

INSPECTION REPORT

**WESTHOUGHTON PAROCHIAL CE PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Westhoughton, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105237

Headteacher: Mr P Naylor

Acting Headteacher: Mrs S M Finley

Reporting inspector: Geoff Yates
2465

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 July 2002

Inspection number: 196817

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: The Fairways
Wethoughton

Postcode: Bolton
BL5 3NZ

Telephone number: 01942 812448

Fax number: 01942 819997

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Nigel Ginniff

Date of previous inspection: 9 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2465	Geoff Yates	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Equal opportunities Information and communication technology Mathematics Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements What should the school do to improve further?
10329	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
7979	Anthony Calderbank	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History	How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	Foundation stage Art Design and technology Music Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Westhoughton Parochial CE school is an average sized primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven years. It is situated close to the town centre of Westhoughton. Most children live in owner-occupier accommodation. There are currently 209 pupils on roll. Twenty-three pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Nineteen children are on the special needs register, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. At around 10 per cent, this is below the national average. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This is broadly average for the size of school. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language but four per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. When the children start in the Reception class, the range of their attainment varies but is generally average. At the time of the inspection the acting headteacher had only been in post for a number of weeks and a full-time member of staff had just left to take maternity leave.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Westhoughton Parochial CE school is justifiably well respected in the local community. It provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education based on Christian principles. Within its welcoming environment pupils are cared for very well and strive to do their best. The acting headteacher, in the short period of time she has been in post, has established appropriate priorities in order for the school to improve further. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress and by the time they leave have attained the nationally expected standards in English and mathematics and above average standard in science. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in science and art and design are above those found normally.
- The quality of teaching is good, overall.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and participate with enthusiasm in all aspects of school life.
- Effective links with the local community and the good partnership with parents support the very positive school ethos well.
- A high level of pastoral care is provided by the school.
- Most pupils behave very well. Relationships are very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development.

What could be improved

- The use made of information and communication technology and of pupils' writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
- The provision for gathering and using assessment information in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- The evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning by co-ordinators.

[The school has already identified these areas as being in need of development.]

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 good progress in addressing most of the key areas identified for improvement when it was last inspected in June 1997. The quality of teaching has improved. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving standards in information and communication technology and design and technology and as a result standards are now broadly average. Over the last four years the improvement in the school's performance in English, mathematics and science has been above the national trend. The school is likely to meet the targets set this year for English and mathematics. The policies and schemes of work for the majority of subjects have been revised to establish consistent practice. There is now a whole-school approach to assessment in English, mathematics and science but more needs to be done in other subjects not only in establishing procedures but in making use of the information gathered to plan future learning. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and learning objectives are clearly

identified. The school development plan provides a clear direction for school improvement. The school has been very successful in addressing issues with regards to the budget and, as a result, it is no longer in deficit. A key factor in successful budget management has been the way the school has ensured that spending has been cost-effective.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	A	C	C
mathematics	C	C	B	B
science	C	C	B	B

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

The performance of pupils over the last four years exceeded the national average for the age group. Inspection evidence shows that standards this year are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards are not as high as in the previous year because of the number of pupils with special educational needs in the age group. Despite above average standards in mathematics and average standards in English the school narrowly missed meeting its challenging targets in mathematics and English in 2001. This year's demanding targets are likely to be met.

Standards in art and design are above average. In information and communication technology and all other subjects inspected, pupils achieve standards similar to those found in most schools. However, more could be done to ensure that pupils use their writing and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. Religious education was not inspected.

The youngest children make satisfactory progress. By the end of the Reception year most will achieve the goals expected for them in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in all subjects in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2 standards are higher than those found in most schools in mathematics, science and in art and design. Pupils attain standards in line with those found in most schools in English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; most pupils are keen, eager and enthusiastic learners. They concentrate hard and try their best. Pupils enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; the majority of pupils show good self-discipline in and around the school. This helps to provide a productive environment for learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils are confident and responsible. They undertake a good range of duties sensibly and with a very mature attitude. Relationships in school are of a high standard and contribute significantly to the life and ethos of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

From the moment they start in Reception, the pupils are willing learners and are keen to be involved in all aspects of school life. They enjoy school, and their positive attitudes contribute highly to their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Inspection evidence shows that the quality of teaching of English and mathematics is good. Throughout the school most teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly and have appropriate expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving. Numeracy and literacy skills are taught well. A strength of teaching is the way teachers' subject expertise is used to best advantage. Very good use is made of classroom support assistants ensuring that pupils who need additional help receive it where necessary. A weakness is that pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their writing and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. The quality of learning in English, mathematics and science is good because the work is matched well to pupils' individual needs. As a result, most pupils show interest, concentrate carefully and try hard. However, immature behaviour in a lower junior class is not always dealt with quickly enough and this slows the pace of some lessons.

Effective teaching in the Reception class includes good opportunities for children to explore and learn for themselves. The quality of learning is good in most areas of learning. However, more needs to be done to incorporate the use of the outside play area into all aspects of the curriculum.

Pupils identified as having special educational needs make satisfactory progress because teachers ensure that work is matched to the standards they have reached.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. A good range of extra-curricular activities and out-of-school visits adds to the quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; pupils have full access to the curriculum and are involved in all of the school's activities. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs are provided with effective support. The school's policy does not take into account recent guidelines with regards to the provision for special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, overall; there is a strong focus on spiritual, moral and social development, which contributes effectively to the personal development of pupils. The school has a strong Christian ethos and this has a significant impact on the very good relationships and behaviour in and around the school. Greater attention is now being given to raising pupils' awareness of the life styles of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good care is provided. Staff know pupils very well and provide a caring environment in which pupils make the progress they should. The procedures for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils are thorough. Assessment of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and

	science is good and the information is used appropriately to plan for future improvements. However, more could be done in other subjects to improve assessment procedures and the use made of the information gathered.
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The school's curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The provision for care and pupils' personal development are significant strengths. The school takes its relationship with parents very seriously and works hard to build a successful partnership with them. Parents play an appropriate part in helping in school and supporting their children at home. More needs to be done to provide parents with a clearer view of what subjects are being taught.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher has not been in post long but has already identified the right priorities in order to improve the quality of education. All members of staff share a commitment to improve standards. However, subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Most statutory requirements are met, but the school's prospectus does not contain all the required information.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has recently put in place additional monitoring procedures. However, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science there is insufficient careful analysis of assessment information to enable appropriate and challenging targets for improvement to be set.
The strategic use of resources	Good; financial planning is good and resources are used well to support the long-term development of the school. The careful use of all available funds has secured significant improvements in the learning environment.

The school is managed effectively and most resources are used regularly. Resources are adequate in most areas but there some deficiencies. For example, in the quality of geography resources and in the outdoor resources for children in the Reception class. The accommodation, whilst not ideal, has been adapted to provide a good environment for learning to take place. It is kept in a very clean condition. The school grounds are attractive and the provision of seated areas enables children to socialise well with each other. Principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • Teaching is good. • Children behave well. • The school helps children to become mature. • Their children work hard and do their best. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns they might have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amounts of homework children are given.

The inspectors support parents' positive views of the school, although it is too early to make any overall judgement about the new leadership team. Homework is sufficient and successfully reinforces the work

being done in class. However, parents need to be provided with more information about the amount of homework their children are expected to do and when it needs to be done.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Satisfactory progress in raising standards has been made since the time of the last inspection. The improvement in the school's performance in National Curriculum tests has been above the national trend. Most children start school with skills that are within the average range. In the Year 6 age group there are a significant number of special educational needs pupils. However, because teaching is of a good quality in English, mathematics and science most pupils are likely to attain the expected levels in English and mathematics with above average levels attained in science. This represents satisfactory progress, overall. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make satisfactory progress and are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. Inspection evidence shows that, despite there being differences between boys and girls results over the last three years this is no longer the case. The school is likely to meet the targets set this year in English and mathematics.
2. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They achieve soundly because the targets they are expected to work towards on their Individual Educational Plans are specific and attainable. The satisfactory progress of pupils also owes much to the efforts of the teaching staff to ensure that the work done in English, mathematics and science matches their prior attainment. However, more could be done in other subjects to ensure that work is more closely matched to their needs.
3. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy has made a valuable contribution to pupils' progress because lessons focus on the teaching of basic skills. All classroom assistants provide very good support. This judgement is similar to those made at the time of the last inspection.
4. The previous inspection found that the Foundation Stage provided a sound basis for children's education, and this continues to be the case. The children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Overall progress during the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. By the end of the Reception Year most children are expected to attain the Early Learning Goals in each area of learning. A significant minority will exceed them.
5. In the Foundation Stage, children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Reception children settle quickly into established routines of the school, responding well to the high expectations of the adults. They know that there are rules relating to the number of children who can take part in any one activity and learn to share and take turns at an early stage. Children concentrate well and complete whatever tasks are set. They develop their literacy and numeracy skills soundly and most will achieve the expected standard. They listen attentively to stories and are confident in speaking to adults in the classroom. Children talk readily about the characters in their reading books and can recognise some of the key words. The more able pupils have already begun to read simple stories and can write sentences without adult help. In all other area of learning, children are on target to achieve the early learning goals. However, the lack of a range of planned activities using the outside area limits the progress pupils make in developing their physical skills.
6. In 2002 the school's results in national tests in mathematics at the end of Year 2 improved with an above average number of pupils reaching Level 3. As a result, overall standards are above those normally found. Overall average standards attained in English were maintained. Pupils write well, speak and listen to a satisfactory standard and have average reading standards. Standards in science were above average. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are attaining at the expected levels for their ages in most other subjects. It was not possible to make any overall judgement in physical education. Religious education was not inspected. The school tracks pupils well and underachievement in mathematics by higher attainers had rightly been identified

as an area for improvement this year. Inspection evidence shows that more challenge is now provided in the range and opportunities for potentially 'good mathematicians' in Years 1 and 2 to extend their skills. This is because teachers have high expectations and really challenge pupils to produce their best results.

7. The major contributory factors in the satisfactory progress the school has made in most subjects since the time of the last inspection are teachers' better planning, based on national strategies, and the good use made of assessment information in setting targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that while pupils have average skills in information and communication technology they do not use them sufficiently in other subjects of the curriculum.
8. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils, at the end of Year 6, results were above the national average in mathematics and science and average in English. Because of the number of special educational needs pupils in the current Year 6 age group results are not as good in English and mathematics this year, but are nevertheless broadly average. In science, results remain above average. Pupils not only have a good scientific knowledge but also know how to apply that knowledge in practical science lessons. Reading standards are average but pupils need more practice in using their referencing skills in the library. Pupils read with expression and have few difficulties. The satisfactory writing quality found in their English exercise books is not replicated in the range of writing in other subjects. In some subjects, for example, history, opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills. In most classes work is presented well but there is some inconsistency in presentation in the lower juniors.
9. By the end of Year 6, standards in art and design are above average. A key factor in the good standards achieved is the effective support pupils receive from a specialist art teacher in developing their skills. In all other subjects inspected standards are average. No overall judgement can be made in physical education or music because the full range of activities was not seen. However, standards in singing and in the physical education lessons seen are good. Religious education was not inspected. It will be inspected later in the year as part of the denominational inspection of the school. Pupils have satisfactory information and communication technology skills but do not always use them well in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The children in the Reception class enjoy their time in school and have very good relationships with their teacher and other adults who work with them. They learn to work happily with one another, sharing and helping. They arrive at school in good time and settle happily to begin the day. Children become readily absorbed in the many interesting and varied activities prepared for them and listen well to their teacher and to each other. They respond well to instructions and learn from an early age that tidying-up is part of the lesson. Children enjoy role-playing together in the beach shop. Several show a good level of maturity in their behaviour and attitudes to others. They share resources and play co-operatively.
11. The attitude of the pupils in Years 1 to 6 towards their school and their learning is very good. This is a strength of the school and has improved upon the existing high standards commented upon at the previous inspection. Most pupils are keen, eager and enthusiastic learners. They concentrate hard, try their best and really enjoy coming to school. During a Year 1 literacy lesson the pupils were playing word bingo in order to recognise words and improve their spelling. The concentration was quite intense as they waited for the winning number and a small award.
12. Behaviour at the school and the absence of oppressive behaviour is also very good and this has also improved since the previous inspection. In lessons where the teaching is stimulating and discipline good, behaviour is sometimes excellent. However, at times, the opposite can happen. Where a minority of pupils in one class loses interest and becomes bored behaviour is, occasionally, unsatisfactory. In and around the school the pupils are orderly and polite. They often open doors ahead of you and ask if you are lost. During the inspection no vandalism or

graffiti was seen. The pupils are proud of their school and are keen to see it tidy. There has been only one fixed-period exclusion during the last twelve months.

13. Bullying is not a problem at the school. The pupils play well together. They have a good awareness that any action they may take against another person will probably rebound back on them and lead to conflict. Personal development and relationships in the school are very favourable. The majority of the pupils get on together very well, as do staff with children and also with each other. The pupils realise that not everyone is brought up with the same values and views on life, even within their own school. From their lessons they certainly know about the poor in their country and in other countries and how, in particular, the children suffer.
14. The majority of the pupils use their initiative well and are good at taking personal responsibility. The school has an effective school council and older pupils look after the infants in the playground and during wet play. Each class has its own prefects. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that Years 5 and 6 pupils go to the school office and ask for regular jobs. However, apart from collecting and returning registers, the infant pupils are not always encouraged to demonstrate their independence in quite the same way.
15. Attendance at the school is still satisfactory and well in line with the national figures for this type of school. The majority of pupils come to school and into class on time and most lessons commence promptly. The school has no unaccounted-for long-term absentees.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good, overall. In the lessons seen, 96 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better and four per cent was unsatisfactory. Almost 70 per cent was good or better and 20 per cent was very good or excellent. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents about two percentage points. The overall trend in the school's results in English, mathematics and science is above the national trend. This is as a result of the good teaching pupils receive. Despite the good quality of teaching seen during the week of the inspection and from evidence from the work survey overall standards are not as high this year because of the significant number of special needs pupils in the Year 6 class. Strengths have been maintained, and the weakness identified in the last report with regard to time being wasted on non-essential tasks was no longer in evidence. Good and very good teaching from two part-time teachers who have specialist skills in geography, history and art and design was much in evidence during the week of the inspection. The quality of teaching in their lessons has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
17. Teaching is good, overall, in the Reception class. The teacher and nursery nurse work well together. Adults provide good role models and their approach is warm and friendly. Routines are carefully established and these are well known and, as a result, children feel secure and grow in confidence. All staff are clear about the aims of the activities and their roles and responsibilities. Their good use of questions and comments extends children's speech and encourages them to think and talk about what they are doing. Independence skills are being well-developed and children display very good levels of behaviour. Through some good direct teaching, literacy and mathematical skills are being taught effectively. However, teachers' planning contains little reference to the use of the outdoors as a way of extending pupils' learning and this is a relative weakness in the teaching.
18. The good quality of teaching, overall, in Years 1 and 2 is underpinned by the very good relationships between teachers and pupils. In Year 1, this can be seen in the way the teacher has built up the pupils' self-confidence during the year. For example, the pupils look forward to being chosen as a V.I.P. when the rest of the class questions them about their hobbies or holidays. However, in a mathematics lesson, pupils were presented with a work sheet which some of them found difficult to understand and had to keep asking for help. In Year 2, the teacher's calm and purposeful approach is used to good effect to create a positive learning environment. Teaching in this year group is consistently of a high quality and ensures that the pupils make at least good progress especially in English and mathematics. Common strengths are the teacher's use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and her clear explanations

- when introducing new concepts to the class. The good quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has a positive effect upon pupils' attitudes and their learning.
19. Most teachers in Years 3 to 6 build successfully on the effective teaching in the earlier years. They plan lessons well and usually achieve a good balance between talking to the whole class, group work and individual tasks. As pupils move up the school the level of challenge in lessons is increased appropriately. This is also helped by the use made of individual teacher's expertise to teach art and design, geography, history and physical education. Progress is generally good in these lessons. For example, during the week of the inspection two very good art and design lessons were observed being taken by a part-time teacher. Strengths included her very good subject knowledge, her focused questioning and the precise use of technical language. The teacher had high expectations and pupils were able to take the initiative and work on their own.
 20. In Years 1 to 6, teachers are secure in their knowledge of most subjects of the National Curriculum. There have been noticeable improvements in the knowledge and understanding of staff since the time of the last inspection, particularly in relation to design and technology. Also, in English and mathematics, specific developments have taken place to introduce the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is now a systematic approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school. This is working well and teaching is good, overall, in both subjects. However, in English more needs to be done to develop pupils' writing and spelling skills across all subjects. In some classes, worksheets are overused in mathematics and this hinders the progress made by higher attainers. In most other subjects, planning is satisfactory and based upon national recommendations.
 21. Throughout the school most lessons are well organised. Teachers use the beginning of lessons effectively to ensure that pupils are clear about the overall purpose of the lesson; for example, they usually write the learning objectives on the board and draw pupils' attention to them. However, in Year 3 a significant minority of pupils display immature behaviour and shout out answers instead of putting their hands up and waiting to be asked. Behaviour of this nature interrupts the teacher and slows the pace of the lesson making it unsatisfactory in two lessons during the inspection. This adversely effects the quality of learning and the progress pupils make.
 22. The quality of teaching in science is good, overall, and occasionally very good. Teachers explain tasks clearly and now give a higher priority to the teaching of investigative skills. As a result, the quality of learning is better because pupils look for evidence when involved in an investigation. Standards of attainment are above those normally found at the ages of 7 and 11.
 23. The teaching of information and communication technology has improved significantly since the previous inspection and during the week of the inspection was good, overall. Teachers still lack confidence in some aspects of the subject, such as control, and are unsure about how the subject can best be used in other subjects.
 24. There is close correlation between the teaching and rate of learning. In all the lessons where the teaching was good or better, the pupils showed interest and made good progress. This was very evident in a science lesson with Year 6 when the teacher's very good use of such questions as 'why' and 'how' resulted in the pupils coming up with some detailed explanations about the uses of yeast. In the good music lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, the teachers' very good subject knowledge and precise use of technical vocabulary improved the quality of learning and pupils' performance.
 25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress because work is set that is matched to their prior attainment. The work of the support staff is very good. They play a vital role in managing the pupils and guiding them in activities. All have good relationships with the pupils and they offer unobtrusive support for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. They are well briefed and ensure that the pupils stay focused on their learning.
 26. Teachers set appropriate homework which makes a valuable contribution to pupils' progress. However, parents need more information about the amount of homework expected and when it

should be completed. Marking is satisfactory, overall. Teachers' comments are usually supportive and sometimes effective in making sure that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Although resources are only just adequate in some subjects, teachers make good use of those that are available to support learning. Visits out of the school are also used well to stimulate interest and improve the quality of learning, especially in history and geography.

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

27. The school provides its pupils with a balanced and interesting curriculum. Statutory requirements are met in all areas. It provides equality of access to the curriculum for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups.
28. The provision for children at the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, covering the recommended areas of learning. A weakness, however, is the omission of planning for the use of the outside area in the areas of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has improved since the last inspection. There is now a policy and detailed scheme of work for each subject. The school has adopted government recommended guidelines for National Curriculum subjects. These ensure that pupils' learning opportunities cover the required ground. In short-term planning, learning objectives are now well focused and precise. However, the curriculum for information and communication technology is too narrow. Although teachers sometimes use information and communication technology effectively in other subjects, its overall use is unsatisfactory.
29. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively and, like most schools, gives more than half its teaching time to English and mathematics. Teachers' planning is consistently and securely based on these strategies. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good. A significant strength in Years 1 and 2 is the practice of focusing the teaching on the pupils' literacy and numeracy targets. This results in satisfactory progress and good achievement for the higher-attaining pupils in mathematics. However, in literacy, opportunities for developing their writing skills in other subjects are inconsistent. In history, geography and science the over-dependence on the use of commercially produced materials in some lessons limits opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.
30. The curriculum provision for personal, social, and health education is satisfactory. However, the written policy requires updating. The curriculum, usually provided through English, science, and physical education, gives appropriate provision throughout the school with elements of health and sex education, including learning about the dangers of substance misuse. Assemblies make a significant contribution to the sustaining of good behaviour and personal development. Some teachers provide specific lessons on personal, social, and health education. Pupils, on occasions, are encouraged to discuss issues and personal dilemmas. For example, in Year 1, in their lessons on personal and social issues, pupils are selected to talk about their own personal issues, whilst other pupils and the teacher listen sympathetically. This improves the pupils listening and speaking skills and creates a sense of belonging.
31. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs. However, the requirements of the new Code of Practice for special educational needs have not been incorporated into the school policy to help staff implement the recent changes. The special educational needs co-ordinator is not given any additional time to carry out her duties. All pupils on the school's special educational needs register have full access to the curriculum. Statements of special needs are reviewed regularly to monitor each pupil's progress towards the learning targets and to set new ones.
32. Pupils from ethnic minorities are well-integrated into all aspects of school life.
33. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good, an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a range of after-school activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6. These include football, rugby,

netball, swimming, table tennis, choir and art. These activities are generally well attended. The school is an active participator in local inter-school sporting events and music festivals. The school's choir, which includes boys and girls from Years 2 to Years 6, takes part annually in the Bolton Schools Music Festival.

34. The school is at the heart of its community, and takes part in many local activities. For example, it is actively involved in the town's annual Gala. The school has good links with other educational institutions. These inter-school links are valued and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. The school provides a range of visits and visitors to extend and enrich the curriculum. Useful visits are made to areas beyond their locality, for example, Smithills Hall, to improve pupils' knowledge of times gone by. The school also has effective links with other groups and organisations such as Bolton Wanderers Football Club. Local businesses also support the school. For example, a local greengrocer provides the pupils with fruit to support their Healthy Eating initiative.
35. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, overall. Since the previous inspection, the good quality provision has been developed further. The school provides a welcoming and very caring Christian environment in which all pupils are encouraged to work together in harmony and learn to respect and be sensitive to the needs of others.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. In class, pupils are given daily opportunities for reflection and prayer, for example, concluding the day by reflecting on *their day* and thinking about their personal contribution to the quality of life in the class. Good quality assemblies further enhance the pupils' spiritual awareness. These are carefully prepared acts of collective worship allowing pupils to reflect and pray. Music is used very effectively to provide a spiritual uplift for the beginning and end of assemblies. This is characterised by the quality of the pupils' singing. They are given the opportunity to reflect on their relationships in the community, in the family and with their friends. The pupils use the parish church, which is opposite the school, for some services. Pupils' spiritual awareness is also raised in a range of lessons. In English, their poems and other creative writings vividly capture special feelings, for example, their creative writing on seascape paintings. The school uses very well opportunities to enable pupils to gain understanding, through reflection, of their own distinctiveness. For example, one pupil rose to the challenge of demanding schoolwork when faced with ill-health. *'I have achieved all of my literacy targets. I am very proud because I had a lot of time off school with an ear problem and I had to catch up'*.
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. It is promoted through the school's mission statement, in which the school sees as a significant responsibility the moral development of its pupils in a secure and orderly learning environment. They are very successful. There is a strong moral framework where, in a positive atmosphere, high expectations of behaviour, self-discipline and very good relationships are fostered. Pupils are provided with clear boundaries for good behaviour. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. School rules are displayed prominently in classrooms. Staff are good role models showing respect and concern for the individual needs of all pupils. A strong feature of pupils' moral development is the way they are taught about wider moral issues through the subjects of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2, in their English lesson, shared with their teacher and developed in their writing, opinions on rules at home. This resulted in pupils displaying sensitivity to the needs of others in their family. Assemblies and end-of-school-day prayers are used well and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on positive personal qualities such as tolerance and kindness.
38. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. There are many opportunities for the vast majority to develop an awareness of how to relate to people in different circumstances. Very good relationships are a strong feature of the school. Achievements in work and behaviour are celebrated in assemblies with certificates for good work and good behaviour. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school. The School Council, consisting of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6, has discussions with the headteacher on issues such as school dinners and playtime equipment. In all classes, pupils are

encouraged to take some responsibility for keeping their classrooms tidy and orderly. Older pupils prepare the hall for assemblies. At break times and lunch times they introduce games to the younger pupils that can be played in the playground with little or no equipment, such as skipping and circle games. Pupils are involved in community activities. They visit the local senior citizen's social club at various times of the year singing and playing carols. Charity work, such as fund raising for Children in Need is a strong feature of school life. The school also involves its pupils in local community sports competitions. This high level of provision is very effective in developing the pupils' social skills and enhancing their personal self-esteem.

39. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a curriculum that promotes an understanding of their local culture, whilst also giving them opportunities to discover and understand a multicultural society. In lessons, opportunities are found to promote understanding of the wider cultural diversity of their community. In literacy, history, art and music the pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of their society is raised. In their writing, they demonstrate a developing knowledge and understanding of the rights and importance of different cultures. In Year 6, pupils are learning French. Some displays of pupils' work feature aspects of cultural diversity such as the display of Polynesian Tapa designs and the Aboriginal art works. The school participates in the Bolton schools' Music Festival and the Westhoughton Gala. The school has composed its own Commonwealth song. Visitors include professional sportsmen and musicians. The school, through its varied provision, teaches its pupils to appreciate their own culture and the diversity of other cultures. Although at an early stage of development there is an increasing emphasis on preparing pupils for living in a multicultural society. The management has identified the need to improve provision further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare. This is another strength of the school and has improved considerably upon the satisfactory provision noted at the previous inspection.
41. The acting headteacher is the trained child protection person. Although she has ensured that all members of staff receive very regular and relevant in-service training, no other person in the school is currently fully trained. The school has very good liaison with the local social services and all relevant documentation is very securely locked away.
42. The acting headteacher is also the named health and safety person and with the relevant governor and very experienced caretaker she makes regular safety checks around the whole of the school. The school maintains an up-to-date written policy and clear and effective risk assessments. The school is well aware that it still has a ventilation problem within the new Infant building. All fire fighting, physical education and portable electrical equipment is regularly checked. The school holds well-recorded, emergency escape exercises every term and exit routes are clearly marked and accessible. Accidents are caringly dealt with, well recorded and reported. Medicines are administered only with parental permission. Detailed records are maintained of specific child allergies and other medical problems. Currently, the school has only one trained first aid person but this is soon to be rectified. Very good use is made of outside professional help, such as the school nurse, educational psychologist and speech therapist. The local fire brigade comes in regularly and talks about accidents in the home. Meals are cooked, served and consumed in very hygienic conditions and the Healthy Eating programme is to be commended. The school has caring procedures for transfer to secondary education.
43. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance. Registers are clearly marked both morning and afternoon and are monitored daily by the school office. Parents are made very well aware of their relevant responsibilities and the school tries to keep a very tight rein on holidays in term-time, which can sometimes become a problem. Very good use is made of the educational welfare officer, and the school maintains a tight lateness routine.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating that of an oppressive nature are very good, overall. These are additional strengths of the school. The school's well-

written policy contains appropriate awards and sanctions. The majority of the pupils are well aware of these and also of the school rules; awards are well sought after. Bullying is discussed regularly during personal and social education, at circle-times and at assemblies, where the pupils are given the confidence to report any potential incidents. All staff are well trained to recognise any symptoms.

45. The monitoring and supporting of personal development is good. Each pupil has a personal record of achievement in which they decide what to put, for example, achievement certificates or special pieces of work. These records are very useful when moving into secondary school. Parents are informed of progress in the annual report.
46. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by classroom assistants. There are sound systems for the regular assessment of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Individual Education Plans contain appropriate targets, but steps towards the targets need to be made clearer.
47. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
48. Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in the effectiveness of the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the use made of the information gathered in English, mathematics and science. These are now good. In other subjects there is no whole-school approach to the recording or use of assessment to plan future work. In other subjects, planning is monitored to ensure that adequate coverage is taking place. However, there is no consistent approach to the recording of skills that pupils develop in these subjects. As a result, planning in other subjects is not as effective in ensuring that progress is always maintained. There are examples of effective marking of pupils' work, which gives them pointers for improvement, but this is not consistent throughout the school.
49. Overall, the school looks after its pupils well in a safe and caring environment, which enhances considerably the success of their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. From listening to parents at the pre-inspection meeting and from comments received on the returned questionnaires a high number of parents feel that their children like the school, and believe the teaching is good. They further maintain that the school helps their children to become mature and well-behaved. Parents are pleased with the way the school helps to promote good relationships between different ethnic groups. A minority of parents denied that their children were given sufficient homework. Whilst the inspection agrees with these positive views it cannot substantiate those on the lack of homework, which was found to be set regularly and at an appropriate level. However, parents would benefit from more written information on amounts of homework and times in which it should be completed.
51. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Each new parent receives an updated prospectus and an annual governors' report. Whilst the latter is currently in line with statutory requirements the prospectus has several omissions, of which the school is now aware. In addition, although not a statutory requirement, parents would benefit from an outline of the school's curriculum within the prospectus. Annual pupil reports to parents are clear and detail what their child can do and the targets to be achieved. The school holds two evenings a year for private consultation with teachers and a face-to-face interview, on request, to talk about reports. Curriculum evenings have been held recently on numeracy and the home/school agreement was well received. Any parent can take advantage of an open door policy to talk with any member of staff. The school provides a lively and interesting weekly newsletter.
52. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning. During the inspection several were in school helping in the library and with reading. For the past six years two mothers have unflinchingly prepared the healthy eating food for the pupils. Parents, including many fathers, are very keen to help on visits out and with sport, in particular Saturday morning rugby. The school is

especially appreciative of the high percentage of parents who become involved in their child's Individual Educational Plans and annual reviews. At home, many parents appreciate the home/school diaries for their two-way communication. Some parents are also very enthusiastic in helping with reading projects and topics.

53. The impact of parents on the work of the school is good and well appreciated by the school. The Friends' Association has raised considerable sums of money through arranging events and parties. Recently they have paid towards the Jubilee Party and given money to the library.
54. The effectiveness of the school's links with its parents and the whole community is now good and has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Such links undoubtedly contribute positively towards the school ethos and to the quality of pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher has recently taken a twelve month secondment from the school and, at the time of the inspection, the acting headteacher had only been in post for a number of weeks and a senior member of staff had just left to take maternity leave. Despite these difficulties, the acting headteacher, in the short period of time she has been in post, has identified the right priorities in order to improve the quality of education. The previous inspection found a style of management in which team building and staff involvement in decision making played a large part. This continues to be so and all members of staff share a common commitment to raising standards. There is a very positive ethos throughout the school and relationships are very good. The school's policy of ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life is effective. There is no written policy in place for promoting racial harmony in line with recent legislation. However, in all aspects of school life racial harmony is promoted positively.
56. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in addressing most of the key issues identified in the report. Good improvements have been made in the resources for information and communication technology and pupils now have more opportunities to use and develop their skills in the information and communication technology suite. As a result, standards have improved and are now similar to those found in most schools. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use their skills in other subjects. Pupils' achievements in design and technology are better and are now satisfactory. Over the last four years the improvements in the school's results in the National Curriculum tests, taken at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, have been above the national trend. The policies and schemes of work for the majority of subjects have been revised to establish consistent practice. Procedures for monitoring standards in English, mathematics and science are good and the information is used well to inform what needs to be done to raise levels of achievement. However, more needs to be done in other subjects to establish suitable assessment procedures and to use the information gathered to improve standards. Development planning is now good, and the school has been very successful in addressing issues with regards to the budget and is no longer in deficit.
57. The role of co-ordinators in the monitoring of standards in their areas has improved in some subjects since the last inspection. For example, the mathematics and science co-ordinators have carried out classroom observations. Other co-ordinators check teachers' medium-term planning to ensure the curriculum is being planned in line with the agreed schemes of work. However, there is still some way to go to ensure that the information is used critically to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in all subjects. This is an aspect that the school has identified as a priority for development.
58. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils most of its legal requirements through an effective committee structure. However, the school's prospectus does not contain all the legally required information. The links between individual governors and some subjects and aspects such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs have been valuable in ensuring that the governing body is kept updated on what initiatives the school is implementing in

these areas. However, more could be done to use such information to evaluate the school's effectiveness.

59. The structure of the school development plan is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. This is a well-thought-out document that deals with the issues facing the school and sets a clear path for development. It is rightly focused on the raising of standards, especially in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. All staff and governors have had the opportunity to contribute ideas. It includes satisfactory systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the progress made towards targets. The appropriate priorities in the plan are linked to specific actions that have deadlines for completion and criteria by which to measure success. The allocation of responsibilities for taking the necessary action is clear. The plan is now guiding spending and also professional development.
60. Financial planning and management are good. The acting headteacher and the two school secretaries conscientiously follow clear financial procedures. The school was audited recently and systems were found to be of a good quality. During the past few years the governors have been very successful in addressing issues with regards to the budget. They have conscientiously ensured that they obtained value for money on all purchases. As a result of their prudence, the school is no longer in deficit. All monies allocated to special educational needs are spent appropriately.
61. All members of staff have job descriptions. The support given to newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school is good. It ensures that they are fully informed on all procedures. Performance management procedures have been introduced well.
62. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory, overall. However, the co-ordinator for special educational needs does not have time allocated to her to carry out her duties. The special needs policy has not been updated to take into account the revised Code of Practice. There is an appropriate governor designated as a responsible person who oversees special educational needs. She works in the school as a special needs learning assistant and, as a result, is able to keep the governing body fully briefed on all developments. Resources and responsibilities are delegated and allocated satisfactorily in order to support pupils' attainment and progress. Staff work closely with the co-ordinator and all available specialist support is well managed and organised. Parents are kept well-informed and invited to all reviews.
63. The school has a sufficient number of teachers who are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a wide range of experience amongst the staff, including provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Staff expertise in design and technology has improved significantly since the last inspection. However, most members of staff have not received up-to-date training in information and communication technology. Teachers do work well together despite the difficulties associated with classes being housed in two separate buildings. Classroom support staff are deployed appropriately and well briefed. They make a valuable contribution to the progress pupils make.
64. The smooth day-to-day running of the school and the efficient management of its finances owes much to the good work of the two school secretaries. They draw very effectively on each other's skills and expertise to sustain and develop everyday routines, making full use of management information systems. The caretaker continues to provide the school with a very good standard of care and is always on hand to greet visitors and offer support.
65. The accommodation is satisfactory and is adequate for the needs of the curriculum. It has been adapted to provide a good environment for learning to take place. It is kept in a very clean condition. The school grounds are attractive and the provision of seated areas enables children to socialise well with each other. However, the computer suite, headteacher's office and Year 6 classroom are housed on the second floor and can only be reached by narrow stairways which are unsuitable for wheelchair access.

66. As at the time of the last inspection the provision of resources is satisfactory, overall, and good use is made of them. There is a lack of resources in geography, and of outdoor resources for children in the Foundation Stage. Information and communication technology provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection but there is still a need for more programs and classroom-based hardware to support work in other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. As it continues to strive for further improvement the governors, headteacher and staff should
- (1) **provide more opportunities for pupils to use their writing and information and communication technology skills in other subjects of the curriculum.**
(Paragraphs 89, 107, 127)
 - (2) **improve the provision for gathering information and the use made of assessment information in subjects other than English, mathematics and science by**
 - putting in place manageable systems to record information;
 - making sure that results from assessments are analysed to set clear targets for future learning for individuals and year groups.*(Paragraphs 48, 123, 129, 144)*

[The school has already identified this area as one for development.]

- (3) **ensure that curriculum co-ordinators are more involved in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas by**
 - ensuring that teachers are given the necessary training to carry out classroom evaluations;
 - giving them time to do it;
 - using the information gathered to share best practice and improve the quality of learning even further.*(Paragraphs 91, 101, 123, 129, 144)*

[The school has already identified this area as one for development.]

Other issues that should be considered by the school.

- (4) The need to provide all the required information in the school's prospectus.
(Paragraphs 51, 58)
- (5) The lack of resources in geography and the need to improve resources in information and communication technology and those for outdoor use by children in the reception class.
(Paragraphs 77, 129, 136)
- (6) The updating of the special needs policy and implementation of the local authority recommendations.
(Paragraph 62)
- (7) The need to plan in the use of the outside area into all aspects, where appropriate, of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage.
(Paragraph 68)
- (8) The need to provide more information for parents about homework.
(Paragraph 50)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
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
Number	1	9	24	13	2	0	0
Percentage	2	18	49	27	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	17	12	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	15
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	23	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (94)	90 (92)	93 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	23	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (94)	79 (92)	86 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	14	20	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	13
	Girls	18	17	19
	Total	26	27	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (90)	79 (80)	94 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	12
	Girls	18	17	19
	Total	25	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (90)	79 (80)	91 (90)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	176
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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	29.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	148.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	439,762
Total expenditure	446,263
Expenditure per pupil	2,145
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,032
Balance carried forward to next year	2,531

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	28	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	43	13	1	0
The teaching is good.	64	32	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	53	4	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	37	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	27	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	49	8	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	61	37	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	37	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	44	11	4	9

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

68. The school provides the children with a sound start to their education. The curriculum is based on the *six areas of learning* and generally gives the children broad and balanced experiences. As at the time of the previous inspection pupils are well prepared to start work on the National Curriculum. There is a wide range of well-focused experiences to promote the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. However, the provision for physical development is narrow. The Reception classroom has direct access to a playground but teachers' planning contains little reference to the use of the outdoors as a way of extending the children's experiences in the other areas of learning.
69. The attainment level of most of the children entering the Reception class is average, with a small number above average but no evidence of children being below average. The arrangements for assessing the children's attainment are satisfactory. No pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. The teacher and support staff use the information from the various tests soundly, together with day-to-day observations to plan work. There are individual targets focusing mainly on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. However, there is little to indicate each child's progress through the stepping-stones in the six areas of learning or to indicate when the early learning goals are met.
70. The classroom is attractive and a stimulating environment for learning. One teacher and two assistants teach the children. The staff is experienced and works well together as a team, which is to the benefit of the children. Teaching is good, overall. As a result, most children are in line to reach the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of the Reception class, with a number reaching them before they move into Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is good. Standards are above average by the end of Reception. There are good procedures for introducing children to school life, which helps them to settle in with ease. Care is taken to meet parents and carers in order to be able to plan carefully to meet children's individual needs. Children enjoy coming to school. They respond well to the rules and routines of the class. Most are confident in trying out new activities and speak confidently to other children and adults. The children are polite and respectful to their teachers and other helpers in the classrooms. Classroom resources are used carefully. Children sit quietly in assembly to hear a story and respond with respect during shared prayers. They concentrate on their activities for extended periods, either when listening carefully to a book during the Literacy Hour, or when persevering with the careful cutting out of Noah's Ark pictures. Children select their own activities during free choice periods and most are able to play sensibly alongside other children and share the activity with others. They demonstrate growing independence in their dressing skills and in personal hygiene; for example, washing hands following a painting activity. The children take responsibility for tidying-up at the end of lessons. There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of other people. Several show a good level of maturity in their behaviour and attitudes to others. They share resources and play co-operatively. When serving in the Beach Shop one child served her customer politely and very efficiently pointing out the price of the item and checking the change with her.
72. Teaching is good, as every opportunity is taken to develop the children's personal skills. All adults provide the children with good example in personal and social skills. Praise and encouragement are highly effective in promoting positive behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

73. In communication, language and literacy, standards are average by the end of Reception. Children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. This area of learning is well taught. Listening and speaking skills are extended effectively through a wide range of well-planned activities. When children are playing, adults question them effectively and challenge them to think.
74. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are well used to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. A strong emphasis is placed on listening carefully to the teachers and following instructions. The children are attentive listeners. They enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and join in familiar ones with enthusiasm. They respond correctly to instructions in ICT lessons. Literacy skills are developing as children talk about key words they have learnt, such as *they, are, said* and *went*, using them correctly when making up their own sentences. Structured play situations, group activities and lunch-times provide opportunities for children to use and extend their vocabulary. Clearly labelled displays, pictures, calendars, weather charts and individual name cards help children develop early reading and writing skills. Many hold their pencils correctly and know how to form their letters. The children are gaining confidence in their abilities as readers and writers. They frequently use the writing corner and take opportunities for writing during role-play when, for example, compiling a holiday list. Some can write their name and simple sentences. The book corner is used well by the children and they handle the books with care. In shared reading tasks children recognise initial sounds and use these to read unfamiliar words. Children choose books as an activity and all children take books home on a regular basis to share with family members. This has a positive effect on children's progress in learning to read. Teaching in this aspect of learning is good. All staff are competent in teaching basic skills in literacy.

Mathematical development

75. Most children attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception year, with a few exceeding them. Children make sound progress in developing their mathematical understanding. Work is planned using the National Numeracy Strategy. Through play, practical activities, number songs, rhymes and counting games many recognise numbers up to 10 and a significant number can count beyond this with ease. Children have good opportunities to compare, match, sort, order and sequence. Teachers place great emphasis on developing appropriate mathematical language and children are encouraged to consider size, shape and position when playing with toys. A significant number can recognise two-dimensional shapes and copy and repeat symmetrical patterns. Problem-solving skills are being developed as children are taught to recognise coins of different values. Calculating skills of *more* or *less*, *greater* or *smaller* are also developed through handling coins. They use computer programs to develop and reinforce their mathematical understanding. All staff are deployed effectively to support the children and this helps them to keep up and complete their work successfully. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. The teacher and support staff are competent in teaching the basic skills required.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. All children are on course to reach the nationally expected levels of attainment in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are interested in the world around them. Children know that Christians pray to God and in class they end their school day with a prayer. They know that plants and animals need water. They paint and draw objects that float and sink and use computer programs well to reinforce their understanding of themselves and to consolidate numeracy skills. The children are developing a good sense of time and place from studying past and present events in their own lives, such as birthdays and christenings. Role-play is also used to enhance children's understanding of the past. For example, one child playing with the impressive Noah's Ark resource was very well-informed about the life of Noah and the flood. In this aspect, the children make good progress because the teaching is good. From the good range of experiences provided and stories heard the children are beginning to know about their own culture and beliefs and how others may have different beliefs.

Physical development

77. By the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to reach the expected levels of attainment. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing children's skills when handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials. Children are given many opportunities to cut out, glue, paint and crayon to develop their handling skills. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development. They are well co-ordinated and use space sensibly. They cope well when playing with older pupils, running and moving around. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, but the lack of suitable outdoor resources limits the progress pupils' make. Although, there is a secure play area with playground markings and access to a spacious grassed area, resources for outdoor play are unsatisfactory.

Creative development

78. Standards in creative development are higher than those normally found by the end of Reception year as a result of the good quality of teaching children receive. Children enjoy a good range of experiences, art, music, story and imaginative play. Through such experiences children are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary and to develop their use of language to express ideas. They enjoy singing. There is a range of musical instruments, which are well used to develop children's understanding of sound, rhythm and pattern. Children enjoy taking part in role-play situations; for example, acting out the roles of parents and Beach Shop assistants. They shop at the Beach Shop and buy items with their toy money. They carry out domestic chores in the home corner and write notes to cancel the milk. This good range of provision is well used for developing the children's speaking, listening and writing skills. There are many well-thought-out activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour.
79. Staff provide materials with a variety of interesting textures from which children can choose to create their own pictures and models. They work with construction kits and Plasticene to create three-dimensional models. Sand and water are available for the children to explore. Teaching is good in this area of learning. Varied activities are provided which encourage the development of creativity.

ENGLISH

80. Inspection findings show that standards in English are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. These findings are similar to those made at the time of the last inspection. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds the school's overall performance in reading was close to the national average and the average for similar schools. However, the school's results in writing were above the national average and the average for similar schools. In the 2001 English tests for eleven-year-olds the school's results were close to the national average. Compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils, results were average. The 2002 results show standards to be in line with those found in most schools, both at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. There is a significant number of special educational needs pupils in the Year 6 age group, yet overall standards have been maintained.
81. Inspection evidence shows that the performance of pupils in English exceeded the national average for the Year 6 age group. The school is on line to meet this year's target. Although test results over the previous three years show boys to be performing better than girls, this is not borne out by inspection findings, which show no significant difference between them. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and the small number from ethnic minority backgrounds receive good support and make satisfactory progress towards the objectives set down in their Individual Educational Plans.

82. The school places an appropriate emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills in Years 1 to 6, and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those found in the majority of schools by the end of Years 2 and 6. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to explain themselves clearly; for example, when describing a book they have read or a piece of work they have just completed. They participate well in question and answer sessions. Pupils in Year 1 look forward to being chosen as a V.I.P. and enjoy the challenge of answering questions about their holidays or personal achievements. In Years 3 to 6 pupils develop increasing fluency in speaking and accuracy in their choice of vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, most are confident conversationalists. They quickly pick new words and often use good phrases to describe and explain. For example, in a lesson based on the book *Kensuke's Kingdom* pupils in Year 6 used a good range of descriptive phrases to describe various characters. Pupils are sometimes given good opportunities to develop their speaking skills well in other subjects. For example, groups of pupils in Year 4 used technical vocabulary well during a geography lesson. They reported back confidently to the rest of the class their research findings about environmental issues such as global warming and droughts.
83. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils make good progress as a result of the good teaching they receive. This shows an improvement on the previous year. By the age of seven, most pupils achieve at least the expected level. The majority have acquired a good knowledge of how to read unfamiliar words by sounding them out. Other strategies, such as using picture clues or making sense of words by looking at the rest of the sentence, are also used well. Higher attainers read aloud with confidence and appropriate expression. They are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books and can speculate as to what might happen if the plot was changed. Many pupils can explain the difference between fact and fiction books and know, for example, that if they want to locate a book about trains they would have to look under 'T' in the library. Pupils take books home regularly and family members hear their children read. This has a very positive effect on standards and progress.
84. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can read a range of texts with a satisfactory degree of fluency and expression. Books are well matched to pupils' attainment and interest level and pupils are very enthusiastic readers. Higher attainers express a preference for different authors and choose books because of particular interest, such as adventure stories. They are able to make deductions and inferences from their reading. Most pupils can describe the different characters in the stories they have read and explain the key features of the plot. The majority of pupils use the contents page well to find information from non-fiction books but some still have to be reminded to turn to the index page. The library is not well used for research activities and few classrooms have an attractive reading area to attract pupils and encourage them to read more.
85. As at the time of the previous inspection pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, in writing in Years 1 to 6, and standards are broadly average by the time they reach the ages of seven and eleven. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can write in a range of styles for a variety of purposes. They produce narrative, description, lists and instructions. From an early age pupils are taught to form letters correctly and develop a style that is legible and well presented. Most pupils know how to use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. Higher-attainers include speech and exclamation marks appropriately in their writing. The previous inspection reported that the pupils were being encouraged to write more extensively. This continues to be the case. For example, Year 2 have rewritten the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. One pupil thought up her own ending and wrote, 'In the morning Goldilocks came back and turned the oven on and cooked some food to say sorry to all the three bears'.
86. By the end of Year 6, the higher achievers attain a good standard producing work of good quality. This is typified by well-organised writing with paragraphs and imaginative vocabulary to capture the readers' imagination. A poem about Halloween does just this as it begins with the words 'Halloween is the fear of the shadows lurking in the dark'. As at the time of the last inspection pupils show an enthusiastic interest in poetry. For example, one pupil with special needs wrote this outstanding piece of personification, 'The conveyor belt yawned into action. "Oh I'm *tyred* ! It was a late night last night". The pistons complained that everyone was being too noisy. The wide-

eyed fork lift truck coughed into action'. Most pupils punctuate sentences correctly and write in a clear, legible style.

87. At the time of the last inspection it was reported that pupils did not have sufficient access to information and communication technology equipment nor did they have the relevant expertise to present their work in varied font and format. The school has made good progress in this aspect and satisfactory use is now being made of information and communication technology to word process pupils' writing.
88. Behaviour is very good, overall, and pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning. Most pupils are eager to learn, stay on task and show good levels of concentration.
89. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, in Year 1 to 6. All teachers have a good understanding of how to teach the basic skills of reading and writing. They plan conscientiously, following the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy. Most teachers ensure that tasks are interesting and are matched to pupils' prior attainment. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of subjects such as science, history and geography to develop pupils' writing. They share the learning objectives with the class so that pupils understand very clearly what new skills they are going to learn and what work they are expected to do. Throughout the school the teaching of phonics, word recognition, spelling, punctuation and grammar is given a high priority and pupils' sound knowledge and understanding of these important basic skills is apparent in their reading and writing.
90. Marking of pupils' work is supportive and there are some examples of thoughtful comments being made which are constructive and set targets for development. When the class teacher makes a point of monitoring pupils' progress during group work, it has the effect of increasing the work rate and levels of concentration. Where teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory in Year 3, classroom control is not firm enough and the teacher does not insist on the pupils following agreed routines. Pupils are allowed to shout out answers without putting up their hands first and expectations with regard to handwriting and the presentation of work are not high enough.
91. The subject is co-ordinated well. Although teachers have been observed in the classroom and a scrutiny of work undertaken, more could be done to evaluate what is working well and what needs to be improved. Assessment procedures are good and the information gathered is used effectively to set targets. Resources are adequate.

MATHEMATICS

92. The 2001 Year 6 results in the national tests show standards to be above average, both in relation to all schools and similar schools. This is as a result of the good teaching pupils receive. Over the last four years the school's performance in mathematics exceeded the national average. Pupils make good progress and there is no significant difference between what boys and girls achieve. Almost all pupils attained the expected level in mathematics in the 2002 end-of-year tests. However, overall results, including those at the higher Level 5, are not as high because of the number of pupils with special educational needs in the age group. The 2002 results in the end of Year 2 national tests show standards to be above those found in most schools. Good progress has been made in ensuring that higher-attaining Year 2 pupils are suitably challenged. As a result, almost half the current age group achieved above average results this year.
93. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and Individual Education Plans contain mathematical targets when appropriate. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the satisfactory progress pupils make.
94. The previous inspection found that progress in Years 1 and 2 was not uniform and that assessment of pupils' learning was inconsistent. Both these issues have been addressed successfully. Good procedures are in place to track pupils' progress and effective use is made of the information gained to ensure that in most lessons work is well matched to pupils' levels of

attainment. Throughout both years pupils make good progress, overall. Pupils enter Year 1 with mathematical competencies that are within the average range. They apply their knowledge and understanding of number well to solve problems in mathematics lessons and to handle data related to other subjects. The National Numeracy Strategy is incorporated effectively into the teaching of the subject.

95. By the end of Year 2 pupils are becoming secure in the quick recall of number facts to at least 20. Most understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and demonstrate this by giving the subtraction corresponding to a given addition and vice versa. Higher-attaining pupils are able mentally to work out change from a £2 coin when items are purchased. Pupils know and use the names for common plane and solid shapes. A good understanding of measures by most pupils is achieved through practical activities involving estimation, approximate measures - such as handspans, and accurate measures of length using centimetres. Pupils conduct surveys about favourite things successfully and plot their results in the form of pictograms or block graphs.
96. Throughout Years 3 to 6 pupils make satisfactory progress. Most Year 6 pupils can apply their number skills to solve problems with confidence. They can recall multiplication facts up to 10 times and employ them to arrive speedily at related division facts. Higher-attaining pupils are able to change improper fractions into mixed numbers and calculate addition of decimals to two places with good understanding of place value. Most pupils are able to work out percentages and to explain what prime numbers are. The majority of pupils know how to calculate the perimeter and area of a regular shape and many can estimate and measure accurately acute and obtuse angles to the nearest degree using a protractor.
97. Satisfactory use is made of numeracy in other subject areas, for example, in science in Year 1 plant growth is plotted on a chart. In Year 5, pulse rates are measured and recorded before and after exercise. In geography, pupils record the annual rainfall in different parts of the United Kingdom and produce graphs to show their findings. While there is some evidence of information and communication technology being used in mathematics lessons there is scope for more usage. In one class during the week of the inspection pupils used the computer to carry out investigations unrelated to mathematics during a numeracy lesson.
98. The quality of teaching is good, overall. All teachers plan their work in accordance with the National Numeracy Strategy and make very good use of classroom assistants. Where teaching is good there is a good emphasis on problem-solving activities. For example, in the Year 6 class pupils responded well to the challenge of working out the numerical codes of given words. In Year 2, effective teaching stimulated pupils to use units of time to solve problems correctly: such as, how many days are there in 2 weeks? The work-study shows that in all classes teaching is of a good quality. However, during the week of the inspection teaching was occasionally unsatisfactory in Year 3. This was because pupils were not managed well. For example, the teacher did not insist that they gave their full attention when she was talking. Good use is made of plenary sessions to praise, summarise and draw on pupils' explanations in most classes.
99. The quality of learning is good, overall, in most year groups because teachers use strategies such as number bingo to help make mathematics fun and the lessons interesting. Good use is made of paired working that encourages pupils to discuss their work. Most teachers are successful in emphasising the correct use of mathematical language. All teachers have good subject knowledge. Most lessons are well prepared and organised, good account is taken of the needs of all ability groups so that work is well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. However, the work study shows that in some classes there is sometimes an overuse of worksheets that do not challenge the higher attainers.
100. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They respond well to the school's practice of working in pairs and discussing their work sensibly. In consequence, they are well able to explain and justify their findings from an early age. Homework tasks support class work well. In general, work is presented satisfactorily but in one lower junior class some pupils do not take sufficient care when setting out their work.

101. The subject is co-ordinated well and includes the monitoring of teaching. However, more needs to be done to make observations evaluative rather than descriptive. There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. Results from statutory and optional tests are analysed and appropriate action taken. For example, the results of higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 have improved tremendously this year because of the focus given to developing pupils' numeracy skills. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to review their own achievements. For example, one pupil wrote, '*When I was first in Year 5 I could not do my 6 times table but now I can do my 9 times.*' Parents' meetings have been held to inform them about the teaching and learning of mathematics. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection, as have the storage arrangements.

SCIENCE

102. The standard of work in the current Year 6 age group is above that normally found. There is a clear trend of rising standards, which is above the national trend. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. In the Year 2001, National Curriculum test results in science were above the national average and the average for schools in similar circumstances. The 2002 results are even better.
103. Most pupils in Year 2 are achieving at least the expected standard. Teachers' expectations are high and all pupils are being appropriately challenged. Progress is satisfactory, overall. Overall, since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained, with a slight dip in 2001. Very few pupils achieved the expected standards in their knowledge of materials and their properties and development of skills in experimental and investigative science. Inspection findings and the results of the 2002 teacher assessments in science show that standards have improved.
104. The overall raising in standards across the school since the previous inspection is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the teachers are placing a higher emphasis on scientific investigation. The pupils are encouraged to look for evidence when carrying out investigations. The pupils enjoy the practical approach to learning and most concentrate hard and work well with others in their group. As a result they learn from one another as well as from their teachers. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was a significant weakness in the science provision. Secondly, they are being taught relevant scientific terms. This helps their understanding of scientific concepts and principles. Thirdly, better use is made of assessment information for planning. As a result, work is matched effectively to the needs of all pupils and provides challenge.
105. By the end of Year 2, pupils have satisfactory scientific knowledge and skills. They make sound progress. Pupils in a Year 1 class can identify different parts of the human body. They know the major organs in the human body and that a balanced diet is required to remain healthy. Through practical observation pupils know and understand what conditions seeds and plants require for healthy growth. Analysis of previous work shows that Year 2 pupils can use electrical circuits effectively to light up a bulb. They have developed a good understanding of the action of forces on objects. They know that forces can make things change direction, stop, get faster, speed up or slow down. Higher-attaining pupils could explain how they made their comparisons fair and can set up an appropriate test. They develop their sound language skills by talking about the activities and the objects they observe.
106. By the end of Year 6, they have a good grounding in a range of scientific knowledge and understanding required by the National Curriculum. They carry out a range of activities that are effective in helping them to develop their understanding of scientific enquiry, as much of their work is in the form of investigation. Many pupils have become confident investigators, organising and recording their work well, needing little help from their teachers and making well-judged predictions of their results. Pupils in Year 6, when preparing to investigate what conditions are best for the growth of yeast demonstrated competence and confidence in their organising of their experiments. They raised questions, discussed how to make the testing *fair* and predicted likely outcomes. They discussed and analysed their observations in groups, finally recording their findings in a methodical and clear style. Work on health and hygiene is good and all pupils achieve well in this area of study. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how microbes, germs and viruses can effect us. They also show, through their investigative work, how microbes and bacteria can be put to good effect. Many pupils relate their learning to everyday life. For example, they know that small organisms can be used in food production.
107. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in science. They deploy their numeracy skills effectively, making appropriate measurements, for example, of length, weight and volume, and display them in graphical form using computer programs. However, the use of literacy and information and communication technology skills is inconsistent across the school. For example, there is an over-dependence on the use of commercially produced worksheets in lessons, which is limiting opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.

108. The quality of teaching is good, and occasionally teaching is very good. The effect of this is to provide pupils with a good quality of learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of the science curriculum. They use appropriate scientific vocabulary and explain tasks well. The teaching of investigative skills has been given a higher priority. This is improving the quality of pupils' learning as they are looking for evidence when investigating. Most pupils are tightly focused on the tasks they are given. Teachers' planning for lessons is detailed and covers effectively the range of knowledge and understanding required. This planning shows clear and attainable objectives that are shared with the pupils.
109. The more effective teaching is characterised by work being well-matched to pupils' needs and assessment information being used well. This is especially noticeable in Years 2 and 6. In these classes there is very good quality questioning relating learning to everyday life and to the experiences of the pupils. Often teachers make very effective use of teaching resources, as in a Year 6 class where the teacher organised a wide range of suitable investigatory activities and research materials to good effect in developing pupils understanding of *micro-organisms*. Classroom assistants are well briefed and provide good support for pupils.
110. Pupils are interested in their work. In the best lessons there is a buzz of excitement and interest in the practical sessions. Pupils spoken to, said '*Science is enjoyable as we like investigating and enjoy the practical work*'. Pupils behave well in lessons. In all lessons seen a striking feature is the way in which pupils collaborate and support each other's learning. For example, pupils in Year 2, when working in groups, sensibly shared the tasks of measuring their hand-spans and discussed their observations. Science is used well for providing opportunities for developing pupils' social skills.
111. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced government recommended guidelines for teaching science. In their planning, both long- and medium-term, there is an appropriate emphasis on investigative work. Good assessment procedures are now in place. Resources are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and her leadership and management of the subject are very good. She monitors teaching and has carried out a comprehensive audit of the subject. National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

ART AND DESIGN

112. Standards in art are above the levels expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6. Since the previous inspection, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved. This is mainly the result of the teachers' very good subject knowledge and the effective teaching methods used. As a result most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment as they move through the school. The art and design curriculum is a significant vehicle for meeting the school's wider aim of giving the pupils a strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimension to their lives.
113. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in their skills and understanding of art, craft and design. Scrutiny of work and observation of teaching show they have experience of the works of recognised artists. They learn a wide range of techniques successfully. They have looked at pattern, made good observational drawings using a range of media, including fabric dyes, crayons and oil pastels. Pupils have represented their ideas in different ways, such as through the use of collage and weaving. They incorporate this knowledge into imaginative works of art of a high standard. Pupils have created good quality sculptures from natural objects collected from outdoors, influenced by the style of Andy Goldsworthy. There are good cross-curricular links and these serve to reinforce and enhance pupils' work in other curriculum areas. Year 2 pupils produced a high quality wall-hanging depicting fruits and vegetables, showing strong links, with their science work. They made clay tiles of old buildings they had observed in their locality, thereby reinforcing their historical understanding of how buildings change over a period of time.
114. By the end of Year 6 pupils show a good level of maturity and skill in their approach to art and design. They continue to develop their observational skills and techniques to a high standard.

Older pupils have undertaken drawings from first-hand observations of floral displays using a range of processes, and techniques such as pencils, pastels, dyes and embroidery. Many are of a high standard with good application of the techniques of shading, tone and accuracy of observation. As in Years 1 and 2, work seen shows links with other subjects. In Year 6, pupils have produced good quality artwork on Egyptian artefacts. In Year 5, using black paint on a white background, the pupils have created striking seascape images which provided a stimulus for their creative writing.

115. Throughout the school there are many very good examples of the artwork of different cultures. For example, Year 3 looked closely at patterns, using Polynesian *Tapa* designs. Year 4, through drawing and printing, explored Aboriginal art and Year 6 explored the technique of *cross hatching*, after studying William Hogarth's drawings. The school also celebrates pupils' art achievements by displaying these prominently in corridors and foyers. Opportunities to explore and develop pupils' skills in three-dimensional work and use of computer programs need to be extended.
116. It was only possible to see two lessons in art and design during the inspection and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. Both the lessons observed were of a very good quality, but only the teacher with specialist art and design skills was observed. Strengths include the teacher's very good knowledge of the subject, focused questioning and precise use of technical language. Planning is thorough and the teacher well prepared so the lessons run smoothly with all the resources accessible. Teacher demonstration is used well to introduce pupils to new techniques and experimenting is encouraged. For example, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were using clay, the teacher asked questions about the properties of the materials they were using, eliciting appropriate art and scientific vocabulary from many pupils. This resulted in the pupils experimenting and increasing their understanding of the properties of materials and producing detailed models of houses on clay tiles. Effective learning is also linked to the teacher's high expectations of quality work and behaviour. This results in pupils taking the initiative, being able to work individually and in groups and also behaving very well. Effective use is made of discussion to help pupils evaluate their own designs and models.
117. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is working effectively to raise the profile of art and design in the curriculum. As a result of a comprehensive audit, looking at teachers' planning, studying displays and portfolios of pupils' work, she has a very good grasp of what needs to be done to improve standards further. She works well alongside the staff to raise confidence and skills in the teaching of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. Two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, in Years 1 and 4. Judgements about standards in Years 2 and 6 are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, including some photographs, an examination of teachers' planning and discussion with teachers. It is not possible to make any judgement about the quality of teaching. Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection in raising standards to a satisfactory level. Pupils in Year 6 now have a satisfactory knowledge of basic skills. However, in all years, few opportunities are provided for pupils to incorporate information and communication technology into the subject.
119. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are similar to those found in most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress in a range of joining and assembling skills. They make things out of different materials, including card and fabric competently. For example, in Year 1, the pupils made sliding mechanisms to create moving nursery rhyme pictures. Year 2 pupils were encouraged to evaluate a range of different types of hand puppets before designing their own. They drew and listed the materials they would need. Their puppets show scissors control and the ability to join materials using a running stitch.
120. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress during Years 3 to 6. Standards of attainment are in line with those found in most schools. In Year 4 they develop well the design skills learned previously. They are taught a basic understanding of 'levers' and

'linkage'. Discussions held with pupils demonstrate that they know how to plan their own sandwiches using different combinations of ingredients. Pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of the components required to produce a mobile Victorian vehicle and the significance of pulleys and friction in the process. Their technical vocabulary is well-developed and words like *cam*, *chassis* and *axle* are well understood.

121. No judgement can be made about overall standards of teaching. In the two lessons seen teaching was of a good quality. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject was secure and lessons were planned carefully. Effective use is made of discussion to help pupils evaluate their own designs and models. Pupils are taught skills systematically and opportunities are provided for them to experiment using a range of tools and techniques. Pupils have been given the opportunity to examine the design features of commercially produced objects.
122. Pupils behave well in lessons and are proud of their work. For example, during the week of the inspection pupils in one class were keen to show their models to the inspection team.
123. The school has adopted the government's recommended guidelines for the subject and planning shows that these are central to the teaching of design and technology throughout the school. Resources are adequate. There are no formal assessment procedures in place. But some teachers have their own systems for recording skill development. Curriculum co-ordination does not include any lesson observations or surveys of work in order to determine how well skills are developed or how the subject is taught throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

124. There is insufficient evidence from direct observation of lessons to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in history in Years 1 to 6 and geography in Years 1 and 2. However, from the evidence of teachers' records and a range of finished work, it is judged that all pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs, achieve the expected standard for their age in both subjects and make sound progress. These findings broadly reflect the judgements made at the time of the previous inspection.
125. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in geography is similar to that found in most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of geographical knowledge of peoples, places and environments. They also develop skills in carrying out geographical enquiries both in and out of school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have studied the immediate area around their school. They can explain how they would improve the garden area and the possible implications of a road being built on the school playing-field. They rightly came to the conclusion that not all change is beneficial. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the places and themes studied. They have looked carefully at how mountains are formed and compare the ease with which we get our water supply with the difficulties experienced by a family in Ghana. A recent visit to the school by the mayor of Westhoughton gave pupils in Year 3 an ideal opportunity to find out about the work of the local council. Standards in mapping are not as good as in most other schools. Although pupils have an understanding of the key elements of map reading, they do not acquire skills in a systematic way, and progress in this aspect is patchy.
126. In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop an appropriate sense of chronology as they study and talk about events in the past. They also gain insight into how the world has changed by looking at toys, homes and seaside holidays. Pupils enjoy finding out about such famous people as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. Teachers enrich the curriculum and encourage investigative study through the use of primary and secondary sources. They achieve this, for example, by organising trips to places of interest such as Smithills Hall to experience the Tudor way of life and the Museum of Science and Industry to see how the Romans have influenced us. By the end of Year 6, pupils have had the opportunity to study and gain a vivid insight into life during World War II.

127. Pupils are developing satisfactory research skills in both subjects. However, information and communication technology is not used effectively enough to communicate ideas or to record data. More opportunities could be provided in both subjects for pupils to use their writing skills. Sometimes children are expected to copy text or fill in the odd word on worksheets. Such activities do not allow pupils to develop and extend their writing skills.
128. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was good, overall. In most lessons planning was effective. The part-time teacher working with Years 5 and 6 showed good subject knowledge, gave instructions and explanations clearly and managed pupils well. In Year 4, the teacher provided the pupils with good opportunities to express their ideas and explain their work.
129. There have been some satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection. Both history and geography now have a suitable scheme of work, which takes account of national guidance, and this has helped to improve teachers' planning. Though the subjects are soundly managed, the co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching in their subject. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Resources for geography have not improved much since the last inspection and are barely adequate. There are satisfactory historical resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. Standards, overall, by the end of both Years 2 and 6 are in line with those found in most schools. This judgement is based on the observation of lessons, a survey of pupils' work and discussions held with the co-ordinator and with pupils. Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection, when standards were found to be below average and progress unsatisfactory. Inspection evidence shows that in most aspects progress is satisfactory. There is only limited evidence of pupils using computers to model or control. All classes have weekly timetabled lessons in the information and communication technology that enables skills to be taught explicitly. However, the application of these skills to other subjects is unsatisfactory. Special educational needs pupils receive good support from other pupils in their class and benefit from being taught as members of a smaller group; as a result they make satisfactory progress.
131. Year 2 pupils have satisfactory word-processing skills. Most can manipulate a mouse accurately. With adult support they use the Black Cat Fresco program to produce pictures of good quality. They gain in confidence in using the airbrush tool to improve their pictures. They use the shift key well to locate capital and lower case letters and use the icon to print their work. They know that computers can be used for different purposes. Year 1 pupils are developing well their skills in creating a set of instructions for others to follow when asked to move the turtle around the screen. They make good use of the 'new' and 'undo' icons. By the end of Year 6 there is good evidence of pupils typing direct to screen in English lessons, with good attention given to presenting work well. They can use text and colour to produce their own Christmas poems. Pupils are able to load, save work, print and choose from a menu.
132. Information and communication technology is not used well in other subjects. There are some isolated examples in design and technology and in mathematics, but, overall, there is very limited evidence to demonstrate a good range of work. During the inspection there were many occasions, particularly during numeracy and literacy sessions, when computers were not in use.
133. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive. They show application and persevere with tasks. They listen carefully to instructions. Pupils are keen to work on computers. Behaviour is very good, overall. They share equipment sensibly. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils are well-motivated.
134. Until very recently most teachers have not had the experience of teaching information and communication technology skills because most lessons were taught by the headteacher. Since his secondment from the school began teachers have responded well, despite the lack of training in the full range of skills. During the week of the inspection teaching was of a good quality. This

was because new skills were introduced well and pupils were given sufficient time to practise and develop them. Learning was made relevant because the work they did linked to their own interests. For example, PowerPoint presentations in Year 6 allowed pupils with an interest in football to produce very good quality presentations about their favourite football team. In these lessons the quality of learning was good. Pupils are given clear instructions and individual support if they need it. Lessons are organised well, with classes being taught in two groups. This means that pupils have ready access to computers during the taught sessions in the information and communication technology suite.

135. The co-ordinators have only just been appointed and are very aware that more attention needs to be given to developing pupils' control and modeling skills. New equipment has been ordered for this aspect. They are enthusiastic and keen to improve standards. There is consistent approach to the recording of pupils' progress but in Year 1 a new system is being tried out.
136. All information technology hardware and software is well maintained. The previous inspection found resources to be limited and some computers outdated. Overall, this is no longer the case, although one classroom computer is in need of replacement and new programs are needed to widen the range of resources. The school has created the computer suite in an upstairs room. While it is not ideal, because of potential difficulties with access for disabled, it does make good use of available space. National Curriculum requirements are met.

MUSIC

137. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards which match the levels expected nationally. It is not possible to make any overall judgement about standards in the rest of the school as no lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. The subject has a valued place in the school's curriculum and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' wider learning experiences of different cultures.
138. By the end of Year 2, they sing clearly, expressively and in tune. They perform very well together in singing practice. In a Year 2 lesson they sang a song, from memory, keeping good time. Pupils are developing well an awareness of musical elements such as loud and quiet, fast and slow and how the quality of sound can be altered by, for example, striking a tambour to produce a short sound. The majority of pupils can remember and repeat a simple pattern by clapping correctly and keeping to the beat. Using untuned percussion instruments they make up their own short rhythm and sound patterns and are developing skills in maintaining a *chant* whilst playing an instrument. Pupils' composing skills are satisfactory.
139. In Years 3 to 6, discussions held with pupils demonstrate a good understanding of specific vocabulary such as, *pitch, dynamics and tempo*. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of singing is good. Most pupils sing in tune, in time and show sensitivity to the mood of the music responding with appropriate expression.
140. Pupils listen to a variety of music, which includes music of other cultures and times. The school makes excellent use of assemblies and singing practices to provide the pupils with substantial information on a variety of composers and the background to their compositions. For example, the music co-ordinator talked about the work of Rick Wakeman, a contemporary composer, and how he rearranged the well-known hymn, *Morning has Broken*. He then involved pupils in singing this version. They sang with feeling and with an appreciation of the words and music. This is spiritual and cultural provision of a high order.
141. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. A minority of older pupils benefit from specialist instrumental teaching. Their achievement is satisfactory. Most can *sight read* formal notation skilfully and play their chosen instrument confidently with a degree of competence.
142. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. It was not possible to make any judgement of Years 3 to 6 as no lessons were seen. Both the lessons observed were of a good quality. Strengths include the teachers' very good knowledge of the subject, focused questioning and

precise use of technical language. For example, in a lesson in Year 1 the teacher explored the meanings of pulse and rhythm through the use of a simple chant and this greatly enriched the pupils' learning and their own performances. Other strengths included the very good management of the pupils' behaviour, warm relationships, good links with previous work and the careful drawing out of the pupils' responses, which aided their awareness and appreciation of music significantly. Overall, higher attainers are fully challenged in these class lessons. For example, the teacher involved the pupils in identifying the long and short sounds and recording the sound pattern using informal notation.

143. Learning is fun in Years 1 and 2 and both teachers use humour effectively to enhance their lessons and this contributes strongly to the pupils' very positive attitudes, behaviour and very good relationships.
144. Leadership and management of the subject are good, overall. The co-ordinator, a gifted musician, is new to the role. He has put in place an action plan, outlining what needs to be developed. The curriculum is planned well and contains clear objectives for each year group including an emphasis on developing the pupils' skills as they progress through the school. However, assessment provision and practice, and the use of information technology in music are developing areas. Resources are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. The school's planning shows that it offers a broad and balanced physical education programme. However, during the inspection lessons were seen in only games skills and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about standards. Records show that standards in swimming are as expected. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can swim the 25 metres. Pupils are given very good opportunities to take part in competitive sport. All activities are open to both boys and girls. During the week of the inspection the school successfully won cups in both rugby and football competitions. The good provision in physical education enables all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups, to make satisfactory progress. As at the time of the previous inspection assessments and records do not sufficiently detail progression in skill development.
146. By the end of Year 2 standards in games skills are similar to those found in most schools. Pupils are quite confident in their movements and show appropriate control and co-ordination. They make good use of space when working in the school hall. Pupils know the need for warm-up at the beginning of lessons. They practise and refine their skills as they work with a partner. Pupils' skills are better in performance than in evaluation.
147. By the end of Year 6 standards in the games' aspect of physical education are above those normally found. Pupils showed above average levels of attainment when taking part in the 'flag' game. They were competitive and demonstrated good skills in avoiding the other team members and in employing the right tactics to take advantage of the other team's weaknesses. Good opportunities were provided for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills; they were encouraged to make suggestions about how they might improve their performance.
148. The quality of learning is satisfactory, overall. In the lessons observed, pupils were provided with appropriate opportunities to practise and refine their skills. They respond well to instructions and structured activities. Pupils can work alone, in pairs and small groups.
149. The quality of teaching during the week the inspection was good, overall. A good sequence of activities is built into all lessons. The quality of learning is better when pupils are provided with opportunities to evaluate. In Year 6, pupils are allowed to develop their own ideas and some thoughtful questioning encourages them to think about the strengths and weaknesses of their own and others' performances and how these might be improved. However, very few opportunities were provided for pupils in other classes to evaluate their own performance or that of others in order to suggest improvements. In games, a good pace to lessons keeps pupils actively involved and there

is a good focus on developing skills. Lessons are well organised and the management of pupils and equipment is good.

150. The co-ordinator is well qualified but has not been given the opportunity to evaluate the subject in most other age groups. Teachers are provided with satisfactory guidance for physical education lessons. Resources are satisfactory, overall. The school has a large attractive playing-field. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities including netball, rounders and football. Good links exist with the local Premier league football team and qualified coaches make regular visits to the school to work with groups of pupils. As a result, pupils of all ages improve their physical education skills.