

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PETER AND ST PAUL AIDED CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lichfield

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124375

Headteacher: Mr P Finegan

Reporting inspector: Mr J White
17242

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 25th January 2001

Inspection number: 196968

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dimbles Hill Lichfield Staffordshire
Postcode:	WS13 7NH
Telephone number:	01543 510748
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Davies
Date of previous inspection:	9 th December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17242	J White	Registered inspector	English as an additional language; mathematics; art and design; foundation stage.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	R Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27206	M Debrou	Team inspector	Equal opportunities; special educational needs; science; design and technology; geography; history	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
22671	D White	Team inspector	English; information & communication technology; music; physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is located in the city of Lichfield. Pupils are drawn mainly from the local parish of Holy Cross but some travel from further afield. Pupils have a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils are white. The school is smaller than average but the roll has risen since the last inspection. Currently there are 168 pupils (87 boys, 81 girls). Thirty four children are in the foundation stage and seven of these attend part time. Children are admitted on a part time basis into a "pre-reception class" at the beginning of the Spring or Summer terms and then enter the main reception class at the beginning of the academic year. Eligibility for free school meals is average. Twenty pupils are on the register of special educational needs, a below average figure. One pupil has a statement of special need. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. At the time of the inspection the headteacher and deputy headteacher had been at the school for only two weeks.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Despite a period of considerable change in senior management and staffing the school has continued to be effective. The governors have supported the school well. The teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good progress in most subjects. They achieve good standards overall in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are keen, work hard and behave well. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is effective and helps pupils to achieve well including those with special needs and children under five.
- Pupils behave well and work hard. Their personal development is very good.
- Partnership with parents is good and they contribute well to their children's education.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory at age eleven.
- Most pupils' library skills have not been developed enough.
- There is no systematic way of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in December 1996 there have been major changes in the senior management and school staff. Nevertheless the school has made satisfactory improvement. Teaching has improved overall but especially in the infant classes. Standards by the age of seven have improved in English, mathematics, science and physical education. Standards at age eleven have been sustained in most subjects and the school met its targets in the 2000 tests. Standards have fallen in information and communications technology at age eleven but are beginning to improve. Satisfactory improvements have been made in assessing and recording pupils' achievements and in the school development plan. The role of co-ordinators needs to be further improved in line with the last inspection's recommendations.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	C	C
mathematics	C	A	B	A
science	B	A*	B	B

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

The results show that pupils' performance has fluctuated over time and in 2000 they achieved particularly well in mathematics and science. The numbers of pupils taking the tests was small and therefore the statistics need treating with caution. There is no clear reason why results in English fell more than in the other subjects. The school met its targets for pupils aged eleven in the 2000 tests. The teaching in Year 2 and Year 6 is effective and pupils attain good standards in English, mathematics and science. Progress is good in the infant classes. Progress over a longer period of time has been less consistent because of several changes of teachers. It has nevertheless been at least satisfactory. The oldest pupils achieve unsatisfactory standards in information and communication technology but they are improving. Infant and junior pupils achieve good standards in physical education. Standards in other subjects are satisfactory but in music lessons pupils make good progress. Children in the pre-reception and reception classes make good progress in most areas of learning and are generally doing better than is expected for their ages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and their attitudes are usually positive.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are harmonious and a wide range of opportunities promotes very good personal development.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils throughout the school work well together. They willingly accept responsibility, for example, junior pupils play with, and help supervise, infant pupils at lunchtimes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Ninety-eight per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better. Only two per cent (one lesson) is unsatisfactory. Twenty-five per cent is very good or better. Literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly. The range of pupils' needs is met in most subjects. The pace of teaching is often good especially in whole-class sessions and results in good progress being made, for example, in mental calculations in mathematics. Pupils are usually made aware of objectives for their learning and their ideas are valued. Pupils learn basic skills well, are interested in their work and usually concentrate well. In some of the work in science the most able pupils could be given harder work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils' learning opportunities are satisfactory overall.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good and pupils make good progress as a result.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The level of care is good and the staff know pupils well.

The school works very well with parents and they contribute significantly to their children's education. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted strongly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher have only been at the school for a few weeks so it is too early to judge their leadership. However, the signs look good for the school's future.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have supported the school well during a potentially difficult time.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is no established system for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are controlled efficiently and linked appropriately to educational priorities.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are adequate overall. However, there are some weaknesses in the accommodation. The area for the very youngest children is small and narrow and consequently restricts the practical experiences that can be provided. This area and the adjacent reception class are also thoroughfares. The staff cope well with these disadvantages. The library in the main school is small and under-used. Finances are tight and the governors try hard to get best value for money especially in the appointment of new staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school and are making good progress.• The teaching is good and children, whatever their abilities, are helped well.• The school successfully involves parents in helping their children to learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents would like more information on how their children are getting on, more extra-curricular activities and more homework.

The inspection team agrees with what pleases parents most. The inspectors also judge annual reports on pupils' progress to be informative. A clear homework policy has been introduced very recently. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Standards in the national tests have fluctuated since 1997 but except for results in reading for pupils aged seven, standards in English, mathematics and science have remained at or above the average for all and similar schools. The low numbers of seven and eleven year olds who took the tests explain to a large degree the statistical variations in performance. Statutory targets for pupils aged eleven were achieved. Teaching has improved in the infants and the current pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards in all three subjects. This is an improvement on the standards of seven-year-olds at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 also attain above average standards and these are similar to those in the last inspection. Year 6 pupils' progress would have been even better had they not had, during the autumn term, a number of different teachers. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls.
- 2 Children enter the school with broadly average attainment. Those who are not of compulsory school age make good overall progress but especially in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the reception year most of the children exceed many of the expected early learning goals in these areas of learning. Children make satisfactory progress in physical and creative development and by the time they enter Year 1 achieve many of the early learning goals.
- 3 Infant pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. By the age of seven they listen attentively and exchange ideas confidently. Junior pupils also listen well. They make satisfactory progress in developing their vocabulary and by Year 6 justify their ideas and opinions clearly. Progress in reading is good throughout the school. Pupils are keen and interested in reading due in no small measure to the help they are given by the school staff and parents. Year 2 pupils talk well about the books they like. They are confident in using dictionaries and know how to find information in non-fiction books. However, they are very uncertain how to use the library. Many of the junior pupils also have under- developed library skills. Pupils in Year 6 read well. They use inference and deduction confidently and when they give their views they support them with their knowledge of texts. Infant pupils make good progress in writing. By the age of seven they use punctuation well and write independently in a sequence of sentences. Their handwriting is well formed. In the juniors progress by Year 6 is satisfactory. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, draft and edit their work and their punctuation and spelling are usually correct. Pupils' presentation of their work throughout the school is of inconsistent quality.
- 4 Infant pupils make good progress in mathematics and by the age of seven have developed good knowledge and understanding in number, shape and measures. The Numeracy Strategy is helping pupils to improve their speed of mental calculations. Most junior pupils also make good progress in these areas of mathematics. Progress in Year 6 has been satisfactory but is already getting better. Year 6 pupils have good understanding of number including decimals. Their computational skills are good. Progress and attainment in data handling are not as good as in other areas of the subject mainly because information and communication technology (ICT) is under – used to help pupils develop their mathematical skills. Infant and junior pupils make

good overall progress in science. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have acquired good knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Although pupils have opportunities to conduct investigations, too often the most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because they are given the same work as other pupils.

- 5 Pupils in Year 2 attain expected standards for their age in ICT. These are similar to those in the last inspection. Standards at age eleven have fallen since the last inspection and are below expectations. Year 6 pupils have experienced several changes of teacher and resources have not been adequate to enable the National Curriculum requirements to be taught fully. The situation has now improved. In the lessons seen in Year 2 and Year 6 pupils made good progress.
- 6 Standards at age seven are as expected for pupils' ages in geography, history and music. These standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Good teaching in physical education has helped to improve standards that are now above expectations at ages seven and eleven. There is not enough evidence to evaluate standards in design and technology for infants and juniors or in art and design at age eleven. Standards in art and design for pupils age seven are satisfactory but not as good as at the time of the last inspection. Although there are examples of good work in the infants and juniors artistic skills have not been developed progressively. Standards at age eleven have been maintained in history and music and are in line with expectations. Standards in geography are also satisfactory but were better at the time of the last inspection. Enquiry skills need to be developed more fully.
- 7 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because provision for them is well organised and they are supported well by teachers and support staff. The last inspection found that many high attaining pupils were not achieving their potential. This situation has improved and in most aspects of their work these pupils make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 8 Pupils' good attitudes to school, good behaviour and very good personal development have a positive effect on their achievements and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils like school, are keen to learn and respond well in lessons. Children in the pre-reception and reception classes are developing good working habits, self-confidence and self-control; their behaviour is developing well and they are keen and enthusiastic. Pupils throughout the rest of the school work hard in lessons, maintain concentration and show interest in what they are learning. Their attitudes in lessons improve in line with the quality of teaching. For example, in music the skill of the teacher excites pupils' enthusiasm and accordingly they achieve well. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtimes, around the school and in the playground is good. At times they are more restless in, and moving to and from, assemblies. No incidents of aggressive, oppressive behaviour or bullying were observed during the inspection. There have been no permanent or temporary exclusions for the last two years, a figure well below the national average for primary schools. Pupils know the school rules well and have an increasing awareness of how to behave properly. They have good manners, are polite, and show good respect for the feelings of others. They are helpful and courteous. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils work together very well in pairs and groups with a positive effect on their independence and learning. In a Year 5/6 science lesson, when devising a fair test to dissolve a variety of substances, pupils organised themselves well into groups. The ensuing very good

level of discussion resulted in very effective plans for fair tests and pupils achieved what the teacher wanted.

- 9 Pupils' personal development is very good. They undertake a wide range of tasks willingly and show very good initiative when given the opportunity. The youngest children return registers to the office, help tidy up resources quickly and hold doors open for others. Year 6 pupils are very responsible in a wide range of duties including supervising and playing with the youngest pupils in the playground at lunchtimes, selling snacks at morning breaktime, and clearing up after assembly. Boys and girls show a very keen and positive approach to team games.
- 10 Attendance levels are satisfactory and in line with the national average. Very few pupils are late or take holidays in term time. Lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 11 The quality of teaching is good overall and in a quarter of lessons it is very good. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Teaching in the infant classes has particularly improved and as a result learning is also better. The very recent introduction of specialist teaching in music for all classes is already having a significant impact on the quality of provision. An excellent dance lesson, taught by a parent, was observed.
- 12 Children who are not of compulsory school age are well taught. Especially good emphasis is given to their personal, social, and emotional development, their communication, language and literacy, and their mathematical development. The good teaching enables children to enter Year 1 having exceeded most of the early learning goals. The teaching provides a good balance between teaching key skills directly and supporting the children's own choice of activities.
- 13 Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly throughout the school. This begins well for children under five who are taught letter sounds and number regularly. These skills are developed well as children become older. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. Lessons are well structured. Invariably there is good pace in the whole-class oral sessions at the beginning and end of lessons and learning is good as a result. For example, in a good numeracy lesson in Year 2 the teacher's quick-fire questions helped pupils to improve their speed in multiplying numbers by 4 and 5. A particularly good feature of literacy and numeracy lessons is the teachers' sharing of learning objectives with the pupils. In the most effective teaching the objectives are reinforced and/or evaluated at the end of lessons. This helps pupils to be aware of their own learning. A good example was in Year 5/6 when the teacher asked pupils what they thought they had learned about rounding numbers up or down to help solve problems. Many of the pupils thought they had learned something new.
- 14 Teachers value pupils' contributions and give them good opportunities to explain their thinking especially in English, mathematics and science. They also develop pupils' confidence by enabling them to share work and ideas with others, for example, sharing descriptive writing in Year 5/6 and suggesting ideas for landscape painting in Year 3/4. The development of good relationships contributes significantly to pupils' learning and encourages them to work hard and concentrate well.
- 15 In the vast majority of lessons teachers cater well for the range of pupils' abilities but especially in English and mathematics where expectations are generally high.

Although overall progress in science is good, progress for the most able pupils could be even better. Too often they are given the same work as other pupils. Teaching of pupils with special education needs is good and class teachers and support staff work well together. Teachers are aware of pupils' individual educational plans and adapt work accordingly.

- 16 Often in the most effective lessons teachers make good use of questions to ascertain what pupils know or have learned. This occurs regularly in English, mathematics and science. Marking is also used as an effective assessment tool and is especially effective in English where teachers set targets for pupils' performance. Marking is less rigorous in other subjects. In general, not enough attention is given to help pupils improve the presentation of their work, which is of inconsistent quality.
- 17 In the few lessons that were satisfactory the good pace of teaching and learning at the start of the lessons was not sustained throughout and so pupils made adequate rather than good overall progress. In the one unsatisfactory lesson pupils were not managed well. However, the teacher's handling of pupils improved considerably during the inspection week.

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

- 18 The curriculum for children in the pre-reception and reception classes is suitably broad and takes good account of the six areas of learning. Planning is good and ensures that children have regular adult-directed activities as well as opportunities to make their own choices. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught throughout the rest of the school and the curriculum is reasonably balanced. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been implemented successfully and have had a positive effect in raising standards and achievement in English and mathematics. Given the significant staff changes the teachers have done well to keep the curriculum on course. Their planning is generally conscientious and includes suitable learning objectives. However, the need now to develop a more cohesive approach to curricular planning is recognised by the school. This is especially important to ensure regular investigative work in science and the progressive development of key skills in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.
- 19 Good opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs and these contribute to their good progress. The school complies fully with the requirements of the national Code of Practice. Detailed individual education plans clearly define targets and tasks, which are carefully tailored to meet the specific needs of each pupil. The plans are regularly reviewed with parents who are valued for the contribution they make to pupils' achievement.
- 20 Equality of access to the curriculum and learning opportunities is satisfactory overall. At the pre-inspection meeting some parents expressed concern over the lack of music provision. This is currently being addressed by the appointment of a fully qualified and very skilled music specialist. Some pupils are withdrawn regularly from their classes to be given instrumental tuition. The school does not ensure that these pupils have opportunity to catch up in any work they have missed.
- 21 The personal, social and health education aspects of the curriculum are appropriately addressed and are usually integrated within work in other subjects such as science. Provision for drugs and sex education is satisfactory and in the latter the school nurse

works closely with staff and parents. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and currently includes football, netball and cross-country. "Get Sporty" sessions organised by the local authority are well attended. The lunchtime football club run by the headteacher is very popular both with boys and girls and pupils benefit from carefully structured and energetic sessions.

- 22 Links with the community are strong and enhance the curriculum. For example, a physiotherapist talks to pupils about bone structure and a parent, highly skilled in dance, teaches dance in the school. The parent was observed teaching an excellent lesson during the inspection. Involvement in the Lichfield Arts Festival is very popular and pupils benefit from visiting artists such as an African music group. A particularly special event was the school's celebration of a local parishioner's 100th birthday. This was a unique opportunity for the pupils to listen to a first hand account of life in times past. The school's proximity and links to the local church are well exploited. Arrangements for transfer to the next phase school are satisfactory and a joint programme has been drawn up to ensure pupils feel secure and informed.
- 23 Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall and there are particular strengths in the promotion of moral and social values. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. The development of spiritual awareness is satisfactory. In lessons pupils are encouraged to respond sensitively and sympathetically to the experiences of others. For example, in a Year 6 history lesson, pupils were asked to imagine what their lives would have been like as Victorian chimney sweeps. The response from one pupil was particularly moving and was shared with the whole class. Assemblies are appropriately linked to moral themes and religious stories and include time for prayers. They are also used to celebrate special events in other parts of the world. For example, pupils responded enthusiastically to the atmosphere created in an infant assembly on the Chinese New Year. However, in most of the assemblies observed not enough opportunities were taken to establish an appropriate mood of calm and reflection.
- 24 The understanding of the difference between right and wrong is promoted effectively and provision for moral development is good. The agreed classroom rules have a positive impact on maintaining good standards of behaviour. Teachers set a good example by valuing pupils' ideas and opinions and provide opportunities for them to share their feelings and beliefs. Parents feel that the school promotes Catholic values successfully and that the school is very caring towards its pupils. A range of charities including Acorn Children's Hospice and Children in Need are well supported through events such as sponsored swimming and cross-country races.
- 25 Provision for social development is good and contributes effectively to a purposeful and calm atmosphere throughout the school. Each class has a set of rules displayed and these are supported by a variety of rewards and appropriate sanctions where necessary. For example, a recently introduced system of individual merit cards encourages pupils to do their best in many aspects of their development. At the pre-inspection meeting most parents agreed that behaviour issues are handled well and that pupils are encouraged to negotiate with each other. Pupils are required to undertake a variety of responsibilities including class and school duties. Older junior pupils are responsible for looking after the office and for supporting the work of the midday supervisors during lunchtime. Pupils respond well to expectations that they work sensibly and productively together and this supports activities in a range of subjects including mathematics, science and physical education. School trips and residential visits, provide an important extra dimension to their social development. Year 5 and 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about what they had gained from their trip

to Standon Bowers for a week of outdoor educational activities. Relationships between adults and pupils are very supportive and staff provide a good role model for the pupils in their relations with each other.

- 26 Aspects of the pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding are soundly promoted. They have opportunities to enhance their cultural awareness by a range of visits including to museums. They also learn about environmental issues and the history and cultural traditions of their own locality and of others. In work linked to a study of water, Year 4 and 5 pupils found out about the importance of the River Nile to the Ancient Egyptians and also compared how water was used in Britain and Bangladesh. There are plans to start teaching French as a useful introduction to the culture and language of another European country. Pupils' work in art is often based upon their study of the work of famous artists. Insufficient attention is given throughout the school to developing pupils' awareness of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Britain and by Year 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding are weaker than is often found.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 27 Provision is similar to that in the last inspection. Pupils are cared for well, enabling them to feel secure and valued. Arrangements to ensure their health and safety are satisfactory. Procedures for first aid and medical issues are good. Good care is taken of pupils at the end of the school day. The school is secure and clean; classrooms are generally tidy but the cloakroom, corridors and hall are untidy at times. Staff know the pupils well and provide strong personal support. The arrangements for child protection are good.
- 28 A good behaviour policy strongly emphasises the use of praise and rewards. The consistent application of the procedures by all staff has a good impact on improving standards of behaviour throughout the school. Procedures to deal with aggressive, racist or sexist behaviour are good. Pupils and parents feel confident that potential issues are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- 29 Promotion and monitoring of attendance are good and have led to maintaining attendance rates in line with national averages since the previous inspection. Also, the level of unauthorised absences has reduced in the current year. The school is particularly strong in discouraging parents from taking family holidays in term time.
- 30 Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection. Children are assessed early on entry to the school and good records are kept of their progress in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers know pupils well and there are good examples of teachers making on-the-spot assessments in lessons. Although some analysis of pupils' results in national tests has been undertaken, the results have not sufficiently been explained or influenced strategic planning. For example, in the national tests for 2000 standards in English appeared to fall but there is little reference to this in the analysis.
- 31 Good support is given to pupils with special needs. Teachers give very clear directions to the learning support assistants and this ensures that pupils receive the level of support to meet their needs. Appropriate adjustments are made to lessons to ensure pupils are not disadvantaged and this is greatly appreciated by the parents. For example, the class teacher sensitively supports a pupil with visual difficulties in all the lessons, including physical education. Records of pupils' progress are well maintained and appropriate liaison is made with external agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 32 Partnership with parents is good and has a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Parents have been very supportive during a period of considerable changes in staffing and leadership. Their view is that these changes have not significantly disrupted their children's education. They are pleased with the school and feel their children achieve good standards. They feel that children are helped well, whatever their abilities, and are well cared for. At the time of the last inspection partnership was strong.
- 33 A few parents would like more information on how their children are getting on and some would like more homework and more extra-curricular activities. The inspection finds that information provided for parents is good. Annual reports give them clear information about their children's achievements. Clear targets for their further progress are identified in mathematics, English and science. A clear homework policy has been introduced recently. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There is an open door policy; staff are readily available and give parents good opportunities to raise issues or concerns, which are followed up promptly. Newsletters, the prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report provide good information. The new headteacher has shown a good sense of humour in his recent newsletters and this has set a good tone for the future in his relationship with parents. In particular, he has set good guidelines in relation to the use of homework. Good links with parents help the youngest pupils to settle quickly into the reception and pre-reception classes.
- 34 Parents provide good support for their children's education. Help in and around the school is very effective. Several parents on a daily basis hear pupils read at the start of the school day and this is having a very beneficial impact on pupils' attitudes to and standards in reading. Classroom help by parents is organised and used well by the teachers. Excellent examples of this were seen in the reception class and in a dance lesson.
- 35 The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association is very supportive and provides valuable funds and resources. Parents support homework well and give their children good support in reading and providing resources to help in lessons. They support the school's behaviour policy.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 36 The current headteacher and deputy headteacher had been at the school for only two weeks when the inspection took place. It would therefore be inappropriate to evaluate their leadership and management. However, the signs look good. The headteacher has communicated well with parents to keep them informed of developments and has appointed a very effective specialist music teacher to teach music throughout the school. Pupils are responding well to this new provision. The headteacher is also to introduce French to broaden pupils' learning opportunities. He is also ensuring that the newly qualified teacher is being well supported. The deputy headteacher's teaching is very good in three out of five lessons and Year 6 pupils have commented how pleased they are to now have a permanent teacher.
- 37 The significant changes of staff in recent times and the lack of a permanent headteacher or deputy headteacher during the last autumn term presented a potential period of instability for the school. However, it is clear that it ran smoothly during this time and governors played a key role in supporting the staff and the acting headteacher (a deputy headteacher seconded from another school). Parents have also commented that, in their view, there was no significant disruption to their children's education at this time. The governors are well informed and very supportive. The chair of governors and parent governors are very active in the school, for example, they regularly help with children's reading. The governors' committee structure and terms of reference are very clear and governors have undertaken a range of training including school self review and performance management. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are looking forward to becoming more involved in the life of the school especially in their role as monitors of the school's performance. Income is tight and the governors have little room for manoeuvre. Financial control is efficient and the governors' priority has been to appoint good teachers. On the evidence of the inspection this priority has been achieved because the quality of teaching is good.
- 38 The last inspection report indicated that improvements were needed to the school's development plan. Some were made including reference to whole school as well as subject issues and also inclusion of indicators of success. The new headteacher has recognised that more precise targets are now needed for teaching and learning. Another key issue from the last inspection was to further develop the role of co-ordinators to enable them to systematically monitor and evaluate classroom practice. Some useful monitoring of classroom practice has taken place, for example, in literacy and numeracy, but there has not been a systematic approach.
- 39 Provision for special educational needs is well managed and developing well after a recent review. Consultation between the co-ordinator and staff is good and arrangements for the support of pupils work well.
- 40 Some improvements have been made to the accommodation since the last inspection including the addition of a new classroom. However, the accommodation has disadvantages. The area used for the pre-inspection class is narrow and it would be inadequate if there were more children. Both this area and the adjacent reception classroom are thoroughfares. The staff cope well but inevitably there is some disruption to children's learning. Year 2 pupils are housed in a mobile classroom that lacks a water supply. The school has no space to provide a suitable library. The current library area is small and under-used. This contributes to pupils' generally weak library skills. There are not enough resources for history, geography and design

and technology. Science resources are not accessible enough for staff and pupils. A review of resources and their organisation is now needed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41 The governors and headteacher should:

- (1) Raise standards in ICT by:
 - teaching the full range of required skills systematically;
 - ensuring ICT is used in other subjects;
 - improving teachers' expertise. (Paragraphs: 4-5, 63, 83-88)
- (2) Improve pupils' library skills by ensuring they use the library regularly. (Paragraphs: 3, 40, 52-3, 59)
- (3) Monitor and evaluate teaching and learning systematically in order to help the school to continue to improve. (Paragraphs: 38, 58, 74)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN

- Ensure pupils' work is well presented. (Paragraphs: 3, 16, 55)
- Ensure the most able pupils are always challenged enough in investigative science. (Paragraphs: 4, 15, 69, 70, 73)
- Give pupils more opportunities to develop data handling skills. (Paragraphs: 4, 63, 85)
- Teach skills in art more progressively. (Paragraphs: 6, 74)
- Ensure marking consistently helps pupils to improve. (Paragraphs: 16, 65, 71)
- Develop a more cohesive approach to curricular planning. (Paragraphs: 18, 71, 73, 82)
- Ensure that pupils withdrawn from lessons for music tuition have chances to catch up on any work missed. (Paragraphs: 20, 58, 94)
- Improve opportunities for spiritual development in assemblies. (Paragraph: 23)
- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of Britain's ethnic and cultural diversity. (Paragraph: 26)
- Improve the school development plan. (Paragraph: 38)
- Review the supply and organisation of resources. (Paragraphs: 40, 73)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	23	58	15	2	0	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	163
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	21

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
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	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above				
	Total	17	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (82)	87 (95)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above				
	Total	20	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (95)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	10	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above				
	Total	16	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (92)	84 (92)	95 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above				
	Total	16	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (88)	84 (81)	89 (96)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Results for boys and girls are omitted where less than eleven in either group took the tests.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	-
Indian	-
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	139
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	27.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	278,244
Total expenditure	275,858
Expenditure per pupil	1,714
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9,900
Balance carried forward to next year	-7,514

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	163
Number of questionnaires returned	35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	31	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	40	9	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	57	20	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	51	26	0	0
The teaching is good.	46	49	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	31	20	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	20	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	34	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	37	49	14	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	23	49	6	3	20
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	40	23	6	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 42 The good provision for children in the foundation stage has been sustained since the last inspection. Four-year-old children are admitted on a part-time basis into a “pre-reception” class at the beginning of the Spring or Summer term and they join the full time reception class at the beginning of the Autumn term. Thirty-four children are in the foundation stage. Children begin school with average skills overall and they make good progress in most of the areas of learning. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 most children exceed many of the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical and creative development they make satisfactory progress overall and by the end of the reception year they achieve most of the early learning goals. A nursery nurse is responsible for teaching much of the work of the part-time children but liaises closely with the reception teacher. The “pre-reception” group joins the reception class for some of the activities. A classroom assistant also works in the foundation stage for some of her time. The overall teaching is good and the staff work well as a team. The area used for teaching the part-time children is small and narrow and the lack of space restricts what can be provided especially for play and first hand experiences. Currently the number of children is small but if there were more children the area would be inadequate. Both the reception and pre-reception areas are not well located. They are thoroughfares and are particularly busy at the start of the morning sessions. The staff and children cope well with these disadvantages.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 43 Good progress is made in this area of learning because the teaching is good. By the time children leave the reception class they exceed many of the early learning goals. The youngest children are helped to settle quickly. They share news at the start of the day and respond well to the very pleasant and positive manner of the nursery nurse. Parents are also encouraged to stay and help settle their children. Good opportunities are provided for all the children in the foundation stage to develop their independence and co-operation with others especially in role-play. Children were observed sharing equipment without fuss and also sensibly choosing activities for themselves. Children playing imaginatively in the “Antarctic” play area collaborated well. A boy and a girl in the “pre-reception” class played together well with a doll’s house. The staff are caring and sensitive to children’s emotional needs and comfort them where needed. Children are quickly gaining in confidence. This is shown very well in their active participation in discussion particularly when sharing a book with an adult. Behaviour is good and children are learning to appreciate when it is important to be quiet; for example, when the reception teacher lights a candle before prayers are said.

Communication, language and literacy

- 44 The quality of teaching is good. Children’s speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are developed well. Consequently they make good progress and by the end of the reception year most exceed the early learning goals. Opportunities for children to talk to adults and with each other are regular and well organised by the reception teacher and support staff. Children in the pre-reception group enthusiastically shared, with the nursery nurse, a story about an elephant. Careful questions such as “what

do you think will happen next?” captured their interest and helped their understanding of the story. They not only had lots to say but were also very attentive when necessary. Children in the reception class listen particularly well when the teacher is addressing them all, for example, in the introduction to literacy and numeracy sessions. They are helped to use language confidently particularly in mathematics. Children are interested in learning to read and often sit quietly by themselves looking at a book. A good range of labelling supports children’s literacy development, for example, words related to the topic on winter are prominently displayed. A writing area in the reception class encourages children to attempt their own writing. Children are also taught key skills in literacy very thoroughly. Consequently many of them in the reception class recognise a good range of letter sounds and rhymes. The most able children form letters with growing accuracy and make good attempts to write simple sentences.

Mathematical development

- 45 Teaching of children’s mathematical development is very good and they make very good progress. By the time they leave the reception class almost all the children exceed the early learning goals and the most able exceed them very well. Children in the pre-reception class are learning to recognise numbers and several count easily to 10. A child who successfully joined together a number of small toy elephants said, with obvious delight, “I’ve made a circle”. Another child playing with small toys counted beyond 10 accurately and successfully named several common shapes. In the reception class good use is made of number rhymes not only as part of children’s mathematical work but also to settle them at the start of sessions. The reception teacher makes good use of mathematical language and has high expectations of the children. For example, after most children had responded accurately to “show me one more than 5” she then introduced them to “one less than”. The children caught on quickly. The classroom assistant later gave good support to the development of children’s mathematical language and understanding by asking appropriate questions such as “how many is that altogether”. Children’s understanding of “bigger than” and “smaller than” was enhanced when they successfully arranged teddy bears according to their size.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 46 Teaching is good. In general, children make good progress in this area of learning and most achieve many of the early learning goals by the start of Year 1. Children in the pre-reception class develop their early investigative skills by planting and observing the growth of cress and sort small toys according to their differences and similarities such as colour and size. They also learn to name parts of the body in their work on “all about me”. Regular opportunities are provided for children to build with constructional equipment. During the inspection they played simple games on the computer and used the mouse with growing confidence. In the reception class children’s early interest in history has been stimulated by work on “special memories” in which they shared photographs of significant events in their lives, for example, the birth of a baby in the family. Children’s early scientific awareness was developed well by the teacher when she asked them to predict which potato, one wrapped in foil and another without, would be the warmest by the end of the afternoon. The “Antarctic” role-play area is well used by the children. They are learning about materials that keep people warm and also make good use of spoken language. For example, a girl dressed as an arctic explorer said, looking through a pair of binoculars, “you look enormous”.

Physical development

- 47 Children's physical skills are not as well developed as skills in other areas of learning but nevertheless many achieve most of the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception year. The teaching was good in the lessons observed. All children in the foundation stage have regular opportunities to develop their physical skills in a good outside play area and in the hall. They also regularly handle small objects in the classroom. The lack of space in the small pre-reception area makes it very difficult to provide a wide range of larger equipment. Children observed in a lesson in the hall and at play outside showed reasonable awareness of space and of others but at times became over-excited. The teacher succeeded well in calming them down. In the session in the hall good emphasis was given to children being able to warm up and cool down. Children have good opportunities to use a range of materials to improve their manipulative skills. In the reception class children used small equipment to make different sized chairs for the three bears and in the pre-reception classes used brushes well to paint a picture of an elephant.

Creative development

- 48 Teaching is good overall. Progress is satisfactory and most children achieve many of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children have opportunities to use a range of media to explore colour and texture and draw, paint, print and make collage. The youngest children apply paint with growing confidence and respond well to choosing what colours to use. They also name the colours accurately. Children regularly sing nursery rhymes at different times of the day. They have also responded very well to the new music teacher and after only one session were asking for him to play their favourite songs on the piano. They sang with enthusiasm. Reception children have made cornflower "snow models" and good collage pictures of their favourite food. The lack of space in the pre-reception area restricts opportunities for creative role-play. The provision for play is better in the reception class where the play area is changed to suit the current topic. Children playing in the "Antarctic" play area quickly became explorers even taking time to snooze in the sleeping bag.

ENGLISH

- 49 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven standards in reading were below the national average and well below when compared with similar schools. Standards in writing were well above average when compared with the national average and similar schools. The small number of pupils aged seven means that comparative data should be treated with caution. The current pupils in Year 2 are achieving above average levels in both reading and writing because the teaching is good.
- 50 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven in 2000 show that attainment in English is in line with that achieved nationally and by similar schools. This represents a decline in standards compared with recent years and with those seen during the last inspection. The number of pupils who took the tests was small and therefore the results need treating with caution. Inspection evidence indicates that the current pupils in Year 6 attain above average standards in reading and writing.
- 51 Infant pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 1 confidently gave reasons why they should take Charlie (the bear) home. Their responses to questions and the questions they asked indicated how well

they had listened during the lesson. In Year 2, pupils talked with assurance when exchanging ideas and expressing their preferences for the animals that name the Chinese calendar. They recounted a story about the Chinese New Year with great attention to detail. Junior pupils listen well in lessons and make satisfactory progress in using a broader range of vocabulary in their speech. With encouragement they are beginning to express themselves using the features of Standard English. In Year 6, pupils discussed the differences between myths and legends and, when challenged, were able to justify their ideas and opinions with examples they have been studying.

- 52 Standards in reading are above average across the school. Pupils are keen and avid readers, positively encouraged by the school and their parents. In Year 1, all pupils read simple text, using pictures and their knowledge of letter sounds to read new words. The most able pupils read with fluency and expression that shows their love of books and reading. They have very definite views about their favourite books. The good progress continues in Year 2 where pupils are able to talk about books they enjoy and delight in recounting episodes from their latest book. High attaining pupils read with accuracy and understanding and are able to refer to the text when explaining their ideas, for example, when explaining the opera singer's "voice of an angel". Whilst the pupils are confident in using a dictionary and have a knowledge of contents and index in helping them to find out information from books, they do not know how to locate books in the library.
- 53 The overall good rates of progress in the junior classes lead to above average standards in reading at the age of eleven. By then pupils select features of the text to explain their ideas and use inference and deduction confidently. They use skimming and scanning skills when investigating text for information. High attaining pupils compare differences in styles of writing, for example, between the representation of fantasy by C S Lewis in Tales of Narnia and J K Rowling in the Harry Potter series. Being able to locate and retrieve information independently is restricted to the pupils in Year 6. Many of the other pupils are very uncertain how to use the library. The use of the library and the acquisition of library skills for all the pupils are key issues for the school to address. All pupils take their books home to read and reading diaries support expectations of reading homework. The good help parents give in listening regularly to pupils' read enhances the partnership between home and school.
- 54 Standards in writing are above average at the ages of seven and eleven. By the age of seven pupils have made good progress and write a sequence of sentences to form a story. They use capital letters and full stops correctly and simple words are spelt correctly. Their handwriting is accurately formed and consistent in size. In writing their "Underground Adventure" the most able pupils used direct speech to add interest to their stories and were beginning to choose words for effect, for example, "Patrick rubbed his fingers along the fluffy feathers". They were inventive in using capital letters to create the effect of falling: "AAAAA!" By the age of eleven pupils have made satisfactory progress. They are inventive in their choice of words, similes and phrases to create effect and vitality in their stories about King Midas. They are beginning to employ complex sentences to express their ideas. Punctuation and spelling are usually accurate. Direct speech is used accurately. They draft and edit their work to ensure that their work reflects their ideas and thoughts. They are making a significant effort to improve their presentation skills. They write for a variety of purposes and audiences and their "Whale" poems reflect their enjoyment in using words imaginatively.
- 55 Although handwriting skills are taught they are not being consistently applied across the year groups and in the whole curriculum to raise the quality of writing and

presentation of work. There are occasions when pupils' work shows a lack of attention to detail and presentation is often untidy.

- 56 Pupils enjoy learning and show a delight in selecting words to express their ideas, opinions and feelings. They are keen to develop their skills and work hard to achieve this. Relationships are good. Pupils and teachers show respect for one another and pupils appreciate the support and encouragement they receive. They are eager to evaluate and improve their work and value the views of other pupils and their teachers. The planning and support provided enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress especially in the basic skills in reading and writing.
- 57 The quality of teaching is good overall and is never less than satisfactory. More than half of the lessons observed were good or better. The quality of teaching in the infant classes has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. In all lessons the planning is good, learning objectives are specific and shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and reviewed at the end. The oral beginnings to lessons have pace and purpose setting the tone for the rest of the lesson. The teachers clearly articulate and establish an atmosphere of high expectation. They take care to ensure that the differing needs of their pupils are met and use assessment very effectively. In most classes the quality of marking is good with teachers providing the pupils with advice on how to improve their work and targets for the future. The very good relationships facilitate the exchange of ideas and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. This was exemplified in a very good lesson in Year 2 when the teacher encouraged pupils to provide extended sentences in their replies and also in Year 6 when pupils were encouraged to share their best descriptive phrases or sentences with the rest of the class. Good teaching is characterised by very good subject knowledge and skilful questioning. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect and pupils make good progress. The plenary at the end of lessons reinforces and extends the pupils' learning and sets clear objectives for the next lesson.
- 58 The co-ordinator has made good contributions to leading and managing the subject and to the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. There is a clear view of the future direction of the subject. Planning for the literacy hour is detailed and very thorough, providing a secure framework for developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers maintain detailed records of pupils' progress and use these to group pupils appropriately and to set targets for improvement. The school has yet to monitor the effect that the withdrawal of pupils for music tuition has on their progress in English. A whole school strategy to address this issue is required. There are no procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Such procedures would provide useful information that teachers could share as a team to refine their skills.
- 59 Resources are of good quality and are generally adequate to support the pupils' learning in the classroom. The library was rarely used during the inspection and the quality and quantity of its books are inadequate. As a consequence the majority of pupils have poorly developed library skills. This is a key issue for the school to address.

MATHEMATICS

- 60 Pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards overall and this is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Standards in Year 6 are also above average and are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Results in the 2000 national tests were also above average for seven-year-olds and for eleven

year old pupils were well above average compared with similar schools. Standards have fluctuated since 1997 but the low numbers of pupils taking the tests explains this. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

- 61 Infant pupils make good progress especially in number. Year 1 pupils' knowledge and understanding of number are good. Most pupils add and subtract with numbers to 10 and many count and order numbers beyond 10. They are also developing good understanding of place value in numbers with two digits. Many recognise odd and even numbers. Progress in shape, space and measures is also good. The most able pupils measure accurately in centimetres. All pupils, including the least able, name common shapes and describe their properties. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well and have made good progress since the beginning of the autumn term. They also make good progress in lessons. In a good lesson the majority of pupils counted accurately in fours and fives and more than a half quickly doubled and halved numbers more than 10. Good teaching ensured that the mental work had brisk pace. Most pupils use simple fractions accurately. Pupils of below average ability are making good progress in number and are achieving several elements of the average National Curriculum level. Year 2 pupils also attain well in shape and measures. For example, high attaining pupils recognise cuboids and pentagons and low attainers distinguish accurately between two and three-dimensional shapes.
- 62 Most junior pupils also make good progress in number, shape, space and measures. By Year 5 pupils' general understanding of the number system is good and many calculate quickly, for example when multiplying by 8 or 9. The most able pupils convert decimals to percentages. They also use metric measures accurately and have good knowledge of regular and irregular polygons. Pupils of below average ability achieve well in their knowledge of place value to 1000. Pupils in Year 6 had a number of different teachers during the last autumn term and inevitably this affected their rate of progress. Nevertheless, progress has been satisfactory but in the last few weeks the pace of learning has quickened. Achievement was good in the lesson observed. Many of the Year 6 pupils show good understanding of decimals to three places and convert decimals to percentages accurately. Computation skills are generally above average. Pupils respond well to opportunities to explain their reasoning, for example, when rounding numbers up or down to solve a problem. Discussion with pupils about their work indicated they have good knowledge of shape and use the language of angles well. Most also explain how to calculate areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes.
- 63 Throughout the school progress in data handling is not as good as in other areas of mathematics largely because ICT is under- used to develop pupils' skills and understanding. Very little data handling was found in the scrutiny of pupils' work apart from the occasional bar graph and frequency table. Discussion with Year 6 pupils showed that they have undertaken some data handling in the past and most knew about pie charts and line graphs. However, few could remember using ICT in mathematics.
- 64 The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection, especially in the infant classes. Mental work is invariably taught at a lively pace and as a consequence pupils make good progress in their speed of mental calculation. Lessons are well structured in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Generally, expectations are high and pupils know what is expected of them. Learning objectives are made clear to pupils and often at the end of lessons teachers reinforce them. In a very good lesson in Year 5/6 the teacher involved pupils in evaluating whether the objectives had been achieved. Regularly, teachers give pupils opportunity to share

their thinking. In Year 3/4, for example, the teacher encouraged pupils to explain how they had doubled certain numbers. A child who accurately doubled 75 indicated he had multiplied 80 by two and then took 10 away. Teachers also often spend a short but useful amount of time at the start of lessons checking that pupils have remembered key knowledge from the previous lesson. This ensures continuity in pupils' understanding. Following the whole-class session at the start of lessons, work is suitably matched to the range of pupils' abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by class teachers and support staff. For example, in a good lesson in Year 2, the support assistant's questioning of pupils with special needs was well focused and helped them to improve their understanding of exchanging coins for their equivalent values. Teachers promote good relationships and behaviour and pupils respond positively.

- 65 Regular assessments are undertaken of pupils' progress in mathematics and records are passed through the school. The quality of marking is inconsistent and is most effective on those occasions when teachers set targets for pupils' improvement.
- 66 Currently there is no co-ordinator for mathematics and the new headteacher is keeping a watching brief. The use of ICT and the development of data handling are areas for development.

SCIENCE

- 67 In the 2000 teacher assessments carried out for seven-year-olds, the proportion attaining the expected levels was well above average. The proportion attaining the higher levels was above average. Pupils did particularly well in the following aspects of the subject: life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. In the 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' overall performance was above the average for all schools. Seven and eleven-year-olds did well when compared with similar schools. The current pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards and these are better than at the time of the last inspection because the teaching has improved. Pupils in Year 6 attain above average standards and these are similar to the last inspection's findings.
- 68 Infants and juniors make good progress. As pupils become older they quickly develop more detailed knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties, how electricity and different forces work, and what humans and plants need to survive. Year 1 pupils describe which household objects give light and what stops light getting through. Year 2 pupils make guesses and then sort materials into different properties. They set up a simple experiment to find out how to complete an electrical circuit. In Years 3 and 4 pupils understand that air is a force and it can affect the speed objects move. In an investigation about materials, Year 4 and 5 pupils explained which make the best conductors or insulators, having previously recorded their predictions. In discussion, Year 5 and 6 pupils describe how switches work to control the flow of electricity and pupils in Year 6 explain how they set up an experiment to test the requirements of plants and how they recorded and interpreted their findings in graphs.
- 69 The quality of teaching is good overall. Careful lesson planning means that clear links are made with previous work and pupils can make the necessary connections. For example, in a Year 1 class, the teacher made good use of a well-known story about funny animals to lead pupils into a focussed discussion about various known animals and their different features. They were able to use appropriate vocabulary to group them and make good suggestions such as mammal, reptile and insect. In the very good lessons the teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about science and

this generates a high level of interest and confidence in the pupils. Year 2 pupils made good contributions and listened attentively during the teacher's skilled introduction to the lesson on animal habitats. Tasks and activities are chosen carefully and help pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding and make good progress. In a Year 5/6 class pupils made good progress in their investigations into the effects of liquid and temperature on dissolving various substances because they worked in groups organised according to their abilities. However, in too many lessons the same worksheet or activity is given to all pupils and consequently the most able are not challenged enough on these occasions. Throughout the school, learning objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and this helps them to have a clearer understanding of the work they are covering. Where a lesson is good its end is also used effectively not only to reinforce the objectives but also to enable pupils to reflect on what they have learned.

- 70 Teachers use questions well to check what the pupils already know and to make sure they have understood the work they are doing. This is particularly effective when the questions challenge the pupils to explain their thinking and use appropriate vocabulary. Very good management and organisation, particularly in Year 2 and Year 6, help pupils to develop good work habits. They are confident in handling equipment and organising themselves. Generally however, junior pupils do not have enough opportunities to contribute their own ideas for experiments and teachers over prescribe much of their investigative work. Good use of time ensures that most lessons move along at a brisk pace and pupils stay focussed on what they are doing. Relationships are good throughout the school and an atmosphere is created where the pupils can become confident learners and support each other. For example, in the Year 5 and 6 class the teacher stresses the importance of working together and sharing ideas. This leads to a lively discussion and a high level of co-operation. In one lesson, the behaviour of the pupils was less effectively managed and consequently pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable. The support given to pupils with special needs is particularly good. Teachers ensure they understand what they are being asked to do and they make good progress. Throughout the school ICT is under-used in pupils' work in science.
- 71 Throughout the school pupils' work is regularly marked. However, there are few comments or targets set to help pupils improve. Overall, teachers keep good quality class records of how well individual pupils have understood each topic and these are passed on to the next teacher. There are plans to review and rationalise the method of assessing and recording pupils' progress to ensure a more consistent approach. This will enable teachers to build up a more accurate picture of individual progress as pupils move through the school, particularly in relation to their investigating and experimenting skills.
- 72 Pupils' attitudes are usually positive and often very good. In the very good lessons, pupils are very keen to participate in their investigations and are eagerly responsive to the teacher's questions. They are keen to talk about their work and show enthusiasm and enjoyment. They offer sensible suggestions and ideas.
- 73 The deputy headteacher has taken on responsibility for science since her appointment in January. She is keen to develop the subject further and has a good understanding of what needs to be done, particularly in planning for the development of investigative skills and in teachers' assessments. She also realises the need to improve the storage and range of equipment.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 74 Three lessons were observed in art and none in design and technology. A scrutiny of pupils' work in art indicates that standards by the age of seven are as expected for pupils' ages. Because of the staff changes in Year 6 during the autumn term, there was not enough work available during the inspection to evaluate standards. In design and technology, there was not enough evidence of pupils' work to evaluate standards throughout the school. Inevitably, because of staff changes and a lack of recent co-ordinators, development in these subjects has suffered and standards are not as good as at the time of the last inspection. There is no evidence that teaching and learning have been monitored. Although much of the work in art is good the range is not as wide as should be expected. Skills are not developed progressively enough as pupils become older.
- 75 Pupils in Year 1 have drawn good pictures of their grandparents and of themselves. Much of their work shows expressive use of paint including "cool" colours and "warm" colours. In Year 2 after studying Modigliani's "Girl with pigtails" pupils produced good self-portraits and pencil sketches. They are also using ICT suitably to help develop their artistic skills. Some good work has been developed in Year 3/4 including use of pencil to create textures for landscape pictures. Pupils looked at work by Van Gogh, took rubbings of different objects and surfaces and then tried to copy them in pencil. In a good lesson in this class pupils responded well to looking at artists' pictures before creating landscapes using a range of colours. Pupils' ideas and techniques were good. In Year 4/5 art has been linked well to history and the whole class contributed to a vivid wall painting in the style of Ancient Egyptian art. Good observational art in this class includes well-drawn bowls of oranges based on the style of Cezanne. In a good lesson in this class pupils used pencil carefully and paid good attention to perspective and form.
- 76 Teaching was good in all the lessons observed and consequently pupils achieved well. The teachers taught key skills carefully and the lessons were suitably resourced. They valued pupils' contributions but also suggested ways in which pupils could improve their performance. Pupils' work was challenging. In Year 4/5 timed tasks added pace to the learning. In general, pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive.
- 77 The new deputy headteacher has taken on responsibility for the subjects while all subject responsibilities are being reviewed.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 78 Only one lesson was observed in each subject. Therefore, an overall judgement on teaching and learning cannot be made. Judgements on pupils' attainment and achievement are based on a scrutiny of their work and discussion with them.
- 79 Attainment at both seven and eleven is in line with expectations for pupils' ages. Overall progress is satisfactory. These findings are similar to those in the previous inspection for pupils aged seven, but standards at eleven were good last time. Pupils' enquiry skills are not developed as fully as they could be. Planning for both subjects is satisfactory and there is a two-year rolling programme of topic work that covers National Curriculum requirements. Appropriate links are made to other subjects such as science and art.
- 80 In the one lesson observed in geography Year 2 pupils successfully drew a map with routes based on the story of The Jolly Postman. The teaching was good. Effective

questions quickly engaged the pupils' attention and led to a stimulating discussion. The work was carefully planned for the differing abilities within the class. Extension activities provided opportunities for the most able pupils to draw a map of their own locality. A pupil with special educational needs was well supported by the teacher and benefited from the encouragement of the other pupils in the group. The teacher gave clear, easy to follow instructions so pupils knew what to do and what was expected of them. Good use of praise encouraged pupils to work well together and to complete the activities. Relationships and behaviour were good and routines were well established. At the end of the lesson pupils had made good progress and were able to show that they knew geographical terms such as key, plan and symbols. Year 2 pupils' completed work indicates competent knowledge of key features of the lives of famous historical figures such as Helen Keller and Florence Nightingale. Year 1 pupils' understanding of chronology has been enhanced by their work on family trees.

- 81 In the lesson observed in history Year 5 and 6 pupils were exploring aspects of how major Victorian events such as the Boer War were represented in the press. The teaching was very good. There was a high level of interest and response as the teacher recreated arguments from some of the original reports and involved pupils in representing these to the whole class. Very effective questioning helped pupils to understand the importance of getting various viewpoints before making a judgement. They explained that "this helps you get the whole picture rather than just one person's opinion." The teacher made extremely good use of an account of life as a Victorian chimney sweep to stimulate some very imaginative writing. As a result, one particularly moving piece was read aloud to the whole class and this helped to encourage other pupils to give of their best. A brisk pace and clear time limits made sure that pupils worked hard and finished their work. Pupils in the Year 4/5 class have developed their knowledge of contrasting localities in their work on water use in Britain and Bangladesh. Junior pupils work on Ancient Egypt and Greece has been linked well to art.
- 82 Pupils study either history or geography at any one time. The teachers use the school's schemes of work to plan what will be covered and when and how it will fit into the term's work. In some classes this planned work is not adapted sufficiently to cater for the range of pupils' abilities. Although planning covers the knowledge aspects of both subjects adequately a more coherent approach is needed for the development of research and enquiry skills. The curriculum for both subjects is enriched and enlivened by a good range of visits, visitors and community links.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 83 At the age of seven standards are in line with those expected for pupils' age and similar to those described at the time of the last inspection. By the age of eleven standards are below average and lower than those identified at the previous inspection. This is, in part, due to the significant number of temporary teachers that pupils in Year 6 have experienced and the lack of appropriate resources to teach the Programmes of Study such as use of the Internet, modelling and controlling. ICT is under-used throughout the school to support learning in other subjects.
- 84 Infant pupils make good progress and gain in confidence in the basic operations using keyboard and mouse. Pupils in Year 2 are learning to use the Colour Magic programme to create pictures in the style of a famous artist. They are enthusiastic in sharing their ideas with their teacher to produce rectangles of various sizes and colours using a mouse. They save and retrieve their work.

- 85 In the junior classes standards and progress are satisfactory in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils in Year 3 use their word processing skills to change font size and colour, cut and paste the text, save work and retrieve and print it. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are developing their data handling skills well. They have stored individual data and know how to retrieve information from the reports and fields they have created. They are beginning to understand the need for careful framing of questions as they construct their questionnaire to gain data about the visit to France. Year 6 pupils' skills are too limited but they are making good progress because key skills are being taught directly. They are developing their word processing skills and edit their work, for example, using cut and paste. They have no experience of data handling or controlling operations. The school has only just been linked to the Internet so any pupils who are able to describe the value of searching the Internet for information and exchanging messages via e-mail have acquired the skills at home.
- 86 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the subject and they enjoy their lessons. They work well together and are keen to contribute to class discussion. They collaborate well when working in small groups and eagerly provide advice and help to their friends when the need arises.
- 87 Three specific lessons in ICT were observed. Very little use was seen of ICT in other subjects. In the three lessons the teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good in two. Key skills thoroughly were taught thoroughly. In the good lessons the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject, the challenges set and the very clear instructions enabled pupils to make good progress.
- 88 The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the future development of ICT now that the resources and funding are available to help teach the required curriculum. A scheme of work and a good assessment system to record pupils' progress have been produced and a programme of training is to be undertaken to enhance the teaching skills of the staff. The school looks well placed to make the planned improvements.

MUSIC

- 89 Standards in music at the ages of seven and eleven are broadly what are expected for pupils' ages and remain similar to those seen at the previous inspection.
- 90 The very recent appointment of a specialist music teacher is having a significant effect on the standards achieved. Plans for the development of the subject are clear and include the introduction of music technology, introducing greater instrumental experiences for the pupils during lessons and working with other teachers to develop the teaching of music throughout the school.
- 91 Infant pupils make good progress in lessons. In Year 1 pupils respond well to the rhythm of sounds and music. They sang and clapped the Grand Old Duke of York with enthusiasm and gusto and were appropriately more gentle when singing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. They choose appropriate loud and soft percussion instruments to accompany each song. In Year 2, the pupils revealed an understanding of a variation in pace when singing and accompanying "Slowly walks my Granddad" as well as an enjoyment in performance. Junior pupils also make good progress in lessons. Pupils in Year 4/5 sang in tune and with expression when singing in four parts in only their second lesson taught by the new music teacher. They coped well with the challenging repetition of "rilli", "dilli" and "rumpf" when learning the rapid "Ebony Trousers" and, by the end of the lesson, were able to perform the song in two parts.

Part-singing was also a feature of the Year 5/6 lesson with the pupils combining "It's a long way to Tipperary" with "Pack up your troubles", again in just the second lesson. All pupils sang with commitment, clear diction and expression.

- 92 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their singing and thoroughly enjoy their lessons. They are keen to improve the quality of their performance and practise hard to do this. They work well together when singing in parts.
- 93 The quality of teaching is never less than good and often very good. Lessons are well planned and opportunities are identified to ensure that pupils acquire the appropriate subject language. The specialist teaching ensures that lessons are both challenging and stimulating. High expectations are resulting in pupils' making good progress.
- 94 Instrumental tuition is provided by visiting teachers and upwards of 60 pupils receive specialist tuition in the playing of violin, cello, keyboard and piano. The instrumental tuition observed during the inspection was good and the pupils make good progress. These lessons take place during the school day and the school has yet to monitor the effect this has on the pupils' learning in the lessons they forego. The pupils also perform in joint schools' performances in the locality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 95 Three lessons were observed. Attainment at the ages of seven and eleven is better than expectations for pupils' ages and an improvement on the standards seen during the previous inspection.
- 96 In Year 1, pupils make good progress in sending and receiving a ball. They make good use of space when warming up and are well aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies when they feel their heartbeat. They work well singly and in pairs to improve their throwing and catching skills. In Year 2, pupils' skills in sending and receiving are further improved. They are able to vary methods for sending a ball and they catch the ball successfully. In Year 6, pupils made very good progress in an excellent dance lesson. They analysed their gestures and connecting movements to improve their performance and enjoyment of the lesson. They responded well to the very appropriately chosen music and worked collaboratively to produce a sequence of movements.
- 97 All junior pupils receive swimming lessons at some stage. Although it was not possible to observe a lesson during the inspection, scrutiny of the school's very good recording system indicates that pupils make good progress. Rarely does a pupil leave the school without achieving the standards expected and most achieve at a higher level acquiring advanced personal survival skills.
- 98 Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They work hard to develop their skills, work safely together and listen carefully to instructions. They are adept at evaluating and discussing their movements and skills to achieve improvement in their performance.
- 99 The teaching ranges from good to excellent and is good overall. Expectations are high and teachers set challenging activities to improve the pupils' skills and performance. In the excellent lesson in Year 6, the instructor was able to demonstrate and work with the pupils to heighten their awareness of dance techniques. She introduced them to "sustained movement"; "strong" gestures in "chance choreography" and the importance of eye contact in paired "equal energy" movements. In Years 1 and 2 the teachers have a good knowledge and

understanding of the subject. They patiently guided their pupils' efforts in throwing and catching a ball with lots of praise and encouragement to achieve good progress.

- 100 The curriculum for physical education is well enhanced by a range of extra-curricular sporting activities for all ages. The school participates in a variety of sporting events with other schools in the locality. The subject is well led and is well supported by teachers, parents and members of the community who provide the extra-curricular opportunities.