

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY OF LOURDES
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Kingswood, Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109265

Headteacher: Mr P. Bates

Reporting inspector: Mrs K. Reed
17188

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st June 2001

Inspection number: 197473

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

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hanham Road
Kingswood
South Gloucestershire

Postcode: BS15 8PX

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M. Coady

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17188	Mrs K. Reed	Registered inspector	Science Design and Technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
10173	Mrs C. Hinds	Lay inspector		How high are standards? 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?
2904	Mrs P. Martin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Music English as an additional language Equal opportunities	
31281	Ms M. Kellow	Team inspector	Art and Design Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

21396	Mr A. Cox	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and Communication Technology Physical Education Special Educational Needs	How well is the school led and managed?
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Lourdes Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic Primary School is situated in the well-established borough of Kingswood in Bristol. The school draws on a wide area, and a number of pupils arrive at school by coach. There are 280 children on roll, taught in nine classes that are made up of pupils from single and mixed years. Attainment on entry is in line with that expected of four-year-olds. Virtually all children have had pre-school experience when they enter the school in September of the academic year in which they become five years old. At the time of the inspection 38 children had not yet reached compulsory school age. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are forty-two pupils on the register of special needs with four pupils having a statement of educational need. Both figures are about average. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is low. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school because the headteacher provides a clear vision and direction for the school. Staff work well as a team, sharing common values and a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the schools aims. They are well supported by governors. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, with good teaching in the first three years. Results in last year's national tests show standards well above average for English and mathematics and above average for science. They have improved over the past four years faster than the national trend. Pupils' attainment and progress are carefully monitored. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are good and often very good. The school offers sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The values and ethos made explicit in the mission statement are reflected in all the school's work and is an outstanding aspect of provision for these pupils.
- The school's performance in the national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds has improved consistently over the last four years.
- The quality of behaviour and the relationships between pupils and their teachers contribute significantly to pupils' achievements.
- The links between the school and parents and the community and their contribution to pupils' learning.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and arrangements for inclusion.

What could be improved

- The use of monitoring to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the teaching at Key Stage 2 and help improve it, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Recognising the needs and developing the talents of more able pupils.
- The quality and use of day-to-day assessment of pupils' work.
- The adequacy of resources in some subjects.
- The effective use and allocation of curriculum time in Key Stage 2.

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 September 1997 standards have improved significantly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There has been some improvement in teaching with a higher proportion of good lessons observed in this inspection compared to the last. Most of the key issues of the last report have been effectively addressed. Most of the shortcomings identified in information and communication technology (ICT) have been rectified; the new computer suite and staff training will enable the school to address those that remain. Schemes of work have been

developed and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented. The co-ordinator role has been developed and further work on monitoring and evaluating teaching is planned. The needs of higher attaining pupils are yet to be addressed, though the school has adopted guidance on identifying more able children. Statutory requirements of governors are now met and issues around the safety of the school site have been addressed. The support for pupils with special educational need has improved and is now good. The school has a very hard-working staff who are committed to improvement. The governors and headteacher are developing a longer-term strategic view and the school is well placed to move forward.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	B	A	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	A	A	B	
Science	C	C	B	C	

Last year the school's results were well above average in the national tests for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics and well above average in the tests for eleven-year-olds in English and mathematics. Compared to similar schools the results at seven were well above average in writing and above average in reading and mathematics. At eleven, results were comparable with similar schools in English and mathematics and above average in mathematics. The school has achieved an improvement in national test results over the last four years faster than the national trend.

Inspection findings indicate attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly in line with the national average in English and mathematics; in science Year 2 is in line with the national average and Year 6 above it. Attainment overall is lower than indicated in last year's national tests. Pupils have not made sufficient progress in Key Stage 2 because the teaching has not been sufficiently challenging to enable pupils to reach the higher levels. There has been some discontinuity in experience for both Year 2 and Year 6, in the case of Year 6, reflecting the national pattern of teacher recruitment problems. The school has exceeded the modest targets it set for English and mathematics. Nearly all children in the reception year will have achieved the nationally defined early learning goals in all areas of learning before they enter Year 1 and over half will exceed these, particularly in language and literacy.

Standards in other subjects are broadly average except for history at seven in which pupils' attainments exceed those expected and for art and design and information and communication technology at eleven in which pupils fail to reach the expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well but some higher attaining pupils could do better.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school which impact significantly on their progress. They take pleasure in all activities offered to them.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Playtimes are joyful occasions where pupils play happily.
Personal development and relationships	The school is a community in which there is love, concern, trust and mutual respect. Children show a genuine concern for one another. Pupils' personal development is good.
Attendance	Attendance levels are good. Pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. It was good or better in 47 per cent of lessons, with 12 per cent being very good or better. Only 7 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 is good overall; 60 per cent of lessons were good in the reception and 75 per cent were good or better in Key Stage 1. The higher attainment in Key Stage 1 is as a result of more challenging and motivating contexts. Satisfactory teaching could be improved by widening the range of teaching and learning strategies, making learning objectives more precise and explicit to pupils and increasing the pace and challenge in lessons. The literacy hour and daily mathematics sessions have been implemented systematically. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory overall, though it is stronger in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, and the teaching of numeracy is generally satisfactory. The development of literacy and numeracy through other subjects could be further developed. Teaching in science is good which reflects the recent emphasis the school has placed upon raising standards in science. The relationships which teachers have with pupils is a strength of the school. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met, though higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Learning support assistants are well briefed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is broad and balanced. Time allocations in Key Stage 2 do not give sufficient time to certain subjects and more time needs to be given to the development of skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. These pupils are supported effectively and achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are well catered for. Teachers plan appropriately for these pupils and sensitively include them in the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and for their social development is good. Although there are opportunities for the development of pupils' cultural experiences, this is an area that could be further developed.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils benefit from the consistently caring attitude of all staff. The guidance given to pupils about their academic and personal development is sound. The school has effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress; however, day-to-day assessment is not used sufficiently to inform the next steps in pupils' learning.
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The school successfully encourages parents to be involved in the life of the school, with many parents providing valuable assistance in the classroom. A good range of information is provided for parents. Annual reports on pupils contain detailed information. Overall, there is a very valuable partnership with parents that ensures they understand and participate in their child's education. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher manages the school well and has provided very good leadership in establishing the vision for the school. Members of the senior management team have effectively shared the responsibilities of the unfilled deputy headteacher post. There is a weakness overall in using the outcomes of monitoring of teaching to raise its quality.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and support the headteacher in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school carefully monitors standards attained by pupils in national test results.
The strategic use of resources	Good strategic use is made of resources to fund educational priorities, for example the development of an ICT suite to raise standards in this area. However, funding for curriculum resources in a number of subjects has been inadequate which affects standards in those subjects.

Staff work hard to make this a successful school and to raise standards. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide good support. The school applies the principles of best value effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns. • The school expects their children to work hard and do well. • Their children like school. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good. • Behaviour in the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team endorses most of the parents' positive views of the school and judges that the school provides a good range of activities outside of lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment on entry are average. Attainment at the end of the reception year is above average as a consequence of good teaching and progress is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where attainment was average and progress only satisfactory. In the reception year pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils make very good progress.

2. The results of last year's National Curriculum test results for seven and eleven-year-olds indicated that attainment was well above the national average in English and mathematics. Compared with similar schools the results for seven-year-olds were well above average in writing and above average in mathematics and reading. For eleven-year-olds similar school comparisons indicate average performance in English and above average performance in mathematics. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Over the last four years standards have risen at a rate faster than that of schools nationally in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school set modest targets for attainment in English and mathematics that were exceeded considerably.

3. Inspection findings indicate that standards achieved in English by the current cohort of eleven year olds are about the national average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in Key Stage 1 in English, but in the upper part of the school progress slows. There are weaknesses in provision for Key Stage 2 pupils that result in the good progress in Key Stage 1 not being sustained. Pupils have too few opportunities to take part in extended discussions and offer differing points of view to develop their mastery of spoken English. Although pupils' reading is monitored, it is not guided or challenged sufficiently. Similarly, opportunities for guided writing are not exploited sufficiently. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of both seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds is in line with the national average in mathematics. Progress and attainment in using and applying mathematics is less than in other areas of mathematics. Both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have had some discontinuity of experience, since they have not had the same teacher for the whole year. The school has done its utmost to minimise the impact of change for these pupils.

4. Teachers' statutory assessment of seven-year-olds in science last year indicated that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was high compared with all schools and the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was also well above average. At eleven attainment in the national tests was above average but average when compared to similar schools. Whilst progress in science has not been as marked as that in English and mathematics, the trend of improvement remained above the national rate and the strategies the school is implementing are having a positive impact on attainment in science. Inspection findings indicate that attainment in science is broadly at the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 and above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. In both Key Stages pupils' progress and attainment is greater in knowledge and understanding than in scientific investigation.

5. In Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well and make good progress. They are well supported through clear targets in their individual

education plans and the good support they receive within lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational need has improved since the last inspection and as a result they are making more significant progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall. Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged as at the time of the last inspection. The school has gone some way to providing guidance on the identification of able pupils and this issue forms a part of the school development plan, however inspection evidence suggests that the needs of higher attaining pupils are not yet fully accommodated.

6. Standards in design and technology and geography match age related expectations in both Key Stages. In Key Stage 1 standards are average in art and design, and information and communication technology (ICT), and above average in history. In Key Stage 2 standards are average in history and physical education, and below average in ICT and art and design. A similar pattern emerges as at the time of the last inspection where progress in the majority of subjects at Key Stage 1 was good but that progress in most subjects in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory. As at the time of the last inspection, progress pupils make in ICT, and art and design are unsatisfactory. The use of ICT to support and extend pupils' skills in other subjects is a feature of the current school development plan. There is evidence of this beginning to impact, for example in science with the use of sensors to record climatic change, the use of software in drawing bar graphs and pie charts and in design technology in designing coats for a teddy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have good attitudes to school. Their happy faces as they chat naturally to the *Lollipop Lady* whilst waiting to cross to school indicate their eager anticipation of the day ahead. They settle themselves very willingly, composing themselves well at their tables or on the mats ready to begin their work. They have good attitudes to their lessons, listening carefully to their teachers' instructions and questions. They work hard throughout the sessions, trying to do their best and taking pride in their efforts. This is a characteristic evident even in the youngest children. A class of Reception/Year 1 pupils worked very diligently to produce models of playground equipment. High levels of enthusiasm were maintained as pupils shared their models with the whole class, describing carefully the materials and the techniques used in the construction. Their enthusiasm and diligence was particularly laudable in view of the fact that the lesson occurred at the end of a very hot day.

8. In the most successful lessons pupils often have very good attitudes. 'Pirates' is the current theme for a class of mainly Year 1 children. The teacher is the 'Pirate Captain' and the children are inspired crew members, designing distressed antique maps in art and plotting co-ordinates for buried treasure in mathematics. They were even balancing beautifully on equipment in physical education in the adventure playground in order to avoid being eaten by crocodiles. The occasions when pupils' attitudes are unsatisfactory are rare. They are usually related to the teachers' lack of skill in identifying tasks carefully and correctly, and making expectations clear. Pupils are not just positive about classroom activities. They take equal pleasure in all the other activities. The recorder group of Year 5 and 6 pupils practises eagerly, preparing for assemblies and festivals. Their motivation and commitment is illustrated by their pride in wearing specially designed school sweatshirts with a recorder logo as they perfect their pieces.

9. Parents applaud the positive attitudes of the children and appreciate the school's endeavours to promote and encourage these attitudes. They rightly recognise the significant impact of these on their children's progress.

10. Pupils behave very well almost all the time. They show that they understand their class rules, which each class has carefully created within the school's very clear code of conduct, and almost always behave appropriately in class. Pupils move around the school carefully; even the youngest children are composed and calm as they walk from the classroom to hall. The behaviour of the pupils in the playground is very good and playtimes are, therefore, joyful occasions where youngsters play energetically and happily. There are only a very few pupils who find it difficult to conform to the school's clear code of conduct. Occasional unsatisfactory behaviour by one of this very small group is not usually allowed to upset the learning of others, or spoil the genuinely harmonious atmosphere in the school. The school has not excluded any pupils during the last year. Pupils respond sensibly to the school's arrangements to provide an atmosphere free from bullying or racial tension. Bullying is rare and pupils feel confident that when it does occur it will be dealt with quickly carefully and sensitively.

11. The school is successful in its aim to create a community where there is love, concern, trust and mutual respect. Pupils relate very well to one another. There are many occasions both in and out of lessons where pupils happily co-operate with each other. A particularly pleasing feature is the natural companionship between older and younger pupils. Mixed age groups readily take their turns when playing hopscotch and other playground games.

12. Pupils offer one another very good support in lessons. Year 2 pupils listened very carefully to each other's descriptions of feeling happy or sad. Pupils were sitting in a circle discussing patterns of behaviour. Their very good sensitivity towards each other helped them understand and appreciate the feelings of others. The mutual support and encouragement evident in many lessons often helps them to improve their work and confidence. Really positive rapport between the pupils helped reticent Year 3 and 4 swimmers to put their faces under water.

13. All pupils care a great deal about others. They listened with rapt attention during school assembly when the headteacher shared good news of the improving health of a sick child. When a Year 2 child cried with apparent disappointment in her own work during an art lesson, she was instantly cuddled and comforted by a fellow classmate. The popularity of the '*signing club*' continues to grow. Younger pupils eagerly wait their turn to join older pupils learning to sign for the deaf. A large group of Year 5 and 6 pupils signed in accompaniment to the school's singing in assembly. Local Catholics who are deaf are highly appreciative of their performance during services in the local church.

14. The school is a very friendly community where pupils relate equally well to adults. Whilst pupils are interested and curious about the activities of their elders they are invariably polite and respectful. Visitors are warmly welcomed and readily told about life at Our Lady of Lourdes, and pupils respond keenly to opportunities to talk about their school.

15. Pupils' personal development is good. When given the opportunity to perform tasks they respond willingly and carefully. Pupils consider taking the registers to and from the office as a real treat, which they eagerly seek. Even the youngest take pride in carrying their cherished possession. Older pupils who have volunteered to help look after younger children at break and lunchtimes wear yellow bands. The 'yellow bands', as they are affectionately described, commit lots of time and energy to supporting the School Meals Supervisory Assistants, ensuring that the younger children are safe and happy at play. A 'yellow band' gently accompanied a child needing peace and quiet to the quiet area and talked sympathetically with her.

16. Pupils quickly learn and follow the school's routines, placing their lunchboxes carefully on shelves provided. They also adhere to the various routines in the classrooms and enjoy taking individual responsibility for keeping their classrooms tidy. Even on lovely sunny days, they willingly spend part of their lunchtime tidying their shelves or arranging their subject books.

17. The school works hard to help pupils and parents understand the importance of regular attendance. This coupled with the positive appetite of the pupils for the school ensures that attendance levels are good. This approach also ensures that pupils arrive in good time for school to start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

18. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Teaching was good or better in 47 per cent of lessons, which is an improvement on the last inspection. A small proportion of lessons (7 per cent) were unsatisfactory which is about the same as the last inspection.

19. In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is good in 60 per cent of lessons and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall, teaching here has a significant number of strengths. Good use is made of baseline assessment information and pupils' progress is monitored carefully. Assessment is a natural and effective part of teaching for these pupils. The curriculum is planned effectively and work is modified to the ability of children, so that the majority of children achieve all the early learning goals. Teachers work well with parents to support learning. The pupil-teacher ratio is high for half of the day, which limits the attention children receive from adults. There are too few resources to support learning.

20. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. Seventy-five per cent of lessons were good or better, with 33 per cent of lessons very good or better. It is here that the most inspirational teaching was observed. For example, the topic through which curriculum areas were taught in one class was 'Pirates'. This provided a meaningful context for learning and engaged these young pupils. Although subjects were taught within a topic-based framework, there was no loss of rigour in the way the National Curriculum was delivered. Varied and interesting approaches generally motivate pupils so that they are keen to learn. For example, in one very good design and technology lesson, children had visited an adventure playground, had pictorial and photographic resources as a stimulus and a range of construction kits and other materials to build with. As they were provided with good knowledge upon which to base their designs and appropriate materials, pupils' attainment was high.

21. In Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory overall with 25 per cent of lessons being good. Lessons here were characterised by a degree of caution. The good lessons tended to be those with a practical basis such as science, or when for example in history, pupils had a range of artefacts from the boot and shoe industry to examine and were actively involved in trying to work out their purpose. A literacy lesson on adverts actively engaged pupils in considering the elements that make up persuasive writing. By the end of the lesson pupils made good progress. They were clear about fact and opinion and could explain techniques that could be used to make an advert more appealing and successful. Teaching could be improved by using a wider range of teaching strategies and increasing pace and challenge in lessons, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

22. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented systematically. In Key Stage 1 teachers use a good, clear strategy for literacy and as a result pupils make good progress in their learning. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory.

Whilst there are some strengths in teaching at this Key Stage, a wider range of teaching strategies needs to be employed, learning objectives need to be more precise and explicit to pupils, and greater independence developed. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall. Mental and oral work provides a clear start to lessons and there usually follows a period of purposeful, direct whole class teaching. Pupils are supported well when working in small groups. However, there is often a focus on what pupils are doing rather than the learning outcomes, and plenaries are used insufficiently to review what has been learnt and enable pupils to judge their progress.

23. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are taught well. They generally work in their own classes with additional support and are fully included in the life and work of the school. Teachers and support staff want these pupils to succeed and have high expectations of them. As a consequence pupils with SEN generally have positive attitudes and make good progress. They are given the opportunity to show what they can do and fellow pupils are supportive in their response to these pupils' contributions to lessons. In one instance, for example, a pupil who had experienced some behavioural difficulties, confidently came out to the whiteboard and demonstrated how to draw a table to record the results of a scientific investigation, correctly assigning headings to the table and providing a model upon which pupils could base their own recordings.

24. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, resulting in high levels of trust and mutual respect. Teachers create a supportive environment in which pupils learn and as a result of this the school is well placed to involve pupils more in an assessment of their own learning and in developing greater independence in the older pupils. Pupils' behaviour is managed well and as a result of this there were very few instances of inappropriate behaviour. Classroom assistants provide good support, providing appropriate levels of guidance. A good working partnership is evident between teachers and classroom assistants that enhances pupils learning. Occasionally, classroom assistants are not used to best effect, for example in whole class numeracy sessions.

25. The marking of pupils' work is regular but rarely contains comment about what pupils need to do to improve work, or what their next target should be. This impedes pupils' progress and does not help parents to understand the progress that pupils should be making. Homework is used effectively in all age ranges and makes a positive contribution to learning. Initially this centres around the core subjects, but by Year 6 includes an impressive range of curriculum areas.

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

26. The curriculum for the reception year is broad and balanced and meets national requirements. Pupils receive a range of good quality experiences that help them to achieve the standards required for pupils entering Key Stage 1. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and mathematics and pupils make good progress in these areas. Baseline assessment is used to group children. However, the teachers' own assessments show that pupils' levels of attainment on entry are higher than the baseline would indicate and this was borne out by standards of work seen during the inspection.

27. In Key Stage 1 and 2 the curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and of its Roman Catholic Foundation. The curriculum is balanced and broadly based in Key Stage 1 with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and mathematics. The Key Stage 2 curriculum covers all subjects of the National Curriculum; however, time allocations for subjects are not balanced, which results in insufficient time being allocated for teaching

some of the foundation subjects. For example, mathematics in Key Stage 2 is timetabled for 75 minutes per day, when the national guidance is around 40 minutes per day. The school needs to reassess its use of time in Key Stage 2 in order to achieve a better balance. The curriculum concentrates on the acquisition of knowledge, which is a strength, but does not give enough emphasis to developing key skills and thinking skills. The school allocates additional time to religious education and swimming, and to Italian in Years 3 and 4.

28. The school has taken the decision not to provide sex education for its pupils. The provision for drugs education is good, with a detailed scheme of work for different year groups taught mainly through the science curriculum. The school does not have a similar coherent programme for personal, social and health education although some aspects of health education are taught through the science curriculum. There is no provision made for other cross-curricular themes such as financial capability or enterprise education. As a result, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop in these areas. This is a similar situation to that found at the time of the last inspection.

29. All pupils have access to the full curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) has improved since the last inspection, and is now good. Individual education plans are of good quality and contain clear and appropriate targets. The procedures for monitoring and catering for SEN pupils are thorough and systematic; as a result, these pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are also well catered for.

30. Since the last inspection the school has worked to develop its schemes of work and is developing its use of QCA curriculum guidance. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully adopted; however, further developments in the teaching of skills are required across all areas of the curriculum, particularly in foundation subjects.

31. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities in music, sport and drama. Pupils learn to play the recorder and have opportunities to play in assemblies and take part in competitions. Sport clubs include football, rounders, netball, hockey and 'New Image Rugby'. The school puts on a number of productions throughout the year and pupils who wish to take part can do so. In this respect the school offers truly equal opportunities to all pupils to participate, irrespective of their previous experience. Pupils and parents appreciate this. A number of pupils take part in the 'signing club'; they are very proficient and sign during assemblies and at mass in their local church on Sundays. Good use is made of the locality, educational visits and a good range of visitors such as archaeologists and professional filmmakers, all of which enrich the curriculum. The school has embarked upon Italian lessons for Y3 and Y4 pupils as part of a county initiative. Pupils work in small groups for these lessons and participate enthusiastically; they are justifiably proud of their prowess.

32. The school has very good links with parents, the church, the wider community, playgroups and other local schools. The school makes full use of its very good links with the local community of schools in developing the curriculum and in providing professional development opportunities for teachers. Links with the playgroups are a strength, and help pupils make the transfer into mainstream school. Links with secondary schools are more problematic as pupils can and do attend up to 15 different secondary schools. However, the school makes considerable efforts to ensure the transition for pupils is as smooth as possible. All schools are sent the statutory transfer records and the school complies with local requests for additional information.

33. The school lives out its Mission Statement, which places a strong emphasis on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Since the last inspection report the school has maintained this provision and, therefore, this aspect continues to be a strength of the school.

34. Spiritual development is good and is underpinned by the school's strong Catholic ethos, which provides a firm foundation for the work of the school and the development of its pupils. Throughout the school day time is given for reflection and prayer. Prayers are often composed by the pupils and give them opportunities to reflect on personal issues related to family and friends, or issues in the world at large. Very good use is made of displays both in the classroom and throughout the school, for example, 'The Celebration Board' in the hall gives pupils opportunities to offer thanks and prayers in recognition of the achievements of others, to reflect upon the difficulties faced by others and to express gratitude.

35. The provision for pupil's moral development is very good. All teachers encourage children to consider right and wrong and the consequences of their actions. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of what is correct or incorrect in terms of their relationships with each other and with adults. Adults in the school are good role models and teachers set high expectations in terms of behaviour. All adults and pupils understand the schools' strong moral code, and there are many opportunities for pupils to develop and express moral values.

36. The provision for social development is good. Older pupils have responsibilities such as putting out chairs for assembly and operating an overhead projector. A small number of pupils organise and run their own poetry club at lunch times. The school has an active system of paired classes in which pupils are able to share their work and share responsibilities. There is also a litter rota according to which each class takes responsibility to clear the playground and field of litter. Pupils are encouraged to take part in fund raising for charities and pupils have an active link with a local refuge for the homeless. Adults in the school set good examples for pupils. The caring relationships between all members of the school community are a strength, evident, for example, in the care and respect shown by pupils to those pupils who have special educational needs.

37. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Through the curriculum pupils have opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. The links with schools in New Zealand and Italy have given pupils opportunities to make friendships and find out about the cultures of these countries. In history pupils learn about the cultural history of Britain and about ancient civilisations such as the Greeks, Romans and Egyptians. Some provision is made for celebrating cultural diversity, for example the use of African music in dance lessons. However, this is an area that could be developed further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has suitable arrangements for ensuring that pupils are safe and secure in school. Clear policies exist and the systems in practice match these policies. Child protection procedures are good and children who are sick or injured are looked after carefully.

39. Of particular benefit to the welfare of all the pupils is the very genuine and consistently caring attitude of all the staff, teaching and non-teaching. The children at Our Lady of Lourdes benefit enormously from the time, energy and thought which all staff gives to identifying and promoting each child's individual and unique need. Parents are

justifiably very appreciative of the caring nature of school life. The very close links with the neighbouring playgroup help many of the youngest children transfer smoothly and happily. Class teachers know their pupils well and are alert to any changes in their demeanour. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good. This harmony ensures fast, easy and relaxed communication between all adults in the school.

40. All support staff make positive contributions to pupils' welfare and their learning in the school. Classroom assistants receive good support from staff and their approach is caring and professional. The general office runs very smoothly and this efficient administration ensures that information about pupils' needs is passed on quickly and effectively. The school is kept clean and in very good condition. This both ensures a safe and healthy environment for the pupils and staff and encourages all pupils to take further care of their environment. The *EAPS* (environmentally aware persons) volunteers maintain a litter free school and plant flowers and shrubs, which they collect as donations from local garden centres. All staff that cook for the pupils and care for them at lunchtime are cheerful and capable as they tend to the pupils' individual needs.

41. Arrangements to promote regular attendance are good. Registrations are used successfully to check attendance and settle the pupils for the day ahead. Absences are followed up carefully. The school uses several effective systems for recording authorised absence. Office staff are extremely diligent in fulfilling their attendance monitoring duties. The school has no unauthorised absence but very occasionally there is no explanation immediately evident in the registers.

42. Most staff are consistent in their application of the school's good arrangements for ensuring good behaviour. The school has identified a straightforward code of conduct and it is shared with pupils and parents. Individual classes work out their own interpretation of the code and agree to adhere to their own rules. Good behaviour is recognised and praised and teachers usually promptly give a clear indication to those pupils whose behaviour is inappropriate. Rewards are used regularly and consistently to motivate pupils to work hard and behave well. Stickers are eagerly sought, even by the oldest pupils. Only a very few pupils experience difficulty conforming to the school's expectations of correct behaviour. Sanctions are very carefully used to encourage these pupils to improve their behaviour. The school has never needed to exclude a pupil.

43. The school has effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress over the year. Staff encourage pupils to try harder. The statutory requirements outlined in statements of special educational needs are met. The provision identified is implemented and reviews are regular and up to date. Teachers set targets for pupils in English, mathematics and science at the beginning of the year. Progress is assessed through statutory testing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and through the QCA optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Results are analysed and information is used to make decisions about appropriate ability groupings. Parents are informed of pupils' progress towards targets through pupils' reports. Whilst these identify pupils' strengths and areas for development, the majority of pupils are unaware of their targets, or of their progress throughout the year. The majority of parents accept the school's invitation and encouragement to bring pupils with them to consultation evenings

44. The school has good portfolios of assessed work in English, mathematics and science. Moderation of work in the core subjects takes place with all staff once a year. Work samples in the foundation subjects are collected and monitored by subject co-ordinators. However, the quality of these portfolios is variable and the use made of information to improve standards in the foundation subjects is inconsistent. Since the

previous inspection report the school has improved its portfolios of pupils' work in the core subjects by adding annotation as to why a piece of work is assessed at a particular level and ways forward for future learning are identified.

45. Teachers have clear long term and medium term learning objectives in all subjects. Day-to-day planning identifies appropriate areas for learning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but in foundation subjects there are often too many learning objectives for one lesson, and in many cases they are not sufficiently precise. In some lessons teachers share the learning objectives with children, but this is not consistent across the school and inconsistent within classes. Pupils are often unsure as to the purpose of the activity and how this may help them in future learning.

46. Teachers plan assessment activities but day-to-day assessment is not used sufficiently to inform the next steps in pupils' learning. The school's marking policy is not effective in helping pupils' learning, and is not used consistently across the school. Marking often lacks evaluative comments that would show pupils where improvements could be made. In the reception and Years 1 and 2 teachers mark work with the children and talk to them about ways to improve their work. More generally, however, pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work or identifying their own targets for improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school. Parents recognise and applaud the school's strengths, praising in particular the behaviour of the children. A significant minority expressed concern about the range of additional activities available to pupils. A very few recently challenged the school about the ethics and the management of the selection of children attending a prize-winning trip overseas. These worries are unjustified. The school's mission is to build and extend existing links with parish, home and school. It very successfully meets this aim to work together with parents.

48. The school welcomes and embraces its parents and all members of staff are open in their approach to parents. They commit significant amounts of time and energy to communicating with parents, listening carefully to their queries and diligently following up concerns. All class teachers produce useful curriculum letters each term. These give parents a full picture of what their child will be experiencing in the term ahead and suggest how parents can support their children's learning.

49. The welcome extended to parents and visitors by the office staff is friendly and efficient. This initial welcome is further enhanced by the attractive and interesting way the school presents itself. Displays in the entrance hall, main school hall and corridors are lively, informative and invigorating. There is much evidence of the time and energy that the school devotes to ensuring that parents and visitors feel welcome in the community. The excellent celebration board in the hall shares pupils' work, news and prayers.

50. The school produces a good range of information for parents. Regular newsletters give a detailed picture of school life. Pupils are able to visit the school prior to starting their time in the Foundation Stage. A delightful guide for new parents booklet, affectionately known as the '*Bear Booklet*', ensures that parents of children starting at the school have ample information about the school's daily routines and organisation. This booklet also gives good guidance to parents about preparing and supporting their children through this transition stage.

51. Information provided about individual pupils is also good; annual reporting systems are efficiently organised. Annual reports contain full and detailed information about what each pupil can and cannot do in most subject areas. Reports also contain at least three clear descriptions of exactly what the child needs to do next to improve. The reporting of personal development is equally good. Parents rightly comment that the unique descriptions given are mirror images of their children and could not be mistaken for anyone else.

52. The school actively encourages parents to involve themselves in the life of the school. A significant percentage of parents offer high quality support. Members of staff treat these parents as classroom assistants. Teachers take care in ensuring that the parents know precisely what is expected of them during each lesson. Parents' assistance is valued and valuable, their presence very evident, effectively facilitating group and individual work. The school benefits both financially and socially from the energetic and enthusiastic Parents, Teachers and Friends Association. This runs a wide range of successful activities and successfully engages many of the parents and families.

53. The school takes care to help all parents understand and be involved in children's education. Teachers use homework effectively and give careful explanations to parents in the termly letters. They encourage parents to attend curriculum evenings which are well organised. Around 50 parents attended an evening to share the school's approach to teaching numeracy. Home-school reading books are well used to convey messages about children's performance and welfare. The school often asks parents to encourage their children to bring in items of interest for particular topics and to dress them up for particular theme days. Young pirates are eagerly anticipating their pirate day when parents (and the school kitchen staff) will be supplying pirate food. No doubt eye patches will be in abundance, as they were for the same very popular theme last year.

54. Overall, this very valuable partnership with parents ensures that parents understand and participate in their child's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher manages the school well and provides good leadership. He has a clear vision for the school and has provided very good leadership in establishing this vision. The way in which the life of the school reflects its aims and values is excellent. The lead he has given to the school in raising results in national tests is good.

56. While the school is without a deputy headteacher the roles and responsibilities of the previous post-holder have been shared effectively between the headteacher and two senior teachers. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall, and good in science, design and technology, history and geography. The provision for special educational needs is well managed. The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) has devoted much time to her role and has contributed significantly to the provision for these pupils. The SEN governor similarly devotes much time to her role and has met each child individually, and discussed their particular needs with the SENCO. Support staff are effectively deployed and make a positive contribution to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The staff are committed to the school and its pupils and working relationships between staff, pupils, governors and parents are very good.

57. The governing body meets its statutory requirements. The items omitted from the governors' annual report at the time of the last inspection are now included. The governing body plays its part in shaping the direction of the school through its inputs into the school's

plans for improvement and its support for the headteacher and staff. The governors have set up a number of committees. These are currently not able to play their full part in decision-making because their meetings are often not quorate. It is also important that proper minutes are kept of all committee meetings. Governors are well aware of the strengths of the school but less aware of some of the areas for further development.

58. The work the school has undertaken to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some interesting and effective subject reports were seen. The judgements they contained about standards, resources, the allocation of teaching time and strengths and weaknesses were based on a wide range of evidence. They had the potential to improve the work of the school considerably. Unfortunately, they are now two years old, and the good work started here has not been sustained. While some monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum still takes place it is not rigorous or systematic. Nevertheless, there are examples of the school identifying weaknesses and taking effective action to secure improvement. Staff and governors recently identified weaknesses in national test scores in science. The situation was investigated, and an effective plan of action drawn up and implemented. Whilst there has been some monitoring and evaluation of teaching, the results of this have not impacted sufficiently on the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2.

59. The school has a clear and effective short-term plan for improvement. The priorities it contains are appropriate, and effective action has been taken to meet the targets. Good strategic use has been made of resources in order to fund educational priorities. For example, an extension has been made to one of the infant classrooms and an ICT suite is currently being developed so that standards in ICT can be raised. However, funding for curriculum resources in many subjects has been inadequate for several years.

60. The governors and headteacher are currently developing a longer-term strategic view and the framework that will allow them to consider the extent to which this is being implemented. The school applies the principles of best value effectively. The school has adopted a strategy for performance management and has made a sound start to the process.

61. All members of staff work hard to make the school successful and raise standards. Teaching and non-teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to match the demands of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are well deployed, and provide good support that is greatly appreciated by the teachers. The accommodation is clean and well maintained and is adequate in all respects except in the provision of a secure outdoor area for the youngest pupils. This was an issue in the previous report that is still to be addressed. Learning resources for English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history and physical education are adequate. For the Foundation Stage, ICT and geography they are inadequate, and for art and design they are poor; this adversely affects the quality of education provided and the standards attained in these subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to improve the quality of education the school offers its pupils, the headteacher and staff, together with the governing body should:

- (1) Improve the use of monitoring to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of teaching at Key Stage 2 and help improve it, particularly in literacy and numeracy, by:
 - (i) regular observations of lessons and providing feedback to staff;
 - (ii) disseminating good practice evident within the school by sharing practice and ideas;
 - (iii) evaluating the impact of practice on standards of attainment;
 - (iv) planning for the professional development of staff in accordance with the findings of monitoring.

(Paragraphs 21, 22, 58, 83, 85, 94.)
- (2) Develop further work on identifying more able pupils and providing them with greater challenge in lessons.

(Paragraphs 21, 83, 89, 94, 105, 127.)
- (3) Further improve the quality of on-going assessment by:
 - (i) involving pupils more in self assessment by the use of individual target setting;
 - (ii) make learning objectives clear and precise and communicate these to pupils;
 - (iii) improving the quality of marking to indicate ways in which work could be improved.

(Paragraphs 43, 44, 45, 46, 88, 94, 99, 100, 101, 106.)
- (4) Enhance the resources available to teach information and communication technology, geography, art and design and the Foundation Stage.

(Paragraphs 59, 61, 67, 115, 123, 128.)
- (5) Improve the balance of the curriculum in Key Stage 2 by reviewing the time allocated to subjects and to different aspects within subjects.

(Paragraphs 27, 28, 30, 115, 127, 130.)

The following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan

- Develop a coherent programme for personal, social and health education *(Paragraph 28.)*
- Develop thinking and key skills further, especially for higher attaining pupils *(Paragraphs 27, 30.)*
- Improve outdoor play provision for the Foundation Stage *(Paragraphs 61, 68, 69, 74.)*
- Raise standards in art. *(Paragraphs 111, 114, 115.)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

62

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	10	35	46	7	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

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		280
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		42

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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	24	23	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	24
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	45	46	47
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	96 (89)	98 (97)	100 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	24
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	46	47	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (97)	100 (97)	100 (97)
	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	20	22	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	37	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (85)	90 (88)	88 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	20	19	21
	Total	37	37	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (82)	88 (88)	95 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	232
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.5
Average class size	31.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	523,872
Total expenditure	512,883
Expenditure per pupil	1,839
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,797
Balance carried forward to next year	35,786

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	146

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	27	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	40	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	43	6	3	1
The teaching is good.	69	25	3	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	28	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	18	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	25	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	38	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	63	29	4	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	29	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	38	22	5	9

Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%

Other issues raised by parents

A minority of parents raised concerns about the ethics and management of the selection of children attending a prize-winning visit overseas. The team's view is that their worries are unjustified.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. The quality of provision for children in the reception year is good. The standards children achieve are good.

64. At the time of the inspection there were 38 children who had not yet reached compulsory school age. Thirty children were in the reception class and eight were in a mixed reception/Year1 class. All children attend fulltime and all were admitted to the school in September of the academic year in which they became five years old. Attainment levels on entry are in line with those to be expected for children of this age. Virtually all children have had pre-school experience. A significant number of children are articulate, have well-developed social skills and demonstrate good understanding of reading and number. A minority of children are from families who speak languages in addition to English. These children also show good skills in English and as a result their progress is sustained. By the end of the reception year nearly all children will have achieved the early learning goals in all areas of learning, and over half will have achieved standards that are higher, particularly in literacy. Children have made good progress and a good start to their education. Higher attaining children and children with special educational needs (SEN) make very good progress.

65. The quality of teaching is good in all areas of the Foundation Curriculum and has a number of significant strengths. Teachers are knowledgeable and very experienced in working with young children. They collaborate very well, ensuring that planning is undertaken well. They evaluate the effectiveness of their work by what children can achieve. They give high priority to teaching speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy throughout the curriculum. They provide well-chosen interesting contexts for children's learning and maintain high expectations. Very effective adult-child interaction during activities ensures assessment is a natural and effective part of teaching. Activities are modified appropriately to meet children's individual needs. The quality of relationships is very good and behaviour is managed very well. Children trust their teachers and adults. There are very good links with parents and children's learning at home. These factors have a very positive effect on children's learning and as a result they are very happy to come to school.

66. Teachers know the children well and follow their progress closely. As a result opportunities are used well to increase challenge and support according to children's needs. Good use is made of baseline assessment information. Progress is monitored carefully. For example, a teacher noted a child's increasing achievement in reading. Following discussions with parents, greater challenge was provided in the child's literacy programme. Through the home-school diary, communication was effectively maintained. Achievement was recognised and suggestions provided to widen the range of approaches used. Parents and teachers work well together,

67. Teachers work hard to provide a high quality learning environment. This is often at some personal financial cost. Available resources are well managed and accessible to children. Collections of important words, alphabet friezes and clear labelling encourage children to increase their vocabulary. Imaginative areas for role-play are created. Opportunity to undertake physical activity is provided by the use of the school hall, outdoor play and climbing areas. However, opportunity for children to generate and explore their

own ideas with the guidance of an adult is not fully maximised, for example during snack-time and outdoor break.

68. The management of the curriculum and teaching are effective. The curriculum is planned effectively for children to achieve the early learning goals. The co-ordinator recognises the importance of providing experiences for young children that are interesting and relevant to them. For example, the book, *Letters from Felix*, has prompted a fresh approach to learning about the world around as Felix writes letters home describing where he is. However, there is no long-term plan for the development of provision for the Foundation Stage or financial plan to support it. Overall, whilst teachers have been creative, there are too few resources to support children's early development. This results from time to time in an inappropriate use of worksheets rather than practical teaching methods. For example, there is too little equipment to provide simple language games involving word and sounds recognition. There is no dedicated outdoor area for the Foundation Stage. The adult: child ratio is often 1:30 for half of the day. This reduces the opportunity for children to benefit from the role model and teaching of adults. These factors lower the quality of provision overall and place constraints on children's learning. They also place considerable demands on teachers' time and energies.

69. The last inspection required the school to review and complete the provision for under-fives by developing a safe, secure outdoor play area. A challenging climbing area has been established and is used by all pupils attending the school. This provision does not fully meet the requirements for children within the Foundation Stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Children enjoy coming to school and are happy to leave their parents. Children understand and respond well to the day-to-day routines of their classrooms, which emphasize independence. They are eager to learn new skills and to explore ideas. They increase in confidence and self-esteem and are able to take appropriate responsibility for organising and managing their own learning. This is as a result of a strong reinforcement and focus on achieving success and finding ways to support learning. Emphasis is placed on developing understanding of appropriate behaviour and the differences between right and wrong. Staff provide good role models and explain sensitively to children the consequences of their actions, encouraging them to consider the feelings of others, to take turns and how to be calm. Children learn to share and work together in a variety of situations for example when working in the sand area or using the computer.

Communication, language and literacy

71. At the time of the inspection children were in the final term of the reception year. As a result, children took part in more sustained teaching of literacy. They responded well because the varied programme carefully planned over the year had developed their confidence and skills. Communication, language and literacy are given high priority in all aspects of the curriculum. Children read along with the teacher and all join with gusto in reading the refrains of well-known stories and rhymes. Higher attaining children read with considerable fluency and happily talk about books, authors and characters they enjoy. Children enjoy writing 'invisible' letters and letter blends in the air. Many children can write simple sentences using simple three or four letter words. Reception children in each class have opportunity for play-based activities and independent work.

Mathematical development

72. Children benefit from an appropriate range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. The development of early number skills is above average. Higher attaining children recognise and use number up to 20. They count forwards and backwards. They use technical language of 'more than' and 'less than' appropriately. Some children demonstrate good ability to calculate mentally for example, that 10 is 7 more than 3. Lower attaining children can count and use numbers to 10 adding 'one more' or subtracting 'one less'. Number lines are used effectively to develop understanding of order and position. Children count the beats on a drum to direct Mr. Bear to the correct digit. They enjoy games such as 'Where is Ted?' counting round the circle in 6s, choosing and reading a card and then putting Ted in the position indicated. Opportunities to construct models allow children to explore shape, size and develop mathematical language. Elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented and have a positive effect on children's learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Throughout the Foundation Stage teaching is good. Children use the computer with confidence. Most are able to control the mouse, click and drag, recognise and use the enter and arrow keys. They use programmes to support their work in numeracy and literacy. Children use large construction equipment for example to create Humpty Dumpty's wall from the nursery rhyme. Children can make their own models and practice their skills in designing and making for example musical instruments. A small range of resources limits their use of small tools. All staff provide support and encouragement to help improve children's skills of cutting, printing and sticking. They learn about and visit places of interest around them such as the park and the farm. They investigate water, identifying which objects sink or float and look for patterns in their observations.

Physical development

74. Children benefit from the use of the hall and outdoor areas. There are planned opportunities for lessons in physical education to promote their development. There is regular access to short periods of outdoor play. However, there is not provision for wheeled toys to enable them to control their movement in fast bursts of pedalling or changing direction. The open nature of the playground also restrains children's spontaneous interaction with the outdoors. Children move around the school safely and are able to line up in order to go to different parts of the school. They make good progress in their physical skills and handle tools, construction equipment and modelling materials competently. Emphasis is placed on the skills to help children hold pencils correctly for effective writing; however, a number of children would benefit from more opportunity to work on a larger scale, for example, painting patterns of water on the playground.

Creative development

75. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences in art, music, story and imaginative play. For example, they are given opportunities to explore ways in which, through dance and physical activities, they can 'think' about their bodies. Songs and rhymes help develop their understanding of sound, rhythm and pattern. Children enjoy singing. Art and creative activities are well supported by adults so that children acquire a range of skills to use themselves. They have opportunities to make a personal response and express ideas using paint and materials as well as undertaking observational drawings of natural objects such as seashells. They follow the expectations of the teacher saying, with pleasure; 'We'll have to be skilful' and; 'It will be such fun'.

ENGLISH

76. The results of the 2000 national tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 show that attainment was well above the national average. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, attainment at seven was well above the average in writing and above average in reading, and at eleven it was close to the average.

77. Over the five years from 1996 to 2001 the test results of seven-year-olds in writing have increased year on year. In reading, the standards achieved show wider variation although they remain above the national average. Trends over time in national tests for eleven-year-olds demonstrate steady improvement in relation to the national average. However, analysis of work samples and observation of lessons in this year's Year 6 indicates that attainment is in line with the national average. This represents a decline in standards from those previously attained.

78. At the end of each Key Stage, the school demonstrates a consistent rate of improvement in standards for both boys and girls when compared to the LEA 'family' of similar schools and with national trend lines. Over the past five-year period, boys and girls achieve equally good results.

79. Pupils' attainment shows sustained good progress through Key Stage 1, from an average base of attainment on entry to school. The good links between the teachers of children in the reception class and the recently improved strategies for teaching phonics are having a positive effect. Effective support for special educational needs (SEN) also ensures good progress. However, in Key Stage 2 pupils' progress slows. Teachers employ a good, clear and well-informed strategy for literacy in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, whilst teaching shows some strengths, there are also important weaknesses in the overall programme that result in teaching being satisfactory, rather than good.

80. In Key Stage 1 teachers have taken a robust and imaginative approach to improving pupils' literacy skills. There are effective opportunities for guided reading with a teacher and effective strategies for the teaching of phonics. This is good practice. As a result, all pupils are becoming increasingly confident and adventurous in their choice of words. These skills are particularly evident during the whole-class elements of the literacy strategy when pupils respond well to the texts being studied. Higher attaining pupils organise their speech well and give clear well-articulated responses. Lower attaining pupils respond well too and also demonstrate good choices of vocabulary. Pupils are drawn to listen closely to their teachers because of the engaging and clear way in which ideas are presented. Teachers' motivating and stimulating ideas inspire pupils to work hard to make their responses exciting. For example, in a Year 2 class pupils' writing was of a very good standard as a result of very effective teaching. Pupils were able to use collections of words effectively to discuss ideas and to support one another in spelling unfamiliar words in phrases such as 'sailing on the ocean' and 'it was extremely dark'.

81. Overall, teachers allow appropriate time for pupils to organise their thoughts. The best teaching provides effective role models and pupils' skills in speaking and listening are reinforced appropriately across the curriculum. For example, in a Key Stage 1 class in history, the use of well-chosen artefacts provided effective opportunity to talk about diaries, their purpose and famous people who are known to have kept them. In a mathematics lesson pupils worked well together to direct Mr. Bear to the next number in the sequence.

82. In Key Stage 2, there are examples of pupils' very good achievement in drama and choral speaking. There are examples too, in lessons, where opportunities to discuss and

prepare to read a poem to the class enable pupils' to show their abilities to speak and read well. However, overall, there are too few opportunities for pupils to participate in extended and challenging discussions within lessons, to offer different points of view and to raise their own questions so that their confident mastery of spoken English increases.

83. In reading, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall in Key Stage 1. Pupils benefit from the systematic teaching of skills with an appropriate emphasis on phonics. There are examples of individual higher attaining pupils and those with special needs, making excellent progress. In such cases, this is also as a result of good support from parents through the home-school reading scheme. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory rather than good. This is because teaching does not ensure that the opportunities for guided reading and writing are exploited to pupils' full advantage. In some instances, this is as a result of a limited range of teaching strategies that are used to ensure pupils' can work independently. Although pupils' reading is monitored, it is not guided or challenged sufficiently overall. For older and higher attaining pupils, their skills of critical appraisal are under-developed.

84. Pupils' library skills are sound overall. Pupils understand the difference between a non-fiction and fiction text. They know how a non-fiction text is organised and how to use alphabetical order, the contents page and index. This is as a result of effective use of non-fiction texts within the literacy strategy and pupils' involvement as librarians. However, more needs to be done to ensure that library skills are taught to a sufficiently high level. At present, library resources limit pupils' achievement. The catalogue systems for information retrieval are not well-established or known to older pupils. Whilst the school has sought to make best use of the space available the accommodation for the library is unsatisfactory.

85. In writing, pupils make good progress in presenting their ideas in a sequence of sentences, often making accurate use of full stops and capital letters. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils write extended reports, for example, recording the differences between a frog and a toad. In Key Stage 2 pupils use writing-frames to develop their ideas. These are effective strategies that enable all pupils to take part in the activities and increase concentration span. Pupils' increasing ability to spell accurately is promoted through regular practice and review with teachers. However, more needs to be done to improve standards in Key Stage 2 by providing a wider range of teaching strategies for word level work.

86. Standards for presentation are set through the appropriate display of pupils' work. Overall, pupils' handwriting is legibly formed and of a consistent size. However, as they become older there is a lack of attention to teaching pupils to write with good pencil control and to acquire a mature dexterity that enables them to write at speed or to present high quality written work. From an early age pupils' weak pencil control is not remedied and for older pupils too little attention is given to setting good standards in handwriting. For example, in Key Stage 2 pupils' work is too often untidy, undated and letters poorly joined. There is little evidence of using opportunities to link spelling and handwriting practices together or for drafting and editing work in progress. Pupils are capable of higher standards.

87. Pupils respond well in lessons. They are sensible, behave well and are thoughtful. Many can work well in pairs. The vast majority of pupils listen well and sustain interest for appreciable amounts of time. Pupils remain compliant even in lessons where the pace is too slow or there is a lack sufficient intellectual challenge.

88. Assessment of pupils' achievements and learning takes place in all lessons. In all lessons, teachers share the purpose with pupils. This is good practice. In very good

lessons, this is recorded in a way that provides for easy reference and it is referred to when assessing what pupils have learned by the end of the lesson. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done particularly in Key Stage 2 to consistently clarify and confirm learning objectives with the pupils. At present, objectives are sometimes described in terms that are too broad. Teachers do not yet consistently identify the specific knowledge and skills that are needed to achieve the main learning objective or describe them with sufficient clarity so that pupils can talk confidently about what they know, can do and are working to learn. There are very good examples of annual reports in English that describe pupils' achievement and what they need to do in the coming year to improve. However, these objectives are not linked to lessons or known and understood by pupils. This is a significant weakness and a missed opportunity to involve pupils in the assessment of their work and to increase their rate of progress.

89. Improvements in the quality of provision for English since the last inspection are still too variable in Key Stage 2. More opportunities are still needed for independent study where pupils can use their own initiative. Teaching still needs to increase the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils and to provide a wider range of strategies to support pupils' developing writing skills.

90. The overall level of book and learning resources is only adequate. There are examples of good quality resource materials used well to support teaching and numerous examples of teachers devising or purchasing their own materials. Book resources are supplemented from external sources. However, the lack of resources limits the range of teaching strategies and the quality of pupils' learning.

91. The English co-ordinator has only recently taken up the whole school responsibility. She has made considerable progress in a short period of time despite the fact that she has no release time from her teaching duties in which to undertake her role. However, this has resulted in a very considerable workload.

92. The co-ordinator has adopted a sensible approach to established systems for monitoring and evaluating English. There are good features to this work. For example:

- the English policy has been up-dated;
- the co-ordinator has sought external advice and support from the LEA Literacy Consultant, for instance in teaching mixed-age classes effectively;
- joint lesson observations have been undertaken to increase the co-ordinators' skills and understanding. This has provided valuable training as well as providing useful summary reports on the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision;
- the priorities for improvement are outlined in development plan;
- curriculum planning has been strengthened considerably in Key Stage 1 and there is clear evidence that opportunities for teaching literacy across the curriculum are being given proper attention.

93. Priorities identified by the school for further improvement include:

- Improving the analysis and use of performance information to raise standards of achievement and improve teaching.

94. There are other priorities for which there are, as yet, no strategies for improvement:

- The use of information of pupils' achievement to identify and meet the specific needs of higher attaining pupils is not undertaken with sufficient rigour;
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they do well, what they need to improve and how this will be achieved has not been addressed;

- There is not a clear understanding of the combined impact of special needs provision, assessment strategies, the teaching approaches of individual teachers on the quality of the provision;
- Priorities for improvement, including resource provision are not set in a suitable time scale in which they can be addressed, nor supported by a financial plan.

MATHEMATICS

95. The school's test results improved significantly and consistently between 1997 and 2000, so that in 2000 standards in the tests for eleven year olds and seven year olds were well above average when compared to the results for all schools, and above average when compared to those of similar schools. At each age the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was well above average. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. The modest targets set by the school for 2000 were exceeded considerably. Comparison of the same pupils' results at ages seven and eleven shows they have made satisfactory progress.

96. Inspectors found that seven and eleven year olds attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress. These judgements include the whole range of the mathematics National Curriculum which, unlike the tests, includes using and applying mathematics. Standards in this aspect of mathematics are lower than in other areas. Cohorts of pupils also show variation from year to year. The current Year 2 class has a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with only one unsatisfactory lesson seen. The best teaching was found in Year 1. The pupils' attitudes are sound, and they behave well in lessons.

97. By the time they are seven pupils can round numbers less than 100 to the nearest 10. They have a sound understanding of addition and subtraction and know their number bonds to 10. They recognise simple fractions and odd and even numbers, and can draw simple graphs. They can tell the time to the hour, half hour and quarter hour.

98. By the age of eleven most pupils know their tables and can read and write numbers up to one million. They double numbers in their heads, including fractions and decimals. They can find percentages of numbers and can use formal and informal methods to calculate simple percentage increases and decreases. Their estimations of measures are good, but their descriptions of two and three dimensional shapes and movements are weak. They can draw and measure angles and draw a range of different graphs.

99. Pupils are generally taught within their own classes, and by their own class teacher. Lesson plans seen were effective, and mental and oral work provides a clear start to lessons. This is usually followed by significant periods of direct and purposeful whole-class teaching in which ideas are developed well and useful strategies are demonstrated. In the best lessons seen pupils are clear about what they are to learn through the things they are doing. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson in which children made good progress in their ability to tell the time. However, throughout the school, teachers' discussions with pupils focus more on what they are to do than on what they are to learn. As a result the pupils are not always clear about the purpose of tasks and activities, and do not always make the progress they could.

100. In a Year 5 lesson about capacity, resources were well used to illustrate ideas and to involve the pupils. However, most teachers do not use resources in this way often enough. As a consequence some pupils become restless and lose concentration as the

lesson progresses. Nevertheless, when the pupils move to individual or group work they generally receive sensitive and helpful support from their teachers and from teaching assistants. Lessons finish with a useful plenary that draws together what has happened and sometimes looks at how pupils surmounted any difficulties they had with their work. However, opportunities to review what has been learned are not regularly exploited by teachers. As a result pupils are not always clear about the progress they have made in lessons.

101. The pupils' attitudes are sound and classroom control and management are generally good, ensuring that behaviour is good. The importance teachers place on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary and the opportunities for speaking and listening observed in all lessons ensure that mathematics makes a good contribution to literacy. Opportunities to apply mathematical ideas were also found in science and geography, and in some lessons computers are used to practise mathematical skills. While information from tests is well used to show progress and set targets, day-to-day assessment is less well developed and as a result some work lacks sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able. Marking is generally thorough but includes few comments highlighting what pupils have learned or what they need to do to improve.

102. Pupils with special educational needs pupils are well supported when they are working in small groups but teaching assistants are currently underused during whole-class teaching. Some good support teaching was seen in Year 5 where pupils made good progress due to high expectations, a clear focus on learning and good questioning skills.

103. A high priority is given to work in numeracy. The pupils develop appropriate mental skills, are taught effective calculating strategies and are given opportunities to discuss their methods. However, opportunities to use and apply their mathematics are not regularly exploited. Leadership in mathematics has suffered from a high turnover of co-ordinators recently. Despite this, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented in a satisfactory manner.

SCIENCE

104. The statutory teacher assessment of the attainment of seven-year-olds last year indicated that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was very high compared with the national average, with all pupils attaining Level 2. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above average. During the inspection standards were judged to be at about the national expectation at seven. This particular cohort has a higher than usual proportion of children with special educational needs and teacher assessment confirms that results in 2001 are lower than the previous year. In the current Year 2 attainment is higher in knowledge and understanding than in investigative science.

105. Standards of attainment at eleven are above those for all schools and broadly the same as in other similar schools. Pupils achieve appropriately based upon their prior attainment. As in Key Stage 1, attainment in knowledge and understanding is higher than in scientific investigation. Although results in science have not kept pace with those in English and mathematics, the school has taken action to raise standards and the effects of this are being seen in a trend in improvement at the end of Key Stage 2 that is above the national trend. Standards of attainment have improved since the time of the last report. Pupils demonstrate a broad range of knowledge and understanding. They are able to make predictions and plan fair tests indicating why these are fair. They are however, less successful in using scientific knowledge to make predictions and draw conclusions. Higher attaining pupils are less confident when working with continuous data; for example, they

talk about using cold, warm and hot water rather than suggesting a range of temperatures. Pupils draw bar graphs but have less opportunity to be involved in quantitative investigation leading to line graphs. The co-ordinator has identified interpretation of line data as an area to develop and has already bought resources to address this issue.

106. The quality of teaching is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which helps to ensure that pupils are taught well. There is an appropriate emphasis on the correct use of scientific vocabulary, which means pupils use terminology confidently and correctly. There were examples of relevant lists of words on displays of work. Planning is detailed and clear learning objectives are identified, though these need to be routinely shared with pupils so that they are clear about the learning intentions of lessons and can be more fully involved in self assessment. Wherever possible learning is based upon first hand experience and pupils are managed well during practical work. Teachers have developed helpful prompt sheets to enable pupils to structure their investigations. Although work is regularly marked, there is little comment on why work is good or what pupils need to do to improve their work. One good example was seen in a Year 2 class where the teacher had posed questions on pupils' investigation plans that had encouraged them to reflect and improve. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching investigative skills. In one lesson for example, teachers careful questioning led pupils to consider how results from an experiment led to a conclusion.

107. Reports contain helpful comment on the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' work. Schemes of work have been completed since the last inspection. Planning is thorough and builds in opportunities for revisiting work to ensure appropriate access for pupils in mixed age classes. The science co-ordinator has identified the need to review the coverage of the programmes of study to ensure manageability.

108. In lessons observed, pupils have very positive attitudes to science. They are keen to learn and this coupled with the good teaching they receive makes learning exciting. Pupils show considerable enthusiasm for their work in science and readily suggest possibilities for investigation. Pupils organise themselves well and co-operate readily in groups. They settle to written work well and speak with confidence about their work.

109. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. A very thorough review of provision took place in 1999, which has been a very valuable basis from which to take the work of the school forward. The co-ordinator reviews teachers planning and regularly samples pupils' work as part of her monitoring role. There have been opportunities for lesson observations in the past and more are planned for the future. A useful portfolio of assessed work has been developed with clear annotation as to why work has been awarded a particular level.

ART AND DESIGN

110. In Key Stage 1 standards are in line with national expectations for children of this age. Pupils have a wide range of drawing ability. Higher attaining pupils can draw with accuracy and use pencil and charcoal to show detail and shading. Lower attaining pupils make simple drawings and use a variety of media to create collages and paintings. This is similar to the level of attainment identified in the previous inspection report.

111. In the small number of lessons observed in Key Stage 2 progress and attainment were unsatisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 pupils make simple stencils and use them to make repeated patterns; however, they are unable to give ideas about how this work could be extended and improved. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are able to follow instructions to create a collage picture of a scene from an Egyptian tomb. Samples of work show a limited range

of skills acquisition, and pupils' drawing is immature. A similar level of attainment was also identified in samples of work and on display around the school. Standards of art and design have not improved since the last inspection.

112. In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, teaching was judged to be very good. The teacher had high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Work was appropriately differentiated and good links were made to other subjects. The cross-curricular theme of pirates showed good links with design and technology, geography, history and speaking and listening skills. The teacher used open-ended questions and prompts to encourage pupils to think carefully about their work.

113. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to art and design are satisfactory. They enjoy art and design activities and the majority of pupils concentrate well. The small numbers of pupils who are unable to focus on their task are not challenged sufficiently. Pupils work well together on group activities. In Key Stage 1 less able pupils work with a support assistant to make a life size three-dimensional pirate. In Years 5 and 6 pupils work on a group activity to reproduce a scene from a temple tomb, they discuss and make decisions as to who will be responsible for different parts of the picture and make collective decisions about the materials to use.

114. In Key Stage 2 the small amount of art and design observed showed teaching to range from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. Teachers lack subject knowledge and confidence in teaching in art and design. Organisation of the room for art and design activities varies; at its best the room is well laid out with resources easily available but on other occasions the classroom is not well organised. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are given a very limited range of resources from which to choose and pupils are unclear as to the purpose of the activity. The work is not challenging and as a consequence many pupils lose interest. In Years 5 and 6 the room is not organised well for the activity, books and equipment are left on top of desks and resources for collage are not clearly laid out for pupils to see. As a consequence pupils work on top of their books and do not make thoughtful choices as to the materials to use. The progress and acquisition of knowledge and skills in these lessons is limited.

115. The school makes good use of the work of other artists and is building its resources in this area. Good use is made of visiting specialists and school visits to enrich the art and design curriculum. However, resources for art and design generally are poor and the time given for teaching art and design is too restricted. This affects teachers' ability to teach all aspects of the art and design National Curriculum adequately. The leadership and management of the subject have been problematic. The subject has been led for a number of years by a succession of teachers on temporary contracts, thus monitoring and evaluation of provision, assessment and moderation of pupils work has not been given a high enough priority. The identification and implementation of a cohesive and systematic development for art and design has not been realised. These areas were all highlighted in the last inspection report but have not been addressed. Whilst recognising the impact of national strategies on developments in the foundation subjects, the school needs to address issues related to resources, curriculum time, teachers' subject knowledge and the leadership and management of this curriculum area.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. Only two lessons were observed, one in each key stage. However, there were displays of pupils' work and some evidence in work sampling. On the basis of what was seen, standards of attainment are broadly in line with age-related expectations and pupils

achieve appropriately. This is similar to the last inspection. A judgement on the overall quality of teaching is not possible because of the limited number of lessons seen; however, the teaching observed was at least satisfactory. A lesson in Key Stage 1 drew very successfully on a visit to a local playground to see the play equipment available; pictures and photographs to help pupils design their own equipment supplemented this. Clear criteria were specified which designs had to meet. Very good resources were available in the form of construction kits for pupils to use and they confidently incorporated other materials into their designs, producing high quality products. In a Year 2 display, pupils had designed a winding mechanism for 'Incy Wincy Spider' to enable her to climb the drainpipe. The teacher had provided very helpful prompt sheets to enable pupils to focus on key aspects of their design. Pupils were using appropriate technical vocabulary e.g. axle, handle. Very good quality labelled drawings had been produced and pupils made a meaningful evaluation of their products. Some projects link well with other subjects e.g. the suitability for different materials for a raincoat was investigated in science prior to designing a coat for Teddy. Pupils then used an information and communication technology package to draw their designs.

117. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has recently attended an extended course to develop her knowledge in this area. The school has adopted national guidance on schemes of work for design and technology and is currently trialling these. From the lessons observed and pupils' work seen these appear to be having an impact on standards and the way design and technology is taught. Pupils now have the opportunity to examine products and assess how they work, an area criticised in the last report. The scheme also gives clear guidance on the demands required in different year groups. The co-ordinator has attempted to add relevance to pupils' work by linking school projects to the community, for example, a visit to a local supermarket to make biscuits and a visit to the fruit market before making fruit salads. The school has not yet introduced a system for assessing and recording pupils' work but has identified a scheme that compliments the National Curriculum guidance they have adopted and will trial this in future. The co-ordinator has had limited opportunity to monitor and evaluate provision in the subject but she monitors planning and talks with children about their work.

GEOGRAPHY

118. By the age of seven and eleven standards in geography are in line with national expectations. However, standards across the breadth of the National Curriculum programmes of study vary. Pupils' knowledge of places is a strength, whilst the skills required to carry out investigative and independent work are underdeveloped. In Key Stage 1 the travels of Paddington Bear are shown on world maps. In Key Stage 2 world maps are used to identify geographical features and countries where the school has some links, for example New Zealand, Italy and India. By the age of seven, pupils know about temperature and how a thermometer is used. By eleven pupils are able to explain the water cycle.

119. Pupils' attitudes to geography across the school are satisfactory and in Key Stage 1 they are good. The majority concentrate well and help each other to read temperatures on a disposable thermometer. Pupils are eager to try out new ideas and use new equipment. In Key Stage 2 pupils concentrate well on the task in hand although a small number of pupils fidget and lose interest often where the task is not well matched to their ability and interests. In Years 4 and 5 pupils work on questionnaires but the more able work at a slow pace and lose interest in what they are doing.

120. Only a small amount of geography teaching was observed. Overall, teaching is at least satisfactory and in Key Stage 1 teaching is good. Where teaching is good the teacher

has clear learning objectives for the lesson, activities are appropriate and there is good use of secondary resources. For example, in Year 2 the teacher recapped how to use a conventional thermometer and had a large diagram of a disposable thermometer to explain how to read body temperature. As a result pupils used thermometers to find their body temperature. In Year 6 the teacher made good use of a pictorial diagram of the water cycle and pupils explained confidently how the water cycle worked. Teachers develop pupils' geographical vocabulary well; in Year 6 pupils talk confidently about precipitation.

121. A programme of field trips and visitors to school enriches the geography curriculum. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop good basic mapping skills but a lack of suitable resources at Key Stage 2 inhibits teachers' ability to adequately build on prior learning. Links made to other areas of the curriculum are a strength. In Key Stage 1 links are made to design and technology through their work on litter and recycling. In Key Stage 2 there are links to ICT by sending e-mails to link schools in New Zealand and Italy. Links to mathematics are made through handling data generated by pupils' questionnaires on the use of time.

122. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is conscientious and has a clear understanding of the subject. A good and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the subject was carried out in 1999. As a result of this review the school has adapted its scheme of work and is also using the QCA guidance.

123. Resources, particularly in Key Stage 2 are inadequate. The school lacks a range of resources to teach mapping and enquiry skills. The use of ICT is underdeveloped, although the school's planned improvements for ICT should help to address this. The time given in Key Stage 2 for the teaching of geography is inadequate and impedes the teachers' ability to cover all aspects of the curriculum sufficiently. The last inspection report identified a number of similar areas for development. Some improvement has been made through links established with other countries and the development of a scheme of work. However, general progress in the development of the subject in order to improve standards is slow.

HISTORY

124. Standards at the age of seven are above national expectations. Pupils use artefacts to find 'clues' about life in the past; they make careful observations and use other senses such as smell and touch to make sensible guesses as to the use of unfamiliar objects. They use artefacts, stories and pictures to make simple comparisons between the past and present day. Standards by eleven are in line with national expectations. Most pupils accurately identify different periods of time and have a good factual knowledge of historical events and life in the past. The work of Years 3 and 4 shows knowledge of the Anglo Saxons, their daily life and occupations. In Years 5 and 6 pupils know about the ancient Egyptians, their beliefs about the after life and the rituals performed for a Pharaoh's journey after death. Pupils raise questions for further research and are developing an awareness of the use of the Internet for research purposes. However, research skills generally are underdeveloped and pupils have little opportunity to develop independent research skills.

125. Pupils throughout the school enjoy history. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are enthusiastic when handling artefacts, they show good concentration and are keen to offer their ideas to others. In Years 3 and 4 pupils work in groups to discuss a variety of artefacts associated with a local occupation. In Years 5 and 6 pupils accurately recall the main points learnt in a previous lesson and work co-operatively to produce one piece of work from the group.

126. In the small number of history lessons observed, all teaching was at least satisfactory and some was very good. Where teaching was very good, teachers enthused pupils by good use of resources and by using a variety of questions and prompts to draw on pupils' prior knowledge. In these lessons, the planning was clear and thorough. Planning included assessment opportunities; however, there was very little evidence that this was used to inform future learning. In Years 1 and 2 the teacher created an atmosphere of excitement and expectation with the skilful use of artefacts. A large tin chest containing wrapped parcels and a variety of items intrigued pupils. 'Treasures' such as an old brooch and a silk petticoat were used by the teacher to draw on pupils' powers of observation, to give information and to allow pupils to make deductions. Good use of the learning support assistants ensured children with special educational needs were able to take a full and active part in the lesson. In Key Stage 2 teachers have good subject knowledge and resources are used well as prompts and learning aids. SEN pupils are given good support and make satisfactory progress. Pupils are encouraged to use their powers of deduction when looking at artefacts.

127. The school makes good use of field trips and visitors to enrich the curriculum and good links are made with other subjects. The pirate theme in Years 1 and 2 makes excellent links with geography, mathematics and literacy. In Years 3 and 4 the study of the Anglo-Saxons links with art through illuminated lettering, ICT through word-processing and geography through maps and origins of place names. In Year 6 good links are made with literacy. Pupils present their work on 'Life Since the 1930's' to other members of the class and with their 'buddy' class. In Key Stage 2 teachers ensure the breadth of historical knowledge is covered; however, the curriculum time given to history is insufficient and does not allow pupils, particularly the more able to develop a wider range of enquiry skills.

128. The co-ordinator gives good leadership, she is enthusiastic and works hard to develop her subject. She has supplemented school resources by using her own funds to make a superb collection of artefacts from which all children and staff benefit. History resources are adequate for Key Stage 1 but Key Stage 2 require further resources to develop enquiry skills and to develop pupils' independent learning. The co-ordinator has carried out monitoring and evaluation and has identified appropriate areas for development. Since the last inspection report the school has maintained standards of attainment in history but the school has made little progress in addressing issues raised for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

129. It was only possible to see ICT taught three times during the inspection. Two class lessons were seen in Year 1 and five Year 6 pupils was observed working with a support teacher. The standards of seven-year-olds are broadly in line with what is expected for their age; the standards of the eleven-year-olds are below what is expected. These judgements are made from the lesson observations, analyses of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. The teaching observed was all at least satisfactory and some good teaching was seen.

130. Resources for ICT are currently inadequate, but the school is in the process of developing an ICT suite. The building work has been completed, and enough computers have been ordered to allow a class of pupils to work in pairs. This will considerably enhance provision in this area.

131. In Year 1 pupils work in ICT in a regular and systematic manner. In the best lesson the teacher has devised systems to make effective use of the resources available to help

the children to learn to give precise directions. Under the supervision of a teaching assistant, one small group of children took it in turns to wear a cardboard box decorated to look like a robot. The others then directed them round the playground. Meanwhile, the remaining children worked on the one computer available, controlled a programmable toy disguised as a pirate or noted directions on a worksheet. This very good management of pupils, resources and activities and the high quality questioning observed helped the pupils to make good progress, and some of them to attain high standards. Teachers' planning is effective and relationships are good. The pupils are generally keen and interested, although one or two lose concentration when they are not sufficiently involved in the lesson.

132. In the Year 6 lesson observed the pupils worked to programme a set of traffic lights. The teacher's subject knowledge and understanding were secure and good questioning techniques were used. The pupils were interested in the activity, sustained concentration and were rightly pleased with their success. They made satisfactory progress.

133. There is insufficient teaching of ICT to the pupils in Years 3-6. While all pupils have some access to computers, class teachers do not regularly teach skills and knowledge in a systematic way. As a result, the pupils have few opportunities to develop ideas in depth and make unsatisfactory progress. A scheme of work has recently been drawn up. Once the new ICT suite is finished, use of this scheme will help to ensure that all aspects of the subject receive appropriate emphasis, and it will be easier for teachers to be certain that pupils are taught ICT regularly.

134. At the time of the last inspection work on the use of devices to control and monitor events was lacking. This issue has been addressed successfully. Progress and attainment at seven remain satisfactory; at eleven they remain unsatisfactory. Previously, computers were not sufficiently used to develop and apply skills across the curriculum. Given the current inadequacy of resources, good progress has been made here. Satisfactory use is now made of computers to support and develop work in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, design technology, geography and art.

MUSIC

135. There is insufficient evidence on which to base secure judgements about the standards and quality of teaching in music. Two lessons were observed in Key Stage 2, one of which was good and the other broadly satisfactory. Other observations were made during assemblies and hymn practice. A discussion was held with the co-ordinator.

136. The subject specialist, who works part-time, has recently embarked on a project to teach all pupils in Key Stage 2 to play the recorder. She has begun with Year 3 and over time intends to achieve this laudable objective. The teaching provides an appropriate challenge. Pupils know what to do and how to be successful as a result of effective teacher demonstration and direction. Pupils demonstrate increasing skill in maintaining a beat and controlling the tone of the notes played. Audio resources are used well to raise the quality of pupils' performance. The teacher persists firmly with a few pupils who would rather 'play' than practice and as a result, by the end of the lesson, good progress is made. In the other lesson, teaching lacked sufficient subject knowledge to improve pupils' knowledge and skills at a fast enough rate. However, the teacher worked bravely with well-chosen examples of music from a variety of cultures to demonstrate melody and rhythm.

137. Pupils enjoy singing songs during Key Stage 1 and make simple instruments. There is a strong vocal tradition of singing for occasion in Year 6 as a result of the end of year

productions. At other times during the year pupils may join the choir and participate in larger events such as the Bath Festival as well as accompany mass. Pupils have opportunities to compose their own songs.

138. The subject co-ordinator has undertaken some monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision in music. She has observed lessons and evaluated the songs composed by pupils. However, she has no time in which to strengthen this practice. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and as a result of the combined endeavour of staff, music makes a positive contribution to the curriculum. However, the systems for systematic evaluation and improvement are not yet in place. Throughout the school improvements are not focused sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching by identifying effective practice or defining the quality of learning and standards to be achieved. The range of resources has been extended but still remain barely adequate. The school accommodation remains unsatisfactory and hinders the teaching of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

139. Attainment at the age of eleven is average. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. A lesson observed with some younger Year 2 pupils, but a majority of Year 1 pupils showed some high standards of performance. High standards of swimming were also seen in Years 3 and 4. The teaching seen in Year 1 was very good; in Years 3-6 it was generally satisfactory, with some good teaching of swimming. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school.

140. In a Year 1 lesson using the outdoor apparatus the pupils were very well managed, and good attention was paid to safety issues. Pupils were well used to demonstrate, and good questioning helped them to consider what they were doing and improve their performance. As a consequence they made very good progress.

141. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils were observed in hockey, throwing and catching and swimming lessons. They enjoy their work, and show average skills for their ages. Effective control meant that the pupils worked safely with their hockey sticks and appropriate questioning made pupils consider how their work could be improved. Pupils listen well to advice, and can correctly identify the key features of an effective throwing action. Appropriate emphasis by teachers on control and quality of action led to significant improvements in the pupils' accuracy and consistency. Useful comments are made to the pupils as they work, but these tend to concentrate on issues of organisation rather than on improving skills. Some good teaching of swimming was seen. Groups were very well organised, the pupils' attitudes were very good, and they behaved very well. The average and more able pupils received clear instructions to help improve their skills and techniques, and made good progress as a result.

142. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed in lessons using small bats and balls. They are generally keen and eager but not all pupils listen well. Lessons start with a lively warm up, followed by work in pairs or small groups. While there is an appropriate balance of teaching and activity, the teachers' discussions with pupils focus too much on organisation and rules, and not enough on skills and techniques. As a result they do not all make the progress they could. The pupils work productively and co-operate well. Their behaviour is generally good and they show average skills of throwing, catching and hitting. One lesson seen was unsatisfactory. This was due to an inappropriate task, insufficient attention to safety and a lack of direct teaching.

143. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to be involved in a residential activity week where they are involved in outdoor activities including archery, caving, canoeing, orienteering, climbing and horse-riding.

144. In all of the lessons observed the teachers and pupils were appropriately dressed, though in several lessons pupils were unable to take part because they had forgotten their PE kit. Teachers' planning is generally effective, and the pupils apply physical effort to their work.

145. The curriculum appears broad and balanced but the time allocated to different aspects of the subject is still not monitored, so balance cannot be ensured. This issue was raised in the last inspection and has still not been addressed. At the time of the last inspection the PE resources were not stored in a safe and systematic way. This has been improved significantly. The range of resources is satisfactory and for games they are good. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered, which helps to develop the skills, teamwork and commitment of the pupils who attend.