produced their own front page of school news; this link creates excellent learning opportunities. Staff from a local building society regularly visit the school to listen to pupils read, helping to raise standards. The school choir takes part in local events including the switching on of the town's Christmas lights, giving an opportunity

to contribute to the community and a reason for performing. Players from local professional football and rugby league teams help to coach the pupils on a regular basis. The school and pupils benefit from visits by theatre groups, multicultural dance groups, artists, a puppet theatre group and an archaeologist who all add to pupils' knowledge of the wider world. The church also plays a large part in the life of the school and helps to create the positive Christian ethos in the school. Relationships with other schools are satisfactory. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make visits to the local Catholic High School and staff from that school make visits to St Joseph's to talk to pupils.

33. The school makes very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality has been maintained since the previous inspection. The very good provision for spiritual development is woven into every aspect of school life. The religious education programme, assemblies, and regular opportunities to discuss pertinent issues, help the pupils to gain knowledge and insight into values and beliefs, and to reflect on their own and others' experiences. Provision for moral development is very good. Principles distinguishing right from wrong are promoted appropriately and consistently by all school staff, who provide very good role models. Pupils show respect for their teachers, other adults, and each other. The use of class discussions allows pupils time to reflect and consider their behaviour. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to work cooperatively and take responsibility for their work and for others; their responsibilities increase as they get older. They are able to support a good range of charities, including Cafod, through fund-raising. Their involvement in the school council gives them opportunities to develop self-confidence and initiative as well as an understanding of democracy. The use of visits, visitors, inter-school competitions, and extra-curricular activities helps to develop pupils' social skills.
34. The provision for pupils' cultural development remains satisfactory but it has good features. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own and other cultures through their lessons in history, geography and music. Experiences of other cultures, such as a visit from the African Children's Choir and an Indian Workshop, help to develop pupils' awareness and knowledge of other people's traditions and different ways of living. At present, the provision is not formalised and not always identified in planning. As such, opportunities to further develop pupils' understanding and knowledge in lessons are missed.

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

35. The arrangements are satisfactory and typical of most schools. Pupils work in a caring environment where they can talk confidently to staff, including the headteacher, about any problems because they know that they will be listened to and dealt with fairly. The headteacher and staff act as good role models. Relationships and links with parents are good in the nursery and Reception Year and this helps children to settle in well and soon gain confidence. The school buildings and teaching areas are well maintained. The governors ensure health and safety audits are carried out annually and the caretaker reports any health and safety problems as they arise. Electrical appliances and fire extinguishers show they have been checked within the past twelve months. Two or three members of staff are on duty at the end of the school day to ensure the safety of the substantial number of children who use the school bus.
36. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory and comply with locally agreed procedures. The school has good relationships with the education welfare officer and school nurse; staff are reminded annually about the procedures. The school secretary and a member of the midday staff are trained in first aid, and the headteacher has had training, but in total, this is insufficient for the number of pupils on roll and to ensure that cover is always available.
37. Expectations of good attendance are high and the systems for promoting good attendance are effective. Opportunities are taken in assembly to reinforce the importance of attendance. Holidays during term time are actively discouraged and the school has had input into the Kirklees Education Authority leaflet on such holidays. Parents who request permission for term time leave are given a copy of the leaflet and reminded that their child's education will be disadvantaged. Only in exceptional circumstances will the school give work to be done during term time holiday. Attendance data is now computerised and will enable more rigorous monitoring.
38. The school's Christian teaching promotes good behaviour and the very good standards of behaviour observed in most classes and around school confirmed the success of this approach. Oakwell Hall Country Park recognised the excellent behaviour of Year 1 pupils following a recent educational visit to the park and sent Year 1 a certificate in recognition of this achievement. During a Reception Year and Years 1 and 2 assembly, when this certificate was presented, the headteacher made good use of the opportunity to reinforce behaviour expectations. Other awards acknowledge good academic work, for working quietly, and for composing a prayer. The school ensures that all pupils receive some award during the year. Personal development is similarly promoted through Christian expectations of caring and sharing.
39. The systems to assess pupils' attainment have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory although more needs to be done to use these systems to monitor progress. Baseline assessment is used appropriately in the reception class to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and to set targets for children's attainment levels by the time that they enter Year 1. Day-to-day assessments and statutory and non-statutory tests provide information about



pupils' attainment in all subjects. Examples of assessed work are maintained in individual files to provide evidence of progress. In English and mathematics, test results are analysed to identify general information about where year groups need to improve and subsequent action has been taken. For example, data handling in mathematics, and handwriting and spelling in English, have been identified as areas where pupils generally do not succeed in as well as they should. These aspects have been targeted to raise standards. Test results are used appropriately to identify which pupils need additional support and need to be included in booster classes and the additional literacy strategy.

40. The school does not effectively use the full range of assessment information to track pupil's progress over the school year and across the key stages. Consequently, the school cannot always identify with sufficient rigour where pupils have made gains in their knowledge and understanding and where there are significant gaps. The information gained from the school's assessment of pupils' attainment is not yet used to set individual targets for pupils. Pupils and parents are usually unaware of the curriculum level that pupils are working at and what precisely they need to do to move onto the next higher levels and achieve higher standards. The school has recognised that the systems are not sufficiently cohesive and consistent to help teachers ensure that they are helping pupils make maximum progress.
41. The use of the specific objectives in the individual education plans to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. A series of tests are beginning to be used to support the identification of pupils with special educational needs but their use by class teachers for this purpose lacks rigour and this is why some pupils are slipping through the net.

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

42. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a substantial majority of parents expressed positive views about the school. The good level of approval from parents has been sustained since the previous inspection. Overall, the partnership with parents is satisfactory. Although positive, a few concerns were identified. The school's open door policy ensures parents have regular opportunities to discuss problems at an early stage. Three consultation evenings are held, which is more than required. Teachers report these to be very well attended. The school has satisfactory follow up procedures in place to ensure parents who do not attend are kept in regular contact and this is good practice.
43. The monthly newsletters are informative. They give parents a flavour of what is happening in each class, together with general information to enable the school to run smoothly. The presentation of these newsletters is good. The school makes good use of the newsletter to keep parents informed about forthcoming topics; this is good practice.
44. The last inspection report said parents needed more information about homework. This aspect was again highlighted in the parents' questionnaire and at the pre-inspection meeting. The school responded immediately in their monthly newsletter, by giving parents a brief outline of regular homework and some indication of other homework activities. This, however, is insufficient given the need for more regular and two-way communication about individual homework needs.
45. The home-school agreement, signed by half the parents, expects parents to support their child at home. The school needs to ensure parents have sufficient knowledge for them to provide that help successfully. New parents receive some help but there is no plan to ensure parents of older children know how best to support their child in the different subjects.
46. Parents are encouraged to help in school, for example in reading, artwork, and when class teachers organise particular projects. The senior management believes that they listen to complaints and suggestions fairly. This, however, is not the view of all parents. The procedures the school has in place to meet parents when they request it are typical of all schools and there is evidence that suggestions are evaluated and some are adopted. For example, a gymnastic club for infants will begin shortly, following a parental suggestion, and will operate under the auspices of a local gymnastic club. Plans for the recently completed school extension are on display and parents' comments are welcomed. The school consults parents who are governors, but has rarely used questionnaires as a means of ascertaining wider parental opinion. Overall, the systems for consulting parents are too narrow.
47. Parents at the meeting raised a concern about the pupils' annual report, which several parents said were inaccurate. Inspectors reviewed a sample of reports, linking them to other records and to assessment data relating to the same children, and found that the reports varied too much in quality and accuracy between classes. The best reports were detailed and informative but others, the majority, were very misleading. One junior aged pupil, who had attained average scores in tests, was described in the report as below average. Another of similar age had attained almost the highest score in their cohort yet was graded *B* when other pupils, with often much lower test scores, were graded *A*. In some classes, at least half of reports are identical. At times, there are discrepancies in what parents are told. Comments about one pupil changed from positive to negative in tone. For example, in the same core subject, *has produced good results* at the end of Year 2, which was accurate given that child's test results, became *skills are unfortunately poor* at the end of Year 3, which was not substantiated by assessment data. The school needs to ensure that reports reflect accurately the

progress made year on year and should question closely instances of lower achievement.

48. The governors' annual report to parents dated October 1999 met legal requirements. The governors did not issue an annual report, nor was one prepared, in 2000 or 2001. No meeting has been held between parents and governors since 1 December 1999. This does not meet statutory requirements. This was explained as being due to the recent building work preventing a report being written or a meeting being arranged; this is unsatisfactory.
49. The home school association makes a good contribution and has improved the quality of the pupils' education. They have provided additional resources such as microscopes, gym equipment, television, globe and classroom blinds; they ensure that pupils across all years benefit. Community spirit is improved by the association's effort to include local people at the autumn fair; they also share and exchange ideas with other local schools.

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

50. The leadership and the management are satisfactory, with aspects for improvement. The core aims and values of the school permeate all aspects of its work, reflecting the strong lead in these matters provided by the headteacher. The leadership of the headteacher has created a school where the vast majority of pupils feel secure and able to turn to the teachers for help and support; where nearly all pupils are well motivated, know right from wrong, behave well, and, in the main, are able to learn. Senior and middle management, teachers and governors share the aims and values and there is a high degree of common accord. The school is a very orderly community and day-to-day management and administration flows smoothly and efficiently. Senior management is reasonably clear about the main strengths and weaknesses of the school and has secured a satisfactory overall level of improvement since the previous inspection. There is a general aspiration amongst management and staff to work for the benefit of the pupils and to achieve high standards, though not all standards are rising as fast as they should. Systems and procedures are being put into place to translate the aspiration for high standards into practice and to create a constantly improving school, but this is rather late in the day. The means whereby the school identifies and shares good practice to improve the effectiveness of teaching, evaluates its performance, and takes the necessary actions have not developed as quickly as other schools. Nevertheless, there is a shared commitment to improve and a capacity to succeed.
51. Delegation and the contributions of those with delegated responsibility are satisfactory and typical of most schools. The extent to which the deputy headteacher, key stage coordinators, subject coordinators, and others with management responsibility understand and carry out their roles has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. The deputy headteacher has a clear perception of her role and is supporting the headteacher appropriately. The key stage managers are involved in monitoring the teaching. The responsibilities of the deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 2 coordinator have been gradually changed over the past two years to respond to changing needs within the school, and this is good practice. Written job descriptions, however, have not been updated to reflect these changes and the role of a key stage coordinator, although understood in practice, is not clearly specified in writing. These minor shortcomings have the potential for slippage and confusion as time goes by. The English and mathematics coordinators have a satisfactory understanding of their roles and are working to improve their subjects. Nearly all of the other curriculum coordinators have the knowledge and expertise to act effectively.
52. The management of special educational needs is changing hands as part of the action to improve provision. This is because the time commitment that is necessary to carry out the role is too large for the deputy headteacher alongside all her other duties. A new policy document for special educational needs is well written and clear. It was introduced in 2001 and all of the required elements are included. The policy is not yet implemented in full. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is neither monitored nor evaluated. The school is acting to remedy this weakness.
53. The main business of the governing body is conducted satisfactorily. The minutes of meetings show a typical range of involvement in the life and work of the school and that governors are helping to shape its direction. An appropriate range of committees and delegated roles, together with a small number of visits, and regular meetings between the chair and the headteacher, help governors to keep informed. Governors understand the main strengths and weaknesses of the school adequately. Most relevant statutory requirements are met except for publishing an annual report and holding an annual meeting, which is a significant oversight.
54. The systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school, the effectiveness of the teaching and curriculum and for acting to improve weaknesses have been improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory overall. Senior management is beginning to piece together the assessment data for each pupil in a format that enables individual progress over time to be tracked. Analysis of the data is taking place but this is not yet as rigorous as it should be. The deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 2 coordinator now monitor literacy and numeracy and have observed each teacher once since the system started in 2001. The findings are discussed with teachers informally to support their professional development, although no record is retained on file, which limits later comparisons and measurements of progress over time, and there has been no follow up visit to check that shortcomings

have been remedied. Nevertheless, this is a satisfactory start, which should be extended in frequency and rigour.

55. The procedures for school development planning were an issue for improvement at the previous inspection. Since then, governors have been involved in approving the final version of the plan. This level of involvement, however, does not go far enough and governors need to be involved at an earlier stage and check closely that the priorities in the plan are the most important and are consistent with both school performance and self-evaluation data. The school development plan for 2001 shows a satisfactory response to the previous inspection in that it sets out a broad educational direction, identifying responsibilities, cost, time factors, and success criteria. The plan appropriately covers most aspects of school life and is relevant to development needs, including raising standards in writing and in information and communication technology, and improving the management of special educational needs. Targets, however, are sometimes vaguely worded and are not measurable. The plan does not always go far enough in setting out the detail of what has to be done to achieve each target. For example, it is not clear to what level standards in writing are to be raised. Nor does the plan identify the specific gaps in pupils' knowledge of writing that need to be remedied, or the groups where the gaps are worst, so that action, including in-service training for teachers, is targeted where it is most needed.
56. Financial management is satisfactory. Income and expenditure are close to the national average for schools of this type and size and the pattern of expenditure on teachers and resources is similar to the typical national picture except for expenditure on education support staff, which is low. The headteacher and governors ensure that the school lives within its budget, with only a prudent amount left over at the end of each year, and that efforts are made to obtain value for money with basic purchases. Best value principles, however, are not applied rigorously to major school developments. The targets in the school development plan to improve writing, for example, have not been written carefully enough for improvements to be measured and linked to investments in training and extra resources to evaluate whether the investment was worthwhile.
57. The coordinator of staff training has recently taken on the responsibility. Teachers have access to professional development training and are encouraged to take relevant courses. For example, training so that the teachers can provide additional numeracy support for Year 3 pupils has had a significant impact on standards; the course gave new ideas and broadened teachers' knowledge. Training undertaken now, compared to the last inspection is more focused and aimed at coordinators, resulting in greater impact.
58. Teacher staffing levels are satisfactory and sufficient for the numbers of pupils. The number and aggregated hours worked by classroom assistants are low. Two new assistants were appointed at the start of the term. An increase in classroom assistance should be considered, as funds allow, to provide extra support for pupils with low attainment in writing. Although some training has been provided for non-teaching staff, more is necessary. The school has an adequate range of learning resources, with the exception of the library, where there are insufficient books, especially reference books, and information and communication technology, where the provision of computers is below current expectations. The latter is recognised and advanced plans are in place to improve this situation. The accommodation is more than adequate, with two halls and spare classrooms. However, accommodation for the library is limited, as there is insufficient space for class groups. Most of the classrooms have been refurbished and provide an adequate, often attractive, teaching environment. The newly completed corridor linking the infant wing with the junior wing has improved accessibility significantly and helped to create a strong sense of unity between the two parts of the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The school has improved standards in reading and mathematics through the effective introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Standards in writing, however, have not improved in Years 3 to 6, nor have standards in information and communication technology in this age group. In addition, standards in art and design and in design and technology have lost ground and are below average in the juniors. These variable standards are caused by inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in the junior age group, particularly in Years 3 and 4, by not identifying the gaps in pupils' knowledge, and by not providing rigorous support for pupils with low attainment. To improve the school, the headteacher and his staff, with the support of the governing body, should:
- ❑ raise standards in writing, initially to the average national standard, then, over time, to the same standard as reading by:
    - rigorously identifying the pupils who need help with writing and the specific gaps that they have in their knowledge and skills;
    - setting specific short-term skill based curricular targets in writing for individuals, groups and classes to remedy the gaps in their knowledge and skills;
    - increasing the range, frequency, and quality of opportunities pupils have to write independently and at length in English and in other subjects;
    - setting long-term targets in each year group for the proportions of pupils attaining or exceeding the expected national levels for their age and reporting regularly to the governing body on progress towards these targets; (Paragraphs 1-6, 10, 16, 18, 27, 39, 55, 56, 58 and 77-91)
  - ❑ raise standards in information and communication technology, art and design, and design and technology in Years 3 to 6 by:
    - increasing quickly the amount of teaching that is good or better in these subjects;
    - providing the necessary resources, as funds allow, for the information and communication technology programme of study to be taught in full;
    - increasing the effectiveness and consistency with which basic skills and techniques are taught in art and design and in design and technology;
    - providing relevant training for teachers and for teaching assistants where this is necessary;
    - increasing the breadth and balance of learning opportunities in art and design and in design and technology, including the range of materials used and the techniques taught;
    - monitoring the time given to each subject and ensuring that the time is sufficient for the programmes of study to be taught in suitable depth;
    - setting long-term targets in each year group for the proportions of pupils attaining or exceeding the expected national levels for their age and reporting regularly to the governing body on progress towards these targets; (Paragraphs 1, 7, 16, 26, 55, 58 and 125-129)
  - ❑ remedy the variations in the quality of teaching by:
    - providing relevant training and support to help the teachers develop professionally where this is necessary;
    - setting specific, short-term targets for individual improvement and checking regularly that the improvements have been made where this is necessary;
    - increasing the frequency with which all teaching is monitored and evaluated;
    - setting long-term targets to increase the amount of teaching that is good or better in quality to at least the typical national amount;
    - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use the library and develop research skills;
    - improving the teaching of experimental and investigative science; (Paragraphs 15-24)
  - ❑ improve the quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
    - accurately identifying all pupils with special educational needs;
    - spelling out in detail the criteria that teachers must use to identify pupils with special educational needs and checking regularly that these criteria are being properly and consistently applied throughout the school;
    - checking regularly that work in lessons is well matched to the learning needs of all pupils and acting to improve both planning and methods where this is not the case;
    - providing relevant training for teachers and teaching assistants where this is necessary;
    - involving parents of pupils with special educational needs fully as partners in the process from the earliest stages and recording meticulously all contacts with them; (Paragraphs 1, 10, 23, 28, 41 and 52)
60. In addition to the major issues for improvement, the governors should consider including the following in their action plan:

- ❑ Improving communication between home and school over homework (paragraph 24).
- ❑ Monitoring the impact on learning in other subjects of pupils that are withdrawn from lessons for music tuition (paragraph 30).
- ❑ Increasing the rigour with which the provision for cultural development is planned (paragraph 30).
- ❑ Improving the extent to which pupils' progress is evaluated (paragraphs 39-41).
- ❑ Increasing the number of staff trained in first aid (paragraph 36).
- ❑ Improving the quality of pupil reports (paragraph 47).
- ❑ Meeting the statutory requirement for governors to publish an annual report and hold an annual meeting for parents (paragraph 48).
- ❑ Setting measurable targets in the school development plan and evaluating the value for money of school developments (paragraph 55).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	31	37	2	1	2
Percentage	0	9	39	46	2	1	2

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

### 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)	12	321
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	70

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	48

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	26	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	17	18
	Girls	23	23	25
	Total	37	40	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (87)	91 (89)	98 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	17	18
	Girls	23	23	24
	Total	37	40	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (89)	91 (93)	95 (96)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	27	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	26
	Girls	22	22	25
	Total	38	40	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (65)	70 (68)	89 (78)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	22
	Girls	19	20	23
	Total	37	41	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (65)	72 (78)	79 (75)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	11
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	264
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*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)	14.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	32.1

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	104

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	625418
Total expenditure	608722
Expenditure per pupil (NOR 333)	1828
Balance brought forward from previous year	3599
Balance carried forward to next year	20295

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	345
Number of questionnaires returned	78

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	27	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	42	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	49	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	45	17	3	1
The teaching is good.	54	41	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	51	6	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	37	9	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	37	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	29	51	17	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	45	46	6	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	58	5	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	38	23	8	8

### Other issues raised by parents

All of the issues raised by parents are included in the summary.

## **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**

61. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is in the part-time nursery and the Reception Year. Children usually spend three terms in the nursery before moving into a reception class where they spend either two or three terms depending on when their fifth birthday falls. At the time of the inspection, there was one reception class. A second class will be formed after Christmas to accommodate the summer born children. About 50 per cent of children entering the reception classes do so from other nurseries or have had some other form of pre-school experience.
62. Provision for the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection. Provision in the nursery is good with some very strong features. Provision has improved to satisfactory levels in the reception class. The curriculum is based on the six nationally agreed areas of learning and, in practice, provides children with a broad and balanced range of experiences. The nursery is particularly effective in providing a wide range of challenging and focused experiences to promote the early learning goals.
63. The attainment of most children entering the nursery and the reception classes is broadly typical for their age and standards overall are average. This is confirmed by the school's initial assessments. Teaching in the nursery is good and often very good and this has a very positive effect on children's learning. Most children achieve well and by the time that they move into the reception classes, have made significant gains in knowledge and skills. Teaching in the Reception Year is mainly satisfactory, occasionally good, but is still less strong than teaching in the nursery and as a result children's progress during their Reception Year is not always rapid. Overall, an average proportion of children are likely to reach the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development by the time they enter Year 1.
64. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and the amount of satisfactory or better teaching, almost all, is greater than at the last inspection. Teaching in the nursery is usually good or very good. Teaching in the Reception Year is less consistent; one lesson was unsatisfactory. Overall, staff have a secure understanding of the early learning goals. Lesson plans and schemes are usually clear with detailed appropriate learning objectives linked to the early learning goals.
65. In the nursery, the staff recognise the importance of high quality play and first hand experiences. This has a very positive effect on the good progress children make towards the early learning goals and provides a very firm foundation for learning in the Reception Year. Experiences are interesting and challenging and are focused very closely on what children need to learn in relation to the national guidance. Activities are well organised and effectively promote communication, language, literacy, and mathematical development. There is a very good balance of teacher directed activities and child initiated ones. However, staff are not always mindful of the need to keep groups small so that all children have a turn. In most activities, nursery staff provide effective support and check and extend children's understanding. The questions they ask are challenging and carefully phrased to develop children's thinking and provide children with opportunities to choose and articulate their own decisions.
66. In the Reception Year, adults occasionally miss opportunities to join in with those activities which children choose to make more of the learning potential of these activities. These sometimes lack challenge and quality without adult support. Praise and encouragement are very effective in promoting positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. Initial assessments are used to predict likely attainment at the end of the Reception Year but these are not always shared with parents, limiting the support parents can give to help their children make progress. Day to day assessments are not rigorous enough in the Reception Year. This results in staff not always providing sufficiently challenging tasks to move individual learning on at a fast enough pace. Although the staff record children's progress, the records are not linked closely to nationally agreed criteria and this makes it difficult for the records to help identify gaps in the pupils' learning. All staff have good relationships with the children and this has a positive effect on the quality of the learning. Teachers and classroom support assistants in the nursery are enthusiastic and have high expectations. Parents are involved in their children's learning through sharing storybooks at home. A notice board and newsletters keep parents informed of their children's learning and encourages them to build on the activities the school provides to enhance further children's learning.

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

67. Standards are satisfactory and a substantial majority of the pupils are on course to attain the nationally agreed goal for early learning by the end of the Reception Year. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority. Children enjoy coming to school and respond well to the rules and routines of nursery and school life. They are eager to learn new skills and, when activities are stimulating and exciting, they put effort and concentration into their tasks. Emphasis is placed on helping children to understand the consequences of their actions. They are encouraged to consider the feelings of other children and to say sorry where appropriate. Good manners are developed as children are reminded to say 'please' and 'thank you' and to wait their turn when playing games. Children are learning to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as computer games, role-play, and outdoor play. Relationships are positive and children are encouraged to reflect on their feelings, actions, and experiences. For example, a topic on 'friendship' provided a focus for children to talk about the special qualities of others and to extend this into an understanding of the character of Jesus. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the Reception Year. There are appropriate opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of other people, their different religions, cultures and ways of life.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

68. Overall, progress is satisfactory and an average proportion of the children are on course to attain the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children are encouraged to become good listeners and to enjoy stories, rhymes, and music. The opportunities for talking and for literacy created in the tasks and small group activities are the strength of the work in the nursery. In the large groupings in the nursery for story and rhymes, progress is sometimes limited because the groups are too large. By the time children move into the Reception Year, they are confident, articulate speakers. This was very evident when the Reception Year led their very first assembly in front of parents and children. Children spoke with confident, clear voices to welcome their parents and visitors and talked proudly about the work they had been doing about friends.
69. The teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the Reception Year. In the nursery, challenging questions and comments are used well to promote children's thinking. Children use language extensively to negotiate roles and invent their own dramatic situations in the home corner or in the 'opticians'. One child convincingly took on the role of 'mum' as she organised a party, baked cakes, and made a telephone call to check that guests were coming. Such activities are not always of a high quality in the Reception Year and there are missed opportunities to develop dialogue with children to extend their vocabulary and clarify their thinking.
70. Clearly labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards help children develop early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to make marks on paper as they book appointments in the 'opticians' or explore the interesting writing table. Structured activities in the Reception Year develop children's early reading and writing skills as they write about their topic work. Children are learning to recognise their own names and older children are able to write their own names with increasing accuracy using capital and small letters. In the Reception Year, appropriate emphasis is placed on the learning of sounds. However, these activities rely heavily on work sheets which lack sufficient challenge and there are insufficient opportunities to learn about sounds through handling real objects. Children are not yet using their knowledge of sounds effectively when attempting to read independently. Comfortable book corners promote a love of books and children are learning to handle books with care. Children choose books as an activity and all children take books home on a regular basis to share with family members. This has a very positive effect on children's progress in learning to read.

## **Mathematical development**

71. The teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class and this ensures that most children make satisfactory progress and attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. In both the nursery and the Reception Year, children have opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence, and count using a range of games, routines, and experiences. Through topic work they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. In the nursery, rhymes such as 'Five currant buns' are used appropriately to develop early counting and ordering skills and an understanding of early addition and subtraction. Reception class children count backwards and forwards to ten and higher attaining children enjoy the challenge of counting in thousands and even millions. However, these activities are not always built on effectively and higher attaining children are not provided with sufficiently challenging activities to extend further their knowledge of number. Data handling skills are developed as children carefully observe the colour of their eyes and record their findings as a block graph. Teachers place emphasis on developing appropriate mathematical language. Children are encouraged to consider size, shape, and position when playing with two and three-dimensional shapes, small world toys or emptying and filling containers in the water and sand play area.

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

72. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world has improved since the last inspection. It is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class. The children are making satisfactory progress and an average proportion will attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.
73. Care for living creatures is encouraged as children look after their pet rabbits and go on farm visits. Interesting displays and well-planned activities now encourage children to explore man made and natural materials. The garden area is a rich source of opportunities for children to observe the changes that occur in nature as seeds and plants grow. Children in the Reception Year are encouraged to think of themselves as scientists as they conduct simple experiments, which include them making and recording their predictions as to whether different fruits and vegetables would roll.
74. The celebration of festivals, such as Christmas and Guy Fawkes' night, help children develop an understanding of their own culture. Books, dolls, and dressing up clothes from other cultures promote an understanding of how other children live. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, talking about the days of the week, the changing seasons and the weather. Nursery staff are particularly skilled and carefully observe and assess children's skills and provide them with support and encouragement to help them develop self confidence and improve their skills of cutting, folding and sticking. Construction toys are used well in the nursery to encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work. Staff in the Reception Year do not always extend this learning sufficiently well and activities often lack challenge and purpose. The computer is a popular choice and many children are confident and competent in using the 'mouse' and using different programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy.

## **Physical development**

75. The teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the Reception Year and this ensures that most children make satisfactory progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Good use is now made of the outside play area to cater for children's natural exuberance and extend learning through physical activity. A good range of challenging large equipment is available on a daily basis to help nursery and reception children develop their climbing and balancing skills. Confidence and skill are exhibited as children balance, climb, and swing on the very good equipment available. Children manoeuvre wheeled toys well avoiding other children and planned obstacles as they incorporate them into their dramatic play situations. Structured physical education lessons further promote their development. In these lessons, children are developing spatial awareness and control. They are learning to run, hop, skip, jump, and balance with increasing co-ordination and confidence. Emphasis is placed on developing children's skills when handling tools, construction toys, and malleable materials and they are becoming competent as they handle a variety of tools and materials safely and with care.

## **Creative development**

76. The provision for creative development has improved since the last inspection and overall is satisfactory. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the Reception Year and this ensures that most children make sound progress and towards the early learning goals. Children enjoy a range of experiences in art, music, story, and imaginative play. However, in the Reception Year such experiences do not always extend children's vocabulary and their use of language to express ideas sufficiently well. A good range of musical instruments, songs, and rhymes helps to develop children's understanding of sound and rhythm and pattern. In the nursery children enjoy taking part in the good role-play situations provided, such as the 'optician's and 'home corner'. These provide children with a range of opportunities to use their imagination as they take on the roles of the customers and shop assistants and use a range of interesting and stimulating resources. There are many activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Reception children explore different tastes and smells of foods as they plan and make a fruit salad with their teachers. Staff provide materials with interesting real and made textures from which children can choose to create their own designs, pictures, models and collages. Malleable materials such as sand and water are available for children to explore on a daily basis. In the nursery, these are exciting and stimulating as small world animals and people are added to stimulate language, thinking, and imagination. In the reception class these activities are not always sufficiently challenging to extend the learning.

## ENGLISH

77. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in reading, average in speaking and listening, but below average in writing. Despite the differences in standards between reading and writing, the proportion of the pupils on course to attain the expected overall subject level in the 2002 national tests is about average and higher than in 2001. Current standards in Year 2 are average in each aspect of the subject. The school has improved its teaching of reading through the effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and this is why standards in reading now are higher than they were. The teachers have highlighted the need to improve writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6. So far, the school has addressed handwriting but has not focused enough on the organisation of ideas in written work, and how this varies with the specific purpose for each piece of writing, nor on grammar and punctuation. Marking and assessment of pupils' writing is not sufficiently precise to tell the teachers exactly which skills pupils lack and what pupils need to do to improve their work.
78. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, more than three-quarters of the eleven-year-olds attained or exceeded the expected national level in reading, including about two-fifths who exceeded expectations; these proportions were about average. When these pupils were aged seven, the standards they attained in reading in 1997 at the end of Year 2 were below average. For these particular pupils to have caught up with the national average by the end of Year 6 shows good achievement, especially for a large group of girls whose attainment was average at the age of seven and above average by the age of eleven. Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 were below average in 2001, with less than half of the pupils attaining the expected level. Standards in writing among this cohort in 1997, when they were at the end of Year 2, were even lower, being well below average. Although there was a relative rise in standards over the junior years, achievement in writing was nevertheless poor, particularly for boys. Only half of the pupils made the expected amount of progress in writing and a large group, mainly boys, attained expectations in 1997 when aged seven but did not repeat their success in 2001 when aged eleven. In English overall, performance at the end of Year 6 was below the national average in 2001 because the unsatisfactory standards in writing reduced the proportion attaining the expected level and significantly reduced the proportion that might otherwise have exceeded expectations.
79. The overall standard over the past five years has remained static at the end of Year 6. The trend of improvement in this age group is below the national trend. Because of this, the position of the school relative to others has dropped considerably since the previous inspection. Since 1996, the proportion of eleven-year-olds attaining the expected level in the subject overall has remained constant at about two-thirds. Whereas a proportion of that size was above the national average in 1996, it is now below the 2001 national average. Poor performance in writing particularly amongst the boys is the main reason for the below average results in English. Overall, the typical boy in 2001 was almost a year behind national expectations primarily because of low attainment in writing.
80. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, the results were above average in writing and average in reading. This is an improvement in writing compared to the 2000 results but not an improvement in reading. Nevertheless, standards in both reading and writing have improved among seven-year-olds since the previous inspection, though the biggest increase has been in writing. In reading, not enough pupils are exceeding the expected national level. As this is not the case in writing or mathematics, the below average proportion exceeding expectations in reading indicates a measure of underachievement among the seven-year-olds who are more able. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading have risen each year in line with the national trend. There has been good improvement at the end of Year 2 in standards in writing since 1997, when they were below average, to the above average results in 2001, which were well above average compared to similar schools.
81. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is average overall in speaking and listening. The pupils have a good range of experiences to develop their skills in speaking and listening throughout Years 1 and 2. In Year 2, many pupils are becoming articulate, confident speakers. When given the opportunity they readily respond to questions and volunteer information. For instance, they enjoyed discussing the safety rules for bonfire night; they listen carefully to their teachers and peers, who value their contributions. All pupils enjoy discussions about the text in literacy lessons and in formulating instructions about what to do at playtime, to get ready for physical education and dinnertime.
82. In Year 6, the majority of pupils are confident and articulate, expressing their views, often in some detail and frequently showing a good understanding of the subject and a wide vocabulary. For example, a combined Year 5 and 6 group was discussing stereotypical views about what boys and girls are like and were putting forward some interesting ideas. The study of *Bill's Frock*, by Ann Fine, and the viewing of part of a video of the same story had stimulated the discussion. Pupils were fascinated to see how differently the school bullies treated Billy when they thought he was a girl! Another example of how well vocabulary can be used was observed in a Year 6 class when they were talking about personification. Pupils described a jumper as *struggling with the clothes in the washing machine, fighting with the jeans or the foam, and being hurt by harsh pulling*.
83. In Year 2, current standards in reading are just above average. Books are handled with care and the majority of pupils are

able to read a variety of texts. Many pupils read fluently with reasonable understanding. The pupils are developing ways of reading unfamiliar words either by sounding them out or by using the pictures as clues. They can talk briefly about their favourite book or story, which is an indication of a higher than expected level, but have not yet developed preferences for particular authors. Few pupils are aware of how to use reference books and this aspect should be developed.

84. In Year 6, the standard of reading is above average. All but the few lower attaining pupils are independent readers, enjoying a range of stories, poetry, and reference books. Most pupils are fluent readers and have a good range of strategies to tackle and decode unfamiliar words. All pupils talk knowledgeably about the stories they are reading and have read. They express their opinions as to why they have enjoyed a particular book or author with comments such as *the book is fascinating* and *I love the illustrations as they catch your eye*. Pupils show a good understanding of the themes and events in stories and readily make inferences and deductions from the text. The pupils are developing research skills and know how to use the content page, the index, and the glossary but say that they have little opportunity to use these skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as history. This aspect should be further developed in other subjects. Increasing pupils' interest in reading is promoted through the organisation of a regular book fair and holding a book day each year. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children read but there is no record book provided for comments; a few teachers send out a homework sheet but this is not always returned.
85. Standards in writing in Years 1 and 2 at present are average. No pupil is writing at a higher than expected level, however, and only a few are on course to exceed expectations by the end of Year 2. The pupils write stories that contain a good enough vocabulary to achieve the higher levels but their punctuation, particularly in independent writing, is often forgotten, including the use of full stops and capital letters. This is noticeable in all the work, even that of the pupils with higher attainment in other subjects. Spelling is variable with a few pupils struggling to spell the most commonly used words. The majority of the Year 2 pupils write in simple sentences; a few write ones that are more complex; this is a typical picture for early in the school year. The use of good descriptive writing is limited. Pupils are given opportunities to write for different purposes such as retelling a favourite fairy story, writing a story ending, and giving instructions, but there are few opportunities for extended writing except those that are used for assessment each half term. All pupils are taught a cursive script but few use this style on a regular basis. The presentation of some work is neat but this is not consistently the case and standards vary widely.
86. Writing skills do not increase quickly enough in Years 3 to 6. Achievement is slowest in Years 3 and 4, reflecting weaknesses in some of the teaching. In Year 6, standards in writing are below average, mainly because of ground lost in Years 3 and 4. Throughout the key stage, various writing tasks are set, including poems, book reviews, imaginative stories and play scripts. Much of the content shows a good use of interesting vocabulary. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 described the moon as *an orange suspended in the sky; a golden crown glistening in darkness; a clock without hands; and shivering in the night*. Pupils in Year 6 described a school bag as *angered by the arms clawing around inside it*. However, pupils do not use punctuation effectively and in independent writing, some forget even the basic elements of grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Although accuracy in spelling improves as the junior pupils get older there are still too many examples of pupils repeatedly making common errors, for example: writing *here* instead of *hear* and *right* when *write* is the appropriate word. Similarly, cursive script is encouraged and taught but not all pupils use it consistently.
87. Pupils with special educational needs that are specific to literacy generally make satisfactory progress, particularly in reading. The extra support provided by teaching assistants is effective in the main and is appropriately focused on phonic skills. Little extra support is targeted at writing skills and this should be remedied.
88. The pupils across the school enjoy their literacy sessions and are keen to participate. They are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary such as *author, title, illustrator, blurb, fiction, and non-fiction*. They listen to text with interest and some excitement and respond with enthusiasm to questions and discussions. Pupils are well behaved and work well, concentrating on the task, particularly where the teachers' enthusiasm inspire and stimulate them. In these lessons pupils listen attentively and respect the views and opinions of their peers. The majority of pupils express enjoyment and pleasure in reading and many read regularly at home.
89. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The pupils' learning throughout the school is good in reading, speaking and listening. This is not the case in writing; learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory; learning slows in Years 3 and 4 and although it increase in Years 5 and 6, learning in writing in the juniors is poor overall. Just over half of the teaching is good or better in quality, an amount that is satisfactory but not as large as the national picture. Where teaching is good, lessons are well structured with a variety of activities that motivate and hold the pupils' interest. Effective questioning helps to extend pupils' understanding and knowledge. Nearly all teachers have good relationships with their classes and this gives pupils the confidence to answer questions on even the most sensitive of topics. In the good and better lessons, the curriculum is taught with enthusiasm and pace that encourages the pupils to succeed and has a positive effect on their learning. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pupils generally work well but not all of the learning needs are met. Occasionally, too much time is spent on class discussions, leaving insufficient time for the completion of group

work or resulting in the plenary session being so rushed as to be ineffective because pupils are tidying up for playtime or lunchtime. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the management of pupils is ineffective, the pace of the lesson is too slow, and many pupils lose interest and are not concentrating.

90. Although most teachers regularly check work, the marking is not rigorous or precise enough to provide pupils with clear guidance about what they need to improve; consequently they make the same mistakes. The teachers give the pupils a range of opportunities to write in other subjects of the curriculum such as history.
91. Management of the subject is changing hands as part of a strategy to raise standards. Management is satisfactory but needs to improve monitoring so that inconsistencies in teaching can be removed and the amount of good or better teaching increased; and increase the use of assessment information to identify and then remedy gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school has highlighted the need to improve writing, with some success already in Years 1 and 2. Although the teachers have focused on handwriting, there needs to be a sharper focus on grammar, punctuation, and spelling, and on the use of assessment to identify where individual pupils have specific gaps in their knowledge. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the implementation of the literacy hour have been satisfactory. There has been an overall improvement in planning, which has ensured progression of basic skills, primarily in reading, a criticism from the last inspection when the school lacked a scheme of work. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The coordinator monitors the teachers' planning and some of the lessons. National test results are analysed but pupils' work is not scrutinised enough to identify specific skills that are lacking. Such performance information that exists is not used extensively enough when planning what pupils will learn next, nor is it used consistently throughout the school to set short term curricular targets for individuals and small groups.

## **MATHEMATICS**

92. Current standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are average. The standard of present work and the results of the 2001 national tests are similar; currently in Year 6, more than seven out of every ten pupils are on course to attain or exceed the expected national level for an eleven-year-old by the end of the school year in 2002. There have been annual fluctuations in results in the past but the broad picture is of rising standards since 1997 when the results were well below average. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Even so, standards are not as high as they could be because of weaknesses in teaching in some of the year groups. A few of the teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils could and should do and do not always provide work at levels that appropriately challenges all pupils. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, with pupils making quick gains in knowledge in those year groups, but standards would be higher if this quick pace was consistent throughout the school. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
93. The seven-years-old currently have a satisfactory understanding of numbers and their values up to 100 but are less secure with larger numbers. They are able to use their knowledge of money and its value to solve problems. Pupils are able to round numbers to the nearest 10 and can explain what they are doing and why. They understand and recognise odd and even numbers and use accurate vocabulary when referring to the size of objects, comparing one with another. Mental calculation is well developed and pupils quickly and accurately add and subtract numbers to 10 in their heads.
94. The skills of mental calculation are very well developed in Years 5 and 6 where, for example, pupils demonstrate good skills in the mental calculation of perimeter, area, and percentages. This aspect of pupils' work is of above average standard. The eleven-year-old pupils can write and use numbers to one million and have a secure knowledge of place value. Their skills in estimation and approximation are well developed. They understand fractions and link this appropriately to percentages. Their mathematical vocabulary is developed well and older pupils use this accurately when describing their method of calculation. Appropriate attention is paid to developing skills in data handling and in developing pupils' knowledge of shapes and their properties. Less evidence is available of pupils using and applying their mathematical knowledge to solving problems and this area of the curriculum is under developed and one of the reasons why standards are not better than average.
95. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall but the quality is very varied, ranging from poor to very good. Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory and sometimes good. In Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching is mixed; although some is good, too much in Year 4 is unsatisfactory. The progress made in Years 1 and 2 is not sufficiently maintained in Years 3 and 4, and too little is expected of many pupils. Progress accelerates markedly in Years 5 and 6 and, in some of the lessons, the pupils make rapid gains.
96. In the very good lessons, teachers plan well, they have a very clear idea of what pupils will learn during the lesson and pupils are very aware of what teachers' expectations are of both behaviour and work rate. These lessons provide a good level of challenge for all the pupils in the class because work to meet the needs of all pupils is provided. Pupils in Year 6 benefited from this approach in a lesson on coordinates in which they extended their understanding of negative numbers very well when plotting points in four quadrants. In less successful lessons work is not sufficiently well

planned, the pace of learning slows, pupils become restless and the challenge provided does not meet the needs of all children. In a lesson seen in Year 3, the work provided met the needs of the most able pupils but for many of those of average or below average ability, the challenge was inappropriate. Improvements are needed in the quality of teaching in classes containing younger junior pupils.

97. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced satisfactorily. Most teachers use the planning structure provided appropriately but some are not sufficiently rigorous in their use of time in the lessons. This lack of rigour results in insufficient time being available for pupils to complete tasks and for teachers to assess what pupils have learned. What pupils are to learn in lessons is usually shared with them and this provides a clear focus for their learning. Mathematical vocabulary is extended well in most lessons. Pupils, especially those in Years 5 and 6, use technically correct language to describe their methods. Mental mathematics skills are developed well especially in the upper junior age group and this is a strong aspect of the curriculum. Where mental and oral skills are taught well the pace of the lesson is brisk, the planning is good and pupils are well challenged.
98. Mathematical skills are used in some other subjects such as design and technology and science. Insufficient use of information and communication technology is made to raise standards in mathematics. Some examples of graph work using data collected by pupils is on display, and in a Year 5 lesson the pupils were using spreadsheets to calculate holiday spending budgets but there are few other examples of such work.
99. Pupils' attainment is regularly assessed and the results are carefully analysed. This provides useful information on where the curriculum needs strengthening. The quality of teaching has been monitored but this has not yet succeeded in raising the quality in every year group. In several classes, especially those in Years 3 and 4, work is not provided at suitable levels for all pupils and results in average and above average ability pupils not making sufficient progress. Good systems are now in place for the school to track pupils' progress from year to year. This has allowed teachers to focus on individual pupils to improve their performance but this is not sufficiently well developed in all classes. The coordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear idea of the developments needed to raise standards.

## SCIENCE

100. In the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2001, the proportion of seven-year-olds reaching the standard expected at this age was above the national average. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, standards were below average. Slightly more eleven-year-olds attained the expected level than did so in a typical school but only one in five exceeded the expectations, which is much less than in other schools, and this dragged overall result down. Over the previous five years, the proportion of eleven-year-olds attaining expectations has increased each year, lifting overall standards from well below average in 1997 to below average in 2001. Compared to similar schools, the results in 2001 at the end of Year 6 were average. Girls outperformed boys significantly.
101. The standard of current work in Year 6 is an improvement on 2001 and the proportion of pupils on course to attain or exceed expectations is about average. However, the proportion of pupils on course to exceed expectations is only slightly larger than 2001. Although the results have improved since 1997, and current standards are average, standards are still not high enough and the achievement of the pupils is mixed. Pupils with average attainment generally make the progress they should over the four junior years but a number of those that are more able are underachieving.
102. Current standards in Year 2 are average. These pupils have a good knowledge of a variety of foods and can sort them into different groups. They are aware of the importance of a healthy and balanced diet. They understand that plants and animals live in different environments and know their requirements for healthy growth. Their observational skills are developing well and they use their senses for an awareness of the world around them. They know, understand, and can explain the need for a fair test.
103. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to build on their knowledge of healthy eating and develop their understanding of fair testing. They know and use a range of appropriate scientific vocabulary. Years 3 and 4 pupils know the characteristics of different everyday materials and their use for different functions but this is primarily knowledge that is expected in Year 2. They have a good understanding of electrical circuits, magnets, and light at a level that is more appropriate for their age. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to establish, before they start an experiment, what they want to know and what they intend to find out. They make predictions and record their findings. They can explain how sound and light travel and their effect on the eye and the ear. Their understanding of the relationship between the earth, the sun, and the moon is sound. They can describe reversible and non-reversible changes, explain evaporation and condensation, and consider ways of separating different substances. However, much of their work is related to the learning of scientific facts. Opportunities for investigations are often missed or teacher-led. As such, pupils' investigative skills and their ability to design their own experiments and records are under-developed. This point was made in the previous inspection and not enough improvement in this aspect has been made.



104. Learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2; slow in Years 3 and 4; quickest, and good overall, in Years 5 and 6. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory; the bulk of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better; a small amount was very good; one lesson was very poor. There is a good focus on developing key vocabulary and clear scientific language. For example, this was seen in a lesson on classifying materials when the teacher encouraged the use of appropriate words to describe the properties of each material. The teachers' questions and answer sessions are generally good and this consolidates learning. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and this is used well to promote a purposeful, learning atmosphere.
105. In about half the lessons, the work challenged the majority but did not meet the needs of every pupil, especially the pupils that are more able. Often, the teachers over-direct the investigations and this leads to insufficient opportunities for pupils to show initiative in their learning. For example, opportunities for pupils to design their own investigations and their own method for recording findings are missed. The standard of presentation is often unsatisfactory and the use of numeracy and information and communication technology is inconsistent.
106. The quality of leadership to support the subject is satisfactory but with aspects for improvement. The arrangements for assessment are inconsistent at present and the use of assessment to lead future planning is underdeveloped. The analysis of assessment results, to identify weaknesses and trends, is also underdeveloped. There is some monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work but the development of a portfolio of levelled work is embryonic only. Resources for the subject are generally good and easily accessible.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

107. Standards are unsatisfactory in Year 6. The quality of work on display in classrooms and around the school as well as the work collected in a portfolio of pupils' work and interviews with pupils confirms the judgement. This represents a fall in standards from those seen during the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 are satisfactory.
108. The pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory knowledge of various media and can create pictures and work with clay to make and decorate tiles. Skills are developing satisfactorily and they can express themselves through lively pictures using bright, vibrant colours. There is limited evidence of printing. In collage work, there is good evidence of pupils creatively using a variety of materials such as netting, cloth, and foil to represent a seascape. Information and communication technology is used appropriately and pupils have satisfactory knowledge of graphics programs suitable for their age.
109. By the age of eleven, pupils have had insufficient opportunity to develop their painting, drawing and representational skills or experience a sufficiently wide range of media to raise standards to average levels. Throughout the juniors, observational drawings are of below average quality. Insufficient care is taken with line and form, and significant detail is often lacking. Pupils have a limited understanding of proportion. The unsatisfactory standards reflect provision of inconsistent quality during the junior years. When children are given the opportunity to learn the necessary skills, as in lessons in Years 5 and 6, standards improve rapidly. Pupils in these classes produce good quality drawings, clearly showing what could be achieved if they were consistently well taught. The quality of painting, especially that of younger junior pupils, demonstrates a lack of care and insufficient emphasis on techniques and skills. Interviews with pupils indicate that a narrow range of materials is available to improve the quality of painting. Pupils have a sound knowledge of colour mixing but, for example, the range of brushes inhibits fine detailed work. Much artwork is used as an addition to other subjects such as English or history and does not result in work that is detailed or carefully completed, developing the necessary skills.
110. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. No lessons were seen in Year 3. Lessons in Years 4 and 5 were satisfactory. Two lessons in Year 6 were good. The pupils work, and discussions with them, shows that achievement in the juniors is, however, unsatisfactory overall. In some of the lessons and in the curriculum, there is insufficient emphasis on basic techniques, or on developing the vocabulary to talk about the subject and improve their work. Where the teaching is good, teachers ensure that time is given to explaining and sometimes demonstrating what is required. Skills are taught and pupils learn quickly. In two good lessons, teachers focused on drawing faces and bodies in proportion. During these lessons, standards improved quickly. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of what needs to be taught is good in those lessons.
111. Pupils demonstrate very limited knowledge and understanding of the work and lives of great artists, indicating that this aspect of the curriculum is not given enough priority. The coordinator has had no opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching or improve its standards through the provision of the necessary training. Assessments of the skills and knowledge acquired by pupils have not been carried out and this is unsatisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. Standards of work seen are unsatisfactory by the time the pupils reach the age of eleven although standards when pupils are seven years old are in line with national expectations. This represents a fall from standards seen during the previous inspection. Evidence was collected from a limited number of lessons, photographic evidence, teachers' planning, and interviews with pupils.
113. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in well-planned lessons. Pupils' ideas and vocabulary were well developed when, for example, they discuss the ingredients of a fruit salad. They carefully planned how they were going to carry out their task and paid good attention to hygiene and safety. This work clearly provided good learning opportunities through investigation. Pupils in Year 1 designed and made a model playground using a variety of construction kits, card, and wood to create the playground furniture. Care was taken with quality and decoration, both of which were of satisfactory quality. Children have experienced sewing and complete their work neatly.
114. In Years 3 to 6, evidence of pupils actually completing designs and carrying out the work is limited. Pupils have completed designs and models of bus shelters in Year 6. In this project, pupils learned about the use of materials suitable for a given task and how to join these, making rigid shapes. The quality of this work was satisfactory but illustrated the limited skills of pupils. Interviews with pupils reveal some recollection of investigating the construction of shoes, designing, making and decorating packets to contain seeds and some aspects of food technology. Some work on making, testing and evaluating wheeled vehicles had also been completed on an educational visit. Overall, knowledge is limited. Areas of the curriculum, such as pneumatics, are not in evidence. Insufficient emphasis is given to the design process and pupils are not sufficiently aware of the need to investigate, modify, and evaluate designs and models to improve quality and finish. Although some basic skills are taught such as safe practice in cutting, sawing and joining, these are not sufficiently well developed in the early years to raise standards to satisfactory levels. Too often pupils are provided with pre-drawn templates rather than having to develop the necessary skills in measuring and cutting for themselves.
115. The limited teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall, with some lessons in Years 1 and 2 being very good. No examples of work were seen from Years 3 and 4. The coordination role is not well developed. The quality of teaching is not monitored although teachers' planning is seen. Staff have received little training in the subject. No assessment is made of pupils' skills to record their progress.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Standards are satisfactory throughout the school. Due to timetable arrangements, it was possible to see only one lesson, which was in Year 6. However. A range of other evidence such as pupils' work and photographic evidence from previous year was seen.
117. Pupils in Year 2, in their study of a contrasting locality, are able to speak about Japan with its snow covered extinct volcano, Mount Fuji, showing some knowledge of a locality abroad. They know that a staple part of the Japanese diet is fish and rice, that the Japanese take their shoes off at the entrance to their house and that the children help to clean their classrooms. They remembered well the Japanese exhibition of artifacts, which the school had borrowed for a term.
118. In Year 6, the pupils have a detailed knowledge of rivers in the United Kingdom, acquired as part of preparations for a field visit. They know about the water cycle and how an ox bow lake is formed. In a very good lesson in Year 6, inspirational teaching led to the pupils quickly gaining knowledge of physical features associated with rivers and the effect of rivers on landscape and people. Key geographic terminology was used effectively. When using the world map, Year 6 can debate topical world events. In the combined Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils' work shows that they had learnt about places around the world and used e-mail information to complement this study. Work in Year 6 shows that they had undertaken an opinion poll on the subject of whether the High Street should be closed to traffic. They had also been involved in an environmental day where they looked at, for example, wind power and recycling materials.
119. Teaching in the one lesson observed was very good with all of the pupils extending their knowledge quickly. Questioning was used to engage pupils and obtain thoughtful responses. The lesson was well prepared to include appropriate input from video material. The previous work of pupils in Year 6 is of satisfactory quality and shows a good range of topics covered. However, much of the writing is copied from the same source, such as the whiteboard, and there is insufficient evidence of individual research or expression. Work from throughout the school shows a similar pattern and this is reducing the opportunities for pupils who are more able to be challenged and to excel.
120. The geography coordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and enthusiastic in leading it. An appropriate policy is now in place, supported by a published scheme. Good provision is made for field trips. These include a study of shops in the locality; a visit to a water treatment works in Leeds; a two-day residential venture to Cliff House near the school, where pupils undertake a variety of geographical and historical investigations. The coordinator keeps records of work undertaken by each year group and good photographic evidence. She also supports colleagues in teaching the subject.

Regular monitoring of teaching, however, is not possible in the time she is allowed. Time given to the subject over the course of the year is short, with some classes allocating an average of less than an hour a week. Resources are adequate with atlases available for each class.

## **HISTORY**

121. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils are achieving standards that are satisfactory for their age. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. There have been improvements since the last inspection with the adoption of a published scheme of work and a recently agreed policy.
122. Pupils are developing an appropriate understanding of past and present and how people lived in past times. Year 2 pupils, for example, are able to describe the events of the great fire of London, when it happened, and how people buried their precious possessions to protect them from the fire. They can describe the living conditions in the houses of that time. In cross-curricular work in history, geography, and literacy, pupils in the combined Year 5 and 6 class compared modern Athens with ancient Greece. The retelling of the myth of *Pandora's Box* developed their understanding of the ancient Greeks beliefs in gods. Good use is made of information and communication technology resources, which adds to the pupils' understanding of the topic being studied. The study of life in Victorian times shows that pupils have good skills when using primary sources and artifacts. The pupils are able to define a primary source and they used the *Match girl's* actual words, contrasting them with those of a fictional character. Interesting displays of artifacts were seen in several classrooms, which is good practice. The pupils handled the artifacts carefully and showed good imagination and detective instincts as they explored, for example, a carpet beater and a modern vacuum cleaner. As well as household artifacts, one class was handling artifacts from a Victorian schoolroom, for example, slates, inkwells and pens and made good links with current classroom artifacts.
123. Teaching was good in all lessons observed. The methods that are used motivate the pupils and sustain their concentration. Lessons are well planned, using available artifacts, videos, and suitable information communication technology software to enhance understanding. The lessons are taught with enthusiasm and good understanding. Learning is good in all lessons and pupils work well together. They work particularly sensibly, applying themselves in lessons where original material is used and pupils have the opportunity to think for themselves. Written work in folders and books, however, is not always of sufficiently high standard and is often superficially marked or unmarked. Work done for classroom or corridor displays is generally of a better standard. Pupils with special needs are fully involved in all the lessons and their work is commensurate with their ability.
124. Subject management is satisfactory. Good photographic records are kept of activities and samples of work from each year. A satisfactory policy and scheme lead to broad, relevant provision. Field trips form an effective part of the provision, as do visiting theatre groups. The time allocated to the subject, however, varies between the classes and is less than the national guidance. Monitoring of teaching is limited. There is no system of formal assessment. Resources are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Standards in Year 2 are similar to those found nationally but are below average in Year 6. This represents some improvement on the situation reported after the previous inspection for seven-year-old pupils but no improvement for the eleven-year-olds and this is unsatisfactory.
126. Year 1 pupils are familiar with the computer and are confident when using the mouse and keyboard. Their drawings of a bonfire show good control of the mouse and an ability to choose different tools to make changes in line and colour. Year 2 pupils develop these skills and are able to enter, save, and retrieve written or drawn work. They follow instructions well when using programs to enhance their literacy or numeracy skills and most of them can program a *pixie* to move and change directions.
127. In Key Stage 2, opportunities for pupils to develop the full range of computer skills and understanding are very limited and, as such, progress is unsatisfactory and pupils are neither adept nor confident enough in the basic skills. They are able, with varying success, to use the mouse and keyboard, edit their work, access and retrieve information for research in other subjects and produce graphs from data gathered. Year 6 pupils are beginning to create a PowerPoint presentation but are frustrated by limited access to computers.
128. The teaching is satisfactory in the main but not enough is good or better and a small amount is very poor. Some teachers lack the expertise and confidence to extend pupils' learning and teach the higher levels of information technology capability. There is no consistently planned teaching of the elements of control, monitoring and modelling. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Assessment systems to chart

pupils' progress and which can be used to provide opportunities matched to pupils' level of attainment are inconsistent.

129. The coordinator has worked hard to promote information and communication technology and the subject has been identified for future developments. The school intends to increase its resources and improve the confidence and expertise of teachers. The planned information and communication technology suite will be of benefit to both learning and teaching in the school.

## MUSIC

130. Standards are satisfactory. At the time of the previous inspection, progress was unsatisfactory and overall standards were below average. Since then, standards achieved by the end of Key stage 2 are now average and the range of curricular opportunities has been extended so that composing and appraising are part of the scheme. Progress in both key stages is satisfactory with evidence that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are confident to compose and perform their music.
131. The pupils in Year 1 can recognise long and short sounds in a piece of music and they try to show this by using hand movements or by drawing long and short marks on paper. They listen to classical music with some enjoyment. Pupils in Year 2 clap the pulse of music by Bach and Vivaldi and then discuss the differences between the two pieces considering the tempo, instruments used and how it makes them feel. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing a variety of action songs. Many of the older pupils manage to keep in tune although this is not always the case with the highest notes. Only when the words are well-known do pupils sing with enthusiasm.
132. The pupils in Key Stage 2 know how a song is written and can talk confidently about the lyrics, the music and the genre. They listen to different songs ranging from a pop song to the National Anthem. They appreciate that the National Anthem is played for special occasions such as world football matches, Olympic Games medal ceremonies or the Queen's birthday. The oldest pupils compose a piece of music using untuned percussion to describe different moods such as *happy, sad, excited, anger, weightlessness*, and others. They are successful in this and groups demonstrate interesting ways of playing to produce relevant sounds for their moods. They keep together and watch each other. The class teacher encourages the pupils to evaluate their work and to think of ways of improving it. The standard of singing of most pupils in Year 6 is in line with expectations. The pupils produce a pleasant sound with words that are mainly clear and well pronounced, except where the rhythm patterns are very quick. The overall pitch is satisfactory but a few pupils struggle to pitch the high notes correctly. Pupils in Year 3 were heard successfully singing a simple two part round.
133. Although teaching is at least satisfactory and often good, teachers still miss opportunities to improve the standard of the pupils' singing. They may remind the pupils about breathing, singing the words clearly and adding some dynamics but little time is spent practising the parts where the pitch is inaccurate, or the words are mumbled. Most teachers are interested in music and are willing to have a go, even where their knowledge is weaker. This enthusiasm, particularly in Key Stage 2, motivates the pupils and helps them learn. Where lessons are good, pupils are involved in the music making and enjoy participating. Teachers are providing appropriate activities to stimulate their desire to succeed and develop their skills. Where lessons are less satisfactory, the activities are limited, the pace drags, and the pupils are not enthused to join in.
134. The coordinator is keen and able to support where necessary. A scheme of work based on national guidance is being developed but has to be evaluated. Teachers are gaining in confidence. A pianist is employed one afternoon a week to accompany singing. This ensures all pupils have the experience of singing with a piano. Extra curricular activities include recorders and both a junior and infant choir, run by someone from the local community. Instrumental tuition is available throughout the school. The pupils regularly perform in the church and in the community. This year they are singing in the town centre when the Christmas lights are switched on. A variety of visiting musicians including Indian, African drummers, African choir, string and brass ensembles all help to enhance the pupils' musical curriculum and to develop an interest in music.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Standards are average throughout and have remained at this level since the last inspection. There is no difference between boys and girls in the standards achieved.
136. In Key Stage 1, pupils are aware of the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise and of following instructions accurately. Their awareness and use of space are developing appropriately, as is their body control when moving or balancing. Within Key Stage 2, pupils prepare themselves thoroughly for exercise and take a pride in dressing appropriately for the lessons. They construct and perform sequences of movements and balances,

varying the levels and directions, demonstrating satisfactory precision, control, and fluency. A large majority of pupils in Year 6 attain good standards and perform complex sequences. They are developing good hand and eye coordination when passing, controlling and dribbling a ball with a hockey stick. Attitudes throughout the school are positive. Pupils respond with great enthusiasm and commitment to the activities provided. The behaviour of the substantial majority is good in response to instructions and to safety generally. Apparatus and equipment are treated with respect and care. Relationships between pupils are based on mutual encouragement and support.

137. The quality of teaching is generally good. In the best lessons, the teacher places heavy emphasis on achieving high standards. Lessons are well planned so that skills are taught and learnt systematically and the good pace of the lesson ensures that pupils benefit from strenuous exercise. The management and organisation of pupils is a strong feature, indoors and outdoors. Teachers often use pupils to demonstrate good points; however, opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and other pupils' performance are sometimes missed.
138. The curriculum is well planned to cover all the aspects of the programme in a balanced and sequential manner. Planning is based on an appropriate framework, which gives clear guidance to teachers in relation to the competencies and skills to be acquired by pupils. There is an adequate range of resources, which are in satisfactory condition; the two halls are well equipped and well used. Outside play areas are spacious and good use is made of them for lessons and for extra-curricular activities such as football and netball training and when competing against other schools.