

INSPECTION REPORT

NORBURY HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hazel Grove, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106064

Headteacher: Mr G Dodd

Reporting inspector: Mr M Newell
10638

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th November 2001

Inspection number: 196654

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Shepley Drive
Hazel Grove
Stockport

Postcode: SK7 6LE

Telephone number: 0161 483 1786

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr I Ritchie

Date of previous inspection: 23rd May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well the pupils are taught How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9593	Mrs B Sinclair	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13110	Mrs P King	Team inspector	Science Geography	How well does the school care for its pupils?
10182	Mr B Cooper	Team inspector	Art and design History Religious education	
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31807	Mr D Carpenter	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Design and technology	
10228	Mrs S Russam	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Hazel Grove about three miles from the centre of Stockport. Most but not all pupils live close to the school. This is a popular school with 468 pupils on roll, of which 40 attend the recently opened nursery on a part-time basis. The number of pupils attending the school has increased quite significantly since the time of the last inspection. Assessment data shows that children's attainment levels when they start school are generally above average, although a small but significant percentage is not at this high level. Approximately 4% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. A small percentage of pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is approximately 19%, which is broadly average, whilst the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with some excellent features. The very good quality of education that the school provides enables pupils to attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science and to attain well or very well in most other subjects. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, this is a school that never rests on its laurels and is constantly striving to improve further. There is an excellent team spirit present in the school with all staff and governors committed to achieving and sustaining high standards. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behaviour is of a high standard. Relationships throughout the school are very good and the school makes impressive provision for pupils' personal development. The quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good, particularly in the Foundation Stage. Each pupil's individuality is recognised and celebrated. All these strengths, together with the very good learning opportunities that are provided both within and outside the formal curriculum, make a powerful contribution to the good progress that pupils of all abilities make. Taking all factors into account this is a school that is providing very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in history and music is well above average and above average in religious education, geography, physical education and design and technology.
- The consistently good and at times very good or better teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress and learn in a most effective manner.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, and clearly love school and this is reflected in the high attendance rates.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and pupils respond by behaving very well.
- The school provides a challenging and stimulating curriculum in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-6 that adds significantly to pupils' personal as well as academic development.
- The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' academic development and for ensuring their welfare and well being.
- The school has established a very strong partnership with parents who are very appreciative and proud of the quality of education that the school provides.
- The headteacher's leadership is excellent. He has played a pivotal role in building a team of staff and governors that work together in an impressive manner to provide a high quality of education.

What could be improved

- Some elements of information and communication technology.
- The consistency in the marking of pupils' work to highlight areas for improvement and more actively involve pupils in setting targets for their own improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the time of the last inspection in 1997. Standards have improved in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching has improved with a much higher incidence of good and very good or better teaching. The quality of curriculum provision has improved and many of the numerous strengths identified have been maintained. No key issues were identified at the last inspection but the headteacher showed no signs of complacency. Under his astute leadership, staff were encouraged to improve areas of the curriculum that were identified as being satisfactory. This commitment to improvement has paid dividends as the school has gone from strength to strength and evidence clearly indicates that the school is exceptionally well placed to continue to develop and improve.

STANDARDS

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

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

The above table shows that when the school's end of Year 6 results are compared to all schools, attainment is well above average in English, mathematics and science. The school performed well when compared to similar schools with attainment well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. The percentage of pupils that exceed the level expected of 11-year-olds is often well above average. The slightly lower results in 2000 do not indicate a dip in standards but reflect the ability levels of the cohort. The school constantly sets itself challenging targets which it achieves and on occasions exceeds. Inspection findings show that attainment in English, mathematics and science are well above average with a high percentage of pupils on track to achieve the expected level by the end of Year 6. This is a school that ensures that each and every pupil fulfils their potential and there is no evidence of underachievement. By the end of Year 2 standards are again well above average in English, mathematics and science with all pupils, regardless of their ability, achieving well. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards in history and music are well above average and above average in religious education, geography, design and technology and physical education. Although standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory overall, some elements, such as sensors and modelling, are not at this level. Standards in art and design are at an expected level.

The attainment of children when they start school is generally, but not exclusively, above average. The very good quality of teaching ensures that children make good and often very good progress within lessons. By the time that children start Year1 most achieve beyond the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in most of the areas of learning with a small percentage achieving well beyond these goals. Attainment in physical development is at an expected level.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are very keen and enthusiastic learners who show a thirst for new knowledge. They have a real desire to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in class and around the school is very good. Pupils show an impressive awareness of the needs of others.
Personal development and relationships	The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and the quality of relationships between pupils and with adults is of a high standard. These factors help to create an excellent learning environment.
Attendance	Very good. The pupils love coming to school and this is reflected in the attendance rates, which are well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching overall is good with teaching in the Foundation Stage being very good. Examples of very good and excellent teaching were also observed in Years 1-6. In the Foundation Stage a very good balance is struck between providing learning opportunities that enable children to learn through practical and investigative activities as well as more formal ones. All activities have a specific focus and every activity is seen as a learning opportunity. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is consistently good with some very good practice in Years 1–6. Tasks are often challenging and exciting. Teachers choose texts that enthuse and motivate the pupils. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through investigative and problem solving tasks that fire up the pupils who cannot wait to further their own learning through independent research. A particular strength is the manner in which pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are enhanced through other subjects of the curriculum. The good progress that pupils make in other subjects, such as history, music, geography and religious education, owes much to the enthusiasm and subject expertise of many teachers that help to bring the subjects to life in a vibrant manner. There are some very good examples of pupils' work being marked in such a way as to clearly outline what pupils need to do to improve. This very good practice is not as consistent across the school as it should be.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a broad, balanced and vibrant curriculum for pupils of all ages. The wide range of visits, visitors and excellent extra-curricular activities bring an added and exciting dimension to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The very good support that is provided for pupils ensures that they progress at a similar rate to their classmates.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are fully included in all curricular activities and in the life of the school as a community.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school places a great emphasis on the personal as well as the academic development of pupils. The school encourages a great sense of responsibility in its pupils and promotes in them a sense of tolerance and respect. The pupils respond impressively and revel in the responsibility that is entrusted in them.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures in place for assessing pupils' academic and personal development. This is a very caring and supportive school. The school has recognised the need for pupils to be more actively involved in setting targets for their own development and improvement.

The school has established an excellent partnership with parents where parents and the school work together in an exceptional manner to support children's learning. The school greatly values parents' contributions and in turn the parents are only too willing to support the work of the school, academically, socially and through numerous successful fund-raising events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership. He is very well supported by an effective senior management team. The headteacher has been the key figure in the continued development of the school. He has helped to create an excellent team spirit where all who work in or govern the school are committed to providing the best possible education for all pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The Governing Body fulfils its responsibilities in an impressive manner and very effectively holds the school to account for the quality of education that it provides.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has in place very good and rigorous procedures for analysing test and assessment data and for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, which have a significant impact on the levels of attainment that pupils achieve.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of all the available resources at the school's disposal and these make an important contribution to pupils' learning. Very good use is made of the individual teachers' talents and of the building and local environment. The principles of best value are applied very well when purchasing goods and services. Financial planning is of a high standard.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.	The school has a good number of teaching and support staff. The support staff make a most valuable and valued contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. The adequacy and standard of

accommodation is good and resources overall are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fact that their child likes coming to school.• The good quality of teaching and the progress that children make.• The good standard of behaviour.• The range and amount of homework.• The approachability of the school and how closely the school works with parents.• The expectations that the school sets and how the school helps children to become mature and responsible.• How well the school is led and managed.• The range and quality of activities outside of lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How parents are kept informed about how their child is getting on.

A very high number of parents responded to the questionnaire and the overwhelming response was that parents are delighted with the quality of education that the school provides. Inspection findings very much support the views of the parents as this is a very good school and parents' views and perceptions are very accurate. A small percentage of parents would like more information about their child's progress. Inspection findings found that the range and quality of information is much better than that found in the majority of schools and is therefore judged to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. This is a very good school. Inspection findings show that by the time pupils leave school the standards that they achieve are well above average in English, mathematics and science. The consistently good and at times very good teaching, the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher, the rigorous analysis of test and assessment data and the very positive attitudes that pupils have to learning are all factors that contribute significantly to these high standards. The school has performed consistently well over time. Detailed data maintained by the school show clearly that the slight dip in Year 6 results in 2000 was linked to the natural ability level of the cohort. The test results in 2001 for Year 6 pupils indicate that attainment in English, mathematics and science is well above average when compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools attainment is well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. This is a school where there is no evidence of underachievement and each and every pupil achieves well and makes good progress in relation to their ability. The school sets challenging targets each year and usually meets or exceeds these targets. The school is effective in this process because it clearly identifies pupils that are on track to achieve beyond and well beyond the levels expected of 11-year-olds. At the same time, careful consideration and support is given to pupils on the special educational needs register to ensure that these pupils reach their full potential. Inspection evidence shows that the school sets itself demanding and challenging targets in literacy and numeracy that are often met and in some instances exceeded. The school is on track to maintain a high level of attainment and achievement in subsequent years.
2. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. A significant percentage of pupils are on track to exceed the level expected of 11-year-olds in all three subjects. Pupils achieve very good standards in reading. Pupils read very fluently and understand the text well. Pupils have been taught a good range of reading strategies and this enables them to locate information at speed. A great strength of the school is that it has helped to nurture a love of literature in the pupils and, as a result, pupils are very confident readers who are only too willing to express opinions and discuss the wide variety of literature that they read. Standards in writing are well above average. Pupils use an expressive and expansive vocabulary well. They adapt their style most convincingly to suit the audience and purpose. Spelling, punctuation and handwriting standards are very good. Many pupils have a real interest in writing as a result of the exciting and vibrant manner in which writing skills are nurtured and developed. Speaking and listening skills are very good. Pupils listen very attentively to teachers and to classmates. Pupils are articulate in their responses. This is often helped by teachers' sharp and incisive questioning that places a high expectation on the pupils to not only express but to justify their views and opinions.
3. Standards are equally good in mathematics and science. By the age of 11, pupils have developed very good number skills with many pupils giving clear explanations as to how they have worked out quite complex calculations. Mental agility skills are at a high level. Most pupils draw and measure angles accurately, show a good understanding of different units of measurement and of calculating averages, mode and mean. The increased emphasis that the school has placed on problem solving activities and interpreting graphical data has led to improvements in these aspects of the subject and pupils are now achieving well. By the time that pupils leave school they apply the principles of fair testing well to their investigative work. They use prior knowledge and understanding to predict results and evaluate the reliability of their findings. Many pupils

have a well-developed scientific vocabulary. The pupils have a very good level of scientific knowledge. For example, they are aware of ways in which organisms are suited to different environments, they show a very good understanding of the principles of dissolving, are able to confidently measure forces in Newtons and have a good understanding of the nature and uses of insulators and conductors.

4. The test results for seven-year-olds in 2001 showed that attainment in reading, writing, and mathematics was well above average when compared to all schools and similar schools, with a significant percentage of pupils exceeding the level expected of seven-year-olds. Teacher assessments in science and in speaking and listening show the pupils to be achieving equally well. The 2000 test results showed attainment in reading, writing and mathematics to be in the top 5% of schools nationally. The natural differing ability levels of the cohorts can explain the slight difference in attainment between these years. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is of a good standard and makes a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and to the good progress that pupils make. Pupils are keen and eager to do well. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well and the higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged. Inspection findings show a similar picture, with attainment in English, mathematics and science well above average.
5. Pupils' reading standards by the age of seven are very good. Pupils have been taught a very good range of reading strategies and this enables them to read new words confidently and accurately. They read with high levels of expression and show a good level of understanding of the text they have read. Many pupils know how to locate information using an index, contents and a glossary. Writing standards are at a similarly high level. Pupils write well for a variety of purposes. The higher attaining pupils use complex sentences. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops with a significant percentage using more advanced punctuation, such as speech and exclamation marks. Handwriting is well formed. Speaking and listening is another strength. Pupils listen very carefully to instructions, to text that is being read and to one another. This has a very positive impact on the quality of learning. Pupils speak articulately and use an expressive vocabulary when talking about their work or about their own experiences.
6. Pupils are attaining well above average standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. Number skills for a high percentage of pupils are good and many pupils have a good recall of multiplication tables. Pupils measure and tell the time accurately. Pupils have a good knowledge of shapes and the higher attaining pupils are confident in using a tally chart to record information. The increased emphasis the school has placed on problem solving and investigative activities has led to improvements in this area of the curriculum and the pupils are now achieving well. Standards in science are well above average. The in-depth coverage of all aspects of the subject, together with the emphasis that is placed on investigative work, all make an important contribution to how well the pupils attain and achieve. By the age of seven all pupils make simple predictions, observe changes and recognise the importance of a fair test. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of electricity, they explain the properties of living organisms, and name the parts of a flowering plant. Pupils show a high level of understanding of how forces affect movement. A strength is the manner in which pupils use a scientific vocabulary to explain their work.
7. A great strength of the school, and one which makes a most important contribution to the standards that are achieved, is the way in which pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed and enhanced at every opportunity in other subjects of the curriculum. In history, for example, pupils wrote extended pieces of factual writing about several historical characters, such as Henry VIII and John Cabot. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing subject specific vocabulary in numeracy, science and geography. In science, pupils are expected to draw and interpret graphical data and to write up their

investigative work in a clear, well-structured manner. Many examples were seen of pupils writing for a whole range of purposes in other subjects, when writing up investigations, interpreting historical events, explaining views on a wide range of issues, and of accurate measuring and recording. Often these activities were all recorded in pupils' own words rather than simply filling in worksheets and this very good practice adds considerably to pupils' learning.

8. Standards in history and music are well above the nationally expected level at the end of Years 2 and 6. The quality of teaching and provision is never less than good and is often very good. This promotes a very enthusiastic response from the pupils who invariably rise to the challenges that are set. In history, pupils have a very good level of historical knowledge of the periods of history that they study. The pupils are encouraged to become historical investigators, to locate information from primary and secondary sources of evidence and the very good progress that pupils of all abilities make is directly linked to the teaching which makes the subject spring to life. The high standards in music are again linked to the high quality provision and the consistently good and at times very good teaching. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to compose, perform and appraise and are encouraged to participate in lessons and performances with a real sense of enjoyment. The good direct teaching of specific skills together with the impressive opportunities for a high percentage of pupils to learn to play a musical instrument all impact most significantly on the learning, attainment and progress that pupils of all abilities make.
9. Standards in religious education, geography, design and technology and physical education are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning in these subjects is good. Teachers show a good subject knowledge and ensure that elements of the subjects are all taught in sufficient depth. In geography, for example, pupils are taught geographical skills alongside geographical knowledge but are also asked to examine wider issues, such as pollution and the changing environment. In design and technology, pupils are expected to evaluate their finished products and suggest improvements. This has a positive impact on future work. In physical education, pupils achieve well across all elements of the subject as a result of the good quality of teaching. The excellent provision made for extra-curricular activities and residential visits brings an added dimension to pupils' learning. In religious education, the pupils acquire a good knowledge of Christianity and a great strength is the development of the ability to empathise and recognise the needs of others, which is brought about by sensitive and good quality teaching. Standards in art and design are at a satisfactory level at the end of Years 2 and 6 with the school rightly recognising the need to ensure that specific skills and techniques are taught in a more systematic manner. Standards in information and communication technology are at a satisfactory level overall but the work on sensors and modelling is not at this level. There were some excellent examples of computers being used to support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum observed during the inspection. On some occasions similar opportunities are missed. This is usually linked to a lack of teacher confidence and expertise. Again, the school is aware of these areas for development and is already tackling the issues.
10. The attainment of children when they start school is generally above average in the key areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. There is, however, a wide range of abilities between the higher and lower attaining children. The school has a nursery and two reception classes that form the Foundation Stage. The quality of provision and the quality of teaching are of a very good standard. This enables children of all abilities to make rapid progress in their learning. The excellent teamwork, together with the most effective support staff, does much to support and enhance the high quality of teaching and learning. By the time that children start in Year 1 many are achieving beyond or well beyond the expected level in

nearly all areas of learning. A smaller percentage of children are not at this level but nevertheless have made equally good progress given their lower starting point. Attainment in physical development is at an expected level when children start in Year 1.

11. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Support is well targeted and this ensures that the pupils make good progress and achieve well both within lessons and over time. Support staff make a significant and valued contribution to how well pupils learn. Individual education plans are of a good standard but on occasions some teachers do not make the most effective use of the plans to further enhance pupils' learning. Arrangements for supporting pupils with a statement of special educational need are effective and make an important contribution to the good progress that pupils make. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good, enabling pupils to make good progress. Good support is given in class by the class teachers through well-planned activities and by teaching assistants within literacy and numeracy lessons and in some additional language lessons in small groups. Pupils are closely monitored to track their development. Pupils achieve well and are enabled to take a full part in all aspects of school life. Pupils in school who are identified as gifted and talented are allocated work and tasks that are suitably challenging and demanding and which are closely matched to their individual needs. As a result the pupils make good progress.
12. This is a very good school where high standards are consistently achieved. It is a school that is not content to rest on its achievements but instead is constantly looking at ways to provide an even better of quality of education for its pupils. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the very effective Governing Body and the equally effective teaching and support staff, it is a school that is exceptionally well placed to continue its process of development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and continue to be one of the many strengths of the school. Since the last inspection the school has continued to promote and sustain an environment in which pupils know they can develop and establish patterns of learning, initiative and purposeful study. There is an atmosphere of concentration throughout the school from the Foundation Stage onwards and all tasks are undertaken purposefully and with a great sense of pride and achievement. Pupils are very keen to achieve well and they take part in all activities with a high level of interest and enthusiasm. Pupils are always ready to ask and answer questions and enjoy nothing better than rising to the challenges that are set in the wide range of investigative and problem solving tasks that are a feature of many lessons. All these factors make a powerful and significant contribution to the quality of learning and to the standards that pupils achieve.
14. Behaviour in lessons, during play and around the school is consistently very good. Pupils consistently listen and concentrate on their work, follow the usual conventions of asking and answering questions and respect and value the contributions of their classmates. Discussions with pupils show that they are very confident that should bullying ever occur it will be dealt with swiftly and fairly. There have been two fixed period exclusions during the last twelve months. The pupils demonstrate an air of maturity in the way in which they settle into their routines in a bright but orderly manner. They show high levels of social skills development during breaktimes and lunch and sustain discussions and initiate games confidently. They are keen to share their knowledge, achievements and interests with others.
15. Pupils with special educational needs generally respond very well to their lessons and

demonstrate a positive attitude to learning alongside their classmates. The very small minority of pupils who have emotional and behavioural problems respond well to the help the school provides in enabling them to come to terms with their difficulties and build meaningful relationships with adults and their classmates.

16. Relationships are very good. Pupils show consideration and sensitivity towards each other and combine respect with friendliness when dealing with teachers and other adults. They work productively in groups, sharing ideas and resources sensibly. Pupils are also capable of working individually for extended periods, demonstrating initiative and creativity. Older pupils take on high levels of responsibility when caring for and assisting younger pupils, particularly in shared reading, with a commendable level of maturity and support. No bullying was seen during the inspection and pupils are able to work at all times in an atmosphere free from oppressive behaviour.
17. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils involve themselves in all aspects of the life of the school and in the local community. Pupils respond very well and with great maturity to the range of responsibilities they are asked to undertake. They carry out many monitorial tasks, organise and run the library, act as buddies to the younger children in school as well as a whole range of other class and school duties. Pupils show very good levels of initiative in their own learning. In investigative and problem solving tasks they are eager to carry out research to help them find the answers to the challenges that are set. Often, without prompting, they will continue their research at home and share their findings the next day with their classmates. The residential visits for the older pupils provide a very good opportunity to enhance pupils' personal development as well as their academic and physical development. Discussions with the pupils show that they get a great deal out of these visits. Pupils recognise that these visits help them to develop team working skills and to be aware of and value the needs and feelings of others. The School Council enables pupils to put forward suggestions for changes and improvements to the school and pupils on the council have a really good grasp of what are realistic and unrealistic suggestions. The discussion and debate during the council meetings provide pupils with a fascinating insight into decision making processes to which they respond with a high level of maturity and sensitivity.
18. Attendance rates remain very good. Unauthorised absences remain below the national average. The school maintains very good systems of marking and analysing the registers each morning and afternoon. Any absences are dealt with speedily and with tact and diplomacy. These procedures all contribute to regular, prompt attendance and make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Parents' views confirm that children enjoy coming to school and are appreciative of the opportunities and benefits presented to them.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. During the week of inspection teaching was good or better in almost nine out of ten lessons and very good or better in nearly half of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Examples of very good or better teaching were observed at all stages. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and makes an important contribution to the big strides in learning that children make. Children get off to a flying start in their educational lives in the Foundation Stage. The consistently good and at times very good or better teaching in Years 1-6 ensures that pupils of all abilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language continue to make good progress as they move through the school. This quality of teaching, the very good attitudes to learning that pupils have, the rigorous procedures to monitor teaching and learning and the thorough process of target setting all make a significant contribution to the high standards that pupils achieve

by the time that they leave school. All teachers show a readiness to reflect critically on how they teach in order to improve. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection with a higher incidence of good and, importantly, very good or better teaching.

20. The school has a nursery and two reception classes in the Foundation Stage. A great strength of the provision is that there is a consistency in the quality of teaching between all classes. A wide range of exciting and vibrant learning opportunities is planned across all the areas of learning. Each activity has a specific learning focus and the activities that are planned relate closely to this focus. Many opportunities are provided for children to learn through practical, investigative and problem solving activities as well as more formal ones. There is a great team spirit amongst all the staff and the support staff make a very important contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Very good use is made of assessment data to help guide and inform planning and to ensure that tasks are matched to the individual needs of the children. The vibrant learning opportunities that are provided across all areas of learning fill the children with excitement and a real desire to learn more. Relationships are of a high standard and there is a real buzz of purposeful and enjoyable productivity in all classes. Overall, the very good and at times excellent teaching and the teamwork approach of the whole staff make the provision for children in the Foundation Stage a strength of the school.
21. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good and at times very good across the school. This consistency of teaching has a major impact on the sustaining and in some instances improving of high standards. A strength of the teaching is that reading and writing skills are taught in a direct and progressive manner. This enables pupils from an early age to tackle unfamiliar words, to structure their stories well, to spell accurately and to present their work in an attractive manner. As pupils get older they are taught to skim and scan, to read beyond the literal level, to write extended pieces of writing and to use an expressive vocabulary that hooks the attention of the reader. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to write for many audiences and purposes and they have the skills at hand to sustain an idea or plot, to bring a character vividly to life and to write persuasive and often emotive arguments. Teachers' close relationships with pupils encourage thoughtful speech and listening. Teachers' good knowledge of literature enables them to capture the attention of the pupils and to ask incisive questions about the text that they are studying. These factors add significantly to the good quality of learning that is a feature of most lessons.
22. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. The basic skills of numeracy are taught well and this gives pupils an early confidence to handle numbers with ease. All lessons are well planned and the pupils respond very well to the structure of the lesson, which always includes a quick fire session at the start of the lesson to test pupils' mental agility. In the best lessons, there is a good level of challenge for all groups and pupils are regularly required to explain how they have worked things out. For example, pupils in Year 2 explain their mental method for calculating how many fingers and shoes children have altogether. This clarifies their thoughts and helps their understanding. Very good use is made of visual resources, such as overhead projectors, to demonstrate particular teaching points. This enables pupils to see the teaching point more clearly and advances their learning. Across the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Teachers are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy teaching numeracy. This helps to motivate the pupils, who really like nothing better than a challenging problem solving activity which they tackle with relish and high levels of perseverance. The sharing of lesson objectives with the pupils is proving very successful because they are then eager to take a share in the responsibility for their learning.

23. A strength of the teaching, that adds to the quality of learning and the high standards that pupils achieve, is the manner in which pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted across the curriculum. In history, pupils are asked to write analytical and factual pieces of work on, for example, the Tudors or John Cabot. In geography, pupils justify views and opinions on issues such as pollution and conservation. In religious education, pupils are asked to retell bible stories in their own words. In science and geography, pupils are expected to explain their work both orally and in written form using an accurate and expressive technical vocabulary. Scientific reports are written up accurately and clearly and with a good sense of structure that gives the reader a clear insight into what the investigation entailed and what the conclusions were. In a Year 4 physical education lesson, pupils were asked to explain how their movements fulfilled the exploration of level and direction. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted in subjects such as science, geography and design and technology. In science, pupils measure accurately and record their findings in tabular and graphical form. Pupils then interpret the data accurately. In design and technology, pupils are taught the importance of accurate designs and measurement and, as a result, finished products are of a better quality. Pupils' knowledge of co-ordinates is put to the test in geography as they are asked to locate significant landmarks. Teachers often ask pupils to write answers or accounts in their own words rather than simply filling in mundane worksheets and this again adds to the ongoing development of pupils' literacy skills.
24. The school on the whole places considerable emphasis on learning through investigative and problem solving tasks. In science the quality of teaching is good. The majority of pupils' learning is through investigative and experimental work which is well managed, with pupils being encouraged to take increasing responsibility for the organisation of their activities. Pupils are challenged to think things through scientifically and the strong emphasis on the use of correct scientific terminology from an early age is very effective in embedding the language of science in pupils' work. Very good examples were observed of computers being used to support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are provided with opportunities to edit and draft their work, to present information in different formats and to carry out research. This practice is to be commended but is not as consistent across the school as it could be, as opportunities to use computers to support learning are sometimes missed and this prevents pupils' learning from being even stronger.
25. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. It is effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. Individual education plans are of a good standard because they contain targets that are challenging and demanding and are well targeted to the needs of the individual pupil. Teaching is at its best when these plans are used effectively to plan activities to help meet the targets. On occasions some teachers do not make enough use of the plans to help guide and inform future planning. Support staff play a valuable and valued role in supporting pupils' learning. The support they provide is sensitive and yet probing and challenging. Staff take a full and active part in lessons, use their initiative very well and work very effectively with teachers. As a result, the contribution support staff make is significant and adds considerably to the good progress that pupils make. Only occasionally are the expectations of support staff not at a high enough level and on these occasions pupils' learning is more restricted. Good quality teaching and support is provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Teaching ensures that pupils are fully involved in question and answer sessions and that pupils are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and in the life of the school as a community. Good procedures are in place to assess and track their progress and additional support is targeted when and where appropriate. All these factors help to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates. The school has identified a small number of pupils as gifted and talented. The work that is set for

these pupils is sufficiently challenging and demanding and their progress is carefully monitored. Again, this ensures that pupils achieve their potential and achieve at a level that is commensurate with their high ability levels.

26. Teachers on the whole have good subject knowledge across most areas of the curriculum. Teachers use this knowledge to enthuse and motivate the pupils and help to bring subjects to life. There are, for example, several teachers with good musical skills, including the co-ordinators, and the school uses their expertise well in teaching music to their own and other classes. This element of specialist teaching and teachers' enthusiasm is a significant factor in the high standards achieved. In these lessons, teachers use their knowledge well to teach skills, extend pupils' knowledge and to provide good models of musical performance. In physical education, the individual skills of some teachers shine through and add to the quality of pupils' learning and their performance and achievement. In history, teachers' knowledge of the subject means that they can ask and answer quite searching questions which deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Although some teachers are very secure in their knowledge and expertise in information and communication technology, a smaller number of teachers are less secure and on occasions this restricts pupils' learning. The school has already recognised this and additional in service training has already been planned. There are a number of strengths in the teaching of art and design but in some instances not enough emphasis has been given over time to the direct teaching of specific skills and techniques that would lead to further advances in the levels of attainment.
27. The quality of relationships across the school is very good. Pupils respond very well to the enthusiasm and humour of their teachers. Pupils are very keen to do well in their lessons. They take a full and active part in all lessons and show high levels of interest and motivation. Pupils talk with great animation about their work and it is clear from discussions with pupils that they thoroughly enjoy lessons and school in general. Pupils are always ready to take on board constructive verbal criticism to help improve their work and show a great sense of pride and achievement when they are praised for a good piece of work. The school has rightly recognised the need to capitalise on these very positive attitudes and enthusiasm further. At present, pupils are not sufficiently involved in setting targets for their own improvement which would bring a further dimension to the quality of their learning. In addition, whilst the marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall with some very good practice, the opportunity is not being used well enough in all classes to outline to pupils what they need to do to improve or why a particular piece of work is of a high standard. These are areas that the school has identified as areas for development. Ninety-five percent of parents who responded to the questionnaire were happy with the amount of homework that the school sets. Ninety-seven percent of parents felt that the quality of teaching was of a good standard and that their children were making good progress. These are very accurate and astute perceptions. The parents are very supportive of the school and recognise and value the very good quality of education that the school provides. Parents support their children's learning in a very effective manner and have established a strong partnership with teachers and the school in general. These are additional factors that, together with the good quality of the teaching and the desire to learn shown by the pupils, make a powerful combination and contribute greatly to the high standards that are consistently achieved.

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

28. The school has a rich and varied curriculum, including very good provision for the Foundation Stage. It is very broad and balanced, meets the needs of all its pupils, and is very well planned to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all. This is an

improvement on the good provision identified in the last inspection and helps to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities learn through a rich and vibrant range of learning opportunities that make a significant contribution to the high standards that are achieved in many areas of the curriculum.

29. Whilst due emphasis is placed on the teaching of English, mathematics and science, a great strength of the school is the depth and variety of learning opportunities provided across the full range of curriculum subjects and in the very extensive range of additional activities on offer to the pupils. Over a hundred pupils take advantage of peripatetic music lessons, improving individual skills and also enriching the musical life of the school. This stimulating environment promotes very good attitudes to learning. Lessons are generally interesting and the school has worked hard to develop good links between subjects to raise standards. This is evident in the way that literacy is developed across the curriculum, for example, in the very good written work in history. The school is also extending numeracy links across the subjects, for example, in improving the recording and interpreting of graphs in science. Teachers in each year group plan well together to ensure that there is parity of opportunity for all pupils. The curriculum is well supported by useful schemes of work in most subjects. However, whilst satisfactory, the scheme of work for art and design is not yet secure in matching new national guidelines to the commercial scheme the school uses. This prevents standards from being even higher. Information and communication technology is used regularly in lessons but its use is not yet developed systematically to cover all aspects of the subject. The school meets all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and provides religious education according to the Stockport Agreed Syllabus. The school also meets statutory requirements for daily collective worship.
30. The curriculum provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Planning is of a high standard and ensures that children are provided with exciting opportunities to learn through investigative, practical and problem solving activities as well as more structured and formal tasks. Planning relates closely to the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals and each activity has a specific learning focus with every opportunity seized upon to extend and enhance children's communication skills.
31. The school provides a very good level of personal, health and social education and is dedicated in recognising the importance of this area of the curriculum. The school ensures that it promotes personal development, respect for self and others in a sensitive but supportive manner. All aspects of health education, including drug awareness and sex education, are handled through a planned programme and covered in an appropriate manner.
32. The provision and support in class for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables pupils to make good progress. It is effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. Learning support staff are particularly effective and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of individual education plans is good, although on occasions some teachers do not make enough use of these plans to inform their planning or match the work they provide to the pupils' individual needs.
33. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good, enabling pupils to make good progress. The school liaises well with outside agencies to seek advice, bi-lingual support and translations where needed and the school makes every effort to involve parents as much as possible. Good support is given in class by the class teachers through well-planned activities and by teaching assistants within literacy and numeracy lessons and in some additional language lessons in small groups. Pupils are closely monitored to track their development. Pupils achieve well and are enabled to take

a full part in all aspects of school life. It is a good reflection on the relationships in the school that help is readily available from fellow pupils who also show respect and pleasure when difficulties are overcome.

34. There is excellent provision for extra-curricular opportunities, which includes a range of sports, music, gardening, computer, cookery and craft clubs. The school takes every opportunity to demonstrate and celebrate the achievements of its pupils by regular performances and productions held during the year. These include drama and musical presentations performed at local churches and residential homes in the area. The curriculum is supported and enriched by a wide range of visits to such places as Blue Planet Aquarium, Bramhall Hall and residential visits to Plas Nantglyn, for example. The school has extended a warm welcome to a range of visitors who have shared experiences of other faiths, cultures and beliefs with the pupils to give focus to many areas of the curriculum. Plans are in hand to extend the number of visits pupils make to places of worship in addition to a Christian Church. The school is highly respected in both the immediate and surrounding areas.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Good quality collective acts of worship take place on a daily basis and provide an excellent focus for the spiritual dimension in the lives of the pupils. A particularly notable feature of the assemblies is the great sense of happiness and harmony that comes from staff and pupils. Adults and children have a mutual respect that underscores the sense of community in the school. During the week of the inspection, the theme of the assemblies was music and musical instruments and pupils were reminded of the beauty and creativity of music in their cultural setting. The assemblies contain moments of reflection and a sharing of emotions of sadness and joy in which adults and children participate as equals. The singing of hymns is particularly joyful and pupils return to their classrooms spiritually refreshed. Within the curriculum teachers seize on opportunities to reflect on their own lives and the world in which they live, for example, they look at how a seed grows or at the life cycle of an animal. Opportunities are provided in the personal and social curriculum for pupils to explore emotions and feelings and to reflect on how their actions impact on the lives of others.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All adults have consistently high expectations of pupils, who respond very positively. There is a sharing of ideas for promoting a school-wide code of conduct and the school is notable for the very good behaviour that pervades all activities. Pupils have a clear understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others and they behave in a respectful and thoughtful manner towards one another. In lessons, teachers plan to emphasise the moral component of the stories that they read to the pupils and older pupils have a strong sense of morality relating to issues, such as world hunger and poverty. Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to debate moral issues in their subject lessons and in their shared discussion times.
37. The provision for pupils' social development is also very good. Pupils are valued and treated with respect and the atmosphere in the school is filled with a sense of order and community. There is a school council with representatives chosen from each class and it functions as a major contributor to the social order of the school and is taken seriously by pupils of all ages. Pupils in all classes are encouraged in taking responsibility and initiative is rewarded. Older pupils often take responsibility for the welfare and happiness of the youngest members of the school community and at lunchtimes act as monitors and supporters for their young companions. Teachers act as excellent role models for their pupils and play a significant part in establishing the sense of the school as a social community.

38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The strong sense of community that underlies activities within the school also reaches out into the wider world as the pupils in different year groups make visits to places of interest. By the time they reach the end of Year 6 pupils have been able to visit galleries, museums, churches and the zoo and these visits add greatly to the pupils' knowledge base. In addition, visitors to the school give insights into the Jewish faith, poverty in Africa and have provided a workshop introducing Zulu culture to the pupils. Musically, pupils are able to take part in public performances, such as carol services and the local Christmas Extravaganza at Stockport Town Hall, which help to increase their sense of belonging to a community. Through their work in school and their frequent educational visits the pupils have a very strong grasp of significant features of their own culture. The school organises opportunities for the celebration of the Chinese New Year with dragon dances and a banquet and the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr (Eid Mubarak) which help to introduce the younger pupils to the festivals and ceremonies of other faiths and beliefs. Pupils are not as well informed of the art and music of other cultures in ways that would enable them to make comparisons between them and, for example, their experiences at centres, such as the Lowry Gallery. Teachers in the reception classes are now considering the extension of their stock of resources to include ethnic instruments and text based materials to promote a wider cultural understanding amongst their pupils and the school is in a position to expand the level of experience and understanding in Key Stages 1 and 2.
39. There are very good links with the local and wider communities. Social events at the school are well attended and a strong feature of community life is the school's participation in the annual Hazel Grove Carnival. Links and co-operative support have been sought and maintained with local businesses and organisations which have assisted in the provision of resources within the school. A strong working relationship and spirit of co-operation has been established and developed over many years with local secondary schools and shared events and resources contribute to this valued partnership. The school and local colleges have established very good links enabling students to experience teaching practice within the school. This has proved beneficial to both parties as students feel free to discuss new ideas and techniques whilst learning from good examples of teaching practice and styles of presentation used within the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. There is a strong, positive ethos of care throughout the school. It is a high priority with all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, that pupils are given the highest levels of care and support and are known and valued as important individuals. These high levels of care and guidance have been maintained and in some instances added to since the time of the last inspection. This is a very caring and supportive school where pupils' academic, social and personal development is nurtured in a very positive manner.
41. The procedures for child protection and welfare are very good. The named teacher responsible undertakes this role sensitively and professionally, and ensures that all members of staff are kept aware of any changes in current legislation and appropriate systems. There are currently five qualified first aiders within the school. There are appropriate systems in place to contact parents and carers in the event of accidents or pupils becoming ill whilst at school. The school is justifiably proud of the high levels of attention and vigilance which are given to all aspects of health and safety, both within the school and during external visits. Regular fire drills, audits, security checks and a specifically designed risk assessment procedure are carried out and recorded in an efficient and effective manner.

42. The care and guidance that is provided for pupils with special educational needs is of an equally good standard. Pupils are well supported and the school ensures that a high level of pastoral care is provided when necessary alongside academic support. The special educational needs co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with a wide range of other professionals, parents, carers and other schools. These duties are undertaken effectively, as is the organisation of annual review meetings. The school meets its statutory requirements as outlined in pupils' statements of special educational need. The statements and reviews are up to date and specified provision is implemented effectively, including access to additional staffing. The school provides special needs pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum with full access to the whole of the National Curriculum.
43. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting good attendance. All procedures are followed in a most effective manner and absences are regularly followed up. Parents are given reminders about the importance of good attendance and punctuality which is helped by the fact that pupils love coming to school. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The school has a very good quality behaviour policy in place and all pupils are fully aware of class rules, mainly because they helped to draw them up. Good behaviour is recognised, celebrated and rewarded through assemblies, praise in class and stickers. All staff act as excellent role models for the pupils and, should a pupil misbehave, staff are only too ready to help pupils understand why their actions are wrong. Staff expectations of behaviour are consistently very high and their behaviour management strategies are very good. All these factors help to promote the importance of good behaviour and add considerably to the high quality learning environment which is a feature of the school.
44. The school's monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. Internal procedures for assessing academic attainment are well structured in all subjects. Teachers assess individual pupils' attainment against key subject objectives in core and foundation subjects, ensuring that learning is monitored very well across the curriculum. Co-ordinators have compiled a valuable portfolio of moderated and levelled work in each subject, but the lack of annotation and explanation of the judgements on individual pieces of work sometimes limits their effectiveness in supporting teachers' future assessments. Standardised tests and other assessment strategies are used well to track progress, and this has recently been enhanced by computerised systems and the use of more comprehensive data to enable effective tracking of individual pupils' learning.
45. At the end of each school year, teachers assess the level of attainment of pupils in all subjects, and records of this are used well by the next class teacher to inform curriculum planning and allocation of pupils to ability groups where appropriate. Results of national standardised tests in English, mathematics and science are analysed thoroughly to identify any differences in performance based on ethnicity or gender, to monitor trends and ensure that achievement is maintained. For example, the percentage of pupils exceeding national expectations at the end of each key stage is monitored with the aim of year-on-year improvement. Analysis of test papers has enabled the identification of questions where pupils have found difficulty, and the information is used very well to inform planning and to tackle any weaknesses. The information gained from assessment procedures is used very effectively to set targets for each cohort with a well-considered level of challenge, and this has a positive effect on standards. The school has equally good procedures in place to assess pupils with special educational needs and the data is used effectively to ensure that the targets that are set match the needs of the pupils. Good systems are also in place to track the pupils for whom English is an additional

language and the information is used to monitor their progress and to target additional support if necessary.

46. The school has excellent procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development and for reporting this to parents. Teachers keep ongoing records of behaviour, attitudes and social skills, and a range of procedures are in place for positive reinforcement through, for example, merit awards. A well-structured programme for personal, social and health education, which is monitored in the same way as other curriculum areas, ensures that pupils' personal development needs are addressed. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning and link it to real-life experiences, as in a Year 5 lesson on smoking, for example, where excellent teaching resulted in a high level of discussion including moral issues.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The partnership with parents is excellent and is consistently strong in every aspect of this relationship. Parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection and those who responded to the questionnaire were highly complimentary and positive in their praise and respect for the work of the school and the levels of care, support and dedication extended by all members of staff. Parents fully acknowledge that the staff are easy to approach at any time and ensure that any concerns are listened to attentively and that any action will be instigated quickly, professionally and appropriately. The partnership that the school and parents have forged and the involvement of parents in their children's learning are impressive and make a significant contribution to the quality of children's learning and to the life of the school as a community. This area of school life was identified as a strength at the time of the last inspection and continues to flourish and be a significant strength of the school.
48. The school holds this partnership in the highest esteem and makes every effort to obtain the views and comments of parents. A feature of this relationship is the regular issue of a questionnaire which ensures that every parent's view is sought at least once during the time their child is attending the school. A newsletter is sent out to parents approximately twice per term to keep them updated on events, news and curriculum meetings which they may wish to attend to gain a greater insight into the work of the school and the areas of study and projects offered to their children.
49. Regular meetings are also held for parents to give them full opportunity to discuss their children's progress and areas for improvement. End of year reports have been regularly revised and improved over the last few years and now are highly detailed with comments on each area of the curriculum. The reports clearly identify the strengths and targets for development combined with statistical information, such as attendance rates and behavioural patterns. Parents have expressed the view that they particularly appreciate the detailed format now provided.
50. Parents of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are involved in annual review meetings. They are invited to contribute both in writing and verbally to the discussions about the continuing needs of their child and the progress made since the previous review. The school is also efficient in consulting with parents of pupils who have individual education plans, where parents are beginning to be involved in identifying their children's needs and in contributing to setting targets and working to achieve these both at school and at home.
51. The contribution parents make to their children's learning at home is very good and has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and attainments. Most parents help with reading,

mathematics and a wide range of research projects and value this as a positive link with the school. Many parents help within class and support sporting events, extra curricular activities and the work of the Parents' Association, which works dedicatedly and tirelessly to provide a wide range of fund raising and social events. The separate infant and junior Adventure Playgrounds have been developed as a direct result of this support.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides excellent leadership of the school. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, a recently extended senior management team, a dedicated and highly effective teaching and non-teaching staff and Governing Body. He has successfully built a team of people who work together in an excellent manner. Under the leadership of the headteacher, this is a school that never rests on its laurels. It constantly evaluates the quality of education that it provides and puts in place procedures to improve further. The headteacher has successfully established a very good school in which there is a shared commitment to achieving and sustaining high standards. The head and deputy head meet on a weekly basis and discuss issues pertinent to school development. These are then expanded upon with the extended senior management team before more detailed discussion begins with the full teaching and non-teaching staff. This ensures that all staff take a full and active role in the decision making process and value greatly the fact that views and opinions across the spectrum are taken on board before decisions are agreed and implemented. Staff, pupils, parents and governors recognise and value the leadership that the headteacher provides.
53. The headteacher has put in place good procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and these have had a significant impact on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Regular lesson observations are already embedded in school practice, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Formal feedback is given after lessons and any pointers for development and improvement are clearly outlined. Observations in other subjects take place when subjects are a particular focus on the school development plan. Subjects across the curriculum are monitored effectively by knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinators, who monitor colleagues' planning and are increasingly monitoring teaching and learning through the scrutiny of pupils' work. These effective methods provide co-ordinators with a good grasp of standards and learning across the school and enable them to identify areas for development in the good quality action plans that they draw up. The school has very good procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. The detailed and rigorous analysis of this data means that the school has a very good grasp of whether groups of pupils are achieving as expected, or similar aged pupils in different classes are achieving at the same level, or there are any significant variations in attainment between boys and girls or pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their classmates. If any trends are detected the school targets additional support or looks at teaching or the quality of resources to assess their impact. The school has rightly identified the need to more actively involve the pupils themselves in the target setting process in order to have an even bigger impact on standards. This is good practice. The school is also embedding into school practice good quality assessment procedures in other subjects of the curriculum and these are already having a positive impact on teaching and learning. Each year the targets that the school sets itself in literacy and numeracy are demanding and challenging and all staff are committed to achieving and where possible exceeding those targets.
54. The school development plan is a very good quality document and is seen as a working document, which is the driving force behind the continued improvement of the school.

The plan outlines priorities, clear and concise success criteria directly linked to raising standards, allocation of finances, time scales for completion and procedures to monitor progress towards stated targets. Everyone at the school is provided with an opportunity to contribute to the plan and this ensures that the school as a whole shares responsibility for the outcomes as well as heightening their awareness of what needs to be accomplished. The plan is an accurate agenda for school improvement and shows that this is a school that not only knows where its strengths are but also is equally aware of the areas for development and improvement.

55. The school has made very good progress since the time of the last inspection in 1997. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved. The quality of teaching has improved as is evidenced by the higher percentage of good and very good teaching. The quality of the curriculum and the range of learning opportunities have improved. Importantly, many of the strengths that were identified at the last inspection have either been maintained or enhanced. No key issues for improvement were identified at the last inspection but the headteacher did not see this as a time for being complacent. Instead he devised an action plan where staff were expected and encouraged to improve areas of the school's work that had been judged to be satisfactory. This very effective approach has certainly paid dividends because the school has continued to go from strength to strength and the school is ideally placed to continue to develop and improve.
56. The school has responded well to the national initiatives for performance management. All staff have discussions with the headteacher to help identify areas of personal development. These are often then linked into the school's priorities and individual training then follows. The headteacher shows the highest level of support and commitment towards his staff and ensures that staff development is incorporated into all on-going plans for the development of the school. This has had a very positive impact on standards and the quality of learning. Teaching and non-teaching staff have put into practice the skills and knowledge they have acquired on training courses in a most effective manner in the classroom. A very good programme of induction and support for new and newly qualified staff is in place. They feel very well supported by colleagues and the school in general and this means that they quickly and smoothly fit into the life of the school and, as a result, fulfil their roles effectively and with great confidence.
57. The school benefits greatly from the contribution made by its very effective Governing Body. The governors have a very clear awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development and are very successful in holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides. There is an excellent working partnership between staff and governors, which adds to the quality of education being provided. There is a clear and well-defined committee structure in place that ensures that all policies and other documents are debated and discussed at length before becoming accepted as school practice. Governors are fully active and involved in all aspects of school governance. They have formal links with specific class teachers, formal links with co-ordinators of all subjects as well as the special needs co-ordinator and are regular visitors to school where they have had the opportunity to observe lessons and the life of the school in general. Governors join with staff on a staff in-service training day where they have the opportunity to scrutinise pupils' work alongside teachers. These initiatives provide governors with a very good insight into how well pupils learn. Governors attend many local, regional and national training courses and are held up by the local education authority as an exemplar of effectiveness. The head and the chair of governors meet on a weekly basis and both the chair and vice chair make a particularly significant contribution to the management of the school. Other governors are only too ready to support the work of the school using both their professional and social skills for the benefit of the pupils. Practical examples include accompanying school visits and trips, taking responsibility for producing the governors' annual report to parents or devising,

collating and acting upon the results of a high quality questionnaire which sought the views of parents about every aspect of school life and provision.

58. The management of special needs provision is of a good standard and this helps to ensure that the pupils make good progress. Money and resources are used well to enable support to be targeted to the areas of greatest need. The quality of the management is effective in tracking pupils' progress, in involving outside agencies and actively involving parents where applicable. The management of pupils for whom English is an additional language is also good and ensures that pupils are well supported, that the progress and achievement of these pupils is well monitored and tracked and that the pupils take a full and active part in all aspects of the curriculum and in the life of the school as a community. The school has identified a small number of pupils as being gifted and talented and effective management structures are in place to make sure that work that is set for these pupils is sufficiently demanding and that their needs are met in an appropriate manner.
59. The quality of financial planning and budget monitoring is very good. The school carefully appraises all new initiatives in relation to likely costs and implications for the school. The budget is firmly linked to development planning and reflects the educational needs of the pupils very well. Any specific grants that the school receives are used in an appropriate manner to advance the learning of all pupils. Very good procedures are in place to monitor spending. The finance committee meets on a regular basis and is actively involved in setting and then monitoring the budget. The headteacher is given clearly defined spending parameters. Records of financial decisions are clear and detailed. The day-to-day management of finances and, indeed, the secretarial duties carried out by the administration and bursary staff in the school are of a high standard and help to ensure that the school runs in a smooth and efficient manner. The school ensures that the principles of best value are applied well. Staff and governors use test and assessment data well to evaluate standards against the expenditure per pupil. The school always seeks to obtain good value for money when purchasing goods and services. Information and technology systems are used well to support the work of the school. The canvassing of parental opinion regarding the quality of education that the school provides takes place. The effective use of funds to enhance the quality of the nursery accommodation has had a very positive impact on the learning environment. The school recognises the importance of assessing the impact of major spending decisions on standards. When, for example, the school purchased additional computer resources, employed additional support staff or staff attended a wide range of training courses then the school examined the impact on the quality of teaching and learning. This is very good practice. The minor recommendations from the last auditor's report have all been fully implemented. The expenditure per pupil is not particularly high at £1713 and the school only carries between 2 and 4% of its budget forward to the next financial year. Taking all the factors into account this is a school that is providing very good value for money.
60. The school has an adequate number of suitably qualified staff and a good number of support staff to meet the needs and demands of the curriculum. All teachers are dedicated, committed and extremely hard working. The individual skills and talents of teachers are used well to advance pupils' learning. Practical examples include using the specialist skills of a teacher to teach physical education to classes other than his own, or the appointment of a teacher with a particular expertise in design and technology to improve provision and teaching. Both initiatives proved most successful. All support staff are suitably qualified and are used most effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and other classroom tasks. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.

61. The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. The school provides a highly stimulating and pleasant environment with many examples of pupils' work being celebrated and displayed attractively in all areas of the school. The hall is used for a wide variety of purposes, including assemblies, physical education, music, midday meals and before and after school clubs. Despite some restriction in its size, this is being used particularly effectively in view of the increasing numbers on roll. The standard of external accommodation is very good. The school benefits from extensive grassed areas and has high quality climbing apparatus that pupils thoroughly enjoy playing on and that enhances their personal and social development. The school makes very good use of its grounds to support pupils' work in science, geography and physical education. The condition of the infant hard surfaced playground is far from ideal but plans are already in place for the improvement of this facility. The new Nursery building has been a welcomed and highly successful addition to the school and has further enhanced the provision for the Foundation Stage. All areas of the school are kept in a very clean and attractive condition by the hard working and dedicated caretaking and cleaning staff, who add significantly to the quality of the learning environment. Resources are satisfactory overall, although there are some occasions where textbooks have to be shared to ensure adequate provision in certain subjects, such as mathematics. The school provides research facilities for pupils both through the library and through information technology provision, which are put to effective and purposeful use, although some books are outdated and subject resources, such as atlases, have, on occasions, confused information.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to build on the school's many strengths, high attainment levels and the very good quality of education that it provides, the Governing Body, headteacher and staff should:

1. further Improve standards in information and communication technology by:

- ensuring that the elements relating to control, sensors and modelling are taught in a progressive and systematic manner;
- ensuring that opportunities are consistently planned for pupils to use computers in an effective and meaningful manner across all areas of the curriculum;
- making sure that good quality in service training continues to be undertaken by staff in order to increase their knowledge and expertise so as to have its biggest possible impact on pupils' learning and attainment.

(paragraphs 9, 23, 24, 87, 94, 123, 132-136)

2. improve the quality of pupils' learning by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in setting their own targets for improvement;
- improving the quality of the marking of pupils' work so that it clearly outlines what pupils need to do to improve their work or identifies why work is of a good standard.

(paragraphs 27, 53, 88, 90, 100, 101, 107, 108, 123)

In addition the school should consider the following less important areas in the action plan:

- continue to examine ways in which to make pupils more aware of different faiths, cultures and traditions and in doing so better prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society *(paragraphs 34, 38, 78, 115, 142, 155)*;
- seek to improve book resources in the library and in certain areas of the curriculum where there are currently too few *(paragraphs 38, 61, 91, 124, 136)*.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	84
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	33	35	9	0	0	0
Percentage	8	39	42	11	0	0	0

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

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)	20	428
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	96

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	32	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	27
	Girls	32	32	32
	Total	59	60	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98(100)	100(100)	98(100)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	27	28
	Girls	32	31	32
	Total	59	58	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98(87)	97(90)	100(89)
	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	27	35	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	25	27
	Girls	35	32	35
	Total	59	57	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95(87)	92(84)	100(93)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	25	25
	Girls	34	32	34
	Total	57	57	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92(85)	92(91)	95(95)
	National	72(70)	72(69)	82(79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	429
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		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	16.47
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	220

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	774408
Total expenditure	755665
Expenditure per pupil	1756
Balance brought forward from previous year	11470
Balance carried forward to next year	30213

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

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	440
Number of questionnaires returned	231

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	26	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	38	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	33	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	47	2	1	2
The teaching is good.	73	24	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	41	9	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	18	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	22	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	62	32	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	88	12	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	26	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	24	3	1	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. At the time of the previous inspection the school had no nursery class but in March 2001 acquired new purpose-built accommodation housing a nursery providing 40 part-time places. The Foundation Stage now consists of the nursery and two parallel reception classes. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is above average in the key areas of learning although the range is wide between the lower and higher attaining children. Assessments on entry show that the majority of children are attaining above the expected levels in the key areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development. The broad based and highly stimulating curriculum is combined with teaching of very good or excellent quality and the children make rapid progress in their learning. The teachers are able to rely on the help of a dedicated, experienced and well-informed group of support staff and the excellent teamwork does much to promote and maintain the very high standards of teaching and learning apparent in the Foundation Stage. Children of all abilities and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and by the time they start in Year 1 they achieve above the expected level in nearly all areas of their learning with a smaller percentage of children exceeding well beyond the expected level. Attainment in physical development is at the expected level by the time that children start in Year 1.
64. At the present time the nursery admits 40 children who attend part-time in either the morning or afternoon sessions. Transfer to the reception classes takes place in the September following their fourth birthday although the nursery, which only opened in March 2001, has yet to experience a full year with one cohort of children. The nursery teacher assesses children's attainment when they enter the nursery and the data forms the first part of a comprehensive portfolio of information collected. The assessments are updated on a regular basis and are used to measure progress and enable the early identification of children who may have special educational needs. A strength of the provision in the Foundation Stage is the volume of information accumulated by the teachers and the effective way in which this is used to plan for the educational needs of individual children. All staff are secure in their knowledge of the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals and, as a result of their teaching, children are placed firmly on the stepping stones of their development.
65. Contact with parents is frequent and purposeful and there is a productive teaching and learning partnership in both the nursery and reception classes. Parents are fully involved in their children's learning and teachers share with them their daily assessments of the progress being made by the children. As a consequence, parents are able to make a major contribution to children's learning at home and school and the quality of the learning partnership contributes much to the overall success of the Foundation Stage. The consistently very good and at times excellent teaching and the teamwork approach of the whole staff make the provision for children in the Foundation Stage a strength of the school.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The majority of children enter the nursery class with levels of personal and social development that are in line with or above expectations. Staff in the nursery build on these skills and encourage the children in their growing independence, engaging the

children at every opportunity. During the inspection, circle time was used very effectively in drawing on the children's ability to act confidently and securely in a group situation. They demonstrated a readiness and an ability to participate in conversations and to share their treasured moments with one other. During the snack-time intervals, staff make use of every opportunity to engage the children in conversation and act as good role models in their own willingness to talk with and share thoughts with them. The high expectations of social awareness fostered in the nursery class are also apparent in the willingness of the children to care for one other and to share resources. Very few confrontational situations were observed as the children shared their toys and outdoor play apparatus with one other. During a role-play episode some members of the small group involved exhibited a touching concern for one of their number who had apparently lost a dog. Children in the reception classes show a high degree of independence and social awareness. They work independently on many of their projects and they respond to the high expectations of their teachers. They are happy to engage in debate and conversation with visitors to their classroom and use a wide vocabulary when sharing their thoughts and ideas. When participating in assemblies in the school hall the children from the reception classes confidently take a full part in activities and offer answers to many of the questions put forward by the teachers taking the assembly.

67. The very good teaching is a major factor in the personal, social and emotional development of the children. Teachers make good use of a range of opportunities both planned and incidental and are able to create moments of joy and happiness for the children in their shared experiences. Throughout the day, simple routines, such as registration, snack time, tidying up and getting dressed for home, are key moments for the children to show their emerging maturity as individuals. By the time they start school in Year 1 the children have made very good progress and will have exceeded their early learning goals in this area of their development.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Although some of the children enter nursery with below average levels of ability in this area of their development, the majority start with attainment that is in line with or above the expectations for their age group. The children benefit from the very good quality of teaching in this important area of learning. They enter a language-rich environment in which everything is labelled and identified and in which staff constantly engage with the children in ways that encourage their language skills. Children are consistently asked questions that challenge their imaginations and require them to explain what they are doing. An outstanding feature of the nursery class is the way in which independence leads to a buzz of conversation between children interacting in groups not being directly supervised by an adult. When using the sand and water trays the dialogue of experimentation and discovery is very clear and some children use the computer and explain what they are doing with great clarity. The dialogue between adults and children is often at its best when sharing those 'eureka' moments of discovery that come to children of this age when, for example, they discover what can happen to water when it is compressed into a tube.
69. The learning environment of both the nursery and reception classes is also rich in the printed word and the children treat their books with great respect. Many of them speak of their own treasured stories that are read to them at home and they bask in the language of those read to them in the school. In the nursery and reception classes children have access to listening corners where they can hear audio versions of their favourite stories and also enjoy quiet moments of reflection. Books and the development of the reading habit are a main focus for the links between the school and the children's homes and there is a good interchange of literature between the two.

70. Teachers' high expectations also encourage the children in the development of their skills in speaking and listening. When they enter school the children are often better at speaking than at listening but it is a difference that rapidly narrows as they engage in conversation with adults and other children. Their social skills of turn-taking assist them in a growing ability to listen to others and the staff act as good role models in this respect. In both the nursery and reception classes the willingness of the children to listen to one other in circle time and to the staff who are reading or telling stories is a notable feature of the daily activities. By the time they join their Year 1 classes the vast majority of children have made very good progress and have exceeded the early learning goals in this area of their development.

Mathematical development

71. The children make very good progress as a result of the very good quality of the teaching received in mathematical development. Teachers take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills and language. During the course of the inspection children in the nursery were observed sitting in a circle and clapping out the rhythm of numbers from one to twenty with great enthusiasm. In their classrooms children are surrounded with numerical signs and symbols throughout the day. Staff plan for the use of number in a wide range of contexts and also make good use of incidental opportunities for counting and calculating. Through the story of "The Three Bears" teachers explore concepts, such as bigger and smaller, and the children are encouraged to apply these to objects around them in addition to those in the story. Explorations of volume and capacity take place on a regular basis in the water and sand trays and some of the children have already become good judges of the amount of water necessary to fill certain containers and can use an appropriate vocabulary to describe what they are doing. Geometry also plays a significant part in the growth of their mathematical understanding and from their explorations of shape in two and three dimensions they learn rules for constructing with building blocks and outdoor play equipment.
72. In the reception classes the children have a good working understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes and attempt simple descriptions of the properties of the shapes available to them. Teachers provide good opportunities to combine language work with the growth of mathematical understanding and the children participate enthusiastically in singing number rhymes and songs. In one reception class children were observed correcting the 'mistakes' made by their teacher when placing numbers in the correct order on a number line. Not only were they able to do this with great seriousness of purpose but also laughed and shouted with joy as they were proved right and their teacher was proved wrong. The quality of the teaching ensures that, by the time they move into Year 1, children are likely to exceed the early learning goals for this area of their development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. In both nursery and reception classes children are negotiating the stepping stones of their knowledge and understanding of the world with great enthusiasm. The very good teaching encourages their explorations as they experiment, touch, taste and chatter enthusiastically about their discoveries. In their outdoor play they can be seen developing concepts of ownership and territory and they know that 'their fence' around the play area is the protective boundary of a special place for them and they are keen to take visitors on guided tours of their space. They have a growing awareness of the world around them as they collect and explore things from the environment, such as the autumn leaves, and tend the plants in their classrooms. In their paintings of themselves and the other members of their families they show a growing understanding of themselves as

part of a bigger world of the family and they know that age is an important part of people's identity.

74. Throughout the Foundation Stage the children learn about food and health and they enjoy those activities in which they can make food, such as biscuits and cakes. Their social development is such that they are ready to share the results of their food making activities with visitors and others and they know that the sharing of food is an important social activity. Children in the reception classes are able to take part in the Key Stage 1 assemblies and they are beginning to grow in their awareness of faith and Christianity and the wider culture in which they are growing up. The very good quality of the teaching encourages the children in the exploration of the world around them and by the time they transfer to Year 1 they have made very good progress in this area of learning and have acquired the ability to hypothesise and ask 'what if' questions when trying to solve problems. The majority of the children are likely to have exceeded the early learning goals by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

Physical development

75. When children enter the nursery their physical development is slightly below expectation but they make very good progress from this point and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter their Year 1 classes. In the classroom the children move with great care and are conscious of the nature of the space available to them. They play with small toys and also manipulate small blocks and construction equipment with relative ease. When using the computer, many of them have the hand-eye co-ordination to achieve good control of the mouse and can also use the keyboard accurately. Whilst they enjoy painting with hands and fingers, they also have the skills necessary to use a paintbrush effectively. When in the outdoor play area, most of the children run and play safely and use a range of equipment. Many roll a ball in a chosen direction although they have less control over distance travelled and they have a good sense of balance when using the raised beams. In the classroom, children going on a 'bear hunt' were able to explore and investigate space whilst developing their number skills.
76. Children in the reception classes have good body control and awareness of space and, by this stage, most change in a short time without assistance. When using the hall they are aware of the need for a warm-up session before the main activity. The quality of teaching is good and teachers make good use of physical activities to promote other skills and the use of colour coded boxes of equipment aids the children in their understanding of sorting and setting objects. By this point in the year children in the reception classes respond to the high expectations of their teachers in the control and use of pencils, scissors, glue sticks and other tools and they move around their classrooms with great ease.

Creative development

77. The quality of teaching and learning in this area of the children's development is very good and in the nursery and reception classes the children are surrounded by opportunities for creative development. They listen to music and they make their own, using the simple tuned and untuned instruments available to them. They hear others sing and play on recordings and they have many opportunities for their own singing, which they use enthusiastically. They study the paintings done by famous artists and they paint their own works of art that adorn their classrooms. In nursery and reception classes the children have many opportunities for creating through role-play. The fantasy characters they create and the stories they weave help them to develop their vocabulary and understand relationships. A lost dog formed the basis for a short but touching creative role-play in the nursery as children 'telephoned' the vet and rang the police. Children in

the nursery have a particularly good range of opportunities for using paint as a creative medium and the individuality of their paintings is a tribute to the high expectations of their teachers. They have also produced abstract art using the computer.

78. The reception classrooms are a riot of colour and creativity and the children are hugely proud of their part in producing the overall effect. Role-play is further developed and the children engage in sophisticated negotiations, for example when weighing and posting parcels in their post office corner. They continue to enjoy dressing up and acting out their interpretation of the roles of the adults in the world around them. At the present time there is a lack of ethnic support materials for their creative development and the development of their knowledge and understanding of the multi-cultural world. The quality of the teaching in both the nursery and reception classes ensures that the children make very good progress and successfully exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

79. The test and assessment data for 2001 show that attainment in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 was well above average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. The results of the tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2001 showed attainment in English to be well above the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. The school has made good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school pupils of all abilities, including the pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make equally good progress. The school is achieving well and standards are set to remain at this high level. These high standards owe much to the consistently good and at times very good teaching and the very good attitudes shown to learning by the pupils. In addition the leadership of the subject by the co-ordinator, the rigorous analysis of data, the effective monitoring of teaching and the manner in which the school promotes pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum all play their part.
80. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are well above average. Pupils' listening standards are very good. They reflect pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to their work. Pupils know why it is important for only one person to speak at once, so they listen carefully when teachers read, explain and tell them what to do. They are very good at listening to one another. As a result, the quality of learning in most lessons is good. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson, pupils quickly learned to access the correct materials and resources for their group task. This is because they listen carefully to each part of the teacher's explanation.
81. By the age of seven, most pupils are very confident to say what they notice, think, remember and want to know. Throughout the school, teachers use the correct technical words and they encourage the pupils to use them in English and other subjects. This leads to pupils' good learning. For example, seven-year-olds use the terms 'pictorial index' and 'glossary'. By the end of Year 6 pupils show a very good ability to listen to the contributions of their classmates. They evaluate what has been said before making their responses. Pupils are articulate and explain their work in great detail. They have an expressive and expansive vocabulary. They accurately retell what they learn. For example, in a Year 6 physical education lesson, pupils articulately discuss why regular exercise is a fundamental part of a healthy lifestyle. Through skilled questioning, the teacher successfully developed pupils' recall of the impact of exercise on the heart and circulatory system; thus making clear links between pupils' learning across several

areas of the curriculum. Pupils were expected to respond thoughtfully to the questions and this sharpened their concentration and so improved the quality of their learning.

82. The school achieves very good standards in reading by the time pupils reach the age of seven. They read storybooks aloud and with understanding and read with great expression. They like talking about what they have noticed in the stories. Pupils have a very good knowledge of letter sounds and use this knowledge to help read new words. Pupils use the many strategies that they have been taught to help them with unfamiliar words or to gain a deeper understanding of the text. Most pupils know how to use indexes and contents pages to find facts in information books and locate information quickly.
83. By the age of 11 pupils attain standards that are well above those expected for pupils of this age. They use a very good range of strategies in their reading to establish meaning and are developing confidence to express opinions and discuss their books. They have well-developed higher order reading skills and are able to read beyond the literal level. This is as a result of the direct and specific teaching of such skills. Pupils read with great expression and confidence and all have tremendous interest in reading. Generally pupils read very fluently and with understanding, they retell a story in great detail and they are familiar with locating information for research. The vast majority have a genuine love of books and literature.
84. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in writing that are well above average. There is evidence that standards continue to rise. By the age of seven, pupils write readable sentences with capital letters and full stops. Higher attaining pupils use complex sentences. For example, a pupil wrote 'Cinderella wanted to cry, but she was determined not to sob in front of her wicked sisters.' Teachers provide a wide range of writing experiences, including information and imaginative work. Handwriting is well formed and most words are spelled correctly. Pupils are writing more extended pieces of work with good quality vocabulary and a good structure that keeps the attention of the reader.
85. Year 6 pupils attain standards in writing that are well above those expected for pupils of their age. The higher attainers produce writing of a very high standard. For example, one girl wrote, 'I pressed my face against the dog's fur and wept quietly so no one could hear me but my dog grew uneasy and wanted to whimper.' Pupils use a wide range of forms of writing, such as stories, plays, letters, poems, reports and notes. Spelling, punctuation and handwriting standards for many are very good. Pupils spell and punctuate correctly in exercises, but sometimes tend to forget in longer pieces of writing. Many pupils have a real interest in writing. There are many examples of good quality of writing. One pupil writes as part of an account about World War II, 'The hungry '30s left behind a legacy never to be forgotten – one which shaped the future of British society and its inbred class system.' Another pupil, when describing the character of 'Oliver' from the Dickens novel 'Oliver Twist' wrote that he was 'an unfortunate wretch who, with his intelligence, should have known better than to try to reform an unlistening society.' The high standards in writing across the school owe much to the direct teaching of writing skills to suit different audiences and purposes and the exciting stimuli that teachers provide on a regular basis.
86. Teachers make very good use of other subjects to develop pupils' literacy skills. Across the school, teachers seize on opportunities in subjects such as history, science, geography, and religious education to further develop pupils' literacy skills and this good practice has a most positive impact on the standards that are achieved. For example, Year 2 pupils are taught in a very literate environment where emphasis is placed upon developing subject specific vocabulary. This is particularly evident in the emphasis placed upon written words pupils use in numeracy, information and communication

technology, science, geography and personal, social and health education. In Year 5, pupils found out a range of information linked to their history work about the Tudors. By using books and information and communication technology pupils could compile extended pieces of factual writing about several historical characters, such as Shakespeare, John Cabot and Henry VIII and his six wives.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall at both key stages with some very good practice. Throughout the school there are very significant strengths in the teaching and some minor areas for improvement. Teachers' close relationships with their classes encourage thoughtful speech and listening. Teachers' good knowledge of books, language and the best teaching methods enable them to use skilled questioning in class. This improves pupils' understanding. Pupils try to copy their teachers' expressive speech, reading and writing, and so improve their own. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils read an extract from 'Six Speckled Hens' with great expression, following a very good reading by the teacher. Pupils pick up teachers' enjoyment of books too, which is important for their own reading development. The quick pace of these lessons keeps all pupils interested. Support staff make a most valuable contribution to pupils' learning when pupils work in groups. Occasionally, better use could be made of this support during the introductions to lessons. Very good examples were seen of computers being used in some classes to support and enhance pupils' learning and this good practice is to be commended, although it is not as consistent across the school as it should be.
88. Overall, teachers' good use of the National Literacy Strategy is underpinning the high standards. The school continues to take effective steps to improve the quality of writing through the introduction this term of target setting. A strong feature of all the very successful lessons throughout the school is that teachers manage the different parts of the literacy hour successfully. They give explanations in the introduction and use the end of the lesson to successfully review pupils' understanding of the work. As a result, pupils cover a good deal of work during the lesson. Teachers make good use of assessment to group pupils and to identify what they need to do next in their work to extend pupils' learning further. Teachers use attractive resources and interesting methods to gain pupils' interest. As a result, most pupils enjoy their work, concentrate well and are keen to learn. They get on very well together when working in pairs or groups. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. This underpins their successful management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons. Pupils are very keen to learn and achieve as well as they can. They take initiative and responsibility for their own learning and work with high levels of perseverance and productivity. They take a real pride in their work. The pupils are not actively enough involved in setting targets for their own improvement or in understanding the success criteria needed to achieve differing levels of attainment. The school has identified this as an area for improvement.
89. Support for pupils who have special educational needs is good. This ensures that the pupils who lack confidence to acquire new skills and knowledge in reading and writing feel secure in the learning environment and thus make good progress. Staff plan the work for these pupils carefully. Pupils receive effective support from specialist classroom staff. The well targeted support for pupils for whom English is an additional language means that pupils take a full and active part in lessons and are confident to do so. Pupils make good strides in their learning.
90. There is room for some improvement in some aspects of literacy teaching throughout the school. There is inconsistency in the quality of marking. Some of the marking is of outstanding quality, whilst some marking does not tell pupils often enough what they need to do to improve. On occasions, some teachers do not make effective use of pupils' individual education plans to accurately match tasks and activities to the needs of the pupils and this prevents learning from being even stronger.

91. The leadership of the subject is of a good standard. Teaching and learning have been monitored in an effective manner and this has led to improvements in teaching and learning over time. In addition to lesson observations, the co-ordinator and senior management team have carried out scrutiny of pupils' work and regularly monitor teachers' planning. Areas for development are clearly identified. The school carries out a detailed and thorough analysis of test and assessment data and sets targets for improvement for the whole school, individual year groups or smaller groups of pupils. The analysis of attainment by gender, ethnic group and year groups is most effective and the information is used to guide long term curriculum planning and to feed into the school improvement plan if appropriate. All these factors play a very significant role in the high standards that are currently being achieved and are set to continue in subsequent years. Although the school has a good library facility, some reference books are in need of replacement.

MATHEMATICS

92. Inspection findings show that the standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are well above average. This matches the National Curriculum test results in 2001 for seven and 11-year-olds which showed that attainment was well above average when compared to all and similar schools. Standards and provision in mathematics have improved since the time of the last inspection. This is due to good teaching of mathematics throughout the school and the school's very detailed analysis of test results to identify areas of weakness and make necessary adjustments to the curriculum.
93. Pupils of all ability achieve well and suitable work is planned to meet their different needs. Lower attaining pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, receive good support in small groups from the skilled classroom assistants and from the class teachers which enables them to achieve as well as they can. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Their progress is closely monitored and the good level of support they receive in class ensures that, as far as possible, any difficulty in language does not hinder their mathematical development. This is evident in the good standards being achieved. Those pupils identified as gifted and talented are allocated suitable work enabling them to make good progress.
94. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive effect on the standards of teaching and learning. The associated training and the introduction of a new commercial scheme ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. The introductory mental sessions are generally brisk, leading to a good improvement in pupils' arithmetic skills. Explanations are very clear so that pupils know what is expected and are able to start their individual work without delay. Activities are generally interesting and well planned to motivate pupils and promote very good attitudes to work throughout the school. The time at the end of lessons is used well to reinforce the main teaching points and to assess what pupils have learned. This is a good improvement since the last inspection where the ending of some lessons were reported as rushed and haphazard. In the best lessons, pupils are fully involved in judging their own levels of success and ascertaining future needs. Good use is made of numeracy skills in other subjects, such as measuring and drawing graphs in science to illustrate changes in pulse rate. Whilst good use is made of computers to practise number skills and to generate graphs, insufficient use is made of computer skills in other areas, such as generating spreadsheets.

95. By the age of seven most pupils are developing a good understanding of numbers to a thousand and can readily calculate that 10 less than 163 is 153. They have a good recall of multiplication tables two to five and also ten and can use the inverse of these facts to solve simple division problems. Higher attaining pupils can round numbers to the nearest hundred with confidence and can work out 72 divided by 2 in their heads. Lower attaining pupils are gaining an appreciation of numbers to a hundred through a good range of practical activities, such as using coins to pay different amounts and through continuing number patterns.
96. By the age of eleven, most pupils have a very good understanding of numbers to a million, including decimals. They solve long multiplication calculations by using a grid as well as the traditional method and have experience and good knowledge of long division. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages and use this when reading information from a pie chart. Higher attaining pupils give clear explanations as to how they have worked things out, showing very good understanding, and are beginning to apply some of the tests for divisibility. Lower attaining pupils receive good support to acquire the basic skills but, although they achieve well, their lack of depth of understanding means that they do not quite reach the national level. All pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills in simple word problems and in investigations and puzzles, such as spotting patterns in products of consecutive numbers or in the mystic rose pattern.
97. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of different units of measurement. They draw lines in centimetres and tell the time using both digital and analogue clocks. Most pupils identify and describe two-dimensional shapes up to octagons and can complete shapes around a line of symmetry, though little work was seen on identifying right angles. Pupils label a simple bar graph accurately and use a graph to answer questions, such as how many eggs were laid during a particular week. Higher attaining pupils are confident in using a tally chart to record information.
98. By the end of Year 6 pupils draw and measure angles with a good degree of accuracy and use the formulae for working out the area and perimeter of a rectangle. They have a good understanding of different units of measurement, working out weights and necessary cooking times for different types of meat. They draw a line graph to show the speed and distance travelled when comparing journeys by ferry and hovercraft. Most pupils have a good understanding of averages, mode and mean, though experience of probability is limited.
99. A very detailed analysis of recent test results by the mathematics co-ordinator identified problem solving and the construction and interpretation of graphs as areas needing further development. In checking pupils' work for last year, inspection evidence confirms this. However, the prompt and co-ordinated steps taken by the school are already having a considerable impact in further raising teachers' awareness and confidence in these areas and so improving standards. For example, in well-planned lessons in Year 2, pupils recognise for themselves that multiplication is a quicker way of solving repeated addition and higher attaining pupils spot a pattern related to square numbers. Good co-operation with the science co-ordinator is giving extended opportunities to use and interpret graphs in both subjects.
100. The subject is led in an effective manner and the good quality of leadership and management of the subject has contributed to the high standards. The extensive programme of lesson observations has led to an improvement in teaching and learning. Pupils are assessed on a regular basis and their progress is monitored closely. Pupils are very well prepared for the statutory assessment tests through good coverage of the curriculum and through regular practice. Targets are set for classes and groups though

not yet for individuals. Including pupils in setting their own targets would raise awareness of their own learning and specific areas for improvement and so raise standards even further.

101. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and during the inspection some very good and excellent teaching was observed. Lessons are well planned with interesting activities to motivate pupils well. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of behaviour and so no teaching and learning time is lost. In the best lessons, there is a good level of challenge for all groups and pupils are regularly required to explain how they have worked things out. For example, pupils in Year 2 explain their mental method for calculating how many fingers and shoes children have altogether. This clarifies their thoughts and helps their understanding. In an excellent lesson the lively teaching style and brisk pace encouraged full involvement of all pupils and the 'brainstorming' of facts related to two-dimensional shapes drew exceptionally well on pupils' existing knowledge. Teachers make very good use of simple resources, such as hundred squares and number lines, to improve arithmetic skills and understanding, and good use is made of the overhead projectors to demonstrate a teaching point, such as the similarity between two lots of five and five lots of two or in interpreting a pie chart, helping pupils to visualise 25% as a quarter. Teachers of younger pupils choose stories well to develop pupils' skills. For example, in Year 1 the repetition and deliberate mistakes in '1-2-3 Oops' improved counting to 20. Teaching assistants are well briefed and generally make a very good contribution to the quality of learning in lessons, particularly for lower attaining pupils. Work is regularly marked, and there are some very good examples of marking being used to further advance pupils' learning. This practice is not as consistent across the school as it could be.

SCIENCE

102. The results of the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2001 show that pupils' attainment in science was well above the national average, with all pupils at least meeting national expectations, and was above average in comparison to similar schools. Teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 showed attainment to be well above the national average. Inspection findings show that results and provision have improved since the time of the last inspection.
103. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is well above average for seven- and 11-year-olds. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, as do the pupils for whom English is an additional language. Throughout the school, pupils are achieving well. By the age of seven, pupils carry out simple investigations confidently, recording their findings in tables as well as with words and labelled diagrams, and use measurements accurately and with understanding. All pupils make simple predictions, observe changes and recognise the importance of a fair test. Higher attaining pupils also describe how to make a test fair and articulate their ideas clearly, making good use of scientific vocabulary. The majority of pupils also discuss their learning in a broader scientific context, for example, in Year 1, where pupils discussed a range of light sources and related them to different uses as well as to their broader knowledge of the moon and its phases. Very good teaching which drew well on everyday experience encouraged this. Pupils have investigated movement of a toy car on different surfaces and slopes, showing very good understanding of the involvement of forces. They link sounds to different musical instruments and are aware of senses, including hearing. In a very good lesson to begin the study of electricity in Year 2, pupils quickly understood the principles of a simple electrical circuit and the idea that electricity must flow round it without a break if a bulb is to light. Younger pupils have explored differences between people and the physical changes they have experienced since they were babies and, by the age of seven, pupils confidently explain the properties

of living organisms and name the main parts of a flowering plant. Throughout the age range, teachers use an investigative approach to science and, by the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils explain their learning clearly in their own words, showing good links with developing literacy skills. Pupils of all abilities have a sensible approach to their scientific activities, co-operating well and using materials confidently. Those with special educational needs have full access to the learning experiences of the class and have a satisfactory grasp of scientific concepts although their recording skills are less well developed.

104. Throughout Years 3-6 pupils are expected to write their own accounts of their investigations so that by the end of the key stage they can confidently record their experimental work with a good structure, incorporating well-produced line graphs, bar graphs, tables and labelled diagrams to record their findings. Pupils in Year 5 have used computers to produce a variety of graphical representations of their investigation of changes in pulse rate with exercise. By the end of Year 6, pupils apply the principles of a fair test well to their own investigations, measuring a range of variables and higher attaining pupils consider strategies for increasing reliability, such as repeating procedures. Activities are carried out carefully, with sensible use of equipment and group discussions of the scientific basis of the investigation, using scientific terminology with confidence. The majority of pupils use prior understanding to predict results and evaluate the reliability of their findings. Work on plants addresses the function of different parts and the requirements for plant growth, building on earlier learning, and pupils have developed clear understanding of this area through investigative work. They are aware of ways in which organisms are suited to their environment, use keys for identification, and have a clear understanding of food chains and the role of producers and consumers. A residential visit to Wales has been used well to further develop pupils' appreciation of living things in their environment. Through work on the major organs of plants and animals, pupils are aware of their functions and how they help fulfil the requirements of life, for example, the reasons for changes in heart rate during exercise.
105. Throughout Years 3-6 pupils' work on materials shows clear progression, with an investigative approach throughout so that by the end of Year 6 they have a very good understanding of principles of dissolving, of separating soluble and insoluble substances, changes of state and the relationship between properties of materials and their uses. Pupils apply this learning to problem-solving activities, for example, when they investigated the suitability of different soils for a plant with specific requirements.
106. Pupils have a good understanding of the effect of forces on objects, including stretching, upthrust and air resistance, and most confidently measure forces in Newtons. They have developed their understanding of sound by investigating factors which affect it, clearly recognising the link between the length of the vibrating object and the pitch. Work on electricity shows a good understanding of the nature of insulators and conductors and their uses, as well as a range of different electrical circuits.
107. Teaching is good across the school and during the inspection some very good teaching was observed. Teachers understand the requirements of the science curriculum and have very good scientific knowledge, which enables them to teach it effectively and to extend and broaden pupils' understanding of the subject. In particular, the strong emphasis on the use of correct scientific terminology from an early age is very effective in embedding the language of science in pupils' work. Teachers' planning is very clearly focused on well-defined learning objectives, with an emphasis on science enquiry, ensuring progression in pupils' investigative skills, and showing very high expectations. This is further supported by useful frameworks to guide pupils' thinking so that they learn how to write well-structured reports of their work, progressing to totally independent writing as they grow older. Lessons have a brisk pace with activities closely matching

learning objectives. Where teaching is particularly effective, teachers use questions very well to challenge pupils, especially higher attainers, to extend their thinking and consider real-life problems where they can apply their understanding. This is exemplified in Year 4 where pupils' investigation of friction was extended to consider the materials used for windscreen wipers. Teachers are enthusiastic and motivate pupils well, usually providing a very good level of challenge so that they can achieve well, and planning for differentiated levels of support or resources, and occasionally differentiated tasks. Occasionally, in both key stages objectives for pupils' learning are not well adapted to suit pupils with special educational needs and, although teaching assistants work well with these pupils, the concepts and complexity of activities addressed by the rest of the class are excessive for this group and in these instances learning is less effective. A good variety of teaching methods is employed, so that whole class and individual work is effectively combined with group activities. The majority of pupils' learning is through investigative and experimental work which is well managed, with pupils being encouraged to take increasing responsibility for the organisation of their activities. Where teaching is most effective for older pupils, open-ended problems and questions are used without too much guidance so that pupils are challenged to think things through scientifically. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall with some very good practice. However, on a number of occasions it is not sufficiently diagnostic or challenging to move pupils' thinking forward, tending instead to focus on general praise.

108. Pupils' learning in science is good throughout the school. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good and make a significant contribution to the quality of learning. Pupils are eager to learn and to contribute their ideas in lessons, co-operating well and engaging enthusiastically with activities. From an early age they approach their practical activities sensibly with a responsible approach to the use of resources, and present their written work with care. At present, the pupils are not actively involved in setting targets for improvement, nor are they made aware of what specifically they need to do to achieve differing levels of attainment. The school has already identified this as an area for development and, once embedded in school practice, this should add considerably to pupils' learning and to the standards that they achieve.
109. The subject is led with enthusiasm and a clear sense of direction. Medium and short term plans and pupils' books are monitored effectively to enable the co-ordinator to maintain a good overview of standards and to support colleagues. Monitoring of learning through observation of lessons effectively ensures that high standards of teaching and learning are maintained. The emphasis on investigative approaches for all pupils enhances the depth of pupils' scientific understanding. Thorough analysis of the results of national tests informs subject development very well and appropriate plans for further improvement are in place. The subject leader has a good understanding of science teaching and is developing a systematic approach to assessment with a positive impact on pupils' learning. This includes assessment against key objectives, and year teams devise their own topic-related tests. This latter development has the potential for even greater impact on standards. The compilation of a portfolio of assessed and levelled work is underway and will support teachers' assessments, but the lack of annotation reduces its effectiveness.

ART AND DESIGN

110. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' work in art is in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make steady progress in their art lessons, which results in progress over time being satisfactory. Satisfactory progress has been made since the time of the last inspection.
111. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore the media of paint and pastels by mixing colours, examining texture and application using a variety of tools, including brushes of various sizes and shapes, their hands and simple shapes for printing. They use paint and collage to illustrate various themes and as part of many other subjects. To illustrate their work in English they have made collages and painted pictures of Peter and the Wolf and to reinforce their work in numeracy they have constructed line drawings which they developed into patterns. These are of a satisfactory standard. Pupils in these year groups do not have sketch books to help them make links between what they produce in art lessons based upon preparatory work, such as testing the effects of different types of pencil, crayon or shade matching. Examples of well-known works of art are prominently displayed around the school, which help pupils develop a satisfactory level of appreciation of the work of artists, such as Degas, Picasso, Monet and Lowry. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils show respect for and pride in their work, especially when it is displayed in the corridor and in their classrooms.
112. Within Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to steadily develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. For example, pupils in Year 6 study the work of Pablo Picasso and use some of his techniques to replicate his style of Analytical Cubism where the forms of things are dissected into bits and then separated. The work is of an appropriate standard. By analysing Picasso's work and comparing it with their own, pupils discuss the importance of looking at objects from different viewpoints when creating balance and proportion within a finished piece of work. Younger pupils effectively learn the importance of observation when working on self-portraits and take care when mixing paints to create the correct shades for hair and eyes. They use their imagination well when producing random and repetitive patterns, for example, when personalising the style of Ancient Greek artists.
113. Pupils talk very positively about their art lessons and they behave very well. Older pupils are eager to discuss their work and are confident about suggesting ways in which they could improve it. They are familiar with explaining and discussing different techniques. Year 6 pupils recalled a range of work they had enjoyed as they progressed through the school. Of particular note was the use of papier mâché to make puppets and clay to make Tudor and Viking artefacts. However, the most enjoyable work was undoubtedly the recent work done at Nantglyn on a field trip, where they sketched and painted the local landscape. The finished work was of good quality and proudly displayed in class. All pupils gain experience from working in both two- and three-dimensional materials, including clay and textiles. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils enjoyed the practical activities, concentrated on what they were being taught and took care of their own and others' work. They talked enthusiastically with one another whilst working and showed a pride in having their work praised and admired by their teacher and other adults helping in the class.
114. The standard of teaching is satisfactory. However, over time some teachers have not always placed enough emphasis upon teaching skills, knowledge and understanding of artistic techniques, but more upon using art as an activity related to other subjects. This is more evident in classes where teachers are less confident in their own artistic expertise and has restricted pupils' ability to produce pieces of work that show a good

development of the full range of artistic skills and techniques. However, great importance is attached to celebrating pupils' achievements by displaying their day-to-day efforts sensitively and creatively. Examples of high quality work produced by the pupils are well annotated and clearly attributable to individuals within classes.

115. Good systems are in place for monitoring teaching and learning. A portfolio of pupils' work to inform teachers about standards to assist them in planning for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding is in the process of being collated. The use of assessment is beginning to inform curriculum planning to ensure continuity and progression and breadth and balance of experience. However, not all teachers are making good use of the curriculum guidance advocated by the co-ordinator and prefer to use other materials, such as 'Step by Step' as the basis for their lessons. The co-ordinator is aware of this and is already addressing the issue. Opportunities for art to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are good, but more use could be made of visiting artists, especially from non-western cultures, to add variety to pupils learning experiences. The co-ordinator is aware of the value and importance of using sketchbooks, and this practice is established in Key Stage 2, but has yet to be introduced for younger pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards in design and technology are above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were described as in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and this is a result of the good quality of teaching being provided. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards design and technology and they behave well in lessons, where they work with enthusiasm. They work very productively and with high levels of concentration. This makes a very important contribution to the quality of learning and to how well pupils achieve.
117. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and ensures that pupils are provided with a range of activities that progressively increase their skill levels and their understanding of the design process. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils have a good insight into structures through their work in making musical instruments and model homes. Pupils in Year 2 also build on their previous experience in making moving vehicles. Experience of food technology is linked effectively with work in science as they analyse the changing state of substances in the cooking process. Pupils in Year 2 also renew their acquaintance with textiles as design and technology materials when they make good quality puppets to their own designs. Whilst it is apparent that pupils at this stage tend to be more enthusiastic about making than designing, their enthusiasm for the hands on approach is gradually used to generate a more studied approach to the design process. Discussions with pupils and with the co-ordinator confirm the good links between design and technology and other subjects in the curriculum, such as art and design and science.
118. Pupils in Years 3-6 continue to make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, they achieve good standards in their design and technology work. Teaching continues to make effective links with other areas of the curriculum, such as science, as was observed in the Year 3 lesson where pupils were investigating the principles of pneumatics in their design activities. Pupils in Year 5 were engaged in the investigation of cams and gears, and in a lesson where teaching and progress were excellent, the discussion of the significance of the shape of cams was highly erudite as the class teacher set high expectations of vocabulary and subject knowledge. The content of the

units of study allows for frequent revisiting of key concepts and pupils are increasingly challenged by their teachers to improve and expand their knowledge of the design process. Their response is to work hard and motivation stays at a high level. Pupils make very good use of design books to record their preliminary ideas before translating them into practical form, and every opportunity is taken to encourage pupils in the evaluation of their designs by referring back to the books. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils have become aware that aesthetic considerations may often, in the commercial world, outweigh some design principles in areas such as style and safety, and they are also aware of the existence of the 'design icons', especially in the field of fashion. The quality of the teaching ensures that pupils take designing seriously and they have no problem in revisiting their designs to locate problems and identify areas for improvement.

119. Resources for design and technology are good and are improving. The recently appointed co-ordinator is a specialist in the subject and approaches her task with vision and enthusiasm. She has identified the strengths in the subject and has clear ideas on areas for improvement. The introduction and implementation of a new school-wide assessment scheme based on the guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is already paying dividends in the availability of data to assist in future planning for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

120. Standards in geography are above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress as they move through the school. The school has made satisfactory progress in this area of the curriculum since the time of the last inspection. Standards have been maintained and teachers continue to provide a good level of challenge through high expectations. The good use of the local environment and fieldwork continues. Assessment has improved through the use of key objectives.
121. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good geographical skills and draw a simple map of their locality and their route to school, recognise features on maps of different scale and identify the location of Manchester on a map of Great Britain. They add a key to identify main features on a map, and are beginning to use simple co-ordinates well. An aerial view of the classroom shows a good understanding of plan views in Year 2, further demonstrated by a seating plan in the same style. The continuous unit in the scheme of work, 'Where in the world is Barnaby Bear' is used well to develop a sense of places in the world. In Year 1, learning about Africa is linked to the travels of Barnaby Bear, and pupils are beginning to gain a good understanding of the difference between physical and man-made features in comparing Africa with the United Kingdom. They show good awareness of the potential influence of people on their environment, and suggest ways to improve the school grounds.
122. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of maps, comparing old and recent maps of the locality, and developing their skills during a residential visit to Nantglyn in Wales, where they also showed good map-reading skills through orienteering. They are aware of world climate zones, and have studied climate, rainfall and temperature locally and around the world, building well on their ability to use tables and graphs. In their study of places, pupils have good opportunities for field work and in Year 5 show good awareness of differences and similarities between their locality and Castleton in Derbyshire, contrasting urban and rural, physical and human features, and understanding well reasons for settlements. This was reinforced in their residential visit to Wales where they produced good quality individual records of the visit, including comparisons of physical and human features. They also compare their own homes and

lifestyle with those in Kenya. Their awareness of environmental issues is good. In Year 4, a study of resource use is linked well to a design and technology project on recycling and pupils are able to debate issues, such as proposals for a bypass, showing good awareness of different points of view. In Year 6, a combined history and geography project studying Stockport past and present allows pupils to demonstrate good understanding of Ordnance Survey maps and symbols, the ability to understand scale of maps and their independent learning skills. They use interviews as part of a survey, and represent their findings graphically using computers, with most producing good quality project reports.

123. Progress is good overall, and pupils respond positively to their work showing good attention to presentation. Pupils behave very well and take a pride in how they present their work. They are enthusiastic about the subject and all these features impact positively on pupils' learning. Teaching is good overall. Planning is thorough and well-focused, with high expectations of pupils' performance. Geographical terminology is used and reinforced so that pupils become familiar with it and use it in their independent written work well. A positive feature of much teaching, especially in Years 3-6, is the encouragement of debate and linking geography to real life experience and current local, national and international issues so that the subject comes to life and pupils are motivated to learn. Most classrooms display maps which are used to reinforce current learning so that a sense of place and awareness of types of maps is reinforced as pupils move through the school. Good links are made with literacy through expectations of high standards of independent written work, and information technology is used satisfactorily to support the subject with older pupils. On occasions, opportunities are missed to use computers to further enhance learning. Marking is variable, and where good includes dialogue to encourage pupils to think about their work. Where it is less satisfactory it is cursory and praises work without commenting on pupils' learning of geography or what is needed to improve.
124. The new subject leader is well qualified in the subject and, although very recently appointed, has a clear sense of direction. Provision includes good use of the local area and further afield, and geographical skills and understanding are developed well in residential visits to Wales. Information technology is being used well in some classes but more opportunities could be identified. The introduction of a new scheme of work based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority ensures good curriculum coverage and continuity and progression, and the subject is regularly monitored to ensure high quality coverage across the school, with a positive impact on standards. Annual assessment against key objectives is established, although assessment tasks are not consistent or co-ordinated. A portfolio of levelled work supports teacher assessment, but lack of annotation limits its usefulness. Resources are adequate but more computer software and updated atlases would further enhance the pupils' opportunity for research.

HISTORY

125. Standards in history are well above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been improvement since the last inspection when standards were above national expectations. This is as a result of highly effective subject leadership and all the teachers' commitment to increasing pupils' enthusiasm for and knowledge of history throughout the school. Pupils of all abilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language all make good progress over time as they move through the school. Progress within lessons is sometimes very good. Pupils benefit from well-targeted support which ensures that their needs are consistently met.

126. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of chronology. They look back through their time at the school and recall what they did when they were first at school. This work is extended to a comparison between toys their grandparents and great grandparents played with and modern toys. This work is brought to life through the visit of a travelling workshop where 'grandmothers' talk about and demonstrate the toys they used. Further successful work on chronology includes comparisons between holidays now and in the past, transport through the ages and the history of lighting. Pupils have a very good knowledge of the life and work of such historical figures as Florence Nightingale, Grace Darling and Samuel Pepys. Their lives are understood within the context of when they lived. The value of Pepys as a diarist is also fully recognised. Pupils showed a clear understanding of the motives of Guy Fawkes in wishing to blow up Parliament as a result of a drama session in which the religious differences of the time were explored and discussed. Many of the pupils recognised the difference between historical fact and opinion and demonstrated some sympathy for the plight of Guy Fawkes and his friends when they wrote about them. Pupils are able to make very good use of a variety of information sources, including books, artefacts and pictures. They make very good use of their literacy skills when presenting their findings in history.
127. By the end of Year 6, pupils have extended their knowledge, understanding and interpretation of history. The high quality of all aspects of their history work is brought about by the school's commitment to bringing history to life and making it relevant and exciting. Pupils demonstrate a real understanding of the development of the local area since Georgian times. A very well designed town trail, which pupils follow, highlights the changes over time and the relevance of different buildings. A strong emphasis is placed on the way buildings have changed in use to reflect the needs of people at different times in history. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the hatting trade in Stockport and understand the importance of it in the development of the town. Factual information is gained from a wide range of artefacts borrowed from the local museum service.
128. Very good links are made between geography and history when looking at the development of the town and comparing Nantglyn in North Wales, where Year 6 pupils went on their residential trip, with the area around the school. Pupils' writing and research on Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and Roman times shows a clear understanding of life at these times. Year 6 pupils recall considerable detail from these topics, which they covered up to three years before. The quality of work in the school on Tudors carried out in Year 5 is outstanding. It enables pupils to use the full range of historical skills that should be developed in Key Stage 2. The pupils make very good use of their literacy skills when writing up the detailed information they have discovered about Henry VIII. Their understanding and knowledge of the period are heightened by an annual Tudor day held in school, where pupils and staff dress in Tudor costume, make Tudor bread, learn Tudor dances and music and perform parts of William Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' Pupils also attend a Tudor day at nearby Bramhall Hall where they widen their knowledge yet again by spending a day in a Tudor building. Pupils are able to use the Internet to find out information about history as is demonstrated by the timeline drawn by Year 6 that stretches through the Year 5 and 6 part of the school and covers significant events from the Roman invasion of Britain to man landing on the moon. Further evidence of the historical knowledge gained by the end of Year 6 is shown in topic books on World War 2 where pupils are able to report events from the war from both the British and German point of view.
129. Pupils throughout the school respond with great enthusiasm to the high quality of both the history curriculum and the teaching they receive. They are very actively involved in their learning. The high quality of history displays encourages them to take great care over their work and present it neatly. They particularly enjoy using their knowledge of historical periods in other subjects, such as geography and music.

130. The quality of history teaching is very good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and the good pace of lessons enables wide coverage of each topic. Pupils are challenged and made to think about history in a mature way. They are encouraged to think about fact and opinion as in the Year 2 lessons about Guy Fawkes. In Year 1, the history of lighting is widened to include discussion about the impact of the level of lighting on our day to day living. In Year 5, a well-led discussion about explorers evokes a wide range of answers from the pupils. Assessment opportunities and information are used well by teachers to plan the next stage of learning.
131. The subject leader has a great interest in history, works very hard and successfully promotes the subject within the school. She is fully aware of the work that is planned and has the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching thoroughly during each school year. The school makes very good use of the wide range of resources and books available from the local library service.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards in information and communication technology are at the nationally expected level overall by the end of Years 2 and 6. There are particular strengths in older pupils' word processing skills, knowledge of the Internet and electronic mail, researching and how to merge pictures and text. The younger pupils in school are confident computer users and have a good grasp of how computers are used in the wider world. The weaker elements of the subject are control, modelling and use of sensors. During the inspection some very good examples were seen in lessons and in portfolios of evidence of computers being used to enhance and support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. On other occasions, learning opportunities had not been built into teachers' planning and opportunities were missed. The progress that pupils are making at the present time is good. This is as a result of the good quality of direct teaching, the improving confidence and expertise of a far wider number of staff and the clear and accurate agenda set by the effective co-ordinators. Evidence indicates that over time teaching and progress have been at a satisfactory level. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language is also at good level at the present time because they receive appropriate support. The school has made satisfactory progress in this area of the curriculum since the time of the last inspection. Inspection evidence shows that the action plan that the school has drawn up and the commitment of all who work at the school have to raising standards indicate that the school is well placed to continue its cycle of development and improvement.
133. By the age of seven, pupils are confident in using word processing programmes to create simple stories or to record information from work in the classroom. The majority save and print work by using the command menus on the computer screen. Pupils know how to save a piece of work to file. Pupils use and understand the caps lock, backspace and space bar to a satisfactory standard. When opportunities are provided in other subjects, such as mathematics and history, for computers to support pupils' learning, pupils respond well and as a result their computer skills are enhanced as well as their mathematical and historical knowledge and skills. In a good science lesson, pupils used computers to help them design a poster about the dangers of electricity. They did this to a good standard. Pupils have a good understanding of how computers are used in the wider world and have an appropriate grasp of computer terminology and vocabulary. Pupils also show a good awareness that computers can be used to present information in a variety of formats. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness that instructions can be written for a programmable toy and that these instructions can determine the path and

direction of the toy. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve good standards in word processing. Computers are used effectively to edit and draft work. Pupils present information from their science investigations in different formats, such as text, graphs and pie charts. This is of a good standard. Pupils input and analyse data appropriately and pupils use the computerised library system to distribute and return books. When producing a newspaper review of a residential visit the pupils used a variety of different skills. They accessed the Internet for appropriate pictures and text and then merged them together in an appropriate manner. Pupils have continued to develop their awareness of how computers impact on the world in which we live. Many pupils are confident users of computers for research purposes and use both the Internet and CD ROMS for appropriate information. Pupils are adept at sending e-mails to pen pals in France and know how to use a digital camera. The weaker element of attainment is in the area of control and sensors and pupils lack confidence in, for example, writing a sequence of instructions to control a light bulb or motor with a control box.

134. Pupils show very good attitudes to learning in the subject. They are attentive and show a real thirst for new knowledge and skills. Behaviour in lessons is often of a high standard and even when pupils cannot see the screen clearly it does not distract their learning but merely increases their concentration levels. Pupils work really well together and are always ready to discuss their work. Many pupils have computers at home and some have considerable skills that have been enhanced through their work on computers at home. These pupils are only too ready to help their classmates with little prompting from the teacher. These very positive attitudes, high levels of concentration and attentiveness make an important contribution to the quality of learning and the good progress that pupils are currently making.
135. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was of a good standard and is impacting positively on how well pupils are currently learning. Most teachers have a secure subject knowledge and use this in an effective manner to enthuse pupils and to deal with any misconceptions that occur. The school does not have a computer suite and computers are stationed in classrooms. Teaching is often organised so that half the class are taught specific skills around the computer screens whilst the other half work on associated tasks. This works well when all pupils can see the screens and the rest of the class completes their work in a purposeful manner. Teaching is at its best when specific skills are taught in a most effective manner, previous learning is revisited to help pupils in new learning and pupils are provided with opportunities to try things out for themselves without over direction from the teacher. Examples of this were seen in Year 6 when pupils had to create a newspaper article following a residential visit and when pupils in Year 2 designed a poster about the dangers of electricity. Another feature of effective teaching is the use of recap at the end of the lesson. Teachers use the opportunity to assess and reinforce what has been learned in the lesson and to use the information to guide and inform future lessons. Teachers often explain what is going to happen in the next lesson and this adds an air of eager anticipation to pupils' learning. When teaching is not at this high level it is because of a lack of teacher confidence or expertise and opportunities are not exploited to use computers to support pupils' work across the curriculum.
136. The subject is led well by two enthusiastic, well-informed and knowledgeable co-ordinators. They have a very good grasp of the strengths and areas for development within the subject. The co-ordinators have put in place a very good quality scheme of work that carefully and clearly outlines the areas of study for each year group. Its implementation is to be rigorously monitored. This is appropriate. Each teacher in the school has individual targets for improvement and development in both the short and long term. Good assessment procedures have been recently put in place although insufficient time has lapsed for them to be having their biggest impact on raising

standards. Good quality portfolios of moderated work are in place to guide teachers in accurately assessing pupils' work. The co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and scrutinise samples of pupils' work in an effective manner. Time is to be allocated for them to monitor teaching and learning across the school during the next term. The school runs an extra-curricular computer club, which is well attended and adds to the quality of pupils' learning. Resources are satisfactory but plans are in hand to further improve both hardware and software resources during the current and next financial year.

MUSIC

137. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils are reaching standards which are well above the national expectations. Particular strengths are the high quality of singing throughout the school and the large number of seven- to 11-year-old pupils who receive instrumental tuition in school and attain a sufficiently high enough standard to be entered for external examinations. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection, where standards were judged to be good, and is due to the good use of specialist teaching and the extensive range of opportunities offered to pupils. From the earliest age, pupils have the opportunity to listen to a good range of music. This encouragement to listen to and participate in music throughout the school creates a very enthusiastic approach to music. It also enables pupils of all abilities and those for whom English is an additional language to make good progress and to achieve well.
138. By the age of seven pupils sing very tunefully and are skilled in tapping out the rhythm of the music. They develop a very good appreciation of music through listening to modern as well as classical pieces of music. In studying Peter and the Wolf in some depth, pupils match the instruments of the orchestra to the characters of the story. For example, they know that when they hear the french horn the wolf is involved. They have a good musical knowledge and identify Prokofiev as the composer and in assembly the majority of seven-year-olds recognise 'The Planets' by Holst. Through well-planned opportunities pupils identify moods in music by the way it makes them feel. In a very good infant assembly, pupils listened to contrasting pieces of music, including Beethoven's 'Pastoral Symphony' and music by Steps and discussed their reactions, for example, 'did the extracts make them feel happy or sad?'
139. By the age of eleven pupils have developed their singing well through belonging to the choir as well as in lessons. They sing a song with a four part round and hold the descant for the chorus when singing 'Sing Hosanna!' with the whole school. More than half the pupils in Year 6 play an instrument, including keyboard, guitar, glockenspiel, flute, violin and brass. Other pupils participate well by playing the untuned percussion instruments. Through skilled direct teaching from teachers with considerable expertise, and through purposeful practice, pupils evaluate and improve their own performance. For example, in learning to play 'A Summer Place', pupils practise in their associated groups of keyboard, string or percussion, listen to each other and then suggest ways to combine the groups to achieve a good overall effect, saying, for example, that the untuned percussion needed to be a little louder. They are developing a good musical vocabulary, explaining crescendo or diminuendo and follow simple notation. Pupils who are receiving instrumental lessons make a good contribution to class lessons by sharing what they have learned and this improves the standards of all pupils. They have opportunities to compose their own music. For example, pupils in Year 3 use a computer program to try their ideas whilst pupils in Year 6 compose their own songs during the 'Exploring Lyrics and Melody' topic.
140. Throughout the school there are very good opportunities for pupils to perform for an audience both in school and for a wider audience. In a weekly assembly different groups

and classes improve their confidence and skills by performing for the rest of the school. Pupils also prepare well for larger productions at Christmas and at the end of the summer term. Last year, Year 6 said their farewells to the school by staging a performance of 'Bugsy Malone'. Pupils also perform at the local church and library and participate with other schools to sing in the huge Manchester Evening News Arena. A small number of pupils also join in a residential musical weekend.

141. Teaching is good throughout the school and examples of very good teaching were observed. There are several teachers with good musical skills, including the co-ordinators, and the school uses their expertise well in teaching music to their own and other classes. This element of specialist teaching and teachers' enthusiasm is a significant factor in the high standards achieved. In these lessons, teachers use their knowledge well to teach skills, extend pupils' knowledge and to provide good models of musical performance. The co-ordinators support their non-specialist colleagues very well in suggesting resources and in helping with planning. There are good links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn 'The Boar's Head Carol' so that they can join in a Tudor Christmas at Bramall Hall. Whilst the class teacher made good use of taped music, a pupil from Year 6 came joined part of the lesson to accompany the class on the flute and, together with clear teaching points from the teacher, helped to improve the quality of the singing. The co-ordinators organise a good range of extra-curricular activities, including the choir and recorder groups. Teaching is also enriched by the good contributions from the large number of peripatetic teachers who work in the school.
142. The co-ordinators lead and manage the subject well and their contributions add to the quality of learning and to the standards achieved. The school is well resourced with an extensive range of musical instruments, ensuring that all pupils can participate in class lessons. Work is well planned, both in lessons and in teaching sessions, such as hymn practice, and includes all elements of the curriculum. Whilst a very wide range of music is used, contributions from music from non-European cultures are limited.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Standards in physical education are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress as they move through the school. Standards and progress are the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, but there have been improvements in the curriculum offered as the scheme of work has been further developed. A new dance programme has already been introduced in Key Stage 1 and will be introduced in Key Stage 2 early next year. This is extending this aspect of the curriculum with more opportunities to work on dance from other cultures. Work observed in the inspection was limited to games in Key Stage 1 and games and gymnastics in Key Stage 2. However, planning indicates that there is good coverage of all other aspects of the physical education curriculum and that clear and challenging learning objectives are set for each year group each half term.
144. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies and how valuable it is to good health. They follow instructions well and move around the hall at different speeds and in different ways and use the space well. They take care to give each other sufficient space. They are confident when asked to demonstrate their skills to the rest of the class. They find bouncing a ball with a racket difficult but are prepared to persevere. They work well together as a group and are able to devise their own games and invent appropriate rules.

145. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have extended their understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies and link their faster heart rate to how blood is pumped round the body. They understand the term synchronisation in relation to gymnastics and their attainment is raised by the use of a video, which shows how technique can be improved. Pupils swim well. Pupils play a good variety of team games including netball, rugby, football and lacrosse. Progress in the acquisition of skills in these games is generally good.
146. Key Stage 2 pupils play matches against other schools and, where possible, teams are varied to enable more pupils to have this valuable experience. Pupils also learn the skills needed to participate successfully in cross-country running. The annual residential trip to Nantglyn in North Wales gives Year 6 the opportunity to experience a range of challenging outdoor and adventurous activities, including orienteering, linked well to map reading skills in geography, hill walking and climbing. An excellent range of physical education extra-curricular activities is offered to all Key Stage 2 pupils both by teachers at the school and outside organisations. This is helping to raise standards. During the inspection the dance club performed a well-rehearsed and effective dance in time with some 'mechanical' music.
147. Pupils in both key stages are eager to participate in their physical education lessons. Parents are very keen to support their children when they participate in matches and cross-country running. Pupils are very well behaved and keen to do well in physical education. The school is aware that the present storage arrangements for equipment make it more difficult for younger pupils to learn how to put out equipment and apparatus, but no alternative storage area is available.
148. The teaching of physical education is good in both key stages. Good use is made of teachers with specialist skills in physical education to help with planning and sometimes teaching both classes in the same year group. Teaching of games outside to the two class groups is only satisfactory as it is a very large group to manage. Pupils benefit from the decision to teach games outside throughout the year. A good-sized playground and a well-drained sports field make this possible. However, the present timetabling arrangements mean that if bad weather prevents classes taking part in outside games they occasionally miss their physical education lesson, as the school hall is constantly in use for other educational purposes. Teachers use the hall space well although it is reduced by the stage and the storage of apparatus. The introduction of published schemes of lesson plans has further helped non-specialist teachers who successfully adapt the plans to the needs of their classes. All pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from the time and commitment that many teaching staff give to both extra-curricular activities and organising matches against other schools.
149. The subject leader has great expertise in physical education and is very committed to further raising standards in the school. She is working hard to further develop assessment to enable pupils to make even better progress.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in their understanding of Christianity and in their ability to discuss issues and empathise with others. However, they make only satisfactory progress in gaining knowledge about other world religions. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection when standards and progress were both satisfactory. This is the result of the school's decision to focus on

developing a new scheme of work and improving the planning of the subject and the assessment of pupils' progress.

151. By the end of Year 2, the pupils recognise the importance and value of friends. They list the qualities they would like in a friend. They develop a good sense of community and recognise the value of belonging to organisations and groups. They are familiar with the stories of St George and St Patrick and understand well that there are special Saints days. They know about the special symbols in other religions, such as the Menorah and the Star of David in Judaism, and that Diwali is the Hindu festival of light. They have visited the local church and describe the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and understand well that different behaviour is required in a church. They discuss the various celebrations and special occasions that happen in church and are very knowledgeable about the purpose and organisation of weddings.
152. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of stories about Jesus and use the Bible to extract information about Him. They are aware of the Ten Commandments, are able to write their own ten special rules and extend this to thinking about the ways in which they can make their own lives peaceful and positive. They know some of the major stories from the Old Testament, such as Jacob and his brothers. They extend their work on Christmas by finding out how it is celebrated in different parts of the world. Their understanding of other world religions is less well defined. Whilst they talk knowledgeably about Judaism, there is some confusion between the major festivals in the Islamic and Hindu religions. They are very mature in their discussions about racism linked to the story of Martin Luther King and the Alabama bus boycott. They are sufficiently confident to share their own personal experiences and are able to empathise with the people in the story. The strong links between religious education and personal and social education are helping to raise standards in religious education.
153. The pupils' response to the subject is good. Pupils are very keen to participate in classroom discussions and happy to share their feelings and thoughts with other members of the class and their teacher. They listen well to different points of view. Their written work is well presented and younger pupils contribute well to classroom and hall displays. Pupils enjoy the high quality assemblies that take place in the school and they contribute towards the standards achieved in religious education.
154. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers present work in a challenging manner and have high expectations of the pupils. The very good management of the pupils enables them to participate well in class discussions and to learn from each other's experiences. Lessons are well planned and the worksheets that pupils are given are well designed to promote a variety of responses. Whilst assessment of pupils' work is sufficiently thorough, progress is harder to measure because worksheets are not always dated.
155. The newly appointed subject leader is committed to continuing to raise standards and through the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning has a good grasp of the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. Opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching across the school through lesson observation are planned for the near future. She is aware that pupils would be helped to gain a greater understanding of other religions if they were able to visit places of worship in addition to a Christian Church. This is a priority in the further development of the subject.