

INSPECTION REPORT

CHURCH COWLEY ST. JAMES FIRST SCHOOL

Cowley, Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123139

Headteacher: Mrs M Buller

Reporting inspector: Mrs B Darley
22518

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th July 2001

Inspection number: 196848

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bartholomew Road Cowley Oxford
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Appropriate authority:	Oxfordshire
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Stephen Hartley
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd June 1997

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Barbara Darley 22518	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art Design and technology Music	How high are standards? - The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
Geoffrey Humphrey 9163	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed? - Staffing accommodation and learning resources
Margaret Handsley 19117	Team inspector	English Religious education Physical education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed? - Leadership and management
Robert Battey 2866	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Information and communication technology Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed? - Finance and efficiency

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Church Cowley St James is a voluntary controlled first school that admits pupils aged three to nine years old. There are 314 boys and girls on roll. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The school is popular and oversubscribed with 47 per cent of its pupils drawn from outside the school's catchment area. Fifty-eight pupils have English as an additional language and 21 pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is high compared to the national average. Sixty-seven pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly similar to that seen nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals varies between 10 and 17 per cent which is broadly in line with the national average. Currently, 32 pupils are eligible for free school meals. Children's attainment on entry to nursery and reception is below expectations particularly in relation to speech and language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards have risen dramatically over the last two years since the current headteacher's appointment. This is due to a clear focus on raising expectations and improving the quality of teaching. The school is well placed to continue to improve and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and a very clear direction for school improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils' social development and the procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are also very good.
- The quality of relationships between pupils and staff is very good right across the school.
- Very good quality information is provided to parents.
- The school's relationships with outside agencies, institutions, the education action zone and a local educational trust are very good and help them in raising standards.
- The quality of teaching in reception is always very good and teaching across the whole school is good overall.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing are below expectations in Years 3 and 4.
- The withdrawal of some pupils for specialist support for literacy, special educational needs and learning English as an additional language is not sufficiently effective. Specialist-teaching staff are not well deployed to make best use of their expertise. Teachers do not have sufficient expertise in teaching pupils who are learning in an additional language.
- The governing bodies role in shaping and directing improvement in the school is underdeveloped
- There is too great an inconsistency in the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage. The majority of the teaching in the nursery is satisfactory and in reception it is always very good.
- Attendance rates are below the national average due to extended holiday in school time.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. There has been good improvement in raising standards and the quality of teaching. The key issues from the last report have been successfully dealt with.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	D	E	D	D
writing	D	D	D	D
mathematics	D	E	C	C

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

The school's national test results declined after the last inspection and were low and a cause for concern when the current headteacher was appointed. Increased awareness of standards and a significant focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising expectations has borne fruit. Standards rose dramatically last year, but were still below expectations except in mathematics. Early indications from the school's analysis of the 2001 national tests results for Year 2 show continued improvement is likely. The inspection findings are that by the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in English. In mathematics, standards are judged to be in line with national expectations. For all other subjects they are in line with national expectations with the exception of religious education where they are above. Pupils in Year 4 have made good progress in their learning since their Key Stage 1 results in 1999 and are now in line with national expectations except in writing where standards are still below national expectations. For all other subjects they are in line with national expectations with the exception of religious education where they are above. The school sets itself a good level of challenge and continues to exceed its targets. When children start nursery most have low levels of experience particularly in speech and language. By the end of reception most children are at expected levels for their age and achieve the Early Learning Goals. There are clear indications this is an improving school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy school and demonstrate interest and enthusiasm for their work. They take pride in what they do and are keen to show their work to others.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and towards adults. They are very aware of the impact that their actions can have on others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between all members of the school community are very good. Pupils are helpful and supportive towards those who find learning or maintaining high standards of behaviour difficult. The personal development of pupils is very good and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. Punctuality in the mornings is satisfactory overall, but there are always a few pupils who arrive late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	good

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

The quality of teaching in reception classes is always very good and a significant strength of the school. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good overall with some examples of very good teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons. The school has a strong focus on identifying and meeting the needs of all pupils in lessons aided by strong support from non-teaching staff. Where pupils are withdrawn from lessons for specialist help this is less successful in meeting their needs and does not add sufficient value to the pupils' achievement. In 66 per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching is good or better and of this 20 per cent is very good. Overall in 93 per cent of lesson the quality of teaching is satisfactory or better. The 7 per cent of unsatisfactory or poor teaching falls in science in Key Stage 1, geography in Key Stage 2, special needs withdrawal during literacy and in nursery.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities provided through the planned curriculum is satisfactory. On occasions, time slippage at the end of lessons, particularly for numeracy and literacy, reduces the time available for other core and foundation subjects and this has the potential to prevent the full delivery of the planned curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for these pupils is satisfactory overall. There are good levels of support in classrooms. The withdrawal of some pupils from lessons is ineffective and does not provide access to the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is not sufficiently well integrated into the whole school education provision. This affects pupils' access to and understanding of the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good guidance is given to pupils to develop their spiritual and moral awareness. The guidance the school provides for pupils' social development is very good and satisfactory concerning their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The support, guidance and welfare provided for pupils by the school is good. Teachers and support staff know and understand their pupils well. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are appropriately monitored and teachers make satisfactory use of their assessment of pupils' learning to guide their plans.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Overall, the effect of the school's links with parents, the impact of their involvement in the work of the school and the contribution they make to their child's learning, is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has brought about a significant level of improvement since the last inspection. School management is good. The headteacher and senior staff work closely together to develop the school's educational provision and share a commitment to improving standards. Senior staff make a satisfactory contribution to the development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body effectively carries out its statutory duties, such as making sure the full National Curriculum is taught. Governors monitor the work of the school and set appropriate targets for improvement, but provide insufficient direction for the school's development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governing body, headteacher and senior staff, supported by the local Education Action Zone, the Diocesan Adviser and local education authority, effectively review the work of the school as it develops and improves.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	All three areas are satisfactory overall. There are weaknesses in the library provision and resources for physical and religious education.
The strategic use of resources	There are satisfactory systems to ensure that the school obtains best value in spending its funds including specific grants.

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 school is well led and managed. • Children like school and behave well. • The school promotes high expectations and pupils make good progress. • Teaching is good and helps pupils to become mature and responsive. • Staff are approachable and parents are comfortable in their relationship with the school. • The school has improved in the last two years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistencies in the setting of homework and the information given to parents about it. • Variation between year groups regarding the information provided to parents about the progress of pupils. • The range of after school and lunchtime activities.

Twenty-one parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector and 79 returned the questionnaire. The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. The inspectors conclude that the provision of homework is satisfactory and adequately supports learning. The inspectors did not find any significant variation between year groups with regard to the information provided on progress and judged the range of additional lunchtime and after school activities to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's national Year 2 test results declined after the last inspection and were low and a cause for concern at the time of the arrival of the current headteacher. The school was performing below that of similar schools. The seriousness of the situation was explained to staff and governors and a significant focus was given to improving the quality of teaching and raising teachers' expectations. This has borne fruit and standards are rising. The school sets itself a good level of challenge and continues to exceed its targets. There is a clear awareness of the continued need to raise standards further particularly in writing in Years 3 and 4 and speech and language in the Foundation Stage. The school is eager to build on its success and strives continually to improve its performance against similar schools which were below in 2000 national tests in reading and writing. The lack of complacency and continued drive for betterment is the mark of an improving school.
2. Children start nursery with attainments below expectations particularly in speech and language. They receive sound teaching in nursery, but there is an insufficient specific focus on developing children's language. The school is aware of this and is part of a new project due to start in September, which will focus specifically on developing the curriculum and support for children's speech and language. It will also provide training and support for staff. Consistent very good teaching in reception classes aids children's learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage¹ when children leave the reception classes most reach the expectations of the national Early Learning Goals². Very good provision in reception classes for creative play enhances children's learning and they achieve above expectations for their age in this area.
3. Standards in Year 2 tests rose dramatically last year, but were still below national averages except in mathematics where they were in line. The clear focus on analysis of data by the mathematics co-ordinator has raised standards more quickly by helping teachers focus their teaching more effectively. Science results are based on teacher assessments. These assessments resulted in standards above expectations. A clear focus on teachers' training to raise their knowledge and expectations of pupils' levels³ of achievement is showing in improving standards. From the school's analysis of the national 2001 tests⁴ in Year 2, there are good indications of continued improvement. This would appear to match the inspection findings. The evidence of the inspection shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in English. In mathematics, standards are judged to be in line with national expectations. In all other subjects, they are in line with national expectations. In religious education pupils' learning is above expectations.

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

³ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Key Stage 1 when pupils are age 7, expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁴ At the time of publication there are no 2001 national average figures available

4. Pupils in Year 4 have made good progress in their learning since their Key Stage 1 results in 1999. In 1999, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics were well below national levels⁵ and in writing they were below. Inspection findings show standards are now in line with national expectations in English with the exception of writing which is still below expectations. In mathematics, science and all other subjects the inspection found standards to be in line with national expectations. In religious education pupils' learning is above expectations.
5. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations across the school. However, the uneven distribution of computer hardware affects pupils' access and learning. Most pupils have appropriate knowledge of computers, but too few opportunities to use their skills across the curriculum. The school is aware of this and there are plans for a specific information technology suite as part of the re-organisation building works.
6. Pupils with special educational needs⁶ make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils receive good levels of assistance in their classes from teaching and support staff. There is an appropriate emphasis on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Good attention is given to support and improve the pupils' attitudes towards their tasks. When pupils are withdrawn for support, their learning and progress is unsatisfactory in some sessions and they do not make sufficient improvement overall. Their progress is not recorded and tasks are not matched to their needs. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in learning English and sound progress in the National Curriculum over time.
7. The recent appointment of a co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils is leading to their effective recognition. They make good progress, having their needs met by the ability groupings in English and mathematics. Here they are able to function effectively in the higher ability groups. Their learning is carefully tracked and expectations increased appropriately in science. Gifted and talented children in reception classes are given more challenges. In nursery and in the foundation subjects there is too little recognition and planning for gifted and talented pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and assist their learning. They enjoy school and demonstrate interest and enthusiasm for their work. They take pride in what they do and are keen to show their work to others. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires, confirmed that their children are keen to come to school. They are happy in school, have good attitudes and care about each other. They felt that teachers promote very good moral values and behaviour.
9. In the nursery, children quickly settle into school routines, develop good social skills and learn to share and take turns. In the reception classes, they listen well and are eager to take part in group play and learning activities. They develop good listening skills and observe the discipline of holding up a hand to answer a question. They concentrate on the tasks they are given and make a positive contribution towards lessons. They also learn to work together to solve problems.

⁵ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Key Stage 2 when pupils are age 11, expected to reach Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁶ Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involves external specialists as well as staff within the school.

10. Good examples of children's positive learning attitudes in the Foundation Stage were observed in a physical education lesson. Children followed instructions carefully, but were also able to contribute their own creative ideas, for example, during a practical activities session with construction materials, where there was good concentration and perseverance. Children demonstrated willingness and the confidence to discuss what they were doing.
11. As pupils progress through the school, their self-discipline, enthusiasm and interest in their work continues to develop. For example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson pupils worked hard to improve their performance. In an English literacy lesson in Year 2, pupils were highly motivated and made a very good contribution towards the content of the lesson. In a Year 3 science lesson, small groups of pupils clearly enjoyed the practical activity and presented their findings to the rest of the class with conviction and confidence. By Year 4, pupils develop the ability to learn independently and their enthusiasm and interest, particularly during group discussions, was observed in lessons on religious education, literacy and numeracy.
12. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and towards adults. Staff treat pupils with respect and consideration and this is reflected in the confidence and trust that pupils have in their relationships with others. The quality of relationships throughout the school is a real strength. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact that their actions can have on others. They respect each other's values and beliefs. Pupils of both genders and from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, some of whom have English as an additional language, are fully included in the life and work of the school.
13. There were no instances of bullying or harassment during the inspection. Neither pupils nor adults tolerate unacceptable behaviour. Pupils who have difficulty matching the high expectations of behaviour promoted by the school are supported and helped by their peers who celebrate with them when they meet their behaviour targets. The high standard of behaviour and an expectation of freedom from bullying was confirmed during an interview between a group of pupils from Years 3 and 4 and a member of the inspection team. One pupil has been excluded in the past year.
14. Pupils respond well to opportunities for them to show initiative and take responsibility. Older pupils have a number of routine duties, such as helping to prepare for assemblies and operating audio-visual equipment, and also demonstrate caring attitudes and sensitivity towards the younger ones. Pupils of all ages take turns to return the registers to the central office and help to keep classrooms tidy. Overall, however, opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are limited and could be further developed. Currently there is no school council, although one is being planned for the future.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. Authorised absence is high, but unauthorised absence is in line with the national average. The school has rigorous procedures for following up on unexpected absence and discouraging extended term time holidays. Punctuality in the mornings is satisfactory overall, but there are always a few pupils who arrive late. Learning attitudes, now very good, have improved since the last inspection when they were judged good. Behaviour has also improved since the last inspection when it was judged good as compared to very good as it is now. Overall, very good learning attitudes and behaviour makes a positive contribution towards pupils' achievement. Pupils develop as confident individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall. A significant strength is the quality of teaching in reception, which is consistently very good. Examples of very good teaching were also seen in Key Stages 1 and 2. In the lessons observed, teaching was very good in 20 per cent and good in 46 per cent. Teaching was satisfactory in 93 per cent of lessons seen. Within the 7 per cent of less than satisfactory teaching was one example of poor teaching in nursery. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching is relatively low and far outweighed by the strength in teaching quality for the school as a whole. All unsatisfactory and poor lessons seen were individual lessons spread across the school. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in an English lesson where pupils with special educational needs were withdrawn for specialist support, a geography lesson in Key Stage 2, a science lesson in Key Stage 1 and one nursery session. The consistently high level of very good teaching in reception has set a significant challenge to the school and the overall disparity in quality of teaching and practice between reception and nursery is now too great. The monitoring of teaching has not ensured that the best of practice is fully shared.
17. The school has improved the quality of its teaching significantly since the last inspection where it was judged sound overall with 39 per cent of lessons found to be good. In the last inspection, unsatisfactory teaching was due to low expectations. Since the arrival of the current headteacher two years ago there has been a consistent focus on raising expectations of all pupils, but especially the more-able pupils. Teachers have had a great deal of support and training which has improved overall basic teaching skills. The literacy and numeracy hour and other local initiatives have provided good training and support to teachers. The improvement in expectations, basic teaching skills and the curriculum are now beginning to impact on standards of attainment as demonstrated by rising Key Stage 1 national test results. The careful and consistent monitoring of teaching has been responsible for raising teacher's expectations and thus the overall quality.
18. A high focus on improving the quality of planning has helped teachers to be clearer about the purpose and structure of their lessons. This is usually clear in teachers' planning and tasks are explained well to pupils. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson pupils were very clear about their tasks and settled quickly to discussing the structure of food chains in different habitats. There is some lack of clarity in the focus of learning objectives for lessons. They are too often imprecise about exactly what pupils will learn during the lesson and teachers do not always evaluate whether pupils have learnt what was expected. Many staff share their objectives for the lesson with pupils, but the lack of clarity about precisely what they will learn leads to some missed opportunities for pupils to assess how much they have learnt. Where teachers are clear about what pupils will learn and share this with pupils it enhances their learning. For example, in a successful physical education lesson Year 2 pupils were aware that the teacher was looking for skills in throwing and how well they co-operated, focused on this and were able to assess how well they thought they were doing. Teachers make good use of national and school guidance documents to help them with their planning.
19. Strong initiatives to raise teachers' awareness of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented has led to a good match of tasks to pupils' abilities within class. The best match of tasks to pupils' abilities is seen in literacy, numeracy and science, but the school is aware that this good practice needs to become firmly embedded in other subjects.
20. Teachers have positive and caring relationships and manage their pupils effectively. Better teaching is based in teachers' very secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. They use a variety of teaching methods that ensure they capture and hold pupils' attention and interest, which aids their learning. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' standards of behaviour and attitudes to school and most expect

appropriate standards of work. Most teachers use time and resources well and most lessons have good pace, but where these were less well managed it resulted in an example of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have good questioning techniques, particularly at the beginning and ends of lessons, to find out what pupils have learned and to take their learning forward. This is a strong feature of literacy and numeracy teaching and resulted in the largest proportion of good teaching. Teachers give clear and effective explanations. Most teachers have good management skills in the classroom and discipline is firm but fair. These factors create a good learning environment in most lessons and produces from pupils good behaviour, enthusiasm for school and good attitudes to their work.

21. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. In one English lesson, where some pupils with special education needs were taught separately to their class the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory. This was because there was insufficient allowance for pupils' differing needs within a small group and pupils did not achieve sufficiently well. Class teachers, with the good levels of assistance from support staff, appropriately modify teaching methods and resources. As a result of this support, pupils with special educational needs learn effectively alongside their fellow pupils in class. For example, younger pupils with learning difficulties in literacy successfully discuss what they do with a learning support assistant. The learning support assistant provides good support and with her help, the pupils confidently complete partly prepared sentences with good levels of understanding and accuracy. This support enables them to complete similar work as the pupils in the rest of the class who are able to write sentences unaided. These pupils have good opportunities for small group or individual work and benefit from the input of other pupils.
22. Class teachers make satisfactory provision in lessons for pupils with English as an additional language and learning support assistants make sure all pupils understand their work. However, class teachers do not always have sufficient awareness of these pupils' language needs. They do not have sufficient expertise in teaching pupils who are learning in an additional language. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive individual and small group tuition and make good progress in learning the first stages of English. They have support from the specialist teacher to understand their lessons. However, this is too infrequent for pupils to make good progress in understanding the National Curriculum.
23. Pupils who are withdrawn to work in small groups miss out on the curriculum work in the classroom. This includes groups of pupils with special educational needs, pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils learning the Additional Literacy Strategy. This prevents them making good progress in the National Curriculum subjects.
24. Marking overall is satisfactory though this is inconsistent across subjects and classes. Pupils receive praise for their work and effort, but rarely advice on how to improve further. There are some examples of effective marking which looks carefully at what pupils have achieved or what they can do to improve, and results in improvement. There is insufficient monitoring of teachers' marking.

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

25. The school provides a broad range of learning opportunities that meet statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented effectively throughout the whole school. In English and mathematics, the national strategies have been enhanced with learning resources provided by a local educational trust. There is evidence in English and mathematics lessons that literacy and numeracy strategies are beginning to have effect and that standards are rising. Although teachers plan effectively, they do not maximise the opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum.
26. The opportunities in the Foundation Stage, based on the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals, are satisfactory. Schemes of work for information and communications technology, and all foundation subjects, are based on the guidelines produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the local education authority. Schemes of work have been reviewed against the requirements of the new National Curriculum programmes and plans adapted for most subjects. Further adjustments for history and geography are necessary to ensure the school's scheme meet the requirements of the new orders. The school has successfully addressed the curriculum issues raised after the last inspection by providing appropriate schemes of work for all foundation subjects.
27. The school day is in line with the nationally recommended teaching time, but the timetable is not rigidly adhered to on all occasions. Over-running the allocated time at the end of lessons, particularly for numeracy and literacy, occasionally reduces the time available for other core and foundation subjects. This has the potential to prevent the full delivery of the planned curriculum and needs to be more closely monitored to ensure that allocated curriculum time is consistently adhered to across the whole school.
28. The school provides good quality personal, social and health education through specific timetabled lessons, the science curriculum and syllabus for religious education. The school has adopted a 'Family Links' programme that provides special schemes of work that focus very effectively on the personal and social aspects of the provision. The programme ensures that all pupils are made aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles, health and safety, drug misuse and citizenship. The policy on sex education is to answer direct questions with appropriate facts as part of the preparation for adult life.
29. The school offers good levels of support in classrooms. The provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school is satisfactory overall. It provides pupils with an appropriate curriculum, mainly within their classes, and fully meets the requirements of the nationally agreed Code of Practice⁷. Pupils' individual education plans express their special educational needs well. These individual education plans are appropriately reviewed with satisfactory levels of input from parents and specialists from agencies outside the school. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons for additional teaching support, they often miss their full entitlement to all subjects of the National Curriculum.
30. The curriculum is planned to be of interest to all pupils. The school is aware of gender differences in the 2000 test results and has given consideration to selecting resources to appeal to boys in an effort to address this. However, policy documents and schemes of work do not explicitly take into account the needs of pupils learning English as an

⁷ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

additional language. Whilst class teachers plan work to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs, there is no specific planning for pupils learning English as an additional language. Groups of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are frequently withdrawn for tuition in English. This has the effect of denying them access to the whole of the class curriculum.

31. There is a satisfactory range of additional activities during lunchtime, before and after school. These include sporting activities such as football, cricket and athletics, opportunities to play musical instruments and sing in a school choir. There are also opportunities to take part in special interest clubs including art and chess. The most popular of all is the daily breakfast club before school where there are supervised games as well as an appropriate breakfast menu.
32. The school has very good links with partner institutions. It has worked closely with a local educational trust to pilot new strategies for the National Literacy and Numeracy programmes, as well as engaging in teacher training. This has had a significant impact on helping the school to raise standards and the quality of teaching overall. The school also co-operates with the Peers Early Education Programme (PEEP), an early years pre-school initiative that continues through nursery and reception. There is close co-operation with the receiving middle schools particularly concerning curriculum continuity and special educational needs. There are good community links through the parents and friends association and a strong association with the parish congregation of the Anglican Church of St. James, to which the school is linked by name.
33. Good guidance is given to pupils to develop their spiritual and moral awareness. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed in assemblies and religious education lessons. Opportunities for reflection and prayer are an integral part of the school day. In other areas of the curriculum such as English, music and art there are examples of pupils being encouraged to consider their responses and feelings. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson pupils were in awe and gave a gasp of appreciation when their pictures were magnified and presented to the class. Some of the written work on display demonstrates that pupils are given a time to think and reflect about themselves and the world around them.
34. The strong Christian ethos of the school, with the emphasis on respect for self and others, provides an effective focus for pupils' moral development. Values are fostered through the caring and supportive relationships that exist between staff and pupils. The school aims and behaviour policy underpin moral development and pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Parents are pleased with the way in which this aspect has improved since the introduction of the revised behaviour policy.
35. The guidance the school provides for pupils' social development is very good. There is a strong emphasis on the development of children's social skills in the nursery and reception classes. This continues to develop well as pupils grow older and take responsibility for themselves and tasks around the school. The school works hard to provide pupils with the relevant social skills that enable them to respond to the needs of others in a thoughtful and sensitive way. This results in very good relationships and pupils successfully co-operate in lessons and play well together. Pupils are offered good opportunities to contribute to and appreciate the local community through involvement with the parish church and by raising funds for charities
36. The guidance provided for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and develop their knowledge of British culture and traditions, but there are insufficient opportunities to consider the diversity of other historic

cultures represented in the school's multi-ethnic population. Awareness of the main religions is promoted through the religious education syllabus and through listening to music from other cultures, but other opportunities for this aspect of the provision are underdeveloped. Although pupils are taught respect for all people, they do not have sufficient opportunity to learn about the diversity and richness of our multi-ethnic society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The support and guidance given to pupils, and the care taken over their welfare, is good. Teachers and support staff know and understand their pupils well. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting and those who returned questionnaires confirmed that children are well supported by the school particularly in the nursery and reception classes. Some parents of children who have English as an additional language also expressed satisfaction at the way the school provided for their needs.
38. Health and safety procedures are diligent and include good arrangements for first aid. A health and safety hazard, concerning an outdoor swimming pool, raised in the last inspection report, has been resolved by de-commissioning the pool and filling it in with earth. Child-protection procedures are effective and staff are well trained and alert to the needs of all pupils. The headteacher is the designated child protection co-ordinator and the school has close links with social services and all other appropriate outside agencies.
39. The school provides for good personal, social and health education through the timetabled 'Family Links' programme and the science and religious education curriculum. Personal hygiene practice is very good with hand washing before meals and after visiting the toilet, or undertaking practical activities, a well-established part of normal school routines. The school promotes equality of opportunity through the planned curriculum and through recreational and welfare activities. However, its practice of withdrawing pupils for specialist help is not sufficiently well managed to ensure that these pupils have full access to the curriculum.
40. The policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The management of behaviour is consistent throughout the school and any incidents of unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying, are dealt with effectively and sensitively. A very good feature of the behaviour management strategy is the way in which other pupils support those who have difficulty with their behaviour and celebrate with them when they achieve their targets for improvement. The policy of rewarding and celebrating good attitudes and behaviour results in a success driven culture throughout the school.
41. The procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The school works closely with the education welfare service and has rigorous procedures for following up on unexpected absence and discouraging extended term time holidays. In spite of these endeavours attendance remains below national expectations and a few pupils arrive late on most mornings.
42. The procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' personal and academic progress are good overall and have improved since the last inspection, with significant development over the last two years. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal progress are good and those for their academic progress are satisfactory. In the current year, assessments of what children know and can do when they start school were conducted when children first entered full-time education as rising five year olds. In the two previous years these first learning assessments were conducted as pupils entered Year 1. The current method assesses them on entry to reception which is in line with the national arrangements. Children's achievement is assessed against the national Early

Learning Goals and is more accurate. It improves the school's ability to compare attainment on entry with national and local statistics, and achieve a more realistic baseline against which to track progress, set targets and project future outcomes. The nursery is beginning to quantify the information on children's profiles begun when they start nursery. This is at the early stages of development in enabling the staff to judge the value added to children's achievement in the nursery.

43. The school conducts half-termly assessment for mathematics and termly assessment for reading, writing and science. Pupils' personal, social and health education is routinely assessed as an integral element of the 'Family Links' programme. Pupils are given individual and group targets for literacy, numeracy and personal and social education. These are discussed with pupils to help them understand how they can improve. Pupils' achievement is discussed with parents, at consultation meetings and summarised in an informative annual progress report at the end of the school year. Procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are rigorous and continue to improve as short term learning objectives become more clearly defined in all subjects, and the school begins to make use of the computerised assessment manager programme. Assessment data is used to project National Curriculum levels in English, mathematics and science for the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) and to predict attainment levels for individual pupils at the end of Year 4.
44. Procedures for accurately assessing pupils' attainment in information and communications technology are developing across the school. The further development of assessment procedures for foundation subjects, particularly for physical education, is a high priority in the school development plan.
45. The use of assessment to guide short-term curriculum planning, in response to the needs of individual pupils, is satisfactory overall. There is a weakness in the use of assessment to guide planning for the nursery and in the variable use of 'day books' to record on-going daily assessment. The quality of recorded daily assessment is not sufficiently well monitored to ensure that the good practice seen in some classes is replicated across the whole school.
46. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in classes through the school's effective systems. The school has appropriate procedures to recognise and provide for these pupils. It effectively uses test results, target setting and concerns expressed by class teachers to decide where extra support should be introduced. It does not effectively record pupils' progress as they are taught in lessons and by withdrawal. It does not use this information to plan further tasks matched to the pupils' needs.
47. The provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is not sufficiently well integrated into the whole school educational provision. This provision is not included in the overall English policy, for example, nor is there any provision planned in the schemes of work or medium-term and short-term planning. The specialist teacher of English as an additional language and the bilingual instructor, employed by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, provide valuable support to the school. They assess the attainment of pupils in learning English as an additional language, communicate with their parents and families, and actively promote an ethos in which representative cultures and faiths are valued and respected. However, they are inefficiently deployed within the school. The support provided to individuals and small groups is too infrequent and not sufficiently well planned and integrated into the class lesson to make the most of their expertise in promoting understanding of the lesson at the same time as learning English.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Overall, the effect of the school's links with parents, the impact of their involvement in the work of the school and the contribution they make to their child's learning, is good. The school has maintained the good working partnership with parents reported after the last inspection and the information provided has improved and is now very good.
49. Most parents have positive views of the school. The consensus view of those who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires is that the school has improved in the last two years, is well led and managed and that their children like school and behave well. Parents feel that the school promotes high expectations, provides good teaching that makes pupils mature and responsive and that children make good progress. They confirm that the staff are approachable and that relationships with the school are good. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views.
50. A few parents feel that there are inconsistencies in the setting of homework and the information given to parents about it, and that there is variation between year groups on the information provided to parents about progress. Others expressed concern about the range of additional activities at lunchtime and after school. The inspectors conclude that the provision of homework is satisfactory and adequately supports learning. The inspectors did not find any significant variation between year groups concerning the information provided on progress and judged the range of additional lunchtime and after school activities to be satisfactory.
51. The school works hard to create a close working partnership with parents. The home-school agreement clearly defines the expectations of the school, the parents and pupils. The quality of information provided to parents is very good. For pupils under five in the nursery and reception classes the school participates in the 'Peers Early Education Programme'. This local initiative encourages parents to become involved in an educational partnership with their children from a very early age. Participation in this programme ensures a good inclusion of parents in their children's learning. It is a very good induction experience for parents new to the school if they take advantage of the opportunity.
52. The school provides parents with formal training sessions on specific areas of the curriculum, for example the 'Family Links' programme that ensures parents have knowledge of the personal and social education programme provided by the school. Parents are consulted on a wide range of issues during regular coffee morning meetings. The latest topics have included behaviour management and the forthcoming re-organisation into a primary school. The school also arranges parent presentations for curriculum areas such as mathematics and science and these include a focus on the use of specific vocabulary used in some subjects. A parent governor, supported by other governors and senior staff, has a specific 'parent development' brief and this is promoting a whole range of initiatives to create an even closer working partnership between parents and the school. The school's next development area is to encourage more parents of ethnic minority heritage background to become more involved in all of these opportunities.
53. Overall, the quality of information provided is very good. The annual progress reports provide a subject by subject commentary on what pupils know and understand, with future targets for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. At the end of Key Stage 1, National Curriculum levels are provided that include the A to C grades between levels to demonstrate pupils' attainment in comparison to the national average. There are formal consultation meetings with parents every term. Home-school diaries are used to record progress in reading. The weakness in current practice is that the whole-school marking policy is not consistently used to reliably inform parents and pupils on their progress and achievement on a day-to-day basis.

54. Parents are satisfactorily informed on the progress of their children with special educational needs. They can make contact with teachers at any time they wish. Termly reviews of individual education plans and the yearly reviews of statements give further comprehensive information. Parents from ethnic minority heritage groups were underrepresented at the parents meeting, but some did reply and comment on questionnaires. The bilingual instructor provides good support to the school as a home school link and accompanies the nursery teacher on some home visits. However, her expertise is under-utilised. The headteacher is aware of the need for greater involvement of these parents in school life and has this scheduled as a key area for development in the next academic year.
55. There is an active parents' and friends' association that supports the school through fund raising and other social events and provides good links with the local community and the congregation of the parish church of St. James.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has brought about a significant level of improvement since the last inspection. She has successfully established an effective school in a relatively short period of time. The value of her enthusiastic, thoughtful and well-considered leadership is recognised by the staff, parents and governors alike. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work effectively together, sharing vision and educational direction for the all round development of the school. The school's aims and values are reflected in everyday life, such as the emphasis on developing positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are effectively encouraged to believe in their ability to succeed. There is a good level of morale in the school community with a strong belief in improvement. Equality of opportunity is built into the school's mainstream provision; for example, very well trained support assistants make sure all pupils understand their work in class lessons.
57. School management is good. The headteacher and senior staff work closely together to develop the school's educational provision and share a commitment to improving standards. The role of the subject co-ordinators has been satisfactorily developed since the last inspection and well developed in the co-ordination of English, mathematics and science. The policy for equality of opportunity is up-to-date and comprehensive. This includes policy for countering racism. The school's practice reflects the policy with a few exceptions. Pupils' welfare and their progress are taken seriously and are monitored carefully. They receive good quality support in the classroom. The good quality of teaching means that pupils are given work that is well suited to them. Very well trained support assistants make sure that all pupils understand their work in class. However, some groups of pupils are regularly withdrawn from lessons, often missing the same subject time after time. These are groups of pupils with special educational needs, pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils who are taught the Additional Literacy Strategy.
58. The management of classroom provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. She is supported effectively by all class teachers. Support assistants are effectively deployed and make a good contribution to supporting pupils in class. The school has a good match of support staff to assist the satisfactory progress of pupils with special educational needs across the curriculum when in classes. The management of the provision for specialist teaching for small groups of pupils is ineffective and its impact not sufficiently well monitored or evaluated. Small groups of pupils are taken out of lessons for too long and too frequently miss a range of subjects across the curriculum. This is unsatisfactory as it denies them appropriate

equality of access and opportunity and does not add sufficient value to their learning. The governor for special educational needs is suitably developing her awareness of provision. The governing body is not sufficiently analytical in evaluating the cost effectiveness of provision on pupils' achievement.

59. The provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is not sufficiently well integrated into the whole-school educational provision. This provision is not included in the overall English policy, for example, nor is there any provision planned in the schemes of work or medium-term and short-term planning. The specialist teacher of English as an additional language and the bilingual instructor, employed by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, provide valuable support to the school. They assess the attainment of pupils in learning English as an additional language, communicate with their parents and families and actively promote an ethos in which representative cultures and faiths are valued and respected. However, they are inefficiently deployed within the school. The support provided to individuals and small groups is too infrequent and not sufficiently well planned and integrated into the class lesson to make the most of their expertise in promoting understanding of the lesson at the same time as learning English.
60. There is insufficient leadership in the Foundation Stage to build effectively on the very good practice in reception and this has led to too great a disparity of provision in teaching and practice. The physical separation of reception classes and nursery does not make this easy for staff. There is good liaison regarding planning, but insufficient monitoring of teaching despite administrative time available to the co-ordinator through a funded early intervention project. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have monitored the quality of teaching as part of general monitoring and performance management arrangements. They were aware of disparity and already have plans in place to alter the organisation of classes and staffing to enable a closer working relationship to develop and form a Foundation Stage unit.
61. The local Education Action Zone provides access to a local educational trust, which provides very good support and training in English and mathematics. The school makes the most of this provision. The initiative is well managed in school and the effects are carefully monitored. It is clearly having a positive effect on standards of attainment. Good-quality evaluation of the initiative has led to further needs being identified, such as a focus on speech and language in the nursery.
62. The governing body effectively carries out its statutory duties, such as making sure the full National Curriculum is taught. The majority of governors take their responsibilities seriously, working closely with the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to support and monitor the effectiveness of the school's work. Individual governors take responsibility for subjects or aspects, such as mathematics or special educational needs, visiting school to see the provision and reporting back at governors' meetings. Some governors have an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, this is not a shared understanding of the governing body as a whole. A significant minority of governors' attendance at meetings is poor, holding back the development of the governors as a coherent policy making body. Governors monitor the work of the school and set appropriate targets for improvement, but provide insufficient direction for the school's development and evaluation of its overall effectiveness.
63. The school supported by the local Education Action Zone, the Diocesan Adviser and local education authority, effectively reviews the work of the school as it develops and improves. Necessary action is taken to strengthen areas of weakness in teaching, for example, providing a good quality of teaching that enables pupils to make good progress.

64. The match of teachers and support staff to the requirements of the National Curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff are well qualified and experienced. The procedures for appraisal and performance management are satisfactory. There are good opportunities for the professional development of all members of staff with the school taking full advantage of the additional funding for training made available as part of the 'Education Action Zone' initiative.
65. The procedures for supporting newly qualified teachers, and all other staff new to the school, are good. They all receive support from a mentor and newly qualified teachers have a structured induction programme with appropriate time away from the responsibility for their classes. The school also provides places for training student teachers in partnership with a local educational trust. This training programme is well structured with students receiving the support of a tutor and a mentor, resulting in a high quality training provision plus classroom experience.
66. The standard and quality of accommodation for the number of pupils on role is satisfactory. The site is attractively landscaped and provides adequate hard surfaced and grassed areas for physical education, sports, athletics and recreation. There is a secure environmental studies area. The grounds are well managed and maintained to a good standard. There are secure and well-equipped play areas for children in nursery and reception classes. Externally the permanent and temporary buildings are in a satisfactory condition.
67. The use of accommodation is well planned and managed. The hall is deployed for physical education, school assemblies, as a dining area and for some music lessons. There is a central library situated in a detached temporary building. Classrooms in the main school building are of adequate size for the number of pupils in each class and have satisfactory storage and a water supply. The two temporary classrooms are small for the number and size of pupils in the two Year 3 classes and do not have a water supply or sink unit. This omission has an adverse impact on some art and science teaching. The temporary classrooms are poorly insulated and during very hot weather, as experienced during the inspection, provide an uncomfortable learning environment.
68. The quality of display is variable and ranges from satisfactory to very good. There is no whole-school approach towards display to ensure that all classrooms have areas dedicated to the celebration of pupils' work as well as displays to stimulate interest and promote high standards. There is too much variation in the quality of displays that reflect the Christian ethos of the school and the multicultural nature of the pupil population. There is a lack of appropriate display in the library to stimulate an interest in literature and promote the use of non-fiction as a source of reference and research.
69. The availability of learning resources is satisfactory and adequately meets the needs of the National Curriculum. The noted weaknesses are in physical education where equipment is usable but old and religious education where there is a paucity of artefacts, videos, posters and books. The library has insufficient non-fiction texts to support research and investigation across the whole curriculum.
70. The governors and the headteacher recognise appropriate educational policies, which are supported by the school's good financial planning. They are closely involved in financial planning and have established satisfactory systems for ensuring that the school obtains best value in its spending. They manage available funds well. Funds fluctuate greatly due to the school receiving funding as an Education Action Zone from time to time. Technology is used well to manage finances and communication. Funding obtained from specific grants is effectively used. For example, recent high levels of funding to purchase computers and software have been used very effectively. The purchases made are now

influencing standards in information and communication technology across the curriculum. The school has a budget surplus which it plans to use for resources when the new building is completed. The school's administrative staff, assisted by a part time bursar, are very efficient and help to ensure the smooth running of the school. They manage the day-to-day financial administration of the school well. A good response has been made to the last audit of the school, which raised few items for improvement and said financial administration was very good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to improve the quality of education throughout the school, the governing body, the headteacher and staff supported by the local education authority, diocese and Education Action Zone should:
- (1) ensure standards in writing rise in Years 3 and 4, by:
 - improving opportunities for extended and developed writing;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum;
 - improving standards of handwriting and ensuring teachers model this effectively;

(Paragraphs 1, 4, 83-84, 86, 92-93, 117)
 - (2) ensure all pupils have appropriate access to the curriculum by:
 - effective deployment of specialist staff which makes the best use of their expertise;
 - establishing clear measures for assessing how far specialist support adds value to pupils' achievement;
 - improving assessment and recording for pupils receiving specialist support and ensure that this is reflected in teachers' planning and practice;
 - providing training for all staff on assessing and supporting pupils with English as an additional language;
 - ensuring all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and resources;

(Paragraphs 5, 16, 22, 30, 39, 47, 58-59, 94, 103, 129)
 - (3) develop the governing bodies' role in shaping and directing improvement in the school by:
 - developing a shared understanding of the strengths and weakness of the school drawing upon information from the school and monitoring visits by governors;
 - ensuring all governors have a clear understanding of standards and the use of national comparisons;
 - ensuring good attendance at all meetings wherever possible;
 - taking a more active role in assisting the headteacher to drive improvement;
 - establish clear review criteria for analysing the impact of its financial decisions on pupils' standards of attainment;

(Paragraphs 58, 62)

- (4) improve the consistency of teaching across the Foundation Stage of learning by:
 - reviewing all documentation to ensure commonality of approach;
 - monitoring the quality of teaching and set clear expectations of the role;
 - providing opportunities for staff to work alongside the best practitioners;(Paragraphs 2, 7, 16, 42, 45, 54, 60, 73-82)

- (5) improve attendance rates by:
 - providing additional guidance to parents on the impact of taking extended holiday in school time;
 - monitoring patterns of non-attendance for individual and groups.(Paragraphs 15, 41)

72. The governing body may wish to consider the following less important issues for inclusion in their action plan.

The library has insufficient non-fiction texts to support research and investigation across the whole curriculum (Paragraph 69)

The quality of teachers' marking and pupils' presentation of their work (Paragraphs 24, 53, 100, 115)

Ensure a focus on strategies to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills from nursery to Year 2 (Paragraph 1-2, 61, 73, 76, 85, 88)

There is insufficient application of pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills across the curriculum (Paragraphs 107,111, 115, 119, 126, 129)

Greater focus on developing opportunities for developing pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of the multi-cultural society in which we live. (Paragraph 34)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	20	46	27	5	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	288
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	60

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	58

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	29	23	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	27
	Girls	20	21	22
	Total	44	45	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (78)	87 (81)	94 (70)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	27
	Girls	21	22	21
	Total	45	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (80)	92 (88)	92 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	18
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	2
Indian	16
Pakistani	18
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	1
White	178
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2:1
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	241.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	2	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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	487,572
Total expenditure	513,249
Expenditure per pupil	1,640
Balance brought forward from previous year	96,263
Balance carried forward to next year	70,586

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 25%

Number of questionnaires sent out	314
Number of questionnaires returned	79

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	32	5	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	52	39	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	53	1	4	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	46	12	5	3
The teaching is good.	54	37	0	4	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	29	18	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	34	5	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	35	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	42	44	10	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	38	47	4	5	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	44	3	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	30	28	6	13

Other issues raised by parents

Twenty-one parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. Other parents commented on returned questionnaires and some attended a coffee morning with the Section 23⁷ inspector for the diocese and one of the team inspectors. Most parents felt the school was well led and managed and had improved over the last two years. Parents believe that the school sets high expectations and helps their children make progress and develop well socially. Parents found the school staff approachable and had a comfortable relationship with the school. Some parents expressed concern about inconsistencies in information about the progress their children made and the homework they were given. Some parents felt there were too few clubs outside school hours. The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views and found no evidence to support the concerns of some parents.

⁷ Because Church Cowley St. James School is a voluntary controlled Church of England school the inspection of collective worship is carried out under Section 23 of the Schools Inspections Act 1996 (Denominational Education) by the inspector approved by the [Diocese](#) and appointed by the governing body.

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

73. Most children start nursery having had some form of pre-school experience. They transfer into a reception class and currently, children who are rising five are in a separate reception class. The school is part of an effective local pre-school initiative focused on supporting parental involvement in their children's learning and promoting home school partnerships. The nursery teacher makes some use of non-teaching time provided by the initiative for visiting parents and children before they start school. This assists in some informal assessments of children's entry to the nursery. The school is developing its entry profiles to make the assessment more accurate. Drawing from a range of available evidence it is clear that when children start the nursery they have low levels of experience particularly in speech and language. In the forthcoming school year, the school will be part of a funded scheme to help staff focus more effectively on developing strategies to support children's speech and language development more effectively.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. In the nursery and reception classes, children are settled, independent and confident in their relationships with each other and adults. They enjoy learning and behave well. All children happily work together and share toys and equipment. In all classes, there is a good balance of adult directed group time and opportunities for children to take responsibility in selecting activities. In the nursery and reception, a good range of resources are organised well to enable children to select their own equipment and take some responsibility for clearing away. There is clear development as children grow older and older reception children pack away very sensibly and quickly. From an early age children develop their personal skills such as hygiene, dressing and undressing children without assistance.
75. During nursery snack times and small group sessions, several children do not maintain their concentration and become distracted because there is insufficient involvement of children in extended discussion. Very effective teaching in both reception classes during small and large group sessions ensures children maintain their interest and concentration and attend carefully to the teacher. This is particularly evident in literacy and numeracy based sessions when good levels of attention means that children learn well. By the time, they start Year 1 most children attain the Early Learning Goals and are confident to try new activities and eager to learn more.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Assessment information when children start nursery shows that many children have speech and language skills below expectations for children of this age. Some children who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language lack specific vocabulary to explain clearly what they understand. The nursery nurse and bilingual instructor provide very good support to children and initiate and maintain extended conversations. In some group work, the teacher focus is heavily on imparting information. This approach does not always capture and sustain children's involvement and provides insufficient opportunity for discussion which limits children's opportunities and their learning. All children have some understanding of what books are for and know how to handle them. In the nursery, awareness of books and pleasure in sharing books and retelling stories is below expectations for children of this age.
77. In both reception classes, all adults provide good models of conversation and challenging, open questions which encourage children to think more deeply and respond with new ideas. A clear example of this was when more able rising five children were

writing a letter to a fictional builder to tell him what the school needed in its planned extension. Very good teaching in both reception classes puts a clear focus on developing children's awareness and use of language and there is clear development in their reading and writing skills. By the end of reception, children have a thorough enjoyment of books and have good understanding of stories and their sequence. Children eagerly discuss what is happening in the stories. Staff are very aware of particularly talented children and set clear challenges in supporting their skills, for example, setting a spelling challenge for homework. Children's knowledge of vocabulary such as author, titles and illustrator increases with experience. By the end of reception, most children are at expected levels for their age and achieve the Early Learning Goals.

Mathematical development

78. Assessment information gathered when children enter the nursery shows that children count reasonably reliably, but have less understanding of relationships between numbers. In the nursery, they learn to write numbers and count successfully from one to 10. This is extended very well in both reception classes where children are introduced to a numeracy style session. Reception children develop an understanding of the sequence of numbers to 20. Teachers' very good planning and preparation of resources ensures children have exciting experiences of mathematics. For example, a very effective presentation of capacity captures children's interest and extends their learning very well. Children watch the teacher pouring a drink and are very effectively challenged to consider what is colloquially termed full and what is actually mathematically full. They recognise that the point at which the glass runs over into tray underneath is when it is technically full. From this experience, they develop a clearer understanding of half full, nearly full and full. A good assessment technique means that the following day the teacher explores the same idea with different materials to check individual children's level of understanding. By the time children start Year 1, their understanding of mathematics is above expectations due to very effective teaching in both reception classes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. Children have appropriate general knowledge of the world around them. This is enhanced by satisfactory teaching in the nursery, which helps children to take an interest in the world around them. For example, in the nursery, children are aware of the danger of sunlight and learn about creatures and plants. They take an active interest in the crickets in an aquarium and develop an understanding of the life cycle of a butterfly. In reception classes, children are introduced to the idea of what will happen in the school when building work for the extension begins. There are very effective planned links to a fictional builder to look at aspects of the environment. Good relationships are made between this and opportunities to design and build objects with plastic bricks and other materials. They adapt their ideas as they go along. Children have a very good understanding of how types of technology help communication, for example, rising fives know that they can communicate by letter, e mail and use a digital camera to record events. Good questioning by the teachers ensures children extend and develop their general understanding of the world around them. By the time children start Year 1 they meet expectations for their age and achieve the Early Learning Goals.

Physical development

80. Most children in nursery and reception have the physical skills expected for their age. They handle small equipment and tools successfully and are developing good control of pencils resulting in clearly formed letters in their writing. They build models from a range of construction kits unaided. Nursery children control their bodies well, climb and jump with an awareness of others and the need to take turns. Reception children explore different ways of moving and responding to the rhythm of a percussion instrument. Staff make good use of the outdoor areas as a natural extension to the classroom. There is little hard surface play area and too few opportunities for children to ride wheeled vehicles

and bikes. Children's skills are in line with expectations for their age and by the end of reception, they attain the Early Learning Goals.

Creative development

81. Children enjoy creative activities. They have some opportunities to explore paint, printing and making pictures with a range of materials in nursery and reception. Well-planned and prepared activities ensure that children move easily to task and settle quickly. A strong feature of creative play is imaginative role-play. In the nursery, children have a range of telephones to represent a call centre where they take messages and make lists. In the nursery, effective intervention by the teacher extends children's play, but is too short to have a lasting impact. In reception classes, the theme of the building site is explored very well both inside the classroom and outside. Very good resources ensure children act out different roles within a builder's merchants and extend their play to building with plastic bricks. Outside rising fives have a very clear impression of safety requirements, for example, insisting that the inspector wear a hard hat because of the dangers of falling debris from buildings. Children explain that this will stop someone having a cracked head like Humpty Dumpty. They co-operate well to develop a convincing play situation aided by good resources. Children use soil and water to make mortar and build using real bricks. Children exceed expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception.
82. At the time of the last inspection, provision for children under five was satisfactory in nursery and reception and gave children a positive start to their education. The quality of provision in nursery has been maintained and is satisfactory overall. However, changes in staffing in reception have raised standards, expectations and provision making it very good. There has been close liaison on planning between nursery and reception which has improved continuity in planning, but the same continuity of practice is not seen. One poor lesson was seen in the nursery where there was insufficient development of children's skills and an inappropriate approach towards some individuals and their efforts. Overall the quality of teaching in the nursery is sound, but in reception it is always very good. Disparity in the quality of provision and teaching between reception and the nursery is too great and there is insufficient coherence to the Foundation Stage. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have monitored teaching and were aware of disparity before the inspection and scheduled changes to staffing organisation are already in place for the next academic year to create a consistent curriculum for the foundation.

ENGLISH

83. Provision for English shows significant improvement since the last inspection and overall standards of attainment have risen during the last two years. Pupils achieve well throughout the school except in writing in Years 3 and 4. The reasons for this are the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the improved quality of teaching, the improved monitoring of teaching and learning, and the provision made by a local educational trust.
84. In the Year 2000 national tests for seven year olds, pupils' performance in reading and writing was below the national average. When compared to schools with similar intakes, pupils' performance in reading and writing was also below average. Although the results of the last four years put together are below the national average, standards of attainment during the last two years have risen steadily.
85. The present Year 2 shows a wide range of attainment in English. A small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. A small proportion of pupils has special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows that

pupils' overall performance in reading is good for their age and performance in writing is in line with that expected for their age. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below that expected for their age.

86. By the time the pupils leave the school, at the age of nine, pupils' performance in reading is at the level expected for their age. Their performance in writing is below that expected for their age. The present Year 4 show a wide range of attainment, with more pupils attaining below the level expected than those attaining above. These pupils did not have the same good quality provision when they were in Years 1 and 2 as the present pupils have.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are thorough in their approach to teaching literacy, so pupils gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of texts. Lesson planning is clear and in line with the National Literacy Strategy so that pupils are tackling work at the right level for their age.
88. Teachers provide too few quality opportunities in lessons for speaking and listening, in response to pupils' needs. By the age of seven, most pupils listen for a long enough period of time, in lesson introductions, for example. Most pupils show a sound understanding of the main points of what is being said when working with an adult and express opinions about favourite books, such as 'The Monster and the Teddy Bear', but their replies are not well enough extended and developed. The majority of pupils, although developing an understanding of a wider vocabulary, use a restricted vocabulary in their own speech.
89. By the age of nine, most pupils express themselves confidently in lessons and are beginning to develop the use of Standard English. They are aware of the needs of listeners, when evaluating each other's poems, for example, often giving relevant detail. Pupils listen carefully in class, are ready to respond to the teacher, and to each other, and join in lively discussions.
90. Teachers provide good quality reading activities which pupils find attractive and motivating. Pupils enjoy the shared texts that are carefully selected to be at the right level for them. By the age of seven, pupils know how to go about reading new words by using their knowledge of letter sounds and blends, looking at pictures and using the context of the story. However, many pupils do not always use the full range of strategies, preferring to rely more heavily on their knowledge of letter sounds. They show interest in stories and talk about the main characters and sequence events at a satisfactory level and are developing a good understanding of how texts are structured. Pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and most find information by using the content and index pages.
91. By the age of nine, most pupils read a wider range of texts and talk readily about their favourite books. They show some understanding of characters' motivation and behaviour. They are developing a sound understanding of elements such as theme, setting, and character. However, the majority of pupils are unpractised in using libraries to research information at the right level for their age, although many are well practised in searching the Internet. Help and support from parents and carers has a positive effect on pupils' reading throughout the school.
92. Teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs so that most pupils work productively, although many work slowly in writing. By the age of seven, most pupils structure sentences properly and spelling is sound. Most pupils develop their ideas in a logical sequence, but a significant minority of pupils do not extend their work well enough,

particularly when writing in other subjects. The more able develop and extend their work well, developing a sense of audience and choosing words for effect. Most pupils' handwriting is legible, but often not well enough formed or consistent in size.

93. By the age of nine, the higher attaining pupils write with interest, developing and sustaining their ideas through the text. They use a range of punctuation, such as commas and speech marks, in lively story writing. However, many pupils do not reach a level of attainment appropriate for their age. Pupils' writing in different subjects is limited. Opportunities are missed for extending and developing writing in history, for example. The quality of pupils' handwriting is variable. Some pupils' writing is consistent and fluent in style, but many pupils' writing is inconsistently joined and untidy. Teachers throughout the school do not always use the school style themselves and present inappropriate models. Teachers make regular use of homework in reading and spelling to reinforce pupils' learning.
94. Teachers keep a brisk pace to their lessons so pupils are involved and responsive. Pupils enjoy the lessons and are confident to take part. They behave well, in response to the teachers' good quality behaviour management, and form very good relationships with adults and with each other. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the good-quality provision made for them in the classroom. However, pupils who are withdrawn to work in small groups miss out on the curriculum work in the classroom. This prevents them making good progress in the National Curriculum. There is variable quality of teaching during lessons where pupils are withdrawn for specialist support for their special educational needs. Some unsatisfactory teaching occurred in withdrawal periods during the literacy hour and resulted in insufficient learning in the lesson. Analysis of the school's data shows that this withdrawal from lessons does not ensure that these pupils make sufficient progress in their learning over time. Some pupils of similar abilities do not make as much progress as pupils supported in class. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive individual and small group tuition and make good progress in learning the first stages of English. They have support from the specialist teacher to understand their lessons. However, this is too infrequent for pupils to make good progress in understanding the National Curriculum.
95. The subject co-ordinator has worked very hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy, which is now well established and taught consistently through the school. However, the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is not well enough integrated into the provision for English as a whole. The way the specialist teacher is deployed is inefficient, making insufficient use of her expertise. Teachers have received up-to-date training to improve their skills, but their knowledge and expertise of teaching English as an additional language is limited. The school is part of the local Education Action Zone. This has enabled it to receive invaluable support from a local educational trust, which has had a significant effect on the quality of provision for English and, by doing so, has played a major role in improving standards of attainment. The Additional Literacy Strategy is successful in improving the attainment of below average pupils. However, this has been at the expense of pupils missing other lessons, such as science. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are effective and teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils' learning is good. The setting of targets for improvement and monitoring of progress through the school, has had a positive impact on attainment.

MATHEMATICS

96. The school has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now make good progress and their attitudes to the subject have improved.
97. During this inspection, Year 2 and Year 4 pupils attained the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures and data handling). The 2000 national tests for pupils in Year 2 showed a similar picture and standards were comparable with similar schools. Standards have improved over time. Since 1997, there has been an increase in the proportion of seven-year-olds reaching the standards expected in national tests. Standards are rising due to good teaching, the good application of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good use of assessment to place pupils in teaching groups according to their abilities. In national tests, boys did not perform as well as girls. The school is addressing this through its thorough analysis of test results and the grouping of pupils according to their discerned abilities. Across the school, the differences are not now so marked. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
98. By the age of seven, average attainers add and subtract numbers to 10, multiply by two, five and 10 up to 50, and count on and back in single numbers, fives and tens to numbers beyond 200. They know the properties of two-dimensional shapes and work out change from coinage to a £1. Lower attaining pupils, some of whom have special educational needs, add single digits beyond 10 and recognise simple shapes such as square, circles and triangles. More-able count on and back in twos, fives and tens in numbers to at least 100. They double, halve and quarter numbers up to 100 and beyond, and are starting to successfully multiply and divide numbers. All pupils have good early experiences in problem solving, completing money sums, such as $31p + £5.00 = £5.31$. They collect data through tallying and translate this information on to block graphs.
99. In the present Year 4, pupils solve problems associated with number, money and measure (length, mass, capacity, time, perimeter, area). They show knowledge of fractions and solve sums such as four-fifths of thirty. They mentally recall tables, such as the two, three, four, five and ten times tables, and work out associated division facts. They estimate and count out whole number problems involving multiplication and division including remainders. More able pupils have a wider knowledge of tables, such as the six, seven and nine times tables, using these and other tables when solving number problems. They draw and measure a range of angles. All pupils show an understanding of time, using the analogue and digital clock with good levels of understanding and can classify three-dimensional and two-dimensional shapes. They communicate collected data through bar charts and pictograms and interpret the information with clarity.
100. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. During the week of inspection, no lessons fell below satisfactory and in over three-quarters of all lessons seen, it was good or better. All teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. The analysis of pupils' past work shows that satisfactory demands are made of them. The quality of teachers' marking is uneven and under developed. At best, it informs the pupils on their errors, but they are insufficiently encouraged to correct their mistakes. Inadequate attention is given to the presentation of their work. Activities based on work sheets are too frequently used, but do provide relevant opportunities for extension work, in particular for more-able pupils.
101. In a Year 2 lesson where the quality of teaching was good, the teacher used tennis balls and number cards to clearly illustrate to the pupils that two times four is the same as four

times two. In a Year 4 lesson of equal quality the teacher used appropriate mathematical language, successfully challenging the pupils' understanding of odd and even numbers, their product and factors. She introduced very clearly the concept of Venn diagrams (a diagram consisting of circles which overlap, whose numbers are common to two or more of the sets represented). Work is well planned, proceeding at a good pace. Good use is made of questions and answers, with clear explanations and further questions challenging pupils' thinking. In the activity sessions, with pupils grouped according to the abilities, good use is made of the learning support assistants. Pupils work well at their tasks, with very good levels of behaviour, showing high levels of motivation, enthusiasm and interest in their work. When asked what is their favourite subject, many respond, saying mathematics.

102. Standards are further supported and enhanced where all pupils in turn have opportunities to access information and communication technology using very good software for number and money problem solving. Opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects are starting to be developed. However, there is an insufficient application of pupils' numeracy and mathematical knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
103. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, organises the subject, its planning and resourcing effectively and aids staff with its development in classes. Analysis of test results are ensuring that standards are rising. Pupils' growing competencies are assessed well. A good analysis is made of test results and effectively used to drive changes to the curriculum. However, insufficient attention is given to identifying and recording the progress and difficulties pupils show in lessons to help teachers plan activities to improve in the next lesson. The day-to-day tracking and recording of pupils' skills is still underdeveloped. Teachers have a record book to record progress, but its use is inconsistent across the school. Best practice is seen in a Year 2 class. Most teachers and learning support assistants do not regularly make sufficient notes on the performance of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, to assist the teacher to understand what pupils have learnt and what they need to learn in subsequent lessons.

SCIENCE

104. Provision for Science shows satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. In 1997 the proportion of Key Stage 1 pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below national averages. This has risen and based on teachers' assessment in 2000, pupils' achievement at the higher levels was above national averages. The 2001 test results are not yet published, but the school's analysis indicates that this improved position has been maintained.
105. During the inspection, standards achieved in most lessons at both key stages were in line with national expectations, but the scrutiny of pupils' work over time indicated that a good concentration on pupils' investigative and enquiry skills is raising standards overall. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils identify between three and six creatures they could find in a range of habitats and predict what they may find in exploring the school's wildlife area. Pupils' skills are successfully built upon in Years 3 and 4 and their knowledge and skills develop appropriately. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils articulate their predictions clearly and confidently. They are beginning to base their judgements on scientific evidence and use an appropriate range of scientific vocabulary. They successfully draw upon recent experience of a residential trip and apply their experience to explaining the structure of a food chain. They demonstrate an eagerness to investigate using reference books well to gather knowledge. In this lesson, standards achieved were above expectations for their age. Pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported in classes which assists their learning and they achieve appropriate standards.

106. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. The strength in the quality of teaching is teacher's subject knowledge arising from a high level of training and support. There was one incident of unsatisfactory teaching, but this was related to the quality of the teacher's pupil management and organisational strategies rather than a lack of subject knowledge. In the best lessons, there is a clear planned structure to the lesson and clearly identified challenge for more-able pupils through different and more demanding tasks. Teachers carefully track pupils' achievement in lessons and over time. There is effective questioning and a brisk pace to the start of the lesson with clear time-scales. These are shared with pupils which ensures they focus their reading research effectively and gather the required information quickly making effective use of note-taking skills developed in literacy lessons.
107. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in driving standards by raising the level of teachers' subject knowledge through guidance, support resources and training. She is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and committed to the subject. She supports teachers well through planning sessions and has introduced new assessment routines. The co-ordinator has reviewed the planned curriculum against the new National Curriculum and plans to bring all documentation up to date in the near future. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject from reviewing planning and pupils' work. She is aware of the need to increase the level of recording and use of literacy skills in Key Stage 1 and to build upon good practice in clearly setting challenging tasks for more-able pupils. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to ensure greater consistency in the use of literacy, numeracy and information technology during science lessons. There is insufficient time for the co-ordinator to work alongside teachers in class and monitor the quality of teaching effectively.

ART AND DESIGN

108. The school lacks the benefit of a full-time art specialist on the staff, but has a good arrangement to utilise the expertise of a local artist to support the headteacher who co-ordinates the subject by default. Together, they ensure that staff are well supported with ideas, advice and guidance on materials and techniques. Timetabling arrangements and a day visit for Year 4 to their new secondary schools limited the availability of lessons during the period of the inspection. Consequently, no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and pupils' response.
109. However, scrutiny of pupils' past work, work on display and a Year 2 art lesson show that standards are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and nine. Year 4 pupils explore a range of techniques and are developing a good sense of design and composition. They struggle hard to show three dimensions, for example, when drawing the ellipse at the top of a jug. In Year 2, pupils observe carefully and try to represent the detail of what they see such as the features of a face. Some more-able pupils attain high standards, for example, showing an upturned nose with nostrils and eyelids in their representation of a face and very clear detailed observations of flowers in pencil sketches. There is evidence that pupils' skills and knowledge are effectively built upon through a well-structured curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve appropriate standards.
110. One Year 2 lesson was observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching was satisfactory. The lesson was carefully planned and structured as part of a set of work looking at colour pattern and composition. The teacher ensured pupils were clear about what they were doing and its purpose by referring back to previous learning. This together with good organisation and management ensured pupils made good use of available transparent materials to explore in a new way how colours mix. The quality of

organisation ensured pupils developed good mature attitudes to their work. They handled all materials and tools very sensibly and took pride and care in the quality of the work they were producing. Their appreciation and understanding of colour and materials was heightened by looking at their work with an overhead projector promoting gasps of wonder at the quality of colour and the intricacy of the glue patterns showing clearly in the enlarged projection.

111. The co-ordinator is aware that the policy is due for review and the curriculum has been reviewed against the new requirements for National Curriculum. The plan is sensibly to adjust existing long-term planning review experiences and then define these in policy and further curriculum guidance materials for staff. Pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities to work with many different materials and sometimes on a large scale. A particularly strong feature is where the pupils and the artist have worked together to produce a large and effective mural in one of the corridors. This local artist provides good support through guiding and advising teachers on tasks and skills. She also helps them link their planned work to that of other artists. The co-ordinator recognises this is an underdeveloped area and the range of artefacts and pictures particularly from other cultures is too limited. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to ensure there are more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and information technology skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. The provision for design and technology shows a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Few lessons were available during the inspection. However, from other evidence around the school, discussions with staff and scrutiny of pupils' past work, it is clear that achievement is good throughout the school. A well-structured curriculum successfully develops all pupils' skills and knowledge, ensuring pupils' standards of attainment are in line with the national expectations by the ages of seven and nine.
113. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the Year 2 lesson seen was well taught and promoted good achievement in the lesson resulting in standards of work above national expectations. Pupils demonstrated very good attitudes to their work and clearly enjoyed the subject. A strength of the lesson was the teacher's security of subject knowledge and the clarity with which she explained what pupils were to do which captured their interest and fired their imaginations. Good classroom organisation and management ensured that pupils had good access to reference books and materials to help them in re-evaluating the previous designs for a mask. They made effective use of these and quickly adapted their ideas and made decisions about which materials they were going to use. There was a good pace to the lesson and pupils worked consistently hard throughout persevering when working with some materials was difficult. They took good levels of care with their work and were proud of their efforts. A significant strength was the pupils' willingness to take their time to achieve a good quality finished mask and they clearly understood that several lessons would be needed to complete their masks to their level of satisfaction. This was a mature response for pupils of this age and showed clearly that they have gained a good understanding of the nature of design and the need to adapt ideas in relation to purpose and quality. The teacher effectively used a discussion at the end of the lesson to reinforce pupils' appreciation of what they had learnt, the skills and techniques they had used and the developing quality of finish to their animal masks.
114. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that these skills and knowledge are effectively built upon into Key Stage 2. For example, Year 3 pupils make three-dimensional alien masks and past work shows a high quality finish to a very useable item. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to design, make and evaluate products. Year 4 pupils' work on

designing a theatre shows good identification of materials to be used and a creditable attempt to represent a three-dimensional view of their design for the finished product.

115. There is clear evidence that pupils are given a well-structured experience in design and technology. Much of this is due to the hard work of a very keen and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The school's curricular plans have been revised and adjusted to take account of the new Curriculum 2000 introduced in September. A full review of experience this year is planned so that long term plans can be finalised and draw effective links with other subjects. The school's practice of recording design and technology work in art sketch books leads to some lack of clarity about the differences in process between the two subjects. This combined with too little use of pupils' literacy skills in recording the objectives for the activity and evaluation of their designs and final object currently limits higher quality attainment. There is limited use of pupils' numeracy and information technology skills to enhance their learning. Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is currently too informal and there is insufficient rigour in their marking to help pupils know how to improve further. The co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the strength and weaknesses of the subject and is already having a significant impact of the development of the subject with very clear plan for further improvement. A significant factor is that at the time of the inspection toward the very end of the school year nearly all the consumable resources have been used.

GEOGRAPHY

116. The school has maintained the satisfactory provision seen during the last inspection. Pupils' standards of attainment have remained in line with national expectations by the age of seven and nine. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language have appropriate support to ensure they make satisfactory progress. During this inspection, the quality of teaching for pupils up to the age of seven was good and at least satisfactory up to the age of nine.
117. Teachers appropriately focus work for younger pupils on their local area. As they get older, they contrast their local area with another area, such as the Isle of Struay and successfully use drawings to record what they see and understand. Fieldwork studies have started using the school grounds and its environmental area and there are good opportunities for fieldwork studies on trips and good residential experiences. Pupils make plans and maps of what they see, but these are insufficiently labelled. There are limited opportunities for pupils to describe in writing what they experience and see. Teachers place too much emphasis on discussion and drawings to record pupils' learning.
118. Very good teaching in a Year 2 lesson ensured pupils attained levels of attainment above national expectations when identifying the key areas on a school map. Pupils clearly related a map of the school to the actual external environment and accurately labelled the main features. Pupils' achievement was further enhanced by guidance to help them make a key and symbols for the places they had identified and indicated good levels of understanding from the task.
119. Year 3 pupils completed a satisfactory analysis of the physical features of the school's environmental area and identified how it could be improved. Opportunities to extend their learning further were missed as they were not expected to write or record their findings, other than by making sketches of the area. However, some Year 3 class displays show a satisfactory use of writing to extend learning, for example, when pupils have examined the physical and human features of a particular plain in South Africa. There is inconsistent use of information technology to support pupils' learning. Year 4 pupils' work demonstrates that they extend their knowledge of map work by making good use of atlases, globes, maps and plans of varying scales. They use and interpret maps of the

British Isles and places across the world. They have carefully mapped the field studies they completed on a visit to a local residential area. Their range of work is further enhanced by studies of places elsewhere in the world, such as St Lucia.

120. Pupils respond well to their teachers and have good attitudes to their work, applying themselves well with good levels of behaviour and interest in class. Their work is well presented, with good application of their art and design skills to illustrate their finished booklets. However, in both key stages, up to the ages of seven and nine, teachers do not assess the pupils' work sufficiently. In most cases, pupils' work is inadequately marked and they are unsure what they should do to improve further.
121. The subject has not been a high priority for development, but is scheduled for development next year. No time has been available to monitor its provision, but the co-ordination of the subject lacks sufficient commitment and drive for improvement. An audit of resources has been conducted and they are satisfactory. At present, there is a dated policy and a relevant scheme which has yet to be formally matched to the requirements of the new National Curriculum.

HISTORY

122. During the period of inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes to learning across the school. However, from the evidence of pupils' past work, displays around the school, discussions with pupils, one lesson and discussion with the co-ordinator standards of attainment meet national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This evidence also indicates that the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, each teacher interprets how and when they are going to deliver the subject and this results in a too great a variety of approaches. It is sometimes taught as part of a topic approach or as humanities. On other occasions, it is taught as history at a time when geography is not being taught. The newly appointed co-ordinator has not had time to monitor the effectiveness of this provision and to develop a more consistent means of delivery.
123. Younger pupils focus appropriately on comparing the lives of people at different times. A display on the Great Plague and the Fire of London suitably illustrated such studies. In a Year 1 lesson, satisfactory teaching aided learning. The teacher successfully introduced pupils to a school logbook for 1956 helping pupils satisfactorily develop an awareness of how people record things happening in time. Pupils started to synchronise events, to distinguish between aspects of the past lives of children who had previously attended the school and their own. However, there were missed opportunities as the teacher did not provide opportunities for pupils to write about what they had found out or use a time line to illustrate the passage of time from 1956 to the present day.
124. Samples of work from older pupils show a satisfactory range of studies and indicate that pupils acquire a good range of knowledge about the Ancient Greeks in Year 3 and a very good range of extensive knowledge about the Romans in Year 4.
125. Development in the subject has not been a high priority and the present co-ordinator took up her post in September 2000. There has no time allocated to monitor and evaluate the subject, but this is scheduled for between 2002 and 2003. The subject is supported by a dated policy, but has a satisfactory scheme that has yet to be formally matched to the new National Curriculum. There is no agreed means of assessing the subject and there is insufficient information on the pupils' progress to help teachers plan future work. Teachers' marking is under-developed and does not provide sufficient information to show pupils what they should do to improve. The quality of pupils' presentation of their

work is not given a sufficiently high priority. Sufficient funds have been provided to ensure satisfactory resourcing, including the recent purchase of relevant CD ROMs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. The school has maintained the standards of attainment seen during the last inspection. Teaching and learning have improved for pupils at Key Stage 2 up to the age of nine. Pupils' attitudes have improved. These are now good across the school, with all pupils showing good levels of interest, motivation and enthusiasm for the subject. The recent provision of resources, with pupils in all classes having access to a mathematics program, is helping to raise standards in mathematics. The use of information and communication technology across other curriculum areas is unevenly developed. There is some effective use in music to help pupils create and record their compositions. However, word processing is underused and insufficient opportunities are developed across the school to provide finished drafts of completed work. Classrooms are equipped with a minimum of two computers, with only one class having four. This restricts the pupils' access.
127. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and nine. This is due to satisfactory teaching overall in Key Stage 1 and good quality teaching in Years 3 and 4. Good-quality teaching in a Year 2 lesson supported and extended pupils' use of a graphics program. They successfully opened the program, selected the appropriate level and named the functions of the paint tools. Pupils used the computer programs symbols to select the relevant options and blended colours together using the colour manager. The teacher successfully overcame the limited number of available computers. Most of the class completed a very well designed worksheet, asking them to identify the symbols used and their meaning while groups took turns to use the computers. A Year 4 class was successfully introduced to the use of a branching database (a program divided into separate linked parts). The teacher, in the 15 minutes she allowed for the lesson, successfully illustrated how to organise, reorganise and analyse the available information. In answer to her questions, pupils showed a satisfactory awareness, but did not have an opportunity to use the computer to consolidate their learning until later in the week.
128. The quality of teaching for pupils up to the age of seven is satisfactory. For pupils up to the age of nine, it is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge due to good levels of support from the adopted scheme and training. They give whole class inputs, effectively demonstrating procedures and ensure that an appropriate range of work is provided for all pupils. Class teachers and support assistants work well together as a team.
129. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, in class, have equal access to computers and make at least satisfactory progress. When they are withdrawn for support, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology and there is insufficient use to match work to their respective levels of attainment. Whole-class lessons and demonstrations are followed up by groups of pupils working across the week, to develop their skills. This approach is leading to a wide variance in the amount of teacher whole-class input across the school, varying from about 10 to 45 minutes. On many occasions, pupils are developing their skills at times when the class is working on another curriculum area resulting in very limited opportunity for the teachers to evaluate and support pupils' achievement in their information and communication technology work. The assessment of pupils' abilities and the use of this information to guide future planning and work are in the very early stages of development. Pupils' access to the computers is recorded and the skills they are developing, but what they have learnt is insufficiently checked and evaluated to guide the teachers' planning for pupils' learning. The school is aware of these issues and plans to address them

through developing an information and communication technology suite as part of the proposed new building programme.

130. There is effective co-ordination of the subject. The co-ordinator has successfully organised the spending of the recent large budget available for the subject in updating equipment and resources. This has improved resources to the current satisfactory level ensuring a range of good software is purchased to support work across the curriculum, for example, in art, music and science. Staff have benefited from training, but the co-ordinator has not had time to monitor the impact of this on provision in class.

MUSIC

131. The school has been without the benefit of a specialist music teacher during the last year. However, keen and enthusiastic co-ordination by the headteacher has ensured appropriate support to staff through advice and resources. The provision for music has been successfully maintained over the year and since the last inspection. Pupils' standards of attainment by the age of seven are in line with national expectations. In a Year 1 lesson pupils attained standards in singing above expectations for their age due to confident and effective teaching.
132. There was insufficient evidence available during the inspection to make judgements about the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and standards of attainment in Years 3 and 4. However, an observation of Year 3 pupils' class assembly showed clear confident singing with an appreciation of performing to an audience. They clearly enjoyed the experience and the applause from parents and other pupils.
133. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good overall and never less than satisfactory. Where teaching is most successful this is due to confidence, enthusiasm and good subject knowledge which help pupils learn specific information. A good example of this is when Year 2 pupils learn that music creates moods and can be recorded in a variety of ways for others to play. They successfully create and record their music pattern on paper and the computer. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils carefully follow the teacher's clear guidance on how to sit, breathe and improve their performance. Pupils persevered and through effort and practice they performed confidently and sang well. All teachers' good class management, organisation and use of resources ensure pupils listen carefully and work hard which helps them learn effectively. Teachers make good use of learning support assistance to enable pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language to have full access to the curriculum. These staff successfully support individuals and groups ensuring they participate fully and learn successfully.
134. Music has not been a high priority for curriculum development due to staffing issues. The school follows a commercial scheme to ensure they meet National Curriculum requirements. There is a strong and effective focus on singing and developing pupils' ability to create and record music using paper and pencil, tape recordings and computer software. Pupils' work shows a growing understanding and sophistication in recording following a series of lessons and between key stages. The policy is due for revision and assessment strategies are currently underdeveloped. These are scheduled for review when a specialist music teacher joins the staff in September. Currently, teachers' medium-term planning identifies what pupils will learn, but does not develop into well-defined short-term plans focused clearly on the knowledge and skills pupils will gain within a lesson. Consequently, teachers' use of assessment to design different tasks for pupils of varying ability is under-emphasised. There is insufficient written guidance to pupils on their compositions to show them how to improve further.

135. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to listen to a range of music, including that from different cultures, in lessons and assemblies. Extra-curricular recorder sessions run by teachers and support staff and some specialist peripatetic music teaching appropriately extends some pupils' opportunities to learn specific skills and enjoy playing tuned musical instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. The provision for physical education shows a good level of improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory at that time because teachers lacked sufficient expertise in the subject. They have had advice and training and the quality of teaching and learning is now good at both key stages. All pupils achieve well and standards of attainment are in line with the national expectation by the ages of seven and nine. They develop appropriate co-ordination and control in movement, and skills in games. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
137. Lessons are well structured with good emphasis on warming up and cooling down. Pupils learn to look after their bodies by stretching their muscles and preparing for exercise. By the age of seven, pupils are familiar with the lesson structure and progress from one activity to the next without fuss. Teachers help pupils to make good use of the hall or field so they develop a good sense of space and work with an awareness of others around them. Pupils respond well to teachers' clear explanations and demonstrations, working hard and trying constantly to improve their skills and performance. They work on varied sequences of movement, which they repeat and refine in response to teacher's encouragement. By the age of seven, pupils develop appropriate games skills, such as controlling the ball with hands or feet, in preparation for games. Skills improve with practice as pupils develop balance and control. Teachers evaluate pupils' performance, showing them how to improve. From this, pupils learn to evaluate their own performance and that of others. They enjoy performing for others and appreciate each other's efforts. Teachers train pupils to look after apparatus sensibly.
138. By the age of nine, pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and understand that it is essential to fitness and health. Pupils are keen to practice skills and continue to improve. When teachers have good subject knowledge, they give clear explanations and show that they expect a lot and pupils rise to the challenge. In gymnastics, for example, they learn an appropriate vocabulary and successfully explain their movement. In this way, pupils successfully develop and improve their control and fluency. They enjoy performing and evaluate each other's work well. Teachers do not always keep the right balance between instruction and action so pupils do not have enough time to develop their work as they would like. The lesson time in the hall or on the field is not always sufficient for pupils to have enough practice to improve their skills.
139. Pupils in Year 3 have regular swimming lessons and most can swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school. The school provides voluntary extra-curricular activities through the year, including football and athletics. These promote good standards and make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The local football team provides very good support and the school has started playing league matches.
140. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the policy and scheme of work and to audit the resources. There are sufficient resources in school but many of them are old and need replacing. The school belongs to the 'Top Sport' scheme and so benefits from extra training and the loan of resources for playing seasonal games.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Provision for the subject has been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. A subject specialist has recently been appointed as co-ordinator. She has good quality plans to develop the subject and review the current scheme of work to make sure the school's specific needs are met. The school has begun to buy good quality resources as they are needed to teach the developing scheme of work. Support from the co-ordinator and gains in teachers' own knowledge and understanding of world faiths has enabled pupils to achieve well and meet the nationally expected standards by the ages of seven and nine. Pupils' attitudes to lessons are very good. The subject supports the aims and values of the school well and makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
142. The quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, develop a positive attitude to the subject. Teachers plan carefully, with clear objectives for the lesson which ensures pupils are clear about what they will learn. Teachers plan carefully to ensure pupils build up their knowledge and understanding over time. During their time in the school, pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Hindu faiths. Teachers provide interesting activities and resources, such as materials researched from the Internet, to involve pupils in the lesson and broaden their understanding. Their good quality questioning leads to interesting and fruitful discussions. For example, a discussion about attitudes to animals extends pupils' understanding of themes that are common to all faiths and helps pupils develop respect for religious values and beliefs. Teachers build very good relationships with pupils that enable them to share their thoughts and beliefs with sensitivity, for example, when talking about the foundations of other world faiths, the religious history of Parvati and Shiva. Pupils think hard and express their thoughts readily, making connections with what they already know and appropriate use of the literacy skills.
143. Assemblies are used well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the common values of religious faiths. Stories, prayers and reflection help them to develop an appropriate understanding of fundamental personal and human issues.