

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halifax

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 107544

Headteacher: Mrs J Hutton

Reporting inspector: Mrs Marina Gough
22361

Dates of inspection: 15th - 18th January 2001

Inspection number: 196659

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Prospect Street
Halifax
West Yorkshire

Postcode: HX3 6LA

Telephone number: 01422 360646

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Father John Newman

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31807	Mr D Carpenter	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English Art and design	
18724	Ms G Pilling	Team inspector	Geography Physical Education Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
10228	Ms S Russam	Team Inspector	Science Design and technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is situated in the town of Halifax in West Yorkshire. There are currently two hundred and two pupils on roll, all of whom are of white ethnicity. No pupil comes from a home where English is an additional language. Twenty one pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and this figure represents 10% of the school population and is below average. Twenty eight pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, representing 14% of the school population, which is below average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs. Most pupils have had pre-school experience. The baseline assessments, carried out soon after pupils start school, show their attainment to be average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective and provides a satisfactory education for pupils of all ages and abilities. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average, but standards in science are well below average. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2, and is good in Key Stage 1. Some very good teaching was observed in the inspection in both Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Pupils throughout the school have very positive attitudes, and approach their work with enthusiasm. The new headteacher has an extremely clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and firm plans for the school's future development. She enjoys the support of the Governing Body and staff. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave school at the age of eleven.
- Standards in music are good throughout the school.
- Teaching is good in Key Stage 1. The teaching of music is very good throughout the school.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is good.
- Attendance is very good and is well above the national average.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.
- The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.
- The school has established good links with parents.
- The new headteacher provides very good leadership for the school, and has a clear sense of what needs to be done to improve the school further.
- The school's financial procedures are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in science in Key Stage 2. Standards in art and design, geography and history in both key stages. Standards in design and technology in Key Stage 2.
- The curriculum at Key Stage 1 and 2
- The role of subject managers in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in their areas.
- Assessment procedures and the use made of assessment information to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in addressing the issues raised in the previous report, although there is still more work to be done in relation to assessment and in developing the monitoring role of the subject managers. The school is part of an Education Action Zone, and information and communication technology and music have been main areas of focus for the school over the past year. The school now has an attractive and well used computer suite, which is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning and attainment. Since the last inspection the fabric of the building has been improved, and all classrooms have been decorated, and are carpeted. The school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics and English at the end of Key Stage 2 over the last few years, but the emphasis placed on these subjects has been to the detriment of standards in other subjects, especially science. The new headteacher, who has been in post for one term, is committed to improving the quality of education further, and has already identified several areas for development. The school's capacity to improve further is good.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

The table shows that, on the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is well above the national average, and well above average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' attainment in science is below the national average, and below average when compared with similar schools. The inspection findings paint a similar picture and show that whilst pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above national expectations, their attainment in science is below national expectations.

At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment, on the basis of the end of key stage National Curriculum tests, is in line with the national average in reading and writing, and below the national average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. The inspection findings paint a more favourable picture of pupils' attainment, on the basis of the performance of the current group of Year 2 pupils, and indicate that standards in English are above national expectations overall, and that standards in mathematics are in line with national expectations.

In art and design, geography and history at the end of both key stages, and in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils do not make as much progress as they could, and their attainment is below national expectations. Insufficient time is allocated to these subjects, and coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is unsatisfactory. In

music, standards are above national expectations at the end of both key stages, and in physical education and information and communication technology, standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils have made particularly good progress in information and communication technology since the new computer suite was set up.

By the time pupils in the Foundation Stage transfer to Year 1, they attain the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils of all ages and abilities are keen and enthusiastic. They work hard in lessons and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils are well behaved, courteous and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils work well together in pairs and small groups, and are kind and considerate.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
50 lessons seen overall	satisfactory	good	satisfactory

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

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 2% of lessons seen, very good in 20% of lessons, good in 24% of lessons, satisfactory in 50% of lessons and unsatisfactory in 4% of lessons. Teaching is of a consistently good standard in Key Stage 1, where all lessons are well planned and prepared, and where teachers provide a range of tasks that are very closely matched to the needs of the pupils.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the teaching of English and mathematics is good, and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The teaching of science in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory, and is a significant factor in terms of the below average standards attained at the end of the key stage. The teaching of music is very good throughout the school. The teaching of information and communication technology in the computer suite is good, but teachers do not always make enough use of classroom computers to support pupils' learning. Although some satisfactory and good lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, geography and history during the inspection, there are weaknesses in the teaching of these subjects which are linked to poor curriculum planning, and teachers' lack of subject knowledge. The teaching of pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall.

The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, some good examples of teaching were observed when pupils were working in

small groups being supported by non-teaching assistants. However, the practice of withdrawing some pupils to work alongside younger pupils is unsatisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the Foundation Stage pupils is satisfactory overall. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks balance. Not enough time is given to some subjects and this adversely affects pupils' progress. There are weaknesses in curriculum planning, and there are not enough good quality schemes of work to guide teachers in their planning. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils who have special educational needs, and recent changes in the school's identification procedures are a positive step forward.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and satisfactory provision for their cultural development. Pupils' personal development is enhanced in those classes where opportunities are provided for them to take responsibility for aspects of their own learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and supportive learning environment for all pupils. There are weaknesses in some of the school's assessment procedures, and not enough use is made of assessment information to guide teachers' planning.
Partnership with parents.	Good. The school provides good levels of information, and enjoys the full support of parents who work hard supporting their children with homework tasks.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the new headteacher is very good. She has a very clear grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and firm plans for taking the school forward. The role of the subject managers in monitoring teaching and learning in their areas is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The Governing Body effectively monitors and reviews progress towards the targets in the School Development Plan. However, there is not enough monitoring of standards, by subject managers, through the evaluation of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of its resources, especially specific grants, such as those from the Education Action Zone, and those for special educational needs.
Staffing, learning	Satisfactory overall. The school has enough staff for the number

resources and accommodation	of pupils on roll, and the accommodation is adequate and in a good state of repair. There are enough resources for most subjects.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents agree that their children like coming to school. • Parents believe that their children are making good progress and that the quality of teaching is good. • The vast majority of parents are pleased with the amount and frequency of homework. • Parents agree that the school is welcoming. They feel comfortable about approaching the staff or headteacher with their concerns and suggestions. • Most parents believe that the school works closely with parents. • Parents praise the way in which the school is managed. • Parents are pleased with the behaviour in school and agree that the new house system is motivating their children to behave well. • Parents agree that the school successfully promotes positive values and attitudes which reflect the mission statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more information about homework so that they can help their children more effectively. • Parents are concerned about the large number of pupils in the Y4 class. • Some parents are unhappy with the level of lunchtime supervision.

Overall there are high levels of parental satisfaction. The inspection findings fully confirm the parents' positive views of the school, but do not support parents' views that there are weaknesses in the lunchtime supervision or that the Year 4 class is too large. Although the parents currently receive good levels of general information, the school is happy to respond to their requests for more information about homework tasks.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the end of Key Stage 2, on the basis of the 2000 end of key stage National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is well above the national average, and well above average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' attainment in science is below the national average, and below average when compared with similar schools. In both English and mathematics, a higher than average percentage of pupils attain the higher Level 5 in the tests, but in science, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is below the national average. Over the past few years, the school has invested a great deal of time and energy into raising standards in English and mathematics, and has been successful in its attempts. However, as a result, insufficient time and attention has been paid to science, and standards have steadily declined over the last few years.
2. The inspection findings paint a similar picture and show that whilst pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment in science is below national expectations. Most Key Stage 2 pupils read well and have a good appreciation of books and literature. They are confident speakers and attentive listeners. Pupils' writing is of a good standard, and is well structured. However, presentation is often weak, and there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects. In mathematics, pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of number, shape, space and measure, but there are relative weaknesses in their ability to use and apply mathematics in real life situations, and too few opportunities for them to carry out independent and open-ended problem solving tasks. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are below national expectations. The school has recently introduced a commercial scheme of work to help raise standards and to support teachers in their planning, but its impact is not yet evident.
3. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment, on the basis of the 2000 end of key stage National Curriculum tests, is in line with the national average in reading and writing, and below the national average in mathematics. Over the last few years, pupils' attainment has varied from year to year, depending on the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, but standards have been consistently lower in mathematics than in reading and writing. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics.
4. The inspection findings paint a more favourable picture of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, on the basis of the performance of the current group of Year 2 pupils. They indicate that standards in English are above national expectations overall, and that standards in mathematics are in line with national expectations. Pupils attain good standards in reading, and in speaking and listening, and satisfactory standards in writing. The school has identified writing as an area for development, and is aware of the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to carry out independent, extended writing tasks. In mathematics, pupils' number work is secure, and most pupils have a satisfactory grasp of aspects of shape, space and measure. Opportunities for them to use their number skills across the curriculum are currently limited.
5. In art and design, geography and history at the end of both key stages, and in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils do not make as much progress as

they could, and their attainment is below national expectations. Insufficient time is allocated to these subjects, and coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is unsatisfactory. In music, standards are above national expectations at the end of both key stages, and in physical education and information and communication technology, standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils have made particularly good progress in information and communication technology since the new computer suite was set up.

6. Pupils have a variety of pre-school experiences, and the baseline assessments show that their attainment when they start school is average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Reception Class, and by the time they transfer to Year 1, they attain the early learning goals in the areas of learning of personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
7. Pupils throughout the school who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. However, until recently, pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties were not always identified at an early enough stage, and consequently they were not given enough time and support. This situation has now been rectified, although the impact of the improved procedures and systems on pupils' attainment and progress is not yet evident.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, which were described as satisfactory in the previous inspection report.
9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, and pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils are responsive in lessons and many demonstrate an eagerness to learn. They work conscientiously and pupils of all ages have high levels of extended concentration. However, in some classes, pupils do not take enough care with the presentation of their written work. In all classes, pupils approach tasks with great enthusiasm and contribute good levels of effort to class and individual activities. Pupils are particularly keen to take part in class discussions and practical activities. Throughout the school pupils show respect for the views and ideas of others, and are keen to help their classmates. The pupils' very good attitudes to learning have a positive impact on their progress and attainment.
10. Pupils are naturally polite, and behave well in and around the school, holding doors open for adults and one another, and readily engaging in conversation. In lessons, behaviour is good. Pupils respond very well to the reward systems that are in place, especially the newly introduced house point system, and this has helped them to recognise that the behaviour of individuals has an impact on the well-being and happiness of others. Pupils are keen to be identified as good workers, and respond very well to the celebration of their achievements in assemblies. Behaviour in the playground is good and no oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
11. Pupils' personal development is good, and is enhanced by activities such as 'Circle Time', where pupils are invited to share their thoughts about given topics with their classmates. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and teachers are very

good, and there are high levels of mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils of all ages show good levels of independence in the way in which they make choices and decisions about their work, but in some classes, opportunities to do so are limited. The vast majority of pupils conscientiously complete homework tasks, and older pupils are skilled in carrying out personal research.

12. Attendance is very good and during the last year the attendance rate was 96.4% which is well above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence for the same period was 0.3% which is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 2% of lessons seen, very good in 20% of lessons, good in 24% of lessons, satisfactory in 50% of lessons and unsatisfactory in 4% of lessons. The majority of good, very good and excellent lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, and in two Key Stage 2 classes. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
14. The teaching of pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Pupils are given an appropriately broad range of learning experiences which enable them to achieve the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning. Activities are effectively organised and planned. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic language and number skills, and the promotion of pupils' personal and social development is an ongoing priority. There are some good opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills, such as when they 'sign' their names against activity sheets, and when they make choices about the activities they intend to carry out. Satisfactory use is made of non-teaching assistants, although there are times, such as in physical education lessons, when their input is minimal.
15. Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, English and mathematics are taught well, and the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully implemented. Literacy and numeracy lessons are generally well paced, although in some classes, introductory sessions are too long, leaving only a small amount of time for pupils to complete their written tasks. Most teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, but in some classes, opportunities are missed when pupils copy text which they could easily generate themselves, or complete undemanding worksheets. Pupils have some opportunities to develop numeracy skills in their work in other subjects, but these opportunities are incidental and are often not identified in curriculum planning.
16. The teaching of science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. The school has recently purchased a commercial scheme which is now being implemented, but this is not yet having enough impact on standards. The teaching of information and communication technology in the computer suite is good overall, and teachers have benefited from recent training, and from the good support they have received from the subject manager. However, teachers are not yet providing enough opportunities for pupils to use classroom computers at other times of the day to support their learning across the curriculum.
17. In physical education, the quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The teaching of music is very good throughout the school. Teachers are well supported in their planning by a range of good quality commercial schemes, and a good amount of time is given to the subject. In design and technology the teaching is

satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Although some satisfactory and good examples of teaching were observed in individual lessons during the inspection, the overall quality of teaching in art and design, geography and history in both key stages, and in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. The weaknesses in teaching arise from the inadequate amount of time allocated to these subjects, teachers' lack of knowledge of the National Curriculum requirements, and unsatisfactory curriculum planning.

18. Throughout the school, one of the strengths of teaching is the way in which teachers make use of questions to extend pupils' learning, and to help them to clarify their thinking. Teachers phrase questions effectively to support those pupils who have special educational needs, and allow plenty of time for pupils to think of their answers. Questions for the higher attaining pupils are much more challenging and really make them think. For example, during a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils were asked what features of the text they had read led them to believe that the writing was in the genre of science-fiction. In the best lessons, teachers use questions very effectively to establish pupils' previous knowledge, and are adept at picking up incidental opportunities to promote new learning.
19. Some teachers have started to identify learning objectives in their planning, which are subsequently shared with the pupils. This is a very positive development, which has contributed to the overall improvement in the quality of teaching in the school, and enables pupils to have some measure of their ongoing success, in terms of whether they have achieved the stated learning objectives for that lesson.
20. Teachers use a variety of successful strategies to promote effective learning. Pupils work as a class, in groups, in pairs and individually, and where the best teaching occurs, pupils are encouraged to take charge of their own learning by choosing how to approach a task, or by taking an activity beyond the point the teacher originally planned. Some of the most effective learning seen during the inspection, was in the information and communication technology suite. Here pupils often work in pairs, helping one another, and often attain above the expected level.
21. Teachers often give pupils clear indications as to how they can improve their work further, sometimes through discussion, and sometimes through demonstration, such as in information and communication technology and physical education lessons. However, the marking of pupils' work is sometimes cursory in both key stages, and insufficient demands are placed on pupils in terms of the presentation of their work, which is sometimes unsatisfactory. The school has introduced a marking policy, but it is in the early stages of implementation and is not yet being consistently applied throughout the school. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of the pupils in terms of behaviour and academic achievement, and good use is made of judicious praise and encouragement to motivate pupils in their learning. Where teachers are enthusiastic in the way in which they present activities, this serves to motivate the pupils and make them want to learn.
22. The school effectively meets the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs, although until recently, pupils were not always identified at a sufficiently early stage. Classroom assistants give good levels of support in class, enabling these pupils to make good progress towards their individual learning targets. Pupils who have special educational needs are sometimes withdrawn from their lessons to work in small groups, and in the main, this strategy is successful in helping them to achieve their targets. However, the practice of withdrawing individual pupils into other classes is

inappropriate. High attaining pupils are appropriately challenged and enabled to achieve their full potential.

23. A good amount of homework is set in all classes, and reading practice is a regular homework task for all pupils. Pupils are conscientious about completing homework tasks, which often complement their ongoing learning. However, most of the tasks are linked to English and mathematics, and insufficient use is made of homework in subjects such as art and design, music and physical education.

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

24. The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, and there are strengths in the way in which the school provides for the children's language, mathematical and personal and social development. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of structured and free-play activities which enable them to meet the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning. The curriculum provision for the Foundation Stage children has improved since the last inspection, when there were weaknesses in the provision for the children's physical development.
25. The school provides a broad curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and meets statutory requirements. All subjects in the National Curriculum are taught during the course of the year, but there is currently an imbalance in the amount of time allocated to individual subjects, and where subjects do not receive enough time, this has an adverse impact on pupils' progress and attainment. Over the past few years the school has justifiably given a large proportion of time to the teaching of English and mathematics, and has been successful in raising standards in these subjects, but recognises the need to develop other subjects more extensively, especially art and design, design and technology, geography, history and Key Stage 2 science, which have been neglected recently. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy since the time of the last inspection.
26. The school continues to make good provision for extra-curricular activities. Pupils have access to a chess club, mathematics club, computer club/school magazine club, a netball club and orchestra. Weather and season permitting, the school has the services of coaching staff from the Halifax Blue Sox Rugby League Football Club, and from Halifax Town Football Club, and these links have proved to be popular with all pupils. Residential visits are available for older pupils and there may soon be an opportunity for pupils to engage in a major new initiative with the local EUREKA Museum that will allow them to participate in overnight stays. The extra-curricular activities are well attended and have a beneficial impact upon pupils' learning and on their social and cultural experience and development.
27. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, and is underpinned by the very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils. By the time they leave school, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of health issues and are aware of how their life style affects their well being. The school has developed policies for sex education and drugs awareness, and these areas are taught as part of science topics, and discussed during personal, social and health education lessons and 'Circle Time' sessions. The school benefits from good support from external agencies, especially the nurse, who is a regular visitor. There is currently no co-ordinator for personal, social and health education, and no policy or scheme of work, but the school is paying close attention to national guidelines and has firm plans to

develop this area of its work further.

28. The school has excellent links with the local community, which have developed since the time of the last inspection. Those pupils going to the local high school are able to take advantage of an acclimatisation visit during the summer term prior to transfer, and the high school also provides liaison with parents of prospective pupils. The school is looking to establish a link with a local Teacher Training Provider with the intention of participating in the programme of initial teacher training. A relationship already exists between the school and Calder College for the training of NNEB students and students from a variety of child care courses at the College. Work experience students from four local secondary schools are able to enjoy placements in the school. Links with the local church are strong, and the parish priest is a welcome and popular figure around the school. At various times during the year pupils participate in local events such as carol singing, pantomime and theatrical productions. Local business enterprises also work in conjunction with the school as do the police and various sporting organisations. One local business has donated a Millennium Garden to be established in the junior playground. The school has recently been designated as an examination and accredited learning centre, and is able to offer computer courses for parents and other members of the local community. The school places considerable importance on the strength of its links with the local community which have a positive impact on all aspects of the pupils' development.
29. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to make good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and satisfactory provision for their cultural development. However, although teachers are effective in developing incidental opportunities that arise during the course of the day, opportunities for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are not systematically identified in their planning.
30. Pupils' spiritual development is successfully promoted through moments of reflection in class, and from an early age, pupils are encouraged to be aware of the beauty of the natural world. Music lessons often promote spirituality, as the pupils enjoy the shared experience of creating and performing songs and instrumental pieces. There are many opportunities throughout the day for pupils to develop their social skills. Pupils often work together in small groups or pairs, sharing information and ideas, and learning how to be tolerant of the views of others. In team games, pupils learn how to develop positive attitudes to the game, and to accept the decision of the referee as final. Pupils have a strong sense of morality, which extends to issues beyond their own experience, such as pollution, and the morality of war. Older Key Stage 2 pupils have many opportunities to debate moral issues in lessons, and in 'Circle Time' sessions. Pupils' awareness and knowledge of their own culture is well established, but their knowledge of cultures beyond their own experience is limited. Some opportunities are provided, for example in music lessons, for pupils to consider the music and instruments of other non-European cultures, but there are missed opportunities in art and design, and geography for pupils to gain a wider cultural perspective.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school provides a caring and supportive learning environment for pupils of all ages and abilities, and makes good provision for their health, welfare and safety, as reported at the time of the last inspection.
32. Good procedures are in place for child protection, which reflect the LEA guidelines, and both the headteacher and deputy have had appropriate training. No governor currently has responsibility for child protection issues. All teaching staff hold current first-aid certificates. First-aid boxes are strategically placed about the school. Teachers are very effective in reminding pupils about safety procedures in lessons such as physical education, and in a lesson seen during the inspection when pupils visited a local building site, the pupils were provided with hard hats and clear reminders about safety procedures.
33. Routines for the emergency evacuation of the building are tested each term and any opportunities for improvement are noted in the safety log book. Checks are in place for all safety equipment, and risk assessments of the building are undertaken regularly. The nominated governor for health and safety, and a designated member of staff, are responsible for implementing the school's health and safety policy and for monitoring and reporting issues of health and safety.
34. The school provides good levels of support and guidance for pupils. Academic support for pupils is provided through family literacy and numeracy schemes, the Volunteer Reading Agency activities, the provision of additional language support and, for Year 6 pupils, booster classes in mathematics and English. These activities contribute to raising pupils' achievements throughout the school. Pupils' personal development is supported through the school's strong links with the church. Teachers know their pupils well and provide informal opportunities during the day for the sharing and resolution of concerns. The education welfare officer and the diocesan social worker provide excellent support for pupils and the school, and are keen to start an after school 'drop-in' centre for older pupils, so that they can discuss any problems or concerns in confidence.
35. The whole-school policy for behaviour is of very good quality and ensures consistency of approach to the management and monitoring of behaviour in all classes. The recently introduced house points system is working very well and is valued by the pupils, and is recognised as a positive step forward by parents. The house captains have responsibility for other children at playtimes, and for certain aspects of school life. However, at present, because the system is in its infancy, the house captains are selected by staff and not by the pupils themselves.
36. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good, and result in attendance levels that are well above the national average. Attendance is closely monitored by the school administrator and the education welfare officer, and detailed records are kept about the punctuality of pupils to enable even further improvement.
37. Since the last inspection, the school has made some progress in developing and implementing assessment procedures, but the way in which assessment is used to plan the next stage of pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. The headteacher and assessment co-ordinator are working closely together to develop methods for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. More use is now being made of the analysis of test results to highlight strengths and weaknesses in

teaching and learning, but this initiative is at a very early stage of development and is not yet having sufficient impact on standards. Although procedures for measuring pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are satisfactory, procedures for assessing pupils' progress in the other subjects of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. No formal mechanisms are in place for tracking pupils' personal development, but teachers have a good informal overview of pupils' progress in this aspect of their learning. In the Reception class, satisfactory use is made ongoing assessment when planning the next series of activities for the children.

38. Satisfactory procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs are in place, and these pupils are well supported in class by teachers and classroom assistants. The pupils' progress towards the targets specified in their individual education plans is regularly reviewed, and parents are kept well informed. Until recently, pupils who have special educational needs were not always identified at a sufficiently early stage, resulting in some older Key Stage 2 pupils having only recently been placed on the special educational needs register.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The school has established very good links with parents and there are high levels of parental satisfaction. The school enjoys and appreciates the loyalty, support and financial generosity of parents, and values parents as partners in the education of their children. This aspect of the school's work was a strength at the time of the last inspection and the school has worked hard to further strengthen its links with parents.
40. Parents are pleased with the general level of communication between school and home, although some parents would like more specific information about the curriculum and about homework tasks. Parents appreciate the warm welcome they receive when they visit the school and are confident about approaching teachers or the headteacher with any concerns or suggestions they may have. The vast majority of parents believe that their children make good progress, and are pleased to support the school by helping their children with homework tasks. Parents are pleased with the way in which the school is managed, and agree that the school successfully promotes the positive values and attitudes which are encapsulated in the mission statement. A small number of parents are concerned about the large class size in Year 4, but the inspection findings indicate that the number of pupils in the class does not adversely impact upon the quality of education provided or the progress and attainment of the pupils. Although a few parents are concerned about the level of lunchtime supervision, the inspection findings show that lunchtime breaks are well ordered and organised.
41. The school makes every effort to keep parents informed of its work through regular newsletters and letters, consultation evenings, pupils' progress reports, and the governors' annual report to parents. Parents are kept informed of new legislation relating to the education of their children, and are told of changes to the curriculum. The school offers family literacy and numeracy courses, with crèche facilities, and has recently been designated as an examination centre and is now able to offer accredited courses in information and communication technology. Teachers make themselves available to parents and carers after school every day, and the headteacher maintains a high profile at the start of the day so that parents can approach her informally if they wish. Good induction arrangements are in place for new Reception children, which ensure that parents and children are familiar with the school's routines, and similar arrangements exist for pupils when they transfer to the main receiving high school.

Parents are regularly invited into school to share assemblies and Holy Mass with their children, and these opportunities reinforce the community atmosphere of the school.

42. Parents and carers make a very good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. The vast majority of parents encourage their children to work hard at school and help them with their homework. Almost all parents have signed the home-school agreement, and are supportive of the aims of the school. A number of parents and friends help in class, and this enables teachers to provide additional learning opportunities which require extra adult supervision and support. Parents provide further support by supplying artefacts associated with ongoing curricular topics, and one grandmother gives regularly of her time to share with pupils her knowledge and experiences of the Victorians and of the events of World War II. The 'Friends of St Joseph's' is an active association which raises substantial funds and promotes social contact between parents and teachers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The new headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. She has only been in post since the start of the academic year, but she has already made a very clear, detailed and accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has a clear vision of the educational direction in which she would like the school to move, and has devised a range of strategies for taking the school forward. She is sensibly pacing the changes she wishes to introduce, and is working closely with staff, ensuring that they are fully consulted and briefed. She enjoys the full support of the Governing Body, and works especially closely with the Chair of Governors who meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss school matters.
44. Subject managers are in place for most subjects, but their role in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in their subjects is unsatisfactory, with the exception of English, mathematics, music and information and communication technology, where subject managers have a satisfactory overview and grasp of standards in their areas. Most subject managers do not have a sufficiently clear knowledge of what is being taught in their subjects, or how regularly the subjects are being taught. This is especially true for art and design, design and technology, geography and history where curriculum planning is unsatisfactory, and where insufficient teaching time is allocated. The impact of the subject managers on the development of their subjects was an issue identified in the last inspection, and although some progress has been made, there is more work to be done
45. The existing School Development Plan, which has been inherited by the new headteacher, is comprehensive, and in response to one of the issues identified in the previous inspection report, targets are now carefully costed and prioritised. The headteacher has appropriately identified the monitoring role of the subject managers and the development of assessment procedures as priorities to be included in the next School Development Plan.
46. The recently introduced Performance Management Cycle is on track. Performance Management Governors have been appointed and trained. The headteacher and the Governing Body are now awaiting a visit from the assessor, prior to moving into the next planned phase of the cycle.
47. The Governing Body is at full strength, and has a good range of skills that benefit the school. The full Governing Body meets on a termly basis, and appropriate sub-

committees meet as and when necessary. The Governing Body successfully fulfils its statutory duties. The pastoral involvement of the Governing Body has a strong, and positive impact on the life and work of the school, and governors are very supportive of the school's aims. The role of the Governing Body in developing the curriculum within the school is limited however, and there are occasions when the Governing Body relies too heavily on the headteacher's input, constraining its ability to act as 'critical friend'.

48. The school promotes an awareness of, and a respect for, different cultures and religions, whilst providing a strong, supportive, catholic framework for the staff and pupils. It effectively promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils, with the exception of a very small number of pupils with special educational needs who are inappropriately withdrawn into other classes for some of their lessons. The vast majority of staff have a good awareness of equal opportunity issues, and ensure that there is no negative stereotyping, or discrimination of any kind.
49. The school's financial systems and procedures are good, and spending decisions are closely linked to the targets identified in the School Development Plan. The school secretary plays a very important role in ensuring that the day to day financial routines and procedures are effectively carried out, and in preparing budget statements for the headteacher and Governing Body. The school makes very good use of additional funds for specific purposes, such as special educational needs funding, and the Education Action Zone grant, which has enabled the school to improve and develop the provision for information and communication technology and music. Subject managers receive a basic amount of money each year to spend on their subjects, and additional money is provided for subjects which are ongoing areas of development within the school. The most recent audit was complimentary of the school's financial procedures. No significant recommendations were made and all minor issues have been addressed. The school is aware of the principles of best value when making financial decisions, and gives satisfactory value for money.
50. The school has an adequate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers for the number of pupils on role. The school employs a generous number of support staff who often contribute well to the pupils' learning, and who are mostly well deployed throughout the school. However, in some classes, support staff are not fully utilised, for example, during the introductory sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons, or in physical education lessons. Classroom assistants have benefited from recent information and communication technology training, and this has enabled them to be of great value in lessons, working alongside the pupils and the teachers. The new headteacher currently does not have a teaching commitment, although she intends to take on some specialist teaching in Key Stage 2 in the near future. Music, information and communication technology and literacy are taught by subject managers for some of the time in Key Stage 2, and this specialist input has a beneficial impact on standards and on pupils' progress. The new School Development Plan shows a programme of proposed staff development, and training needs are identified by individual staff, or in response to targets in the School Development Plan.
51. The accommodation is secure, safe and adequate. It is well decorated, and the quality of cleaning is now at a satisfactory level and has improved since the time of the last inspection. The accommodation has been substantially improved by carpeting areas in classrooms, corridors and staircases, the introduction of wet areas in some classes, and the purchase of vertical blinds. The school is awaiting the replacement of some windows. The playgrounds are sloping and small, making it difficult to organise some outdoor physical education activities, and the playing field is not easily accessible. Toilets for the younger children are a long way from their classrooms and supervisory

time is lost when children need to be accompanied to the toilets. The school has a recently established infant library and a junior library, both of which are regularly used. The school has a separate hall and dining room which eases the scheduling of physical education lessons in the hall. The information and communication technology suite and music room are dedicated facilities which are put to very good use. All classrooms have water supplies and sinks.

52. There are enough learning resources in all subjects to support teaching and learning, and in music and information and communication technology, where funding from the Education Action Zone grant has enabled the purchase of new and up to date equipment, the level of resourcing is good. The school does not have a rolling programme for the replacement of resources, and some are becoming a little old and will soon need replacing.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should

1) improve standards in science in Key Stage 2 by

- Implementing the newly purchased scheme of work in all classes;
- increasing teachers' knowledge;
- monitoring pupils' progress and attainment carefully;
- ensuring that the subject receives an appropriate amount of time and that it is taught regularly.

(paragraphs 1, 2, 16, 25, 44, 90-97)

2) improve standards in art and design, geography, and history in both key stages and in design and technology in Key Stage 2 by

- implementing a whole-school programme of work which shows clearly the skills and knowledge the pupils will acquire as they move from year to year;
- improving teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum.;

and by improving the curriculum to ensure that;

- an appropriate amount of time is allocated to each subject;
- all subjects are taught on a regular basis, avoiding long periods of time between blocks of study;

(paragraphs 5, 16, 17, 25, 44, 98, 103, 107, 108, 111, 112, 115)

3) develop the monitoring role of the subject managers by

- implementing a planned programme of monitoring throughout the school and across all subjects;
- ensuring that subject managers have the necessary skills to monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects.

(paragraphs 44, 89, 91, 98, 103, 112, 125)

4) improve whole-school assessment by

- ensuring that subject managers are fully involved in devising, implementing and monitoring assessment procedures in their areas;
- ensuring that assessments are recorded in a systematic way and passed on as pupils move through the school;
- making more use of the analysis of the end of key stage National Curriculum test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

(paragraphs 37, 44, 73-128)

Other minor issues which should be considered by the school:-

- the quality of marking could be better and could give pupils more insight into how they could improve their work further; *(paragraphs 21, 73-128)*
- the presentation of pupils' work could be improved. *(paragraphs 9, 21, 77, 92, 96, 110, 114,)*
- the withdrawal of a small number of pupils with special educational needs into younger age group classes; *(paragraphs 22, 48)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	20	24	50	4		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	202
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	28

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

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	15	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	9	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	25	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (88)	79 (76)	86 (88)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (91)	86 (88)	90 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	19	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	6
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	22	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (82)	78 (79)	81 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	18	17	17
	Total	23	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (75)	81 (86)	85 (93)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	193
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	131

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	390,260
Total expenditure	389,461
Expenditure per pupil	1,909
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,092
Balance carried forward to next year	19,891

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	80	16	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	30	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	26	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	42	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	68	30	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	42	14	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	42	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	40	8	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	36	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	26	10	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	34	22	4	16

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

53. The children in the Reception class make satisfactory progress overall during their first year in school, and there has been an improvement in the provision for the Foundation Stage children since the last inspection. The previous report stated that pupils were making satisfactory progress in all areas except in terms of their physical development. This weakness has been successfully addressed. The Foundation Stage team consists of a teacher and a small group of support staff who work well together to provide an appropriate range of activities for the children.
54. Planning for children in the Foundation Stage is based on the Early Learning Goals, and the teacher has attended a number of courses to enhance her knowledge of the changes that have taken place in relation to the curriculum for this age group. Activities are clearly structured, and the children always have a clear idea of what is expected of them. The teacher has introduced a 'signing-in' procedure, which the children use to show which activities they have chosen, and this provides a useful record of coverage of activities and skills in addition to encouraging initiative amongst the pupils. Language and social development are ongoing priorities, and are successfully promoted by all adults in the class. The teacher is very aware of the progress being made by individual children in the class, and maintains effective records of the children's progress throughout the year.
55. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and there are strengths in the way in which pupils' personal, social and emotional development is fostered, and in the teaching of language and mathematics. Generally effective use is made of the classroom assistants, although on occasions, they are not used to best effect, for example in physical education sessions. A range of activities is provided for the children which stimulate their imagination and promote effective learning. The children enjoy their day in class and respond well to the demands made upon them. The teacher is vigilant in identifying children with special educational needs and gives the necessary support from an early stage.
56. Information about the children's attainment, resulting from assessments carried out soon after the children start school indicates that their attainment is average. However, although a small number of children attain the higher scores in the tests, there are more children who do not attain the expected levels than is usual.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. During their year in the Foundation Stage, the children make good progress in the development of their personal and social skills. By the time they transfer to Year 1, the vast majority of pupils have attained the early learning goals in this area of learning.
58. The children settle quickly into the routines of school, and have good levels of confidence. They share and work in partnership with others, and during the inspection, were seen to offer comfort to those who were upset. Most of the children are attentive, and sustain good levels of interest and concentration. Staff encourage the children to take turns in structured and free-play activities and encourage them to consider the needs of others. Overall, behaviour is good and this has a positive impact on the children's learning. The quiet, industrious atmosphere in the classroom does much to create a calm learning environment. The Reception class children are keen to share

their achievements with visitors, and are confident in explaining their work. Although most of the Reception children are reasonably quick when changing for physical education sessions, some still have problems organising their clothes and redressing.

Communication, language and literacy

59. A great deal of emphasis is placed on developing the children's language skills in the Reception class. The children make satisfactory progress overall in this area of learning, and attain the early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.
60. The teacher and support staff make effective use of a good range of materials and artefacts for improving and enhancing the children's spoken language, and the children are frequently encouraged to explain their actions to others as a way of developing their speaking and listening skills. Good use is made of stories and rhymes, and the children are encouraged to join in with well known parts. The children listen well to instructions and are confident about asking for help if there is something that they do not fully understand. The ongoing role play area is a post-office, and children use this well, developing appropriate language depending on whether they are in the role of customer or staff.
61. Books and posters around the classroom encourage the children in their early understanding of letters and sounds, and their knowledge of letter sounds is secure. Pupils demonstrate their appreciation of books by the careful way in which they handle them. They are aware that pictures are an important part of the stories contained in the books, and they have an emerging understanding of the left to right conventions in text and page order. The children's understanding of the links between reading and writing is not yet fully developed. The majority make good attempts to write their names and are proud to read out their efforts. There are many written labels around the classroom which encourage the children in their efforts at reading. However, some of the labels are positioned in a way that makes it difficult for the children to see and read them.

Mathematical development

62. The Reception children make good progress from a low starting point, and by the end of the Foundation Stage, most attain the early learning goals in the mathematical area of learning. There are frequent activities during the course of the day which reinforce the children's understanding of pattern in number, and rhymes are used well to support pupils' mathematical learning.
63. A good number of children count confidently to ten, and sometimes beyond, and some carry out simple addition and subtraction exercises. The majority of children sort and set objects using given characteristics such as colour, shape and material, but few children set their own criteria for sorting. The children make good use of the classroom computer to reinforce their learning of number.
64. The children's understanding of shape is developing successfully and many children describe common shapes such as circles and squares. They are building up a vocabulary of positional language, such as under, over, on top of, near, which they use to describe the location of other children or objects in the classroom. Some of the ongoing structured play activities in sand and water successfully enhance the children's understanding of comparative terms such as more/less than, and longer/shorter than.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. By the time they transfer to Year 1, the majority of children have a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of the world in which they live. They make satisfactory progress in this area of learning, although their knowledge of living things and processes is a weaker area of their learning.
66. During the course of the inspection the cold weather made it difficult for the children to venture outside for any length of time, although they were able to make a planned visit to the parish church. However, the low temperatures provided good opportunities for the children to practise and extend their language about the weather, and to consider its importance in their lives. The children recognise that the school is a warm and protective environment, and know that appropriate clothing must be worn, which will vary according to the season of the year. The majority of children describe their journey to school with reasonable accuracy and some volunteer information about their visits to the shops. The children have not yet developed a very detailed knowledge of the different types of shops and functions of buildings, although they do know that the church is a very special place.
67. Many of the children are beginning to gain a historical perspective of the people in their families. They know that adults are older than they are, and also that there are generations within their families. Some children explain clearly their position in the family in relation to older and younger brothers and sister, but for others, this concept is too difficult. The children have an appreciation of the recent past, which was evident when they were talking about Christmas, and most know that some celebrations and events occur each year.

Physical development

68. Although the hillside site and the architecture of the school building make it impossible for the pupils in the Foundation Stage to have direct access to the outside play areas, the staff do their best to ensure that the children have as many opportunities as possible for outside play. The school has a well-cared for and attractive range of large play apparatus which can also be used in the school hall during periods of bad weather. The children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and most attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.
69. In their movement around the classroom and the hall, the children are physically well co-ordinated, and move with purpose and accuracy. When working with small and large objects the children are developing good hand to eye co-ordination, and successfully use and control equipment such as paintbrushes, pencils and scissors. The children have access to a range of toys and other learning materials in the classroom which promote their physical development, and their use of this equipment is well monitored by the class teacher.

Creative development

70. Pupils make satisfactory progress and enjoy participating in a wide range of activities that promote their creative development. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning.
71. The Reception children have good and regular access to materials such as paper, fabric, paint, glue and textured items such as pasta and straws. When painting, the children enjoy talking about their work, and their artistic intentions. Most children recognise and name an appropriate range of colours, but do not have enough

opportunities to mix their own paints. The children have opportunities to use mouldable modelling materials such as dough which enhance their manipulative skills.

72. The children are beginning to develop an awareness of the use of musical instruments and they know the importance of a light or heavy touch in order to alter the volume when playing untuned percussion instruments. Simple rhyming and singing activities are popular and the children enjoy those moments at the end of the day when they sit together with their teachers and share songs and nursery rhymes. The children take an active part role-play activities and enter readily into a variety of identities as they share their experiences with each other in the post-office, and in spontaneous role play activities.

ENGLISH

73. On the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment in reading and writing is in line with the national average, but below average in comparison with similar schools. Standards vary from year to year depending on the proportion of pupils in the group who have special educational needs. The end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests for 2000, show that pupils' attainment is well above the national average, and well above average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection findings indicate that overall, pupils' attainment in English is above national expectations at the end of each key stage. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were described as not significantly different from national averages.
74. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school, and benefit from good teaching, and a broad and well balanced curriculum. Literacy skills are actively promoted in most classes, but there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills in both key stages, when pupils are asked to copy work which they are capable of writing independently.
75. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average at the end of both key stages, and have a positive impact on pupils' learning in other subjects. In Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils speak with clarity and confidence, and take an active role in class discussions by answering and posing questions. Pupils in each of the Key Stage 1 year groups have good vocabularies which help them to explain their ideas clearly and succinctly. They listen well and process instructions and requests quickly. Teachers are very successful in the way in which they promote speaking and listening skills, by giving pupils the confidence to express their ideas, and by providing thinking time for those pupils who need time to formulate their thoughts. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are very confident when expressing their views, and during the inspection, pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 were observed debating ideas with alacrity and passion. In a debate concerning capital punishment, Year 6 pupils were particularly effective at taking on board new ideas and responding to them. Key Stage 2 pupils listen with attention to their classmates and teachers and show great respect for the opinions of others. There are good opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils to engage in formal speaking and listening situations such as debates.
76. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' reading skills are above average. Key Stage 1 pupils enjoy the 'Big Books' which are an integral part of the literacy hour lessons, and become fully involved with the stories and the characters in them. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 became absorbed by the content and the morality of the tale

of the 'Three Little Wolves', and were much taken by the role-reversal of the pig and the wolves, which forms the subject of the story. The analytical and predictive skills pupils acquire from sharing 'Big Books' are successfully transferred to individual and group reading sessions, where pupils are asked to predict outcomes and address new and difficult words. Pupils in both Year 1 and Year 2 clearly derive much pleasure from their reading activities, and regular practice at home contributes to the good progress they make in this aspect of their learning.

77. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in their reading and by the end of the key stage, the vast majority of pupils identify a wide range of literary styles and have very clear opinions as to the type of books they prefer. Most pupils successfully identify appropriate reference texts which they use fruitfully to support their work across the curriculum. Pupils are confident in their ability to research independently, and recognise the value of computers in providing valuable reference material. Most pupils have favourite authors, and whilst these are often the current cult writers, a good number of pupils also identify the classics of literature for their age group.
78. Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory overall, but could be even better. This aspect of pupils' work has been identified by the school as an area for further development. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils successfully reconstruct and retell stories, but are not as confident when sequencing their own ideas. Although a few high attaining pupils produce extended written pieces, most pupils have difficulty sustaining and developing their ideas. Currently there are not enough opportunities outside the literacy hour for pupils to develop extended writing skills. The pupils' use of basic punctuation such as capital letters and full stops is well developed and spelling is generally satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of the potential of computers to support their written work, and have a good range of word-processing skills. Pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their written work, which is often untidy and badly organised.
79. Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average for the vast majority of pupils. Pupils' written work reflects an understanding of audience and purpose, and pupils distinguish the styles produced by authors writing in different genres. For example, during the inspection, Year 4 pupils picked out the vocabulary from a shared text which helped the reader to know that the piece was science-fiction. Pieces of extended writing are often of high quality and show a logical development of ideas. Pupils sequence their thoughts well and make use of a wide vocabulary to add interest to their writing. The use of computers enhances the pupils' writing and spelling, and pupils are very much aware of the potential of computers in drafting and editing written work. Although some older Key Stage 2 pupils pay good attention to the presentation of their written work in most subjects, the majority of pupils do not take enough care, and are too easily satisfied with poorly presented and organised work.
80. The quality of teaching in English is good in both key stages and the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented in all classes. Literacy lessons are well structured and generally well planned, but do not always contain a group reading activity. Most teachers provide additional group and individual reading sessions throughout the week, but whilst they are useful, too much time is being taken from other subjects. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge, and where they also have a love of literature, this entuses and motivates the pupils. Teachers in both key stages make good use of open-ended and challenging questions to probe pupils' thinking and to extend their learning. Where the best teaching occurs, the highest attaining pupils are fully extended, and the lower attaining pupils are well supported to ensure that they make the best progress possible. Good use is made of classroom assistants in most

classes to support lower attaining pupils, and for running the 'Additional Literacy Strategy' for younger Key Stage 2 pupils. However, there are occasions during introductory discussions when classroom assistants are not fully utilised. The school has recently introduced literacy targets for pupils throughout the school, but these do not yet involve the pupils themselves in an evaluation of their learning. The school has introduced a new marking policy, but this is yet to take full effect. In a small number of classes, teachers make effective use of comments to help pupils know their strengths and weaknesses, but in most classes marking is cursory. Homework is used very well in all classes to support pupils' learning in English, and this has a beneficial impact on their progress and attainment.

MATHEMATICS

81. On the basis of the 2000 end of key stage National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 1 is well below average and pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average. The inspection findings indicate that the current group of Year 2 pupils are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations, and that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations. Standards are the same in Key Stage 1 as they were at the time of the last inspection, but standards in Key Stage 2 have improved.
82. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school, and progress is better in those classes where teaching is most effective. After-school 'booster classes' help older Key Stage 2 pupils to make further progress in their learning, and prepare them well for the end of key stage National Curriculum tests. Higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 are appropriately challenged by many of the set tasks, although in Key Stage 1 higher attainers could be extended even further. Lower attaining pupils in both key stages receive the necessary support to enable them to progress at the same rate as their classmates. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology to support their learning in mathematics when they work as a class in the computer suite, but classroom computers are not used enough on a regular basis to support pupils' ongoing work, and pupils do not always see computers as a tool for learning.
83. The aspect of using and applying mathematics is a relatively weaker area of pupils' learning in both key stages, as currently pupils do not have enough opportunities for using their skills and knowledge to support their work in other subjects. Within mathematics lessons, teachers sometimes provide problem-solving activities which promote mathematical thinking and reasoning in relation to number, but these tasks are often not sufficiently open-ended to fully challenge the highest attaining pupils, and do not draw sufficiently on pupils' learning of other aspects of the mathematics curriculum. In all classes, teachers work hard to develop pupils' mathematical vocabulary, and to draw pupils' attention to the many different ways in which the same question can be presented.
84. By the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils have a satisfactory grasp of number and pattern, although their understanding of place value is not consistently secure. Some pupils are not clear about the function of zero as a place holder when it appears at the end of a number. Currently pupils record their addition sums horizontally, often with tens and units squeezed into the same square, and this makes

it difficult for them to see which numbers are tens and which are units. Pupils are more successful in their number work when they partition two digit numbers before adding. For example, when they split seventeen into ten and seven, and twelve into ten and two, they can group the tens together, and then the units, before performing the final stage of the calculation. Most pupils accurately count forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens, and know the pattern of odd and even numbers. Pupils' mental skills are accurate but slow, and few pupils have immediate recall of number facts to twenty.

85. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of shape, space and measures. They identify and name two dimensional shapes such as rectangles, squares, circles, triangles and hexagons, and some of the higher attaining pupils use appropriate mathematical vocabulary to describe the properties of these shapes. However, few pupils understand angle as a measure of turn. Although pupils understand the need for standard units of measure, and accurately measure and record in centimetres, their knowledge and understanding of units of measure for weight and capacity are not very secure. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to make predictions in their work on measure, and most pupils are not secure in their understanding of the use and purpose of different units of measure in real life situations. Most pupils have a good concept of the passage of time, and this has been enhanced by opportunities for them to consider how many times they can repeat an activity in the space of one minute, for example.
86. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number are very secure. They confidently manipulate numbers mentally, using strategies such as rounding up, doubling and halving when dealing with large numbers, and make very effective use of calculators to enable them to explore extended number patterns. Most pupils effectively predict the outcome when carrying out calculations, and this helps them to check the reasonableness of their answers. Pupils understand the relationships between addition and subtraction, and multiplication and division, and use these inverse operations as another means of checking their answers. Pupils have a good grasp of positive and negative numbers, and identify and explain prime numbers. They understand the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals, although their understanding of ratio is insecure.
87. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in shape, space and measures is above average. Pupils group two and three dimensional shapes according to their common properties and know how to calculate the perimeter and area of regular and irregular two dimensional shapes. Pupils know the symbols for parallel lines, equal angles and sides, and use them well when classifying quadrilaterals. Pupils' understanding of reflective symmetry is good, but rotational symmetry poses problems for some pupils. The majority of pupils accurately read, record and measure standard units of length, but are less secure when dealing with units of weight and capacity. Most pupils know the metric equivalents of pints and pounds, and recognise that a few imperial measurements are still in daily use.
88. Key Stage 2 pupils' understanding and knowledge of data handling is effectively supported through their work in information and communication technology. Pupils are confident about collecting, collating and interrogating data, and make sensible interpretations from graphs and charts. They are familiar with the notion of probability and give examples of events that are likely or unlikely to occur. Pupils construct their own graphs, and have a good understanding of the purpose of co-ordinates in mathematics work, and in their geography work when giving precise instructions for the location of a particular feature.

89. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. Some very good teaching was seen during the inspection in both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established throughout the school, although the effectiveness of the mental introductory session varies significantly from class to class, and is generally more rigorous and well paced in Key Stage 2. In the best introductory sessions, pupils are encouraged to make rapid mental calculations and to explain their method of working. However, in some classes in both key stages the pace of these sessions is too slow, and the sessions are too long, causing the pupils' attention to wander. All teachers make effective use of questions to extend pupils' thinking and to help them to clarify their mathematical understanding by explaining their methods of working. For example, in a good lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were asked to multiply a number by ten, and then to halve the answer. Through discussion, pupils realised that the same answer could be achieved by multiplying the initial number by five, and they came to see that for very large numbers, the first method would probably be more reliable. End of session discussions are well used in all classes to establish what the pupils have learned, although this information is not always used when planning the next stage of pupils' learning. Homework is set regularly in all classes and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. There are weaknesses in the quality of marking, which does not always show clearly the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning, and does not always link sufficiently closely with the newly introduced numeracy targets. The subject managers have had some opportunity to monitor teaching and learning through lesson observation, but have not made formal records of their visits, and have not used their observations to highlight areas of strength and weakness in the school's provision for mathematics.

SCIENCE

90. On the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in science, pupils' attainment is below the national average. Pupils' performance in comparison with similar schools is below average. Teacher assessments carried out at the end of Key Stage 1 show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average overall. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations, and that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations. Since the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have steadily declined, and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have remained the same.
91. Key Stage 1 pupils of all abilities make steady progress as they move through the key stage, and their knowledge, skills and understanding are systematically developed. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory, mainly due to unsatisfactory teaching and poor curriculum planning. Pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. The school has recognised the weaknesses in Key Stage 2, and has already put in place a commercial scheme of work to ensure that pupils' learning is built upon year by year. Because of the attention given to English and mathematics in the past few years, science has been neglected in terms of the time it is allocated, and this issue has been addressed by the school. The role of the subject managers in monitoring teaching and learning in science is unsatisfactory, and this has been identified as a priority by the school, as part of the initiative to raise standards in Key Stage 2.
92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills of investigation. They observe closely, and are starting to make predictions about what they think might happen. Pupils use a variety of methods to record their science work, but do not make

enough use of information and communication technology as a tool to support their learning. Key Stage 1 pupils have a secure understanding of living things, and describe the life cycles of frogs and butterflies. They understand that living things have common needs and characteristics. In their work on materials, pupils consider the suitability and purpose of different materials, and understand that furniture needs to be made from strong materials, whilst clothing is usually made from fabric. The highest attaining pupils know that changes to materials can be permanent or reversible, and give good examples of both states. Pupils have a good understanding of the notion of magnetism, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, made sensible predictions, drawing on their previous experience, about which objects might be attracted by a magnet. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of electricity as a source of power, and construct simple circuits using wires, batteries and bulbs. Their knowledge of forces in terms of pushes and pulls is satisfactory, and most pupils know that the shape of objects can be changed by bending, squashing, twisting and stretching.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils do not attain the expected standards in any aspect of the science curriculum. Over time, pupils have not had enough experience of carrying out open-ended investigations and recording their findings in a scientific manner. Although they now carry out experiments and investigations, their approach lacks method and organisation. Pupils do not have a sufficiently extensive scientific vocabulary, and this prevents them from clearly explaining their ideas. The standard of pupils' recording of investigations and experiments is well below average, and much of the work in their books is incomplete. This makes it difficult for them to draw on their previous learning at a later date. With the exception of Year 5, where satisfactory use is made of classroom computers, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology as a tool for learning, and there are missed opportunities for pupils to use computers to record their scientific evidence, or to research aspects of topics. Few pupils have a secure grasp of the notion of fair-testing, and this is evident when pupils carry out investigations, changing more than one variable at a time. With prompts from the teacher, pupils make sensible predictions, but do not then systematically test their hypotheses, and draw conclusions about their findings in relation to the initial prediction.
94. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils understand the needs of living things, and describe the habitats in which certain animals and plants live. They group living things as herbivores or carnivores, but are not clear about the meaning of the term omnivore. Pupils' knowledge of food-chains is limited, and their ability to describe food-chains in general terms is constrained by their lack of scientific vocabulary of terms such as producer, consumer, predator and prey. Pupils have a basic knowledge of the human body, and an appreciation of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. However, much of their written work relating to teeth, joints, and the function of the heart, has been copied, and pupils have not had enough opportunities to carry out their own research, or to carry out experiments and investigations to test some of the ideas they have recorded. Pupils' knowledge of green plants, and the way in which flowering plants reproduce, is poor, and they lack the necessary vocabulary to explain their ideas.
95. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties are unsatisfactory overall, although most pupils draw effectively on their Key Stage 1 learning to group materials according to their most dominant characteristics. As part of their work linked to electricity, pupils consider which materials make the most effective conductors and insulators, and reach satisfactory conclusions. Pupils describe materials in terms of solids, liquids and gases, but have had very little opportunity to consider the relationship between the three states of matter, or to investigate and

observe how materials can be changed from one state to another through a process of heating or cooling. By the end of the key stage, some pupils have an understanding of solutions, but opportunities for them to investigate ways in which solutions can be separated are limited. Pupils' knowledge of rocks and soils is poor.

96. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very limited knowledge of physical processes. Their understanding of electricity is satisfactory, and most pupils know how to construct simple circuits and record them in diagrammatical form using conventional symbols. Most pupils are aware of the effect of introducing more than one bulb or battery into a circuit. Pupils' knowledge of force is at a basic level, and although they are familiar with the terms of air-resistance and gravity, their ability to explain the effects of these two forces is poor. Few pupils understand the outcome of two equal and opposite forces meeting one another. Pupils have a patchy knowledge of light and sound, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, where pupils were considering how sound travels, few could explain their ideas clearly using appropriate scientific vocabulary.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum ensures that pupils have a satisfactory scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils have opportunities to carry out independent investigations, and with help from the teachers, pupils make predictions and gain an understanding of the notion of a fair-test. Teachers organise their lessons well by using a range of different teaching styles to vary the lesson. They expect pupils to work hard and try their best, and make the work interesting and challenging. In Key Stage 2, there are weaknesses in the quality of teaching which are directly linked to teachers' lack of confidence, unsatisfactory curriculum planning, and the lack of time allocated to the subject. The subject is not taught in adequate detail and pupils do not have a sufficiently deep knowledge and understanding. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about what the pupils are able to achieve, especially in terms of setting out their written work. The work pupils produce is poorly marked, and teachers rarely include comments which would help pupils improve their work. Some lessons are over-directed by the teacher, with the result that pupils do not have sufficient time to draw their own conclusions or to follow their own lines of enquiry. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of classroom assistants to support pupils in their practical work, and pupils of all abilities, especially those who have special educational needs, benefit from their help. Teachers do not make enough use of ongoing assessment when planning the next stage in pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Pupils' attainment in art and design is below national expectations at the end of both key stages, and pupils of all ages and abilities do not make the progress of which they are capable. Over the past few years, the school has given priority to raising standards in English and mathematics, and as a result, little time has been allocated to art and design. Standards have declined since the last inspection, and there are significant gaps in the knowledge of older pupils. The subject is now taught regularly in some classes, but not in all. There is no whole-school scheme of work in place, and as a result pupils' skills and knowledge are not systematically built upon as they move through the school. The role of the subject manager in monitoring teaching and learning, and in ensuring that an appropriate curriculum is in place, is unsatisfactory.
99. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have acquired basic painting skills and an appreciation of how different shades and tones can be achieved by mixing colours

together, but they do not have enough opportunities to work on pieces of different sizes, or to learn about texture in painting. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils used a variety of objects dipped in paint to print outlines and features of buildings and achieved satisfactory results. However, they had no opportunity to mix their own colours or to determine the thickness of the paint they were using. Basic skills such as cutting and glueing are successfully fostered and pupils are able to control pencils when making observational drawings. Although some pupils produce satisfactory drawings, they have not had enough experience of using different grades of pencils and experimenting with different marks, and their work often lacks depth and detail. As they move through the key stage, pupils do not experience a full range of materials, and have few opportunities to work with mouldable materials such as dough and clay, or textiles.

100. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' experience of art and design has been extended but in an unplanned and intermittent way. The quality of the limited amount of work produced by the pupils is of a satisfactory standard, but their breadth of experience is very limited. Pupils have little knowledge of the work and styles of well-known artists, although Year 4 pupils have recently made reproductions in the style of the artist Lowry. Pupils' drawing skills are unsatisfactory for their age, and they lack the necessary shading and mark-making skills to add texture and tone to their work. Pupils have little experience of using fabric in their art and design work, and there are few opportunities for them to develop modelling skills using clay and other mouldable materials.
101. Although pupils in both key stages have sketch books, the quality of the paper is poor, and therefore they can not be used for paint, pen or glueing activities. Teachers make insufficient use of sketch books for preparatory work, or for pupils to practise and develop art and design skills such as colour mixing, or mark-making. Pupils in both key stages recognise the value of computers in art and design and most have made repeating patterns and know how to use a variety of paint programmes.
102. Although some good and satisfactory examples of teaching were seen during the inspection, the teaching of art and design is unsatisfactory overall. The subject is not taught on a sufficiently regular basis, and pupils' breadth of experience and overall progress are adversely affected by the lack of a whole-school scheme of work. Activities are often not sufficiently challenging and the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are not systematically developed as they move through the school. Teachers' knowledge is sometimes shaky and this results in a lack of confidence.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations, and at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below national expectations. Standards in Key Stage 2 have declined since the time of the last inspection. Weaknesses in standards in Key Stage 2 are directly linked to the lack of time allocated to the subject, weaknesses in teaching, and unsatisfactory curriculum planning. The school has in the past few years put its efforts into raising standards in English and mathematics, and has been successful in this aim. However, as a result, not enough attention has been given to design and technology in Key Stage 2, and standards have slipped. The role of the subject manager in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning is unsatisfactory.
104. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stage 1, and acquire a basic range of skills which they use in their design and technology projects. Key Stage

2 pupils do not make enough progress, and do not further develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they acquire in Key Stage 1.

105. Key Stage 1 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the design element of the subject, and know how to plan their work, showing which materials and processes they might use, and identifying the possible outcomes. Year 2 pupils have recently designed and made vehicles that could carry ten large cubes. As part of their discussions, pupils considered a range of strategies for making the vehicles move. They selected appropriate materials such as cotton reels for wheels and doweling for axles, measuring them, and joining them accurately to the body of the vehicle which was made from card and small boxes. Some of the completed vehicles were of a good standard and demonstrated pupils' attention to detail when finishing off the models. Although pupils' experience of design and technology is limited, the activities they are given successfully enhance their learning.
106. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have not made sufficient gains in their learning, and do not have enough opportunities to develop the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding of the subject. Year 6 pupils have recently been given the task of designing and making slippers. The quality of their slipper designs is unsatisfactory and reflects their lack of previous experience of making and designing. Pupils have little experience of different materials, and do not take sufficient account of the suitability of the material they have chosen in relation to its intended purpose. Pupils have some opportunities of working with food, and Year 5 pupils have recently made and packaged biscuits. However, the design of the biscuit package took little account of the size of the biscuits, or the need for keeping them airtight, and pupils did not concentrate enough on ensuring the packaging was practical as well as attractive. Key Stage 2 pupils do not have enough opportunities to evaluate their work against the initial plan, or to retrospectively consider ways in which their product might have been improved. Pupils do not have enough experience of using different tools, and their skills of joining are limited. Pupils' understanding of the value of information and communication technology in the design process is unsatisfactory, and they do not make enough use of computers to support their learning.
107. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, although only a minimum amount of time is given to the subject. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory, and weaknesses in teaching are the result of unsatisfactory curriculum planning, the lack of time allocated, and teachers' lack of confidence in teaching the subject. In Key Stage 1, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and to plan their designs. At the end of a task, pupils have the opportunity to evaluate their work and consider ways in which it might be improved. Pupils are learning a range of basic skills and are learning how to use tools safely and correctly. In Key Stage 2, standards have fallen because teachers have not provided sufficient good quality opportunities for pupils to develop their designing and making skills, and pupils' previous learning has not been systematically extended. The subject is not accorded enough status in Key Stage 2, and teachers do not regard it as an integral part of the curriculum. Little use is made of assessment to track pupils' progress and to measure their attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Pupils' attainment in geography is below the national expectation at the end of both key stages, and standards have declined since the last inspection. The subject is not taught on a regular basis throughout the year. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' learning, and pupils have not covered the curriculum in sufficient breadth and depth.

There is currently no subject manager for geography, and weaknesses in teaching and learning have not been identified and addressed. Pupils of all ages and abilities do not make enough progress as they move through the school.

109. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an understanding of the purpose of maps, and can draw a simple map based on their own route to school. When giving directions, they use landmarks, such as shops and traffic lights, but most are a little unsure about directional commands using right and left. Pupils' knowledge of other types of maps is limited, although some pupils find England and Scotland on a map of Europe. The majority of pupils understand that the weather changes from season to season, and they make simple comparisons between the British climate, and the climate in summer holiday destinations in other countries. Pupils understand why people wear different types of clothes in summer and winter. Most pupils have difficulty making predictions about the weather from ongoing weather conditions, for example, they do not necessarily associate dense cloud coverage with possible rain. Pupils' knowledge of their own locality is satisfactory, although a lack of geographical vocabulary makes it difficult for pupils to clearly explain their ideas. Older Key Stage 1 pupils are currently looking at aspects of transport, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, many pupils demonstrated an awareness of how different terrain would influence the type of transport that could be used.
110. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils identify a range of features using different types of maps and atlases, and understand that co-ordinates accurately pinpoint particular landmarks. Pupils are interested in their own locality, and some have a good understanding of the moral implications of building roads through the countryside, or of creating urban developments. Pupils' factual knowledge of Halifax as it is today is satisfactory, but their ability to examine how the town has developed, through considering two maps of different eras, is weak. Most pupils understand the reasons for changes in land usage, and following a recent visit to a building site, put forward the benefits and disadvantages of building a new housing estate in the locality, and considered its impact on the people and businesses. Pupils' knowledge of world geography is the weakest aspect of their learning, and few pupils have a sufficiently secure knowledge and understanding of how people in other climates, cultures and countries adapt to their environment, or how weather conditions dictate their housing, lifestyles and work patterns. Pupils' knowledge of rivers is satisfactory overall, and they accurately describe how rivers are formed, Their understanding of erosion is insecure, and only a few older pupils accurately describe the composition of a river bed.
111. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory overall, and weaknesses in teaching are linked to ineffective curriculum planning, and the lack of time given to the subject. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching was satisfactory overall, and some very good teaching was seen in Key Stage 1. However, over time, pupils' attainment and progress have been adversely affected by the gaps between the teaching of geographical topics, and the lack of systematic development of geographical skills and vocabulary. There are strengths in the way in which teachers use the local area as a geographical resource, but weaknesses in the way in which pupils' knowledge of the world is developed. The presentation of pupils' work in both key stages is unsatisfactory, and written work is not marked in enough detail or depth. Pupils do not make sufficient use of information and communication technology to support their learning in geography, although there are some opportunities in all classes for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers effectively develop pupils' moral understanding, through topics which deal with aspects of pollution, for example, but opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness are limited.

HISTORY

112. Pupils' attainment in history is below the national expectation at the end of both key stages, and standards have declined since the last inspection. The subject is not taught on a regular basis throughout the year. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' learning, and pupils have not covered the curriculum in sufficient breadth and depth. The monitoring role of the subject manager is unsatisfactory, and weaknesses in teaching and learning have not been identified and addressed. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, do not make enough progress as they move through the school.
113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a developing understanding of chronology, and appreciate some of the changes that have taken place over time. They compare and contrast the types of toys Victorian children had with those of their own, and know that many modern toys rely on power from batteries and mains electricity, options which were not available until relatively recently. This learning is effectively reinforced by a visit to a local museum where pupils spend the day dressed as Victorian children, and have the opportunity to play with toys such as mechanical money boxes, yo-yos, pick up sticks and hoop-las. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical events that happened in the distant past are weak. They have little knowledge of famous historical figures, or of past events. Pupils' appreciation of the ways in which historical information is passed on, through photographs, records and artefacts, for example, is particularly weak, and they do not make enough use of computers to support them in this aspect of their learning.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge about key dates, events and periods in British history is insecure and patchy. Because they have a limited breadth of knowledge, they lack the confidence to explore arguments about past events. Pupils' recall of topics they have recently studied is satisfactory, for example, Year 6 pupils accurately describe features of the reign of Henry VIII and aspects of life during the Second World War. Pupils' knowledge of history in the distant past is unsatisfactory, and they have little knowledge of the Romans, Vikings or Egyptians. A few higher attaining pupils understand the difference between primary and secondary evidence, but most pupils do not have the necessary skills to carry out historical enquiry. Pupils do not make enough use of computers to support their learning in history.
115. The teaching of history is unsatisfactory in both key stages. Over time, insufficient time has been allocated to the subject, and unsatisfactory curriculum planning has resulted in patchy coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. During the inspection, some good teaching was observed in Key Stage 2, and the pupils were enthused by the teachers' presentation of the subject matter. However, individual lessons do not necessarily build upon pupils' previous learning, and this creates gaps in their knowledge and understanding. The school is following the national guidelines for the subject, but there is no whole-school plan to show exactly which skills are to be addressed in each year group. The presentation of pupils' written work is often unsatisfactory, and the quality of marking is not sufficiently helpful in showing pupils how they can improve their work. In some classes, good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills of literacy, but in others, too many undemanding worksheets are used, or pupils copy work from the board. Many teachers have a good local knowledge of the area, which they incorporate well into their teaching, and a good subject knowledge. However, their knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study is sometimes a little sketchy.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Although standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement, especially in recent months, in the rate of pupils' progress, and in their breadth of experience and knowledge. The school has been part of an Education Action Zone project which has led to the setting up of a networked computer suite, and which has provided funds to release the subject manager to work alongside colleagues, and to take over the teaching of information and communication technology in some classes. These initiatives have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the school, and have significantly raised the profile of the subject. As part of the project the school has benefited from the services of a part-time technician, who works closely with classroom assistants, helping them to become familiar with the programmes so that they can work more effectively with the pupils.
117. A good amount of time is allocated to information and communication technology, enabling all pupils to have experience of using the computer suite regularly. Whilst this has been beneficial over the past few months, the school recognises the need to review the time allocation to ensure that, in the long-term, other subjects do not suffer. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress in their lessons in the computer suite, and this progress is further enhanced when they also have opportunities to use classroom computers. However, for some classes, the work in the computer suite is the mainstay of their information and communication technology work, and these pupils sometimes lose sight of the notion of computers as vehicles for learning to support their work in other subjects.
118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently log on and off the networked computers. They are confident about printing their work, and know how to save it on the hard-disk. Most pupils use the computers well for word-processing, although some of the pupils' keyboard skills are slow, and the processes of drafting and editing take a long time to complete. Pupils understand the value of producing written work on the computer, and know how to change the style and size of text to add interest. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils used a graphics programme to produce a free-hand picture of an animal. Although some pupils struggled with selecting the tool for 'filling in' the outline, the highest attainers quickly and skilfully completed the task. During the activity, pupils learned about the 'undo' key, and through a process of trial and error realised that the key would 'undo' only the last action performed. Pupils have some experience of programming a robotic toy, and know that the instructions have to be correctly sequenced. Key Stage 1 pupils currently have limited experience of using databases to store their work.
119. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain the national expectations overall. There are particular strengths in the way in which they use computers for finding things out and for exchanging and sharing information. There are some weaknesses in their understanding of controlling events, linked to the lack of resources for this element of the information and communication technology curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of how computers can help them with their written work, and confidently use word-processing programmes, often importing graphics from other applications. Pupils use the spell-check effectively, and know how to highlight and drag sections of text around within a piece of work. Pupils who meet for the lunchtime magazine club are particularly proficient at altering the size and style of text to make it more striking or demanding. By the end of the key stage pupils have a good understanding of the way in

which the internet works, and appreciate the power of electronic mail in the business world. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, Year 6 pupils created hyper links to join pages of their own web site. The pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of how to animate graphics, and moved with dexterity from programme to programme, rearranging text, captions and pictures. Pupils have experience of using and constructing databases and know how to reorganise lists within databases to show information in different ways. Recently pupils have been introduced to spread sheets, but their work in this aspect of the information and communication technology curriculum is at a very early stage. Pupils' understanding of the control element of the curriculum is limited to using the programmable robotic toy and the 'logo' programme on the computers, and this is the next area of development for the school.

120. The teaching of information and communication technology in the computer suite is good, both when carried out by classteachers and by the subject manager, but there is more work to be done in terms of promoting the use of computers in the classroom. Teaching is supported by a good quality commercial scheme of work which provides very good guidance for teachers and shows the development of skills and knowledge in a systematic way. The training of classroom assistants has had a beneficial impact on pupils' learning, and they offer very good levels of support. Class teaching in the computer suite is effectively organised, and to enable pupils to work independently, teachers often provide written tasks for half of the class to complete whilst the remainder work on the computers. On other occasions, pupils work in pairs, and this is often extremely effective, especially when the higher attaining pupils offer help and support to their partners. Teachers take good account of the pupils' prior experience and learning, and often provide open-ended tasks which enable the pupils to work at their own rate. This was evident in the lesson seen during the inspection on hyper-links, where higher attaining pupils asked if they could skip one of the planned stages. Teachers are in the process of completing the national training for information and communication technology and this, together with the support from the subject manager, has given them good levels of confidence and knowledge.

MUSIC

121. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards in music that are above national expectations across all aspects of the music curriculum. Overall standards have been maintained since the previous inspection, and in the element of composition, standards have improved. Music is currently a major focus within the school. As part of an Education Action Zone initiative, the school has benefited from additional resources which have enabled the co-ordinator to be released on a weekly basis to work with colleagues, and to develop music throughout the school. This has had a positive impact on teaching and learning.
122. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing tunefully, both when accompanied and unaccompanied. They often accompany their singing with clapped rhythmic patterns and actions, and in a very successful lesson seen during the inspection, Year 2 pupils enhanced the story of the 'Hairy Scary Castle' with sound effects, instruments and singing. Pupils have a good sense of rhythm and pitch. They distinguish between short and long sounds, and copy and generate quite complex repeated rhythmic patterns. They describe the sounds made by different percussion instruments, and recognise that some have pitch whilst others are untuned. Pupils are confident composers, who enjoy listening to and appraising the work of their classmates. Teachers make very good use of tape-recorders to enable pupils to listen critically to their compositions, and to provide a record of their progress and achievements. Pupils throughout the key

stage listen well, and are developing an appropriate musical vocabulary which helps them to explain their ideas clearly.

123. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' singing is of a very high standard. Pupils articulate words clearly, and cope well with fast and demanding rhythms, for example, when they sing the well-known song, 'The Rhythm of Life'. Pupils sing part songs very well, and successfully maintain their own parts, keeping pitch and time well by listening to the other groups. They use dynamics effectively to add interest to their singing, and know and follow the musical terms and symbols for 'getting louder' and 'getting quieter'. Pupils understand repeated rhythmic patterns as 'ostinati', and use their voices well to provide simple 'ostinati' patterns to accompany the singing of their classmates. Pupils' singing is of such a high quality that there is often a very spiritual atmosphere in music lessons, resulting from the shared enjoyment of making music. Key Stage 2 pupils are confident composers, who enjoy combining the sounds of a variety of instruments to provide accompaniments to songs and stories. They select instruments because of their suitability, and understand that instruments that are shaken are more difficult to use for short sounds than instruments that are struck. Pupils use ethnic instruments in their own work, and have benefited from watching the performance of African drummers, gaining a brief insight into the music of other cultures. The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to listen to the works of well-known composers, but because the pupils do not have written records of these experiences, they sometimes have difficulty recalling their previous learning.
124. The teaching of music is very good throughout the school. Music is valued as part of the curriculum, and this is reflected in the time that is allocated to the subject. Teachers are very effective in the way in which they combine elements of composing, performing, appraising and listening in their lessons, leading pupils naturally from one to the other. During the inspection, all lessons were well planned, and introductory discussions primed the pupils about what was expected of them. Teachers make effective use of a variety of good quality commercial schemes in their planning, which help to ensure that pupils' learning is systematically developed as they move through the school. Teachers are enthusiastic, and are very successful in motivating the pupils, and in giving them the confidence to experiment and to try original ideas. Social skills are successfully promoted through music activities, and pupils are often asked to work in small groups, developing skills of negotiation, and learning to nominate and follow a leader. Pupils' cultural awareness has been raised through opportunities for them to listen to visiting musicians playing African and Indian music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, and pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Although standards are the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The improvement in teaching is linked to the more systematic teaching of skills, the use of a commercial scheme as guidance for teachers' planning, and the regular timetabling of lessons throughout the school. During the course of the year, pupils cover all elements of the physical education curriculum, and staff work hard to overcome the problems posed by the geographical location of the school site when planning outdoor lessons. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities which effectively enhance the statutory curriculum provision and which provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. There are

weaknesses in the monitoring role of the subject manager. Although he has a good general overview of what is being taught throughout the school, there has been no formal monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observation, and the monitoring of colleagues' planning is cursory.

126. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils move with good levels of co-ordination and have a good awareness of space, although some pupils have difficulty controlling their bodies in balance positions, and their movements sometimes lack fluidity. Pupils often work well when performing gymnastics sequences on the floor, and try hard to link their movements together with jumps and rolls. Pupils understand the notion of 'points' as knees, feet and hands, and 'patches' as tummies, bottoms, backs and shoulders, and make well considered sequences moving from 'points' to 'patches', with incorporated balances. Pupils often show good levels of originality in their gymnastics work, and try hard to be as creative as possible in their ideas. They enjoy using simple apparatus, but are not as confident in performing their movements on apparatus as they are on when working on the floor. Teachers are particularly effective in the way in which they invite pupils to demonstrate good practice, and in the way in which they improve pupils' performance by giving individual help to pupils as they work.
127. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are aware of the impact of exercise on their heart-rates, and understand the importance of exercise as a means of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In gymnastics, pupils link a variety of movements together in different ways to create interesting sequences, which they perform on the floor and on apparatus. Pupils understand that they can add variety to their work by changing the speed, direction and level at which they are travelling. In the best examples of work seen during the inspection, pupils created imaginative sequences which they performed with grace, poise and control. Where the best teaching occurs, pupils are given good advice as to how they can improve their work further, and these exchanges significantly enhance individual pupils' progress. In games sessions, most pupils have satisfactory ball control, and can accurately send and receive a ball over a reasonable distance. In a lesson seen during the inspection, some of the highest attaining pupils demonstrated particularly good tactics of defending and attacking, but these skills are not well developed for all pupils. Pupils are aware of the need to demonstrate good gamesmanship in team activities, and whilst most pupils are very sportsmanlike in their tactics and play, a few pupils become over-competitive and are not graceful losers. By the time they leave school at the age of eleven, most pupils can swim the recommended twenty-five metres, and a number of pupils can swim considerably further than this.
128. The quality of teaching in physical education is good in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was sometimes unsatisfactory. Teachers make effective use of a commercial scheme of work, which ensures that pupils' skills are systematically developed as they move through the school. However, the planning of individual lessons is not always sufficiently focused in Key Stage 2, and the main teaching points are not clearly conveyed to the pupils. In Key Stage 1, the pace of lessons is particularly good, and pupils cover a great deal of work, and often make good progress within individual lessons. In both key stages, a strong feature of teaching is the way in which teachers promote health and safety, by reminding pupils of the value of exercise, and by ensuring that pupils are aware of the potential dangers to their own safety, and that of others, especially when moving apparatus. Teachers throughout the school often make demonstrations for the pupils which show clearly what is expected of them. In addition, good use is made of pupils' demonstrations to highlight strengths in their

performances, although teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to critically appraise the work of their classmates.